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“An Earthly Tabernacle”: English Land Use and Town Planning in Seventeenth-Century Woodbridge, New Jersey

Michael J. Gall

The archaeology of townscapes can provide important information about cultural development and the transfer of settlement systems. This close examination of 17th-century settlement in northeastern New Jersey focuses on Woodbridge Township, Middlesex County, between 1669 and 1676. The study highlights the complexity of early colonial settlement systems in East Jersey and also examines the ways in which experimentation with Old World– and New England–style corporation settlement models; strong desires for land accumulation, power, and wealth; inheritance practices; and religion influenced English townscape development within northeastern New Jersey. The aspects outlined herein likely influenced the creation of other township-corporation settlements by New England immigrants to East New Jersey during the 17th century. These settlement patterns were markedly different than those developed through proprietary land-grant sales elsewhere in the colony.

L'archéologie de la physionomie urbaine peut contribuer de l'information intéressante sur le développement culturel et les types de colonisation. Cet examen d'un établissement du 17^e siècle dans le nord-est du New Jersey se concentre sur le village de Woodbridge dans le comté de Middlesex entre 1669 et 1676. Cette étude fait aussi ressortir la complexité des types de colonisation au New Jersey. Elle examine aussi l'influence qu'un nombre d'éléments ont eu sur le développement de la physionomie d'un village du nord-est du New Jersey : l'essai de différents modèles de colonisation, i.e. celui de l'ancien monde et celui de la Nouvelle-Angleterre; le désir profond d'acquérir des terres et du pouvoir et de s'enrichir; les pratiques liées aux héritages ainsi que les religions. Les aspects soulignés dans cette étude ont sans doute influencé la création d'autres établissements urbains similaires par des immigrants de la Nouvelle-Angleterre au 17^e siècle. Ces modèles d'établissement étaient très différents de ceux développés par le biais de ventes de concessions de terres ailleurs dans la colonie.

Introduction

Interest in the early colonial settlement of the Northeast and Middle Atlantic regions has gained popularity and increased focus since Henry Miller (1996: 25–46) and Steven Pendery's (1996: 71–81) synthesis of the 17th-century British immigrant experience in these portions of the United States. During the 17th century, New Jersey was colonized by the Dutch (New Netherland: 1624–1664, 1673–1674), Swedes and Finns (New Sweden: 1638–1655), and English settlers (New Jersey: 1664–1673, 1674–1775). Each ethnic group arrived with its own ideas about the form a settlement should take, the ways the spaces within it must function, and the multitude of roles it should serve in fulfilling cultural, defensive, economic, commercial, religious, and social expectations. These groups were certainly not homogenous, e.g., the Dutch included individuals from the Netherlands and also present-day Germany and Poland. Similarly, English emigrants arrived from various sub-regions (TAB. 1). Within this group great variation

existed in the style, form, and function exhibited by vernacular townscapes for a variety of reasons that had lasting physical and cultural impacts on the American landscape (McKinley 1900: 1–18; Wacker 1975: 221–329). This study examines the role English township-corporation freeholders played in the cultural transfer of town-planning concepts from New England to East Jersey's early colonial landscape, and the elements that influenced the settlement model chosen. The transfer of settlement systems from New England to East Jersey is saliently apparent in the early settlement of Woodbridge Township, New Jersey (FIG. 1). Located in eastern Middlesex County and bounded on the south by the Raritan River, Woodbridge lies west of the Arthur Kill, opposite Staten Island, New York. Settled by the English in 1669, Woodbridge Township is examined herein as a case study in the transfer of cultural and vernacular townscape ideas by New Englanders via migration and settlement-form experimentation. Through a process of documentary archaeology (Beaudry 1988:

Table 1. English folk migrations: modal characteristics.

Region of origin	East Anglia/ Southern England*	East Anglia/ Southern England†	North Midlands/ London, England‡
American destination	Massachusetts	East Jersey	West Jersey/ Delaware Valley
Control of migration	Corporate	Corporate/ proprietary	Proprietary
Religion of migrants	Congregational	Congregational/ Presbyterian/ Baptist/ Quaker	Quaker
Origin of immigrant elites	Puritan ministers and magistrates	Artisans and yeomen of various religions	Quaker traders, artisans, and farmers
Family structure (% coming in families)	90%	90%	50%
Family identity	Strong nuclear	Strong nuclear	Moderate nuclear
Cooking bias	Baking	Baking and boiling	Boiling and baking
Schools	Town-free schools	Town-free schools/ quaker schools	Quaker schools
Ideal towns	Towns	Towns/ farm communities	Farm communities
Town realities	Hamlets	Hamlets/ farm clusters	Farm clusters
*Fischer (1989: 787, 813-814)			
†Fischer 1989: 787, 813-814), Gall, Lore, and Hayden (2007, 2008), and Gall et al. (2010).			
‡Fischer (1989: 787, 813-814), Bedell (2002), and Gall, Hayden, and Raes (2010).			

43-50, 1993, 1996; Little 1992; Langhorne and Babits 1993: 132-137; Moreland 2001; Wilkie 2006; Cipolla 2012: 91-109), an analysis of 17th-century deeds, wills, and town records—all forms of material culture utilized by historical archaeologists—sheds light on the nature of settlement and land use in Woodbridge Township. Documents like those mentioned above provide more than a just a context from which to interpret other artifact types. These records also can be used to examine land as an artifact itself (Beranek 2012: 75). Manipulated, divided, and exploited to convey power, form identities, uphold religious ideals, establish communities, segregate classes, and fulfill cultural expectations, land is a malleable, multivalent artifact with deep, diverse cultural meanings. By examining land as an artifact and the documents that describe its myriad uses and roles, one gains a deeper perspective into past cultures.

Examined through the lens of both landscape and documentary archaeology, focus herein is placed on the initial period of settlement in the township corporation of Woodbridge between

1669 and 1676. This period offers a glimpse into the idealized form freeholders' envisioned for their community's design and the land-distribution system employed. Both aspects were deeply rooted in New World township-settlement experimentation, familiarity with English and New England townscapes, inheritance customs, religious ideology, and masculine expectations. These ideas were transferred across the Atlantic, modified and tested in New England, and transplanted to New Jersey through a process of settlement migration that had lasting effects on the cultural and physical development of northeastern New Jersey.

The current study on English settlement in Woodbridge Township arose from an earlier examination of the neighboring 17th-century township-corporation settlement of Piscataway, in present-day Edison Township (Gall 2009, 2011). In 2009, this author engaged in the historical and archaeological study of a New England-style town green or commons in the township, one of a few surviving commons of this type in the state. The study revealed the

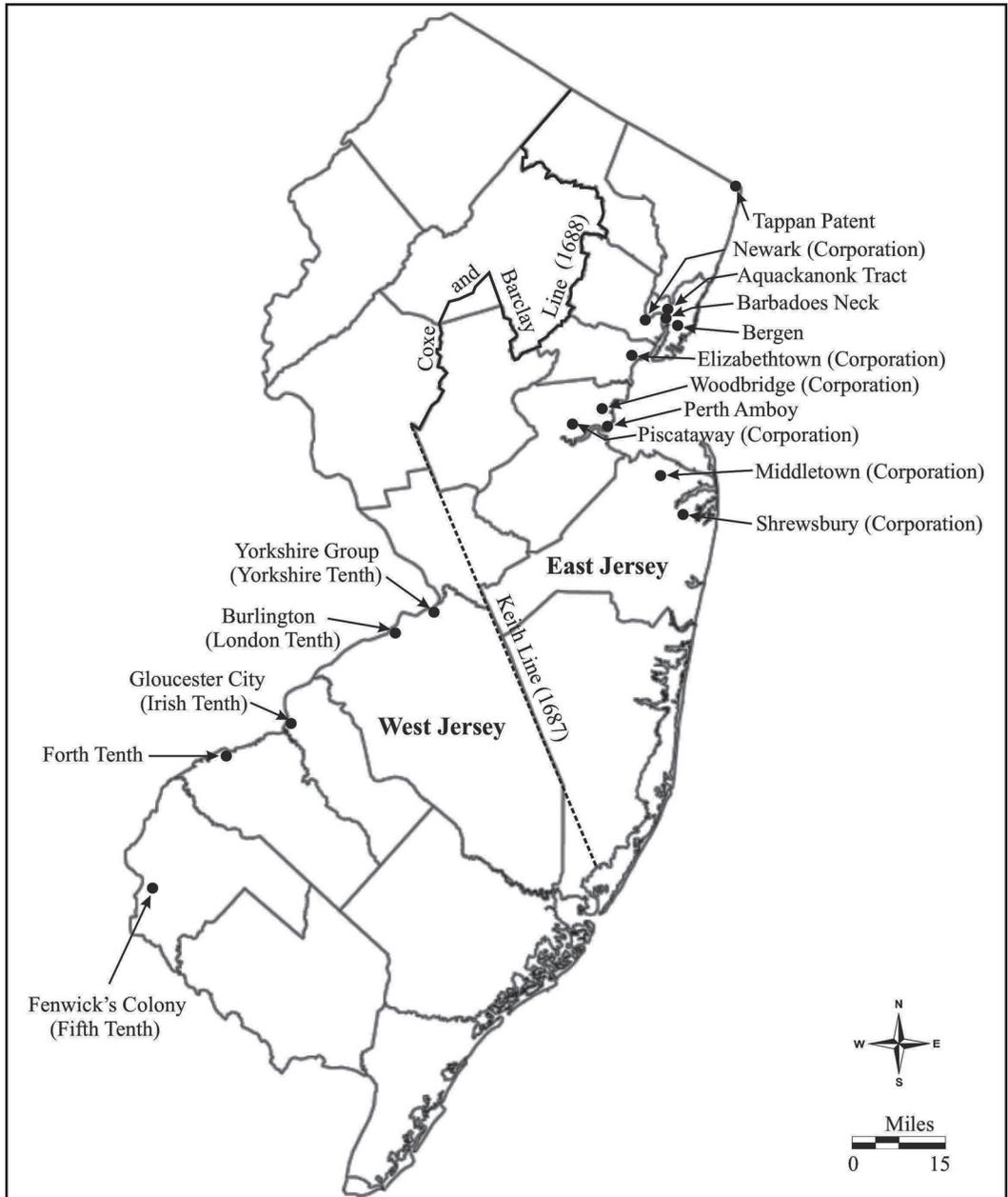


Figure 1. Map showing Woodbridge, other East Jersey corporations, and early West Jersey English towns. (Drawing by author, 2014; courtesy of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.)

commons contained a high potential for intact, deeply buried 17th-century archaeological deposits and structural remains associated with a former town meetinghouse, jail, stocks, ammunition magazine, and militia-training ground. The study also indicated the commons was originally

surrounded by a grid of rectangular, 17th-century house lots, beyond which were located discontinuous marsh and upland accommodation parcels owned by town associates. The pattern of town greens, commons, town lots, and marsh and upland accommodations was vividly

similar to the settlement and land-use pattern observed in 17th-century, nucleated, New England township-corporation settlements. Intensively suburbanized today, roads currently mark the boundaries of the former house lots in Piscataway and provide an inconspicuous reminder of the 17th-century New England-style nucleated community that once existed. New Jersey is, of course, not New England, yet a settlement pattern indicative of the New England colonies did manifest in north-eastern New Jersey through a process of migration and the transfer of cultural ideas, including vernacular townscape forms, by New England immigrants.

To determine whether the nucleated New England settlement pattern in Piscataway was emblematic of other contemporary towns founded by New England immigrants, a similar, though more comprehensive, study was completed for the neighboring township-corporation settlement of Woodbridge. The study of Woodbridge is grander in scope relative to that undertaken for the Piscataway settlement due to the former's richer documentary history. Rather than rely solely upon archaeological data, this townscape study focuses on significant cultural information revealed by a close historical and anthropological examination of wills, probate inventories, town records, and deeds. These documents were used to understand the cultural meanings land possessed; land's role as an artifact in fulfilling cultural, religious, social, and economic expectations; and the influences on the settlement models chosen. The analysis provides insight into cultural, community, and individual identity formation and the development of vernacular townscape plans utilized elsewhere in the state. The corporation settlements identified can be juxtaposed against contemporary English settlement patterns that developed elsewhere, such as those in Quaker-dominated southwestern New Jersey (West Jersey) and in the Chesapeake region, an Anglican stronghold (Trewartha 1946: 568–596; Thorn 1994; King 2013).

The discussion that follows briefly introduces the variation in settlement between the north-eastern and southwestern portions of New Jersey (i.e., East and West Jersey) due to early proprietary and township-corporation influence on settlement patterns, the latter of which has deep roots in Old World English settlement systems. This discussion is followed by an

examination of Old World settlement systems, changing religious and inheritance practices, and modified family structures that directly impacted the form and organization of New England settlements by English immigrants. Land experimentation, hybridization of English open-field and enclosed-field settlements, and the creation of township corporations to fulfill economic, religious, and inheritance needs are then presented. The last section discusses the ways in which English practices were transferred to and modified in New England, and their subsequent transposition to Woodbridge through resettlement. Examination of Woodbridge as a case study highlights the profound influence of New England settlement models on identity creation and cultural development in East Jersey townscapes.

By considering townscapes, such as Woodbridge, as contrived artifacts, one gains insight into the cultural transformation of space and its dynamic, multifaceted cultural meanings (Yentsch 1996: xxvii; Casella and Fowler 2005: 2; O'Keeffe 2005: 11–32; Cochran and Beaudry 2006: 199; Beranek 2012: 78; Thomas 2012: 165–186). This transformation aided the accumulation of wealth and power, fulfilled concepts of cultural and religious identity, solidified social and family relations, and promoted gender ideals of masculine responsibility. By carving the land into parcels with distinct, conceptual (i.e., mapped metes and bounds), and physical boundaries (i.e., fences, ditches, hedgerows), English settlers, who emigrated from New England to East Jersey during the late 1660s, physically imbedded their cultural and religious identity on the New Jersey landscape.

In their work on town plans, Edward (Ned) and Louise Heite stressed examination of town plans as cultural artifacts (Heite and Heite 1986: 142–159). Gabrielle Lanier and Bernard Herman (1997: 279) argued that examination of landscapes as multivalent cultural artifacts aids in promoting their successful analysis as dynamic cultural features. Among its merits, landscape archaeology can be used to explain the ways in which inhabitants transform landscapes into places with deep cultural meaning (Thomas 2012: 182). In the Middle Atlantic region, focus on rural and urban settlement has been particularly strong in Maryland and Virginia in the works of Mark

Leone (Leone and Hurry 1998: 34–62; Leone 2005), Joseph Hopkins III (1986), Paul Shackel (1994), Julia King (2013), and, recently, Crystal Ptacek (2013: 55–72), among others. In the Northeast, Randy Daum (2011: 29–30) is exploring the archaeological remains of a lost late 17th- to early 18th-century New England-style nucleated village, established as a township corporation near Springfield, Massachusetts. In her recent study of the cultural biography of a Massachusetts land parcel, Christa Beranek (2012: 75–90) explores the role land served in fulfilling gender, ethnic, and family lineage expectations. Her work also highlights the notable significance land assumed as an Anglo-American artifact in constructing and defining an English identity in the New World (Beranek 2012: 78).

In New Jersey, archaeologists have examined the myriad roles of landscapes in cultural identity and community formation, power and wealth struggles, space and community control, art promotion and public education, trade networks, and the recreation of Old World settlement patterns (Tomaso et al. 2006: 20–36; Hunter Research, Inc. 2011, 2012; Yamin 2011; Sheridan 2012; Barton 2013: 375–392; Burrow 2013; Veit and Gall 2013: 297–322). Individuals associated with these landscapes include free African Americans, European colonial settlers, labor communities, and even an exiled king. These studies examine large spaces within which numerous people interacted. There, individuals utilized land and nature as objects of material culture in the manifestation of cultural beliefs; to assert control; to uphold religious values, sociopolitical ideals, and economic paradigms; and to create social harmony through the construction of ideal communities and landscapes (Deetz 1977: 10; Beaudry, Cook, and Mrozowski 1996: 272; Ptacek 2013: 57).

Landscape studies in New Jersey have also shed light on the imbued power of identity and cultural meaning settlers achieved through land ownership and manipulation. In his seminal work *Land and People: A Cultural Geography of Preindustrial New Jersey: Origins and Settlement Patterns*, Peter Wacker (1975) embarked on a statewide examination of settlement and demographic patterns in New Jersey that influenced cultural development and change over time. Landscape archaeology studies in New Jersey have also enabled archaeologists

to explore the concept of “otherness” and the role “others” played in the Northeast’s cultural development. In this study, “others” are composed of immigrant town-corporation freeholders, who established restricted-access communities much different in form and ideological character from the dispersed settlements propagated through proprietary land-grant sales elsewhere in New Jersey. Despite their marked difference or “otherness” relative to surrounding non-corporation settlements, their impact on landscape use and cultural development in New Jersey was lasting. Landscape archaeology also provides a tool with which to examine the metamorphosis of perceived wilderness into organized communities and landscapes easily recognizable by European immigrants.

Archaeologists have used capitalist and Marxist theories to examine the ways ideology and class structure, social hierarchies, and the struggle for and maintenance of power influenced community development (Leone 2005; Matthews 2010). Some aspects of social hierarchy are quite evident in Woodbridge, particularly in the township associates’ denial of voting rights and access to the division of township commons to non-associates. Personally financing the town’s establishment, township associates benefited singularly by enjoying these guarded luxuries, creating a class and power structure within the community. Yet, as Leone (2005: 26) has identified, the Marxist concept of ideology does not fully support democracy, elements of which also manifested early in Woodbridge’s history, notably through the enfranchisement of township associates’ widows. Some widows were allocated associate status and given voting and land-ownership rights. The dichotomy of hierarchical power retention and religious views of egalitarianism were lasting struggles within the community.

Aspects of behavioral ecology were also used to examine the role of environmental factors in settlement-model choice, and colonization and locational models were employed to explain settlement hierarchy and site distribution (Fithian 1994; Miller 1996: 31; Bird and O’Connell 2006: 143–188). These approaches were likewise used to understand settlement location and form. In particular, this study examines the ways in which the need for

diversified land types among individual associates in Woodbridge resulted largely from earlier cultural adaptations to the local environment, topography, and geology in New England. There, upland tracts generally contained shallow soil profiles and lacked fertility required for arable plots. Instead, great value was placed on the fertile but narrow marsh tracts and floodplains necessary for animal husbandry and crop farming. The location of the land types required the division of discontinuous tracts among township associates so that each obtained a share of town land equal in monetary and productive value. New England immigrants to East Jersey also sought land along sluggish rivers and proceeded to divide New Jersey townships in much the same ways they had in New England. This article also expands on Beranek (2012) and Wacker's (1975) work by targeting additional influences on identity creation and ways religion, inheritance, and masculine ideals shaped settlement construction and cultural formation.

New Jersey Colonial Powers and Settlement Types

Between 1664 and 1674, the colony of New Jersey was held by two proprietors: Sir George Carteret and Lord John Berkeley. This period was interrupted by a brief interregnum of Dutch control in late 1673 and early 1674. Following English recapture of the territory in 1674, Berkeley sold his half to two Quaker proprietors, John Fenwick and Edward Byllynge. Due to monetary disagreements, a "Quintpartite Agreement" between Fenwick, Byllynge, Carteret, and other Quaker trustees effectively divided the colony in half, forming the provinces of East Jersey (northeast) and West Jersey (southwest) (FIG. 1). Each province had its own governing body and proprietors, most of whom were Quakers (Lurie 1987: 78). The governments of East and West Jersey were consolidated again under royal control by Queen Anne in 1702, but the administrative division between the two regions remained in place until the Revolutionary War. In the interim, each proprietary province developed different settlement systems, guided by proprietors' rules of settlement and land division, and in part by the inhabitants' knowledge of settlement systems in England (Wacker 1975) (TAB. 1, FIG.

2). Land purchased by an individual from the proprietors was in the form of a land grant. Land "grants" and "gifts" bestowed a once-in-a-lifetime specified quantity of acreage upon an individual, but were subject to annual proprietary quitrent payments similar to the English manorial system. Rights to additional, unspecified lands or future land divisions were not included in "grants" or gifts."

The province of West Jersey was initially settled by Swedish and Finnish immigrants, who established forts and then dispersed along the upland margins of navigable inland rivers, particularly the banks of the Delaware River. The Dutch captured New Sweden in 1655 and retained control of the Delaware River valley, the southern end of New Netherland, for another nine years through the construction of new forts. The English forced the Dutch to surrender the weakly held colony in 1664. Initial English settlement in West Jersey, which formed the western and southwestern half of New Jersey, took place at Fenwick's failed colony in Salem County, though there may have been earlier attempts at settlement by Puritan emigrants from the New Haven Colony in present-day Connecticut. Fenwick divided the land along the Delaware River into tenths, affecting the mode of settlement for several generations thereafter. Later, two successful Quaker settlements were established along the eastern bank of the Delaware River in 1677. The first was at Burlington, the seat of West Jersey, settled by groups from London, in southeast England, and from Yorkshire in the English North Country (FIGS. 1 and 2). Burlington was settled on a rectilinear plan and was divided in half, with the London group of artisans and traders occupying one side and farmers from Yorkshire on the other (Wacker 1975: 288). The second settlement stretched from Burlington to present-day Trenton and was inhabited by yeomen from Yorkshire, who generally occupied 100–200 ac. tracts extending from the eastern bank of the Delaware River (Gall and Veit 2011). South of Burlington, Gloucester Point was established in 1689 with a market square. The radial pattern at Gloucester Point was similar to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

The province of East Jersey was largely inhabited by the English (Aquaquanock Tract,

Barbadoes Neck, Elizabethtown, Middletown, Newark, Piscataway, and Woodbridge), Scots (Perth Amboy), and Dutch (Tappan and Bergen) (FIG. 1). Initial English settlers were principally emigrants from eastern, southeastern, and southern England, who migrated to East

Jersey after two or three decades of settlement in northeastern New England and Long Island, New York. An exception was a group of English emigrants from Barbados, who settled Barbadoes Neck. The settlements of Aquackanock, Barbadoes Neck, Bergen, and



Figure 2. Map showing English county origins of initial East and West Jersey English settlers; after Fischer (1989: 32, 440). (Drawing by author, 2014; courtesy of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.)

Tappan were characterized by dispersed settlement, the latter in long rectangular lots similar to those of Dutch-settled areas. In East Jersey, nucleated towns and villages existed in Elizabethtown, Middletown, Newark, Piscataway, Woodbridge, and Shrewsbury, all of which were township corporations in which land and government was controlled by freeholders (Wacker 1975: 248–253). Carteret permitted freeholders control of the settlement pattern employed within the boundaries of these township corporations. English settlement in towns or corporations governed by town associates or freeholders commonly consisted of nucleated house lots within the towns (principal, initial clustered settlements) and villages (secondary, later clustered settlements). For defensive purposes, the East Jersey Proprietors instructed the settlers to surround their towns with large open tracts and meadows, possibly to provide a clear line of sight on unwanted intruders (Wacker 1975: 248, 251). The effort required for the preparation of open fields and meadows was also intended to satisfy the Proprietors' concerns about and desire for long term settlement. Soon after initial nucleated town settlement, villages formed as populations grew and out-migration from town centers took place.

Unlike corporate-association communities, the capital of East Jersey at Perth Amboy, formerly known as Amboy Point, was established and planned by the proprietors. Taken from the southeast corner of Woodbridge in 1683, the East Jersey proprietors envisioned the 900 ac. settlement at Perth Amboy as including an enormous defensive fort bounded to the north and west by square lots arranged along a street grid (FIG. 3). Planned as a defensive and commercial center, the proprietors populated the community with Scots. Construction of the planned fort never came to fruition. Instead, a gridded street system was employed, with small house lots plotted around a market square similar to early towns in West Jersey, as well as the Dutch "brinkdorp," a community defined by an open market surrounded by streets, in Bergen (Dunham 1766; United States Coast Survey 1836b; Trewartha 1946: 581–584; Hunter Research, Inc. 2012) (FIG. 4). Beyond the boundaries of the six referenced East Jersey township corporations, the proprietors typically granted prospective settlers large

rectangular or square lots fronting navigable rivers, providing settlers ease of travel along these watercourse highways. A similar pattern of proprietary land division along waterways also developed in West Jersey during the late 17th century (Gall and Veit 2011).

The townscape instituted in Woodbridge, as well as in the neighboring Piscataway settlement and Newark to the north, consisted of an amalgamated form of English and New England open- and enclosed-field systems (Gall 2009, 2011). All three settlements were founded by individuals who sought new opportunities for land accumulation, wished to escape religious persecution in New England, and desired the chance to establish religious communities of their own (Whitehead 1875: 52–53). Woodbridge was founded in 1666 by New England Congregationalists from Newbury and nearby towns, such as Haverhill, Andover, Yarmouth, Barnstable, and Salisbury, in Essex County, Massachusetts (Monette 1930: 83, 89; Mrozek 1971: 1). These settlers were later joined by Quakers, Anglicans, and Baptists (Barber and Howe 1847: 323). The New England immigrants first came to North America between the 1630s and 1650s from counties in south-central and southeastern England, including Oxfordshire, Hampshire, Berkshire, Suffolk, and Lincolnshire (Monette 1930: 82, 1931: 245–246; Greven 1970: 42, 44) (FIG. 2). They were generally comprised of the lower gentry and included a variety of tradesmen, husbandmen, and planters, who transposed and experimented with English vernacular townscapes in the New World (Hood 1996: 126); thus, an understanding of the vernacular townscapes in England is essential to explaining settlement-system experimentation that took place in New England and New Jersey.

English Field and Town Settlement Systems

During the early 17th century, traditional agrarian community settlement patterns in southern and southeastern England, such as Charlgrove and Lower Heyford in Oxfordshire (Hood 1996: 126), were based on medieval open-field plans with compact or nucleated towns (FIG. 5). Open fields developed in some areas of England between the 8th and 9th centuries A.D., the mid- to late Anglo-Saxon

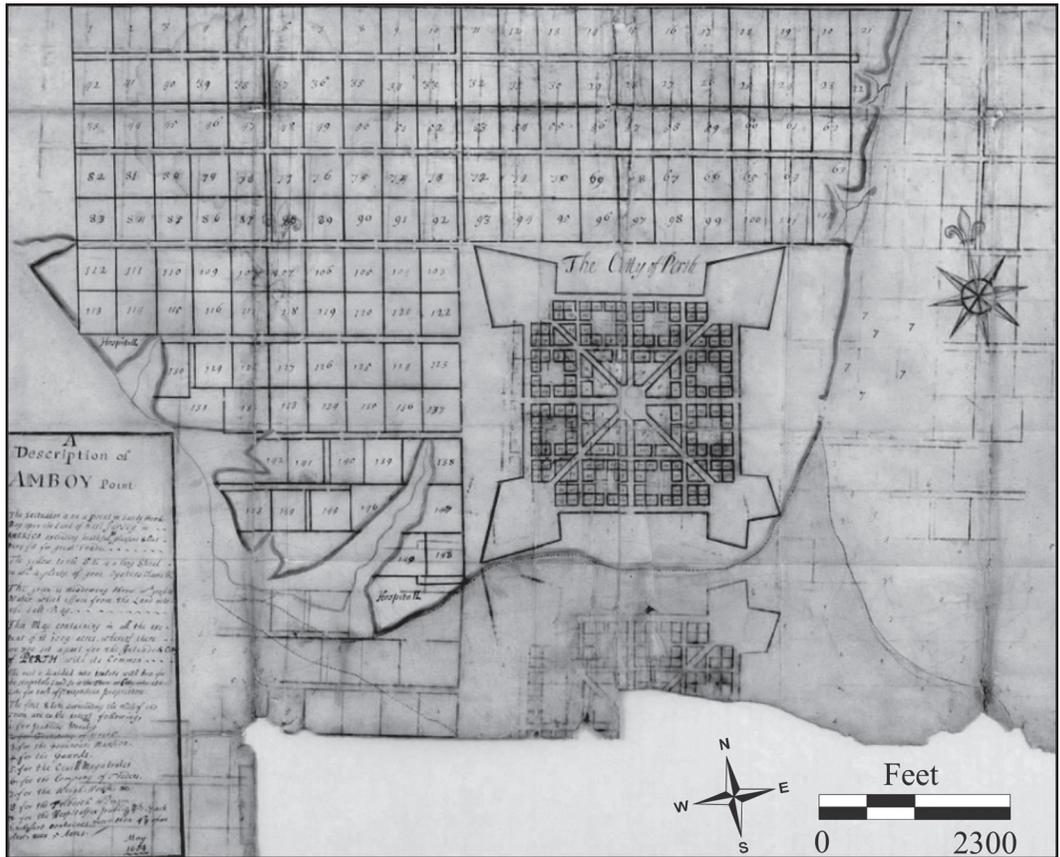


Figure 3. *A Description of Amboy Point* (Wells 1684).

period, and, as populations increased, were followed by nucleated village formation. In other areas, such as Kent, villages preceded open fields (Allerston 1970: 95–109; Higham 2010: 17; Oosthuizen 2010: 107–132). The vernacular open-field townscape pattern often consisted of tightly clustered house lots arranged along one or more highways, or concentrated in rectangular ranges. Common land shared and utilized by townsmen surrounded the nucleated settlements and was often administered by the manor. In a manorial system peasants are loaned land on one or more large estates in exchange for fixed dues, payable in goods, money, or services. Manors could consist of more than one estate owned by one or more lords. The lord was responsible for controlling, regulating, and administering land within the manor, along with military protection to the peasant population. Manors operated as self-contained organizations

under their own governing body within a larger kingdom. Each resident paid a yearly rent and was permitted to farm one or more noncontiguous, unfenced, narrow strips scattered throughout the town within the furlong boundaries of larger fields (FIG. 5). Furlong boundaries within larger fields contained numerous furrow strips farmed by several townsmen. The use of the open-field strips as pasture or arable land was rotated seasonally (Harvey 1984: 60–74). The crops grown and animals raised by townsmen were largely influenced by the manor. The need for arable land, which created pasture shortages, meant that fallow, open-field strips and upland or meadow common land were employed as pasture for inhabitants' livestock by a shepherd or herdsman (Higham 2010: 15). Commons were also situated in meadows and uplands for the production of hay, animal pasture, building timber, and fuel procurement.

The need for pasture and crop rotation on the unfenced shared strips eventually came to depend on a manorial system for land administration that lasted into the 17th century (Brookes 2010: 65–82). The open-field system was heavily reliant on manorial administration, the existence of stem family units (whereby the eldest son works a farm, stays with his family, and inherits his father's land), and the primogeniture inheritance system. In England, the system of primogeniture, memorialized in common law, prevailed until the late 17th century, though a form of partible inheritance known as *gravelkind* was used in the county of Kent much earlier (Homans 1937: 48–56; Pitkin 1961: 69; Alston and Schapiro 1984: 277).

The open-field system stood in stark contrast to the agriculturally productive and more economically efficient enclosed-field system, which generally consisted of large, fenced, single-family farmsteads or unoccupied farm tracts dispersed across the countryside. In this system, greater emphasis was placed on the family unit rather than the community, and individuals were granted greater freedom of

choice in the absence of manorialism (Greven 1970: 57). The nucleated town in both open and enclosed settlement systems was capable of supporting a variety of craft trade pursuits. By the early 17th century, enclosed-field systems began to gain popularity in England, particularly in southeastern England after the Protestant Reformation; however, many towns in southern England did not enclose their land until the late 18th century (Hopcroft 1997: 166–167). The trend toward field enclosure continued across the Atlantic. By the mid-17th century, New England towns increasingly adopted enclosed-field system townscapes. These townscapes used the noncontiguous, diversified-parcel arrangement characteristic of English nucleated town, open-field settlements. The hybridized settlement model was later transposed to East Jersey by New England immigrants, along with other religious and cultural elements.

A major influence on the change from open- to enclosed-field systems was an adjustment in family structure from stem to joint families, whereby all or most sons remained in the

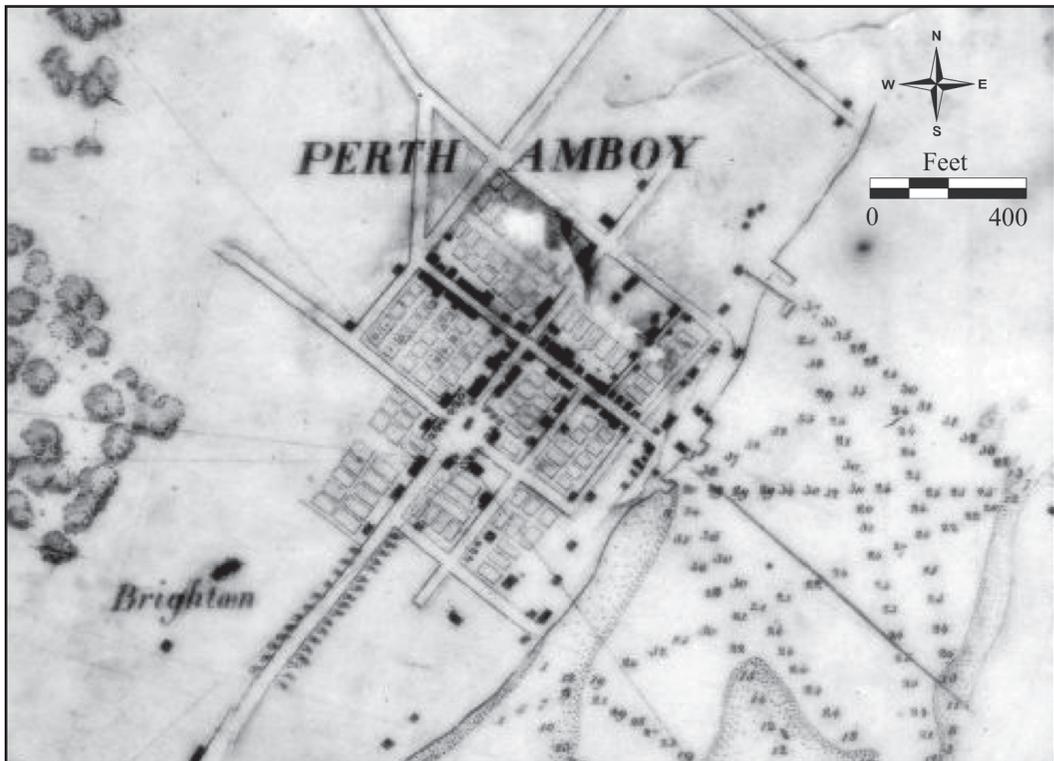


Figure 4. *Map of the Valley of the Rariton from Perth Amboy to New Brunswick* (United States Coast Survey 1836b).

New World in who divided the land permitted significant structural changes in land ownership and townscape development to take place.

New England Corporations, Towns, and Enclosed Field Systems

The colonial and physical environment in New England, as well as its removal from heavy-handed oversight in England, provided a landscape that facilitated the adoption and implementation of partible inheritance on a large scale, as well as land settlement experimentation (Warden 1978: 687). Absent from the English landscape, the development of township corporations in the New World served a purpose similar to English manorialism and allowed New Englanders to gather together in a civic and religious body politic. Town corporations were established throughout New England, a necessary endeavor in a perceived wilderness where town-making fell on the entrepreneurial shoulders of many financial backers turned settlers. Corporations were governed by and established to administer land to “freeholders,” “associates,” “inhabitants,” and “commoners,” as the shareholders were known. These individuals supplied the necessary cash, goods, materials, and networking skills required to establish and maintain town corporations. The shareholders were also instrumental in establishing religious institutions within their settlements. For their effort and financial investment, shareholders were given special rights. These new, experimental institutions are described by historian John Martin (1991: 249) as part borough, part joint-stock company, and part village, and offered opportunities for entrepreneurial land investments and demographic harmony among associates. The institutions encouraged settlement and the formation of additional corporations. Land became a currency among shareholders in a burgeoning capitalistic society, and an artifact with deep meaning antithetical to the democratic egalitarianism associates sought among themselves.

Freeholders were the administrative overseers of the corporation and guarded their membership role and the numbers from non-freeholders. Collectively, freeholders owned the rights to un-subdivided land held in common by the corporation. Associates could subdivide common land among themselves in partible ways by a majority vote. Land subdivided to associates was often referred to as “accommodation” or

“allotment” tracts, different from “gifts” or “grants;” all terms with significant meanings in the documentary record. Accommodations and allotments could be continuously subdivided from the common land among associates in relatively partible values and sizes until either no more common land existed or associates decided collectively that the land subdivision should cease. Associates could grant their land, but not association rights, to non-freeholders, “strangers,” “sojourners,” or “residents” (i.e., individuals who owned land, were not associates, and lacked voting and common land rights) to encourage settlement in the corporation. Associates could also collectively grant land for the benefit of the town’s commercial or economic needs, such as to a resident for erecting a mill in the town. In such cases, failure to meet the contractual obligation in a specified time resulted in the resident’s forfeiture of the land “grant” (Martin 1991: 229, 233). Associates were also permitted to provide land “gifts,” which typically went to ministers and public institutions. Small portions of common land were usually allocated for religious and municipal purposes, arable or pastoral needs, and educational pursuits. Associates collectively paid taxes on un-subdivided commons. For this reason, admission as an associate was restricted to those who had similar moral and religious beliefs, and those with the capital to back the corporation financially, creating a *de facto* hierarchical class-based society (Martin 1991: 186–216, 228). To limit burdens on the associates, financially risky individuals were not accepted as freeholders if they could not uphold their obligations. Associates controlled their numbers to preserve the value of their shares. Inclusion in this exclusive, privileged club was often denied, even to long-term residents and associates’ family members (Martin 1991: 193, 220).

In New England, corporations attempted to allocate relatively partible quantities of land to associates through a democratic voting process among shareholders, largely because productive land was in short supply. The nature of the New England landscape, particularly in Kent County, Massachusetts, necessitated allocation of diversified land types to each associate during common land subdivision to satisfy pastoral and agricultural husbandry practices. Meadowland was most desired given

its fertility and ability to support pastoral husbandry. Wooded upland accommodation lots provided timber resources, but required more effort to clear. Upland accommodation lots were less fertile and difficult to plow due to shallow bedrock deposits. To satisfy associates, each freeholder was given discontinuous shares of valuable floodplain land, a house lot, and upland wooded lot or farmland accommodations. These land shares would then be available for exchange between associates. The system incorporated elements of English nucleated, open-field settlement and land use models.

Division of land to town inhabitants allowed household heads to bequeath land in equal amounts to heirs in a manner that followed religious ideology regarding partible inheritance. It also permitted the establishment of manor-like estates that passed from one generation to the next through direct or entail bequests, forming a strong connection between a family's male lineage and a land parcel. Partible bequests not only provided settlers' heirs with an advantage as they entered adulthood, but, as Beranek (2012: 84) describes, also fulfilled moral and masculine responsibilities among fathers. Fathers could also grant heirs rights as shareholders in the corporation, but this ultimately required approval by vote among other freeholders, who seldom admitted new associates into their ranks. Lower numbers also allowed each freeholder to command a stronger vote in corporation decisions. In an effort to implement changes in inheritance and limit the continued use of primogeniture among the English, laws ensuring partible inheritance were enacted in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1641, and later in Woodbridge in 1729 (Woodbridge Board of Freeholders 1937). These fundamental changes, however, necessitated ownership of larger, enclosed land parcels that remained economically productive after a few generations of subdivision. This change directly influenced town development and settlement patterns in New England, and later in parts of New Jersey, where elements of both open- and enclosed-field systems were employed.

Initially, the vernacular open-field townscape plan was recreated in New England township corporations by many English settlers during the Great Migration (Garvan 1951: 42–61; Greven 1970: 42–43; Garrison 1991: 18–19).

Within two to three decades after settlement, opportunities to enact more egalitarian forms of testate and intestate inheritance helped prompt the abandonment of the open-field system in favor of enclosed-field settlement forms among freeholders and non-freeholders (Pitkin 1961: 67–69; Anderson 1985: 346–356; Hopcroft 1997: 158–181). The enclosed fields were individually owned, separate from and often noncontiguous to house lots, and enclosed with fences, hedgerows, or ditches. They were dispersed throughout the town in a manner similar to the open fields they replaced (FIG. 6). Many enclosed fields later developed into farmsteads. Opportunities to utilize enclosed fields included the absence of manorialism, the creation of township corporations, associates' desire to create their own family manors through inheritance, and the initial availability of vast tracts. Land availability satisfied the land needs of whole families who emigrated from Europe to New England (Breen and Foster 1973a: 194–196).

Families soon increased in size after settlement as new children were born, each necessitating their own landholding once they reached their majority. This shift resulted in marked New England settlement transformations between the 1640s and 1660s. During this period, partible inheritance laws were introduced. The laws required continuous town-commons subdivision, enabling associates to acquire more land that could be divided equally among heirs and remain profitable after subdivision. These heirs enclosed and settled many of the tracts they acquired (Haskins 1942: 1,281–1,282; Greven 1970: 43). As a result, town plans were increasingly characterized by enclosed tracts dispersed beyond the compact town and small areas of common land collectively used by associates. The new model effectively merged the most efficient and valued aspects of the open- and enclosed-field systems within the corporation model. In several cases, the initially created nucleated town lot plan remained intact, and through implementation of ecclesiastical and legislative bylaws aimed at non-freeholders, aided in the retention of control and order, social hierarchies, and religious cohesion within communities (Martin 1991: 229). The compact town form was an oft-replicated, functional, vernacular model with significant cultural meaning. It instilled important nostalgic

reminders of lifeways back in England, but satisfied the needs and desires of corporate associates in the New World (T. Lewis 1985: 10; Wood 1986: 54; Fischer 1989: 55).

Within the nucleated community, residents and inhabitants interacted with one another daily, in leisure, work, and at the town house, where religious and municipal meetings were held. Towns were often under the religious direction of one church body due to minimal travel distance required within a town to attend religious functions. Community members within nucleated towns thus developed strong social relations despite stratifications in the community among freeholders, non-freeholders, and tenants, as well as in the religious congregation. Compact town forms also provided a modicum of protection against internal and external dangers, both real and imagined. Closely spaced houses enabled surveillance among associates and of residents and tenants. Surveillance was particularly important for Puritans and other Separatist sects which

wanted to assemble and maintain an acceptable congregation and sought to rid their community of heretics, dissenters, the immoral, the poor, and even witches (Martin 1991: 230). Closely spaced houses were essential for defensive purposes as well. In Piscataway, New Jersey, for example, the ammunition magazine and militia-training ground occupied a meeting-house green surrounded and protected by clustered house lots (Gall 2009, 2011). The proximity of house lots to a central weapons depot allowed a rapid muster of town militiamen during times of distress. Nucleated town forms also helped stave off or at least retard the development of villages or separate settlements elsewhere in the corporate-township boundaries.

The desire for compact towns was met, in part, with growing resistance. Within decades after initial settlement, towns such as Salem, in Essex County, Massachusetts, witnessed a trend toward township subdivision. The subdivisions were largely the result of associates permitting “residents” and “inhabitants” to establish

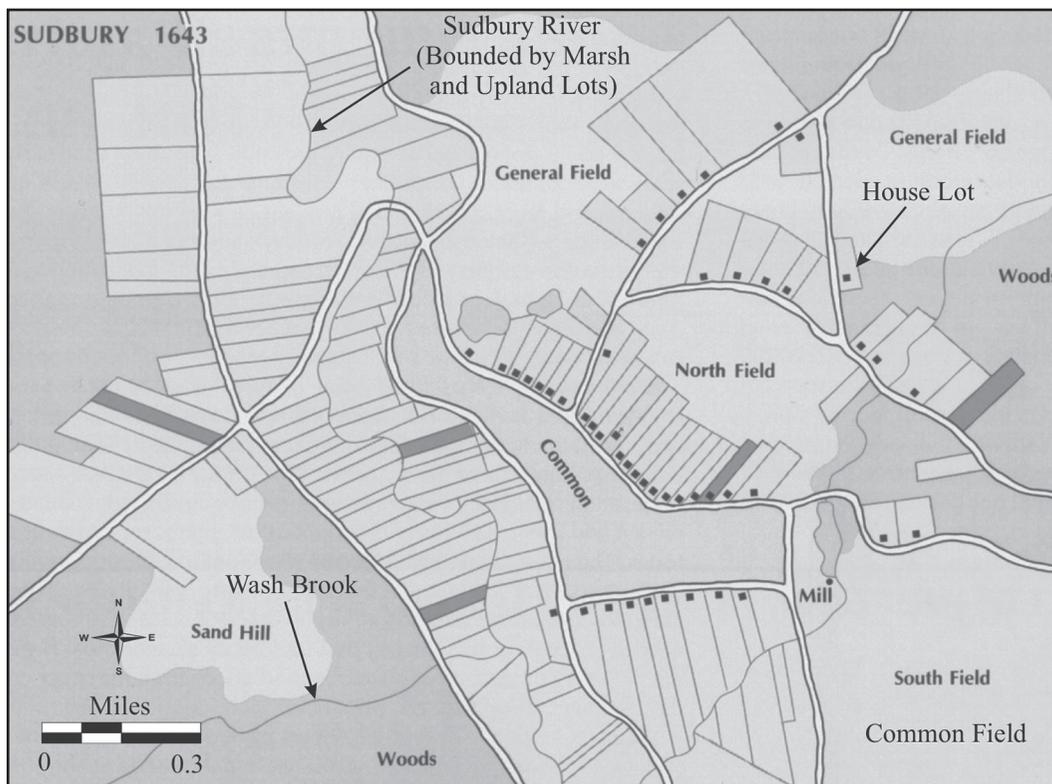


Figure 6. A map of landholdings in Sudbury, Massachusetts, ca. 1643; adapted from Tager and Wilkie (1991: 18). The five darkened lots represent one farmer’s landholdings.

homes on upland grant or accommodation tracts in the fields, farms, or plains outside the town core. Clustered house lots on a field, farm, or plain range often resulted in their subdivision as a village, necessitated in part by the distance between them and the town's social, religious, and political institutions. This distance reduced the effectiveness of surveillance. The subdivisions not only resulted in decentralization of religious institutions and town associates' power, but also in a reduction in resources important for a town's economic viability. In an effort to maintain the social and cultural dynamics of the compact community and retain resources intended to be divided equally among inhabitants, town associates limited settlement beyond specified radii from a town common, house, or meetinghouse, and refused to allow town subdivision (Boyer and Nissenbaum 1974). Associates also threatened to fine families who relocated beyond the town core (Greven 1970: 55). Other forms of local legislation were used to retain cultural and religious purity, and economic stability in the community, such as laws granting freeholders the ability to accept or refuse newcomers into their town (Mrozek 1972: 19). In New Jersey, as in New England, the ability to accept and expel provided town associates with a tool for population control, land management, and cultural cohesion during the massive land-grab movement of the 17th and 18th centuries. Regardless of the legislation passed, individuals with a voracious appetite for available land continued to settle enclosed fields within corporations. These settlements eventually developed into new villages with their own administrative and religious institutions; some even developed into new corporations.

Issues of land access and aims to preserve and promote masculine expectations among landholders with land bequests were satisfied through legislation. Laws were enacted to ensure a ready supply of land for the original corporate associates and their heirs, and to maintain the value of land shares. Each town associate was a shareholder or proprietor in the corporation, and had a right to or stake in common land during partible subdivision of the commons. Associates could sell or bequeath their land rights to heirs or non-family members. In this way, land and association membership were utilized for the creation of social identity and a social

hierarchy. In some corporations, voting rights were restricted to associates as well. Land was also used to promote masculine identity and ideals. Family-patriarch freeholders owned rights to common land, and the ability to subdivide one's land through partible inheritance enabled male landholders to fulfill concepts of masculine and religious responsibility toward their sons, daughters, and wives (Beranek 2012: 75–90). In many instances, estates and association rights were bequeathed entirely to widows, granting women equal rights to men in some respects. In a similar vein, land, goods, or monetary dowries provided to daughters maintained the masculine ideal, while reducing the effectiveness of patrilineal inheritance toward that ideal through the creation of new social hierarchies and extended families. Unfortunately, just a few generations after initial settlement, partible inheritance practices left most families with small, economically unproductive parcels, an unanticipated ramification that plagued New Jersey residents well into the late 18th century (Mrozek 1972: 1–19). This result is likely also tied to the repeated land riots of the mid-18th century in East Jersey, as individuals in places like Elizabethtown attempted to claim lands outside the original corporate settlements (McConville 1999; Weeks 2001: 261).

Inability to acquire enough land to enable equitable inheritance prompted many to seek new opportunities elsewhere. After roughly 20 years of occupation in Andover, Massachusetts, by 1662 most town associates, including two later Woodbridge associates, were given between 122 and 213 ac., consisting of a house lot, upland accommodations, and marshland allotments (Greven 1970: 58). Those of greater social standing, capital wealth, or community role often received more land, though generally still within accepted norms. Such individuals used their allotment as a land bank to bequeath to their heirs, solidifying social hierarchy among families (Greven 1970: 45). Low-acreage allotments for many in Essex County, Massachusetts, and the possibility of gaining much larger and more valuable landholdings through resettlement to ensure a family's future stability, was an important reason for immigration to New Jersey during the 1660s (Greven 1970: 64). The need to relocate was exacerbated by concerns over religious discrimination, as town associates sought

greater cultural homogeneity. Resettlement was highly desired by freeholders and non-freeholders alike. These individuals sought opportunities to invest as associates in new corporations and desired to remove to new locales, as dissatisfaction with local law bodies, religious institutions, and associates intensified (Lee 1912: 216; Monnette 1930: 6, 9–77). Others simply sought land as a capitalistic venture, but elected to remain in New England or return after short stints elsewhere. This was certainly the case with Daniel Pierce, Sr., who founded Woodbridge. After a brief four-year stay in New Jersey to acquire and sell land, particularly for the benefit of his heirs, as well as to survey and establish the community, Pierce returned to his New England home with the benefits of a new corporation associate (Whitehead 1875: 48). There he died in 1678, but left behind a family legacy in land, both in Woodbridge and Newbury (Beaudry 1995: 19–50; Mascia 1996: 156–159).

Land System Transfer and Modification: Woodbridge Settlement

By the mid-1660s, New Englanders had begun a process of land settlement in Woodbridge after Lord John Berkeley and Sir George Carteret gained control of New Jersey and published *Concessions and Agreements (to and with all and every the Adventurers and all such as shall Settle or Plant there)* in New England in 1666 (Wacker 1975: 256). The *Concessions and Agreements* was a liberal document devised to entice English subjects from Long Island and New England to resettle in New Jersey. Settlers from both areas soon received word of the document, and some flocked to the colony for myriad reasons (Leonard 1898: 38). By May 1666, John Pike, Andrew Tappan, and Daniel Pierce, Sr., purchased the area encompassing Woodbridge to start a town or corporation. Their intent was to satisfy the arrival of recognized associates from Newbury and the nearby towns of Salisbury, Haverhill, Yarmouth, Andover, and Barnstable, in Essex County, Massachusetts (Monnette 1931: 243–247; Pomfret 1964: 10).

Pike, Tappan, and Pierce named their corporation Woodbridge after the Reverend John Woodbridge of Newbury. Woodbridge, and his mentor, Reverend Thomas Parker, both with Presbyterian leanings, were embroiled

in a long debate with Congregationalists in Newbury about the nature of church government and practice (Coffin 1855: 6; Currier 1902: 316). Parker and Woodbridge advocated liberal views toward church membership and strove to educate congregation members in a democratic manner (Toppan 1885: 11; Currier 1902: 313). Woodbridge also strongly advocated for the education of women (Ezell 1999). Pierce, and likely his associates, supported the views heralded by both ministers. For his merits, the new township was named in his honor, though Woodbridge never removed from Newbury to settle in New Jersey. In naming the town after their minister, the founders likely attempted to advertise the religious leanings of their community and the types of likeminded individuals whom they would accept into the corporation.

On 1 June 1666, the Woodbridge founders negotiated a town charter with Carteret and Berkeley with articles outlining the terms of settlement. The charter recognized the settlement as a “township or corporation,” with distinct language addressed to “freeholders and inhabitants.” Clearly, it was understood in the charter that Woodbridge would be established as a corporation like those in New England, and have a similar social hierarchy. The first article granted liberty to the associates to settle one or two towns of 40 to 100 families each before November 1666, and gave the town inhabitants the right to their own town plan. The second article stated that a charter would be granted to the inhabitants of each town, enabling them to elect their own governing body and minister, hold their own courts, and nominate military officers and justices of the peace to be approved by the governor. It also granted inhabitants liberty of religious conscience which enticed emigrants from religiously conservative areas in New England to resettle in New Jersey. Freeholders had the power to admit individuals as inhabitants through a majority vote. Another article permitted the allowance of 200 ac. for the ministry and land for the construction of a church, churchyard, and other town uses. The corporation also was granted free trade without the imposition of tax customs. With the agreement in place, Pierce capitalized on the first article and subdivided his share to form two towns or companies. In late 1666,

Pierce sold 40,000 ac. on the west side of Woodbridge to four New England Baptists from the Puritan-dominated Piscataqua River area near the present-day Maine and New Hampshire border (New Jersey State Archives 1666; Scot 1846: 277; Lee 1912: 216). These settlers wished to escape the religious intolerance and astringent nature of court justice that characterized the northern section of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Lee 1912: 216; Monnet 1930: 69–77). Some of the settlers were Baptists and welcomed the opportunity to start anew (Barber and Howe 1847: 323). Others were simply entrepreneur land investors and sought association rights in multiple East New Jersey township corporations. The 40,000 ac. tract became Piscataway, named in honor of the settlers' New England home.

By 1669, the Woodbridge associates began a system of enclosed-field land subdivision to prospective freeholders. In a process to create a culturally and morally homogeneous community, the character of other prospective associates was vetted before acceptance into the corporation (Mrozek 1971; Breen and Foster 1973b: 10–13). The vetting process required the character of newcomers to be vouched for by members from their previous hometown or by individuals with whom they were acquainted in Woodbridge. Likewise, in the nearby community of Newark, composed of Puritans from the New Haven Colony, only those associated with specified religious institutions could be admitted into the corporation as freemen or free burgesses (Whitehead 1875: 52–53). Efforts in Woodbridge were later made in 1692 to prohibit the poor from gaining freeholder status and placing a lingering economic burden on the town and the other associates (Mrozek 1971: 11). Thus, the freeholders' role in land administration was employed to instill religious, cultural, and economic order.

Through a close examination of deeds, wills, town records, and historical cartographic data—artifacts impressed with deep cultural meanings—an attempt has been made to understand the original Woodbridge town layout, 1669–1676 (FIGS. 7 and 8). This period marked the initial division of land among the first settlers. The plotted lots also provide a glimpse into the settlement plan town associates initially desired. The documents examined were used to construct a map depicting the

approximate locations and orientations of several house lots, upland accommodations, highways, meetinghouse and pasture commons, and marsh or meadow allotments in the town. The mapped data indicate that town associates created a nucleated settlement by positioning elongated house lots in ranges adjacent to valuable meadowland east and west of Woodbridge Creek (formerly known as Papiack Creek) and adjacent to highways. Sluggish, navigable waterways with broad marshland and floodplains were key environmental features sought by the New England immigrants, and mimicked the types of land desired in their New England communities. These environmental features also enabled an easy transition to their New Jersey homes and transposition of settlement types indicative of their New England towns.

Of the initial 70 associates allotted land in Woodbridge between 1669 and 1676, the house lots for 42 freeholders could be roughly plotted based on metes and bound descriptions in the deeds, such as river confluences, highways, town boundaries, and town greens. The location of an additional five house lots could not be mapped, but deed information indicates they were located south of a meetinghouse green, represented by an oval in Figure 8. Some, but not all, large upland accommodation lots ($n=36$) and marsh or meadow lots ($n=9$) were also roughly mapped; however, less accurate data on location and parcel shape is listed in deeds for most of these parcel types, particularly meadow lots. Further, meadow lots along the Raritan River in the southwestern portion of the town and the Rahway River in the northeastern portion of the town were not mapped, even though these areas were divided into large meadow parcels by town associates. Lots later reserved for the East Jersey proprietors and Deputy Governor Thomas Rudyard were allocated during the 1680s and 1690s. Rudyard received a 170 ac. amorphously shaped lot in an ideal location overlooking the Arthur Kill and Woodbridge Creek, opposite the creek from Surveyor General Robert Vauquellin's house lot. John French, a brick maker, was allotted a small 15 ac. house lot adjacent to Vauquellin and Woodbridge Creek to provide both the surveyor general and other associates with brick for the construction of their homes. It remains

unclear, however, to what extent individuals actually resided on the parcels they owned. Perth Amboy was sited in the most ideal spot in the township, at the confluence of the Raritan River and Arthur Kill.

A large, ovoid, steeply sloped, community sheep pasture of approximately 97 ac., known as Strawberry Hill, marked the southern portion of the town core west of Woodbridge Creek. The pasture was bounded to the north and west by several house lots. Its size and allocation as a sheep pasture likely reflects the propensity

for animal husbandry, sheep herding, and wool production among the initial settlers. It is possible the Woodbridge associates sought to concentrate in the development of a wool-based industry, the products of which could be sold domestically or traded overseas. It is unclear whether the market plan was long lived, but the site of the town at the confluence of two major watercourses at the head of Raritan Bay would have granted merchant-vessel access to the community. Alternatively, the terrain at Strawberry Hill may have been viewed

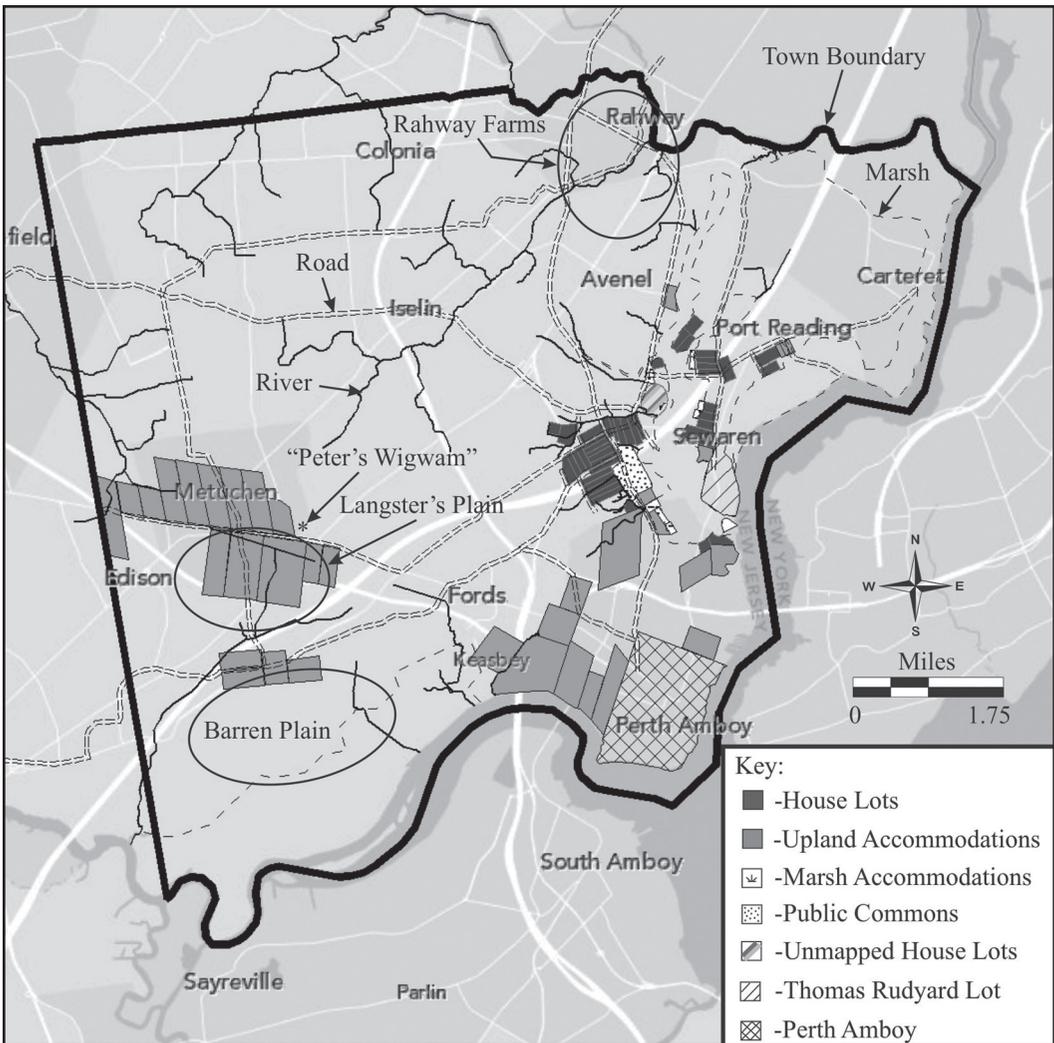


Figure 7. Map showing approximate locations of house lots, meadow lots, and upland accommodations allotted to the initial settlers between 1669 and 1676. This map also shows Meetinghouse and Sheep Pasture commons, and land allocated to Perth Amboy and East Jersey deputy governor Thomas Rudyard. Note: some parcels could not be plotted. (Drawing by author, 2014; courtesy of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.)

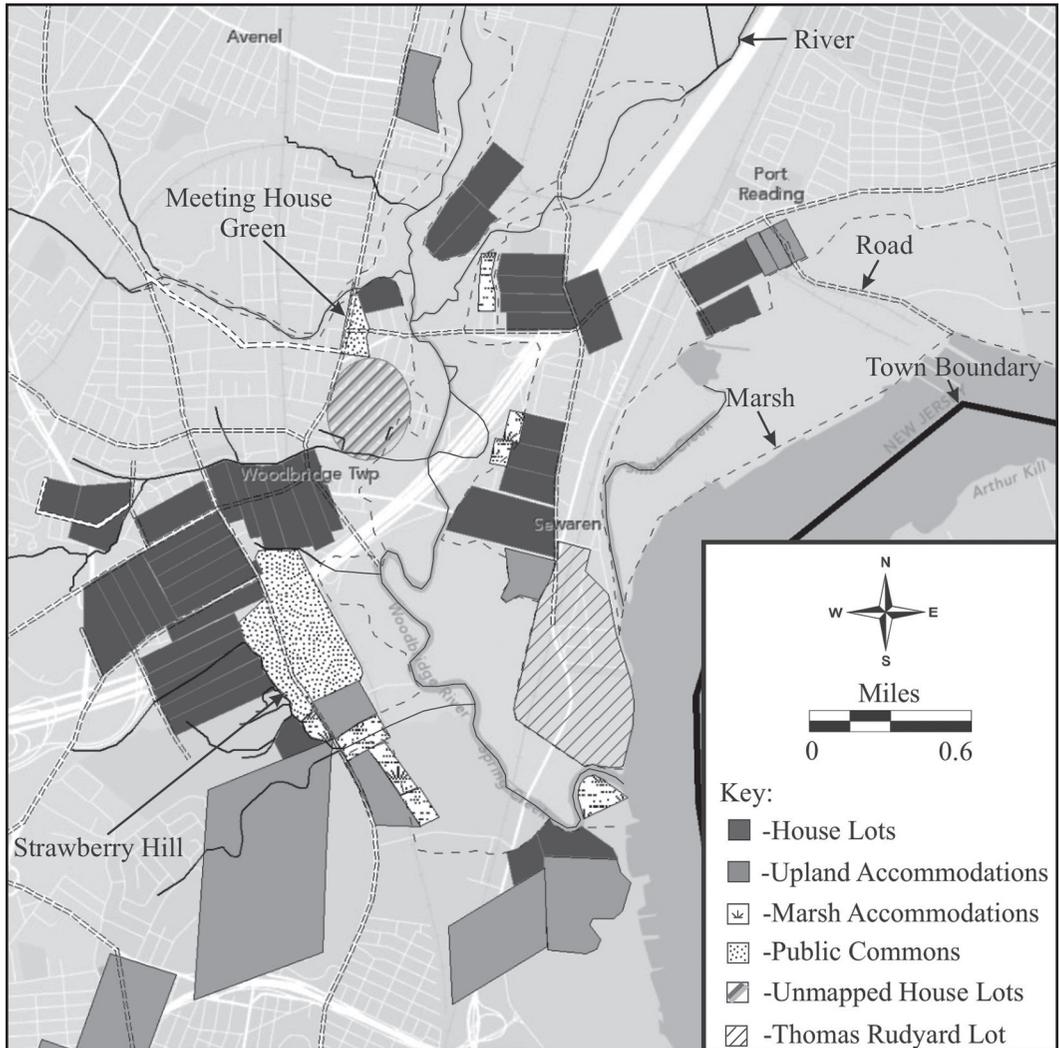


Figure 8. Detail map of approximate house lot locations given to some of the initial settlers between 1669 and 1676. This map also shows the Meetinghouse and Sheep Pasture commons, and land allocated to East Jersey deputy governor Thomas Rudyard. Note: some parcels could not be plotted. (Drawing by author, 2014; courtesy of the Archaeological Society of New Jersey.)

as inappropriate for house-lot development or agricultural use and, instead, was relegated to sheep pasture. In a similar vein of commonland use for community husbandry, in 1707 several commons were converted into open fields to be planted with grain crops by town associates (Woodbridge Board of Freeholders 1937). The use of common land for pastoral and agrarian husbandry indicates that elements of the open-field settlement mentioned above were not abandoned wholesale within the enclosed-field town. Similar patterns of collective

land use are currently being revitalized in the United States through the implementation of community gardens. Beyond husbandry activities, religious and civic functions took place on the meetinghouse green just north of the town lots. A large parcel was also dedicated for the construction of a free school (Mrozek 1971: 2). The free-school land allotment mirrored Parker and Woodbridge's views on educating the congregation, the financial burden for which was collectively placed on the associates, similar to present-day public schools (Toppan

1885: 11; Jackson 1909: 84–85). It is unclear whether admission to the free school was restricted to associates' children, or if it was also open to children of "residents."

In the first division of Woodbridge town land between 1669 and 1676, the original 70 associates were given between 15 and 512 ac. Initially, individuals were allotted land based on household size, including servants, but the acreage per head was not recorded. This practice quickly ended in the summer of 1669. It is unclear whether the initial tracts were allotted based on a lottery whereby individuals whose names were pulled chose their lots from designated available tracts, or individuals pulled numbers associated with available tracts. Certainly the latter was true during the 18th-century division of the commons. The quitrent tax due to the proprietors for common land that remained undivided after 1669 was paid collectively by township freeholders, a burden they would bear until all common lands were subdivided in the mid-18th century. In addition, associates and residents alike paid specified quitrent amounts to proprietors for each acre owned.

Three individuals received fewer than 88 ac. during the first land division, and the average person was given 128 ac. This land was in addition to 240 ac. promised to the initial nine settlers. Eight subsequent divisions of common land by Woodbridge associates between 1700 and 1758 resulted in more than 103 additional acres granted to each eligible associate, greatly increasing the quantity of land held by families (Dally 1873: 147–149; Wacker 1975: 260). Thus, in the first year of settlement, Woodbridge associates obtained more land than many New Englanders received in over 20 years of settlement in towns like Andover, Massachusetts (Greven 1970: 58). The additional land gave families a greater ability to establish manor-like homestead estates, subdivide economically productive tracts, and distribute them to the first generation of heirs.

Map and document data indicate that upon arrival, each townsman received a 10–20 ac. rectangular house lot in the town, and three to four discontinuous accommodations consisting of small meadow lots and larger upland tracts. The latter generally contained between 60 ac. and 120 ac. each. Regardless of one's trade, house-lot sizes were sufficient to establish sizeable gardens and small farms

until the larger upland accommodations could be cleared a generation or two later. The town lots were clustered in ranges, separated by highways, east and west of Woodbridge Creek. At least two additional house lots and one large farm tract were situated at Rahway Farms at the northern end of Woodbridge, along the south side of the Rahway River (FIG. 7). The reason for the small cluster of house lots at Rahway Farms, 2.5 mi. north of the meetinghouse green, may have been to support the construction of a mill. By 1766, the nucleated settlement along Woodbridge Creek stretched to Rahway Farms, which contained two mills by that time (Dunham 1766).

Property lots owned by individuals were noncontiguous, similar to earlier English open-field, nucleated villages. The distribution of an individual's parcels across the landscape prevented the initial establishment of enclosed farmsteads in favor of distinct divisions between clustered house lots and more distant wooded and farm accommodation lots. Those with high social standing, such as town cofounder Captain John Pike, from Newbury, Massachusetts, and Carteret's surveyor general Robert Vauquellin, from Caen, France, were among the few who owned house lots with contiguous upland accommodations (New Jersey State Archives 1669b, 1669c). With these exceptions, town associates enacted a restriction in October 1669 prohibiting individuals from taking up large quantities of land within 1 mi. of the meetinghouse green, Stephen Kent's house (the westernmost house lot in the town), and Strawberry Hill (Dally 1873: 40). The result concentrated residential development within the defined town core, which had lasting effects on town development well into the mid-19th century (United States Coast Survey 1836a, 1844–1845; Dunham 1766) (FIG. 9). By concentrating the population and restricting the distance from one's home to the meetinghouse, town associates also secured surveillance capabilities, their own authority, and the authority of their desired religious institutions.

The upland accommodation tracts initially were intended for use as wood lots, grazing pasture, and agricultural land. These tracts were placed in clustered ranges to the north, south, and west, beyond the nucleated town core. These ranges were known by several different plain or farm names (e.g., Chestnut Plain,

Rahway Farms, Langster's Farm or Plain, and Barren Plain). The terms farm or plain had a cultural meaning for the settlers and likely connoted land intended for individually owned farm enclosures rather than open fields, which would have been termed "fields," as in England (Powell 1963: 24). Parcels in the eastern side of Langster's Plain reference "Peter's Wigwam," suggesting earlier, possibly Dutch, settlement prior to English capture of New Netherland, or alternatively, a Contact period Native American occupation (New Jersey State Archives 1669a). Subsequent occupation of the farm ranges decades after initial English settlement resulted in their subdivision from the main town into new villages. In the case of Rahway Farms, the new settlement became known as Rahway Village. By the early 18th century, increased settlement on Langster's Plain required the construction of its own meetinghouse, resulting in the creation of a congregation on the plain separate from that in Woodbridge in 1756. The construction of the meetinghouse and its associated community led to the creation of the Metuchen village. A similar pattern took place in other East Jersey township corporations. The pattern of land allocation and the location of different land-accommodation types employed by Woodbridge associates mimicked patterns established in New England that harkened to the patterned arrangement of nucleated towns and meadow lots surrounded by open-field tracts in England.

The intended method of settlement restriction proved problematic, and by 1669 town associates engaged in a practice of land exchanges with one another to consolidate dispersed tracts into single larger holdings, enabling greater agricultural productivity (Shotwell 1865; Mrozek 1971: 10). In town, consolidated house lots may have served as a status symbol, visually and literally setting some larger property holders apart from those portions along the highways containing clustered homes. The practice of land exchanges increased during the 1680s and 1690s, allowing some individuals, such as Samuel Moore, to acquire larger contiguous tracts (Shotwell 1865). Regardless, town associates recognized the importance of relatively egalitarian land division among themselves. Each freeholder received a diversified portfolio of land types upon settlement to satisfy different land-use requirements reminiscent of the open-

field allotment system. Town founders generally received greater accommodation acreage in acknowledgment of their financial outlay, as well as to keep such founders, integral to the town's success, within the corporation (Martin 1991). With land swaps increasing, the associates attempted to thwart large landholding families from dominating the landscape and the association. As mentioned, all recognized associates had rights to equal shares of the town commons when subdivided. To restrict massive land accumulation, town associates barred the sons of wealthy landholders from claims to such land when admitted as freeholders. The argument made was that wealthy landholders owned more than enough land to devise to their heirs. The legislation passed was intended to promote partible inheritance among the wealthy and preserve common land for equitable distribution to small and moderate landholding associates and their heirs. To ensure that freeholders and their heirs received sufficient quantities of land associates ordered on 1 June 1669 that, "[n]o Man may Expect to have any Land within the bounds of this Town for their Servants Heads, Nor their Servants to Expect any after the Expiration of their terms of Service" (Mrozek 1971: 2). The legislation was intended to create a democratic, self-preserving element of partible control and power among associates, even if they commanded higher social status in the community hierarchy relative to "residents" and tenants. The legislation also aimed to prevent land monopolization by freeholders with numerous servants and to control population growth.

A close examination of wills associated with the early settlers in Woodbridge reveals noteworthy patterns of inheritance that followed religious customs and New England inheritance practices. The wills of 19 initial Woodbridge associates have survived in New Jersey (New Jersey State Archives 1673, 1679, 1683, 1684a, 1684b, 1687a, 1687b, 1688a, 1688b, 1692, 1702, 1706, 1707, 1709, 1711a, 1711b, 1714, 1716; Shotwell 1865: 29-30). None of the recorded wills followed the English inheritance custom of primogeniture, indicating a divergence from old English customs in that respect. Eleven of those who died testate recorded wills that contain overtly religious language, referencing the "Almighty God," "Christian People," "Earthly Tabernacle," "Temporal

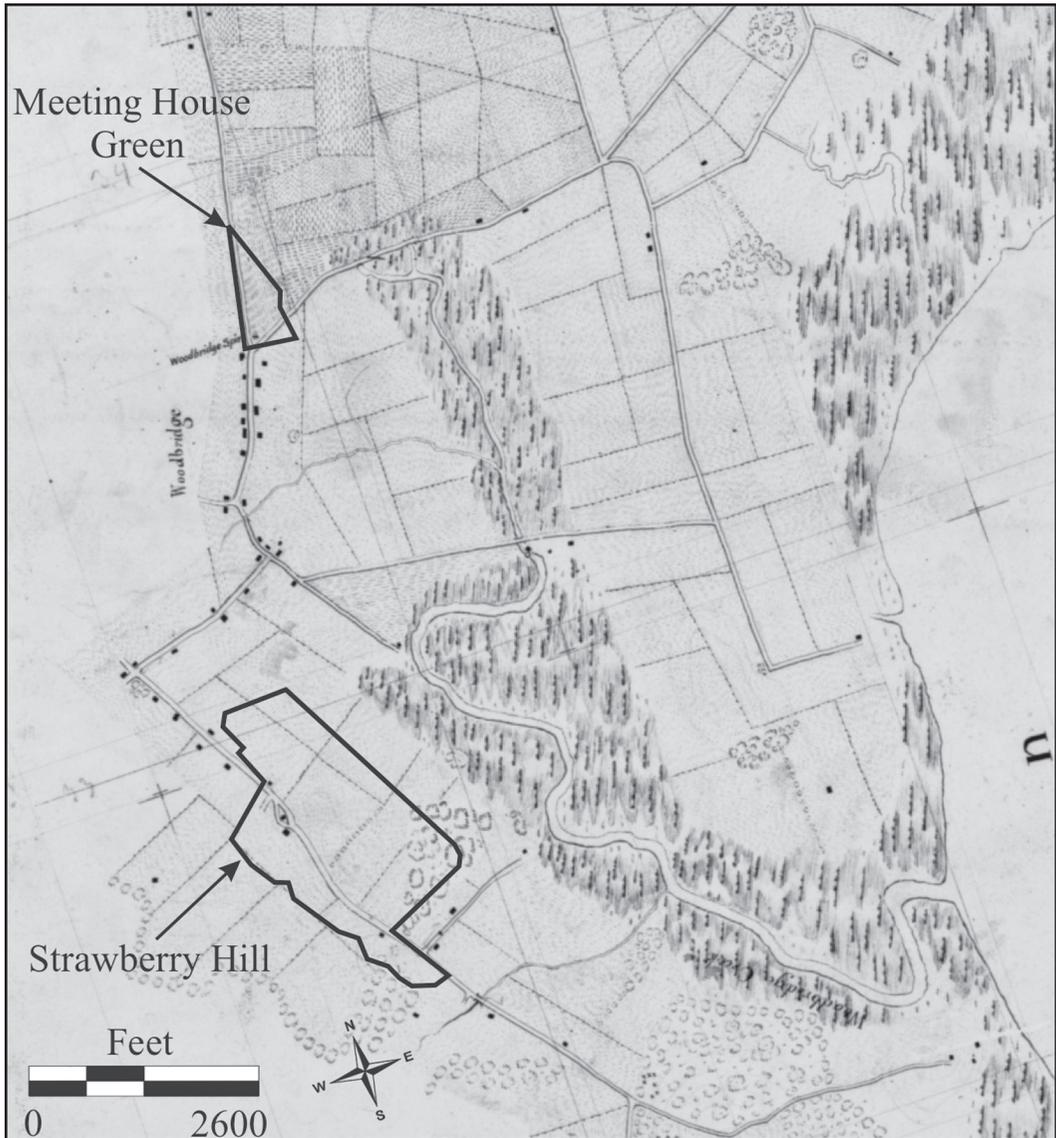


Figure 9. From *Perth Amboy to Elizabethtown, New Jersey* (United States Coast Survey 1836a).

Estate," "Day of Judgment," "Saints," "Second Coming of Christ my Savior that Lamb of God," and "My Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier" (New Jersey State Archives 1683, 1684a, 1687a, 1687b, 1688a, 1709, 1711a, 1711b, 1716; Shotwell 1865: 29–40). All but four of the recorded wills devised land and/or goods in a partible manner from the testator to heirs. The four exceptions are wills associated with John Martin, Samuel Hale, Israel Thornell, and Robert Vauquellin (New Jersey State Archives

1673, 1687b, 1688b, 1709). Martin gave his estate to his wife and indicated that his sons were to receive nothing, possibly because he had already given them land (New Jersey State Archives 1687b). Thornell and Vauquellin also bequeathed estates to their wives, likely because they had no surviving heirs (New Jersey State Archives 1673, 1688b). Possibly for similar reasons, Samuel Hale bequeathed his estate to his son-in-law (New Jersey State Archives 1709). Additionally,

Thomas Bloomfield, Sr.'s will devised his estate to a long chain of unborn generations of future male heirs through a complicated process of entail to keep land within the family and associated with the Bloomfield surname (New Jersey State Archives 1684a). Bloomfield's will appears to be an attempt to create a manor for the family. Daughters referenced in wills typically received monetary allotments. Bequests to wives ranged from goods and temporary living quarters to partial or whole estates. For a revealing example of the influence of religious ideology on land settlement and inheritance practices, one may look to John Bishop, Sr.'s 1684 will (New Jersey State Archives 1684b). Bishop divided his land equally among his three sons. His three daughters each received cash. Bishop's grandson was given land in Newbury, Massachusetts, that was to be used to provide the grandchild an education in art and science in preparation for his service in the ministry. Clearly Bishop viewed landholding as an investment, and that land sales or leases could be utilized to fund religious educational endeavors.

The popularity of partible inheritance practiced in Woodbridge was not restricted to that community. In his in-depth study of New Jersey wills issued between 1751 and 1770, historian Donald Mrozek (1972: 4–5) found that 68.8% of 2,857 wills utilized partible inheritance. When those who bequeathed their entire estates directly to wives were excluded, the percentage jumped to 91.6%. Mrozek argues that this practice had a significant impact on land availability by the late 18th century, greatly reduced the number of economically productive agricultural tracts, and forced New Jersey residents to seek land elsewhere. The trend continued into the mid-19th century, resulting in a migration west for those seeking new land and new opportunities.

Today, the nucleated town of Woodbridge contains dense 20th-century commercial and residential development. While most of the commons have been developed, save for the meetinghouse green, an examination of the street system reveals that several of the highways installed during the 1660s and 1670s are extant. Twentieth-century streets currently outline several of the initial settlers' former house lots, creating an inconspicuous reminder of the original nucleated community on the

present landscape. Several early structures also exist in the town, including the brick house, just east of the original meetinghouse green, once owned by Jonathan Dunham. There, archaeological testing in the form of shovel test pits and excavation units encountered archaeological evidence consistent with a late 17th- or very early 18th-century occupation (Richard Veit 2014, pers. comm.) Understanding early settlement patterns undoubtedly aids in creating a context and research design for locating other archaeological resources associated with the early aspects of the settlement. Just east of Dunham's house, Hunter Research, Inc. (2005) recorded extant structural elements associated with his mill on Woodbridge Creek. Additionally, this author conducted archaeological investigations on the extant, neighboring Piscataway meetinghouse green, where the archaeological remains of a jail, ammunition magazine, stocks, and meetinghouse have the potential to survive intact below thick deposits of landscaping fill (Gall 2009). The identification of Old World and New England settlement patterns in the state strongly suggests other cultural patterns were likely transferred through resettlement, such as foodways, consumer behavior, taskscape use, and architectural forms (TAB. 1). Further, this study indicates that archaeologists should look to the early settlers' towns of origin to provide guidance for future archaeological research in and interpretation of 17th-century settlements.

The implications of this townscape study are both dynamic and far reaching. By examining land and associated settlement documents as artifacts with deeply imbued cultural meanings, this case study evinces the ways in which land can be examined as a cultural and social marker within a local, regional, and global context. Land reveals important cultural information about gender, identity, class, power struggles, religion, inheritance, settlement systems, and the economy, as well as changes over time. Examining land as an artifact provides insight into the extent of settlement-system transfer and experimentation that takes place through migration. This townscape study also sheds crucial light on East Jersey's strong cultural connections with New England and Old World cultural ideologies. The use of land to satisfy certain cultural expectations particular to New England immigrants suggests that

other forms of material culture transfer are likely to be archaeologically unearthed in New Jersey. Such evidence may be identified in New England–style settlements or at sites occupied by New England immigrants. One example is the archaeological identification of a New England–style post-in-ground, central-hearth dwelling in Hunterdon County, New Jersey, erected by mid-18th-century New England emigrants from Long Island, New York (Gall, Hayden, and Raes 2010). Other examples may include feature and artifact-disposal patterning, consumer behavior, animal use and diet, and other cultural markers. This study also implies that land use in other portions of the state, and beyond, can contain rich archaeological information essential for interpreting the cultural transfer of ideas from the Old World to America, and among American colonies.

Conclusions

By gaining insight into the vernacular cultural traditions practiced by English immigrants to the New World, one gains insight to the ways in which those traditions manifested in the formation of diverse cultural identities across the New Jersey landscape. Even among the English, different regional, cultural, and religious traditions were practiced and transferred across the Atlantic. Through land manipulation, the settlers were determined to develop a cultural and social identity in the New World. This manipulation was steeped in Old World cultural traditions, New World land-settlement experimentation, desire for land, religious ideology, and changing views of family structure and inheritance. The open wilderness in New England created an impetus for land experimentation through the creation of township corporations that utilized an amalgamated form of open- and enclosed-field systems. The field systems were used as a way to divide noncontiguous house lots and accommodation lots among corporate associates fairly, so that each received relatively equal shares of productive, economically valuable, environmentally diverse land allotments. The settlement system also incorporated inheritance practices that embodied the religious ideological paradigms associated with the members of Separatist religious sects who occupied the township corporations.

This settlement model aided in the creation of a new English cultural identity in the Northeast. The marked settlement changes and land-use requirements that developed in New England were transferred to the province of East Jersey through a process of resettlement and entrepreneurial land investment. The newly formed “American” identities were further transformed through contact with and marriage between other ethnic groups, such as the Dutch, Finns, and Swedes, who also established settlements in the colony during the 17th century.

Through this townscape case study, this work details the cultural continuities between New England and 17th-century township corporations in East Jersey. In a similar vein, examination of townscape elements in Woodbridge sheds light on the transfer and abandonment of English customs by Old World immigrants. Cultural continuities between England, New England, and Woodbridge are apparent in aspects of religion, family structure, and settlement models. These continuities may be compared to other 17th-century settlements in the state, such as Quaker communities in West Jersey, German communities in the northwestern portion of the state, and Dutch settlements like Bergen in the northeast. By examining land-use patterning and making comparisons with known pattern types associated with well-documented ethnic groups or social classes, one may gain a richer understanding of a planned settlement system’s diverse cultural uses and influences. This comparison and archaeological evaluation can be done even if the townscapes studied lack an historical record as rich as that of Woodbridge, but other archaeological data may be required to bridge gaps in the historical documents. Analysis of the Woodbridge settlement indicates that the adopted townscape model was heavily influenced by a variety of elements. The most notable elements include desires for land accumulation, wealth, and power; inheritance customs; religious ideology; family structure; aims to create cultural cohesion; and promotion and maintenance of commercial and agricultural systems. By examining the meaning and function associated with vernacular landscapes on a broad scale, one arrives at a more dynamic understanding of the lives of the state’s 17th-century inhabitants. Information obtained by townscape studies such as this can be used to

better inform archaeological interpretations of individual sites within a community and to create a stronger link between those sites and the broader regions in which they are contained (Kolb and Snead 1997: 612; K. Lewis 1999: 3–13).

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