

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL LOT

The "School lot" is whittled down from the 70 acres granted to John Dickinson of Hatfield, as part of a complex and lengthy land deal to fix mistakes in surveys and land grants called the "Hatfield Equivalency" to compensate the original, short-changed, inhabitants of Hatfield. The deal was probably struck in 1672, finished in 1744, and the land was surveyed and parceled out in 1763, after a road was cut to get here from the Connecticut River. Dickinson sold to Plainfield settler Simon Burroughs on October 21, 1776, for 28 Pounds (Book 15 page 528). On June 23, 1793, Burroughs sold a little over 8 Acres to Plainfield's first and then new minister, Moses Hallock, for "twenty four Pounds, fifteen Shillings, and Nine Pence current Money of the Commonwealth" (Book 11 page 10). Hallock founded a classical school, Plainfield Academy, which was attended by John Brown in 1816. On May 26, 1840, Moses' son Levitt sold the Hallock homestead to Sarah Mack (77/443), who had to sell the corner store after her husband John died young. In 1860, Mack, having moved to Delaware, sold the place to blacksmiths James and Edward Spearman for \$650 (459/436), whose estate sold it in 1893 to Daniel Gould for \$400 (459/487). On the 1894 deed conveying it to Frank Holden it was "known as the Spearman place" (466/393). Finally, Clara Hudson gave it to the town to create a permanent school. The Hallock Memorial School today contains the Public Library and the Town Offices.

WARRANTY DEED

On May 29, 1925, Clara E. Hudson of Plainfield, in a WARRANTY DEED recorded in Book 823, page 372, at the Hampshire Registry of Deeds in Northampton, conveyed to the Town of Plainfield, for "one dollar and other good and valuable consideration" a "certain parcel of land" described as follows:

Beginning at the end of a stone wall in or near the north line of Main Street, said wall being the dividing line between the property conveyed and land of Everett Jackson, thence Northerly about twenty two and one half rods in the line of said wall to land of E. F. Hamlin, thence Easterly about seventeen and three fourth rods in said Hamlin's line to an iron pin, thence Southerly about twenty two and three fourth rods to an iron pin in the north line of Main Street, thence Westerly about sixteen and three fourth rods in the north line of Main Street to the place of beginning. Said premises are conveyed to said Town to be used for Educational purposes and a play ground. The above described property is a part of and contains the site of the homestead of the Rev. Moses Hallock To have and to hold . . . and to their own use and behoof forever."

The deed was witnessed by Nelson B. Steison, Notary Public, and registered on March 20, 1926, at 11:50 am.

PLAINFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HIDDEN WALLS, HIDDEN MILLS

EXPLORING THE PLAINFIELD LANDSCAPE

SURVEYING THE SCHOOL LOT



EASY - LESS THAN 1/4 MI
WALK AND STAND
AGES 6 (WITH ADULT) TO ADULT

<http://www.hiddenwallshiddenmills.org>



GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Metes and Bounds Survey: The historic British method of describing land for legal transactions, used in New England land. It defines a piece of land in relation to known or given points or boundaries ("bounds"), by starting in one corner and descriptively walking around it, measuring ("measur"), for instance along stone walls (with a defined beginning, end, and direction), or along less specific boundaries, such as a road or stream (a boundary may run along the middle of a stream bed, for instance, even as that stream bed changes over time). The language is an example of the old English habit of doubling two terms with the same meaning terms in one legal expression (comp. "cease and desist", and "null and void").

Chain: A unit of length equal to 66 feet used in measuring land. A Gunter's Chain is an actual chain that is 66 feet (4 rods, 100 links) long.

Rod: A unit of length 1/4 Chain or 16.5 feet long. Used very often in old Plainfield deeds.

Property Survey: Checking the legal description of a piece of land against reality by measuring the location and area of the land, most often done when a parcel is sold.

Warranty Deed: A contract to convey property from one person to another. It includes a description of the property, frequently a metes and bounds survey. In Massachusetts, after signing, a deed is recorded, or registered, traditionally in a book – the record number is the Book/page number. This is public information—anyone can find the text of any deed at the Registry (also online: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/sec/rod/>)

LIST OF THINGS TO BRING

What you need to PREPARE and BRING (6 and up with parent)

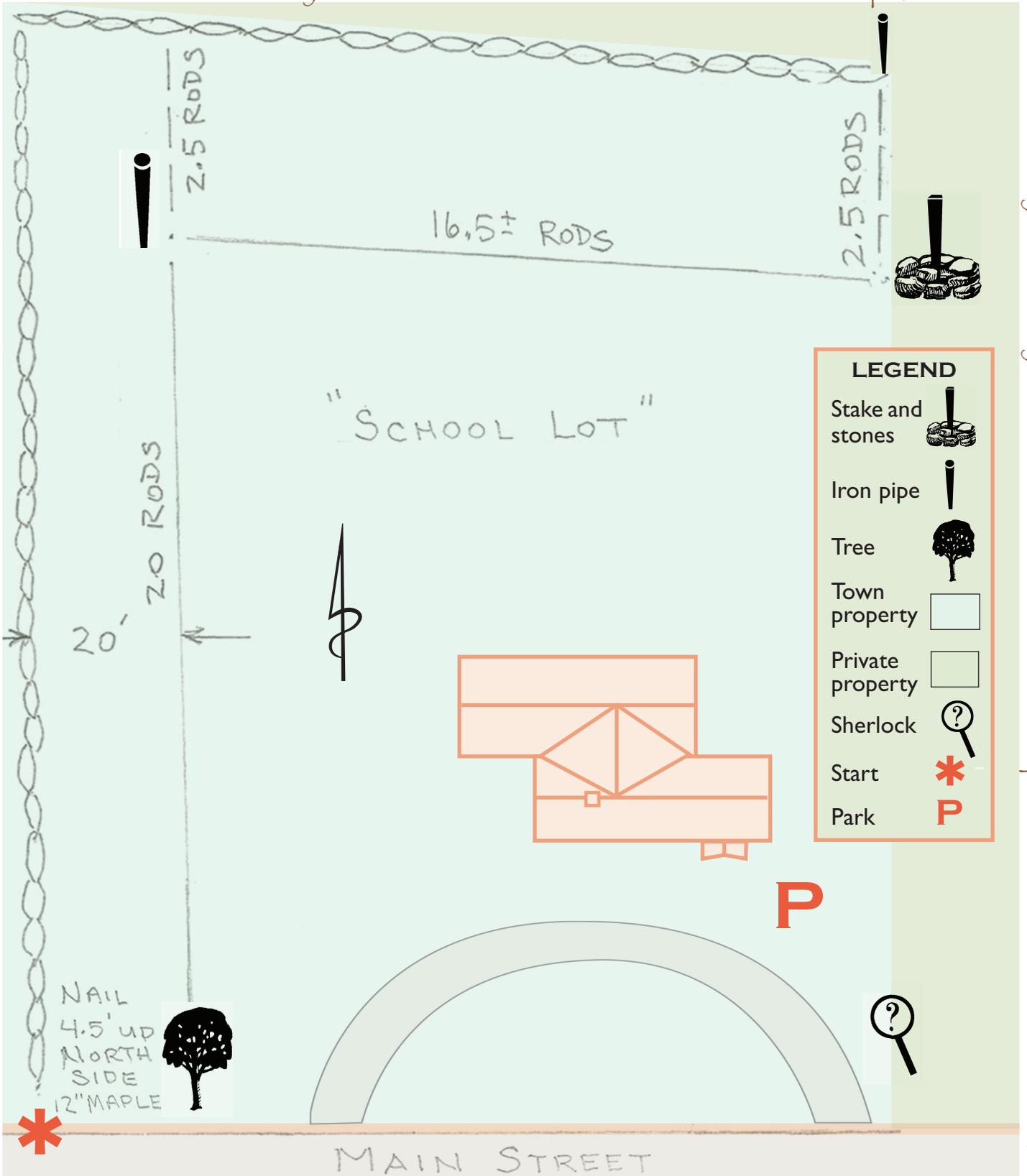
1. Compass marked with degrees. Learn how to use one here, for instance: <http://www.buckskn.org/resources/Outdoor/compass1.htm>
2. A rope, cord, or line that doesn't knot up or stretch too much, the length of a CHAIN (66 feet) marked for--RODS at intervals of 16.5 feet (at 16.5, 33, 49.5 feet)--1/4 ROD (4' 1 1/2") and 1/2 ROD (8' 3").

Tip: Mark your rope or cord with knots or with painters' tape and tie a loop in the end of your rope so that it still is the right length when stretched out. This will allow you to hook the rope around a tent peg and make your life easier.

3. 10 tent pegs or other small stakes.
4. 20' Measuring tape
5. Notebook and pencil.
6. Surveying the School Lot: instructions and deed text

... thence Easterly about seventeen and three fourth rods ... to an iron pin,

Beginning at the end of a stone wall in or near the north line of Main Street, ... Northerly about twenty two and one half rods



Thence Southerly about twenty two and three fourth rods to an iron pin in the north line of Main Street,

Thence Westerly about sixteen and three fourth rods in the north line of Main Street to the place of beginning.

| LEGEND | |
|------------------|--|
| Stake and stones | |
| Iron pipe | |
| Tree | |
| Town property | |
| Private property | |
| Sherlock | |
| Start | |
| Park | |



SURVEYING THE SCHOOL LOT

Doing a metes and bounds survey or checking the description on the deed: are the distances right, are the landmarks still there? The neighbors from the deed are not, so ignore them. Make sure you bring everything on the list on the other side!*

1. Find the first instruction on the 1925 deed and then find the beginning of the stone wall. Look North. Easy to measure? Resolve it like a surveyor by running a parallel line.
2. Measure the distance to a 12 inch maple to your East with a nail 4.5 feet up the north side. Use the distance between the wall and the tree to stay parallel as you move along.
3. Running due North, parallel with the stone wall marking the westerly boundary line of the lot, measure a distance of 20 rods with your rope and stakes to find an iron pipe at ground level. Plant one of your stakes.

4. Running from your stake due North, using your "rod" rope, measure to a stone wall marking the North boundary line. Remember the distance (P), you will need it. How long is the entire boundary on the stone wall?
5. Find the second instruction on the deed and go back to your stake.
6. Parallel with the stone wall, measure a distance of about 16.5 rods in "Easterly direction" ("E 3°N" in the old deeds, and S 87-30 E if you use a modern compass) to a Stake and Stones (an old way of making a landmark found on many Plainfield deeds).
7. Turning due North, use distance measure (P) to find an Iron Pin marking the NE Property corner of the lot. How long is the boundary line from corner to corner?
8. Turn South and continue following the directions in the deed, this time without making parallel lines, until you are at the point of departure.
9. Are all the landmarks accounted for? What would you do if you were a surveyor?

* 20' measuring tape, compass, "rod" rope, stakes.