

Remarks by

Mr. David Floyd, Presiding officer

at the

275th Anniversary of the

"Pullen Point" Land Allotments

held at the

"Gibbons Elm" near the Thornton Railroad Station

Winthrop, Mass., June 22, 1912

on which occasion

A "New Gibbons Elm" was planted by the  
Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company.

Mr. DAVID FLOYD. Ladies and Gentlemen: Until recently it had been supposed that the earliest church services in Winthrop were held about the year 1805. We know now that in the little church which was built at Point Shirley by the Proprietors of that place when they established a fishing industry there in 1753 there was preaching as early as 1755. We know the name of one preacher, the Rev. Mather Byles, pastor of the Hollis St. Congregational Church in Boston. Mather Byles was the preacher of the sermon to the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company in the year 1740. A printed copy of his Point Shirley sermon of 1755 is in the Boston Public Library. It is fitting that the chaplain of this occasion should be a clergyman of the same denomination as was the first preacher at old Pullen Point and one whose church is nearest to Point Shirley, the site of Winthrop's first church edifice. I introduce the pastor of the Congregational Church at Winthrop Beach, Rev. Seelye Bryant, who will offer prayer.



Mr. David Floyd. The little that the presiding officer will have to say is simply to connect this event with the soil on which we stand and on which 12,000 people now dwell. The map which is on the tree behind us shows the allotment of Winthrop to fifteen men, and a little will be read from Judge Chamberlain's history in regard to the allotment. Judge Chamberlain said:

"It belongs to the history of the colony rather than to that of any town to mark the steps by which the "Company"--that is, the Governor and Company of Massachusetts Bay-- "gradually lost its character as the promoter of a land scheme and acquired that of the founder of a state. On Massachusetts, no less than on English soil, in form at least, it was a financial venture, from which profit was confidently expected, but religious and political considerations were paramount, as is manifest from their first legislation. This provided for the sessions of the General Court, for the maintenance of ministers, the issue of process in civil actions, the regulation of wages, and in general the ordering of civil and ecclesiastical government. Still it remained a land company, and as such, made grants of land to prominent men, and doubtless to those who as contributors to the stock or as immigrants were entitled thereto. Massachusetts towns did not come from England, but sprang up on the soil as they were needed, and were recognized as corporations as early as 1632, though their powers were not defined by the General Court until 1636. Names were first given. Thus September 7, 1630, it was ordered that Trimountain shall be called Boston; Mattapan, Dorchester; and a town from Charles River, Watertown. Among the early acts of the land company recognizing unorganized communities



as political bodies was that of November 7, 1632, which ordered that "the neck of land betwixt Powder Horn Hill and Pullen Point shall belong to Boston, to be enjoyed by the inhabitants thereof forever."

The editors of Judge Chamberlain's history (and one of them is the principal speaker on this occasion, the book having been published by the Massachusetts Historical Society,) in a note following what has been read, says:

"The method of allotment adopted by the town"--that is, the town of Boston--"seems clear. The General Court which met September 25, 1634, granted to Boston, enlargement at Mount Wollaston and Rumney Marsh. December 18, Boston chose a committee of leading men to divide the lands of the town among the inhabitants. A year later, December 14, 1635, a committee of five was chosen to lay out by metes and bounds the farms assigned by the alloters at Rumney Marsh. Previously, on the same day, it had been voted that the poorer inhabitants and such as had no cattle were to have their allotment assigned to them from the nearer lands at Muddy River, "--and Muddy River, remember, was Brookline--"and a committee had been appointed to lay them out. Thus it was in general the wealthy who had servants to till their lands, and who were on that account entitled to large allotments, to whom were assigned the more distant lands across the bay at Rumney Marsh"--and the present town of Winthrop was the Pullen Point section of Rumney Marsh.

There should be mentioned on this occasion the fifteen men, residents of Boston for most of the year, who were allotted land here 275 years ago, the allotments beginning in January and continuing during the year. Some of the most important ones were in June of that year, so we are celebrating in the very month that some



of the most important allotments, especially that of Willyam Peirce, who built the house which we now call the Deane Winthrop House, were made. The names of the fifteen men were:

William Aspinwall.

John Sandford. And I am happy to say that a descendant of John Sandford, Mr. Moriarty of Rhode Island, is in this audience today. I wish later he would find his way to the platform. We would like to look at the descendant of a man who had a piece of land near the hill now called Beachmont 275 years ago. Mr. Sandford was a cannon-  
eer at the fort, and then went to Rhode Island and held high office.

Thomas Buttalph, whose farm was bought by Deane Winthrop.

John Winthrop, the Governor. He had 200 acres, beginning at Point Shirley and taking Great Head and the beach up as far as the Highlands.

John Oliver, whose name will be mentioned later by the commander of the Ancients.

William Brenton.

Elias Mavricke, who was a brother of Samuel Mavricke, whose name is so well known in connection with East Boston.

Vallentyn Hill.

Ralph Hudson.

Thomas Fayerweather.

Willyam Peirce, already spoken of, whose land and house were bought by Deane Winthrop.

Edward Gibbons, who had 110 acres, and we are in pretty nearly the middle of it. It extended east as far as the basin, Lewis Lake, at Washington Avenue, and west as far as the railroad.

Edward Bates.

Thomas Matson, a gunsmith, and

William Stidson.



Gibbons had this land in 1637. He died a few years after that, in 1655 I think, but we will hear of that later, and it passed into the hands of James Bill. In 1690 all but two of these allotments that we have been speaking of were wiped out by the land passing into the hands of the Bill family. A map of 1690 shows the Bill family and Governor Winthrop's descendants and one other owning the whole of the present town of Winthrop.

This particular property then went to Deacon John Chamberlain, whose home had been before that in what is the present town of Revere, and who died in the old house in 1755. A Bible that belonged to his wife is in the Frost Public Library at Winthrop Centre. Chamberlain's heirs were Susanna Sargent, Sarah Hallowell, Abigail Eustis, Hannah Burnett and Mary Hasey, and all the people of the old families in Winthrop are connected with some of these names.

In 1783 John and Susanna Sargent, whose names have just been mentioned, had become the owners of the Gibbons' farm and of the old house. John Sargent died in 1776, and then the property belonged to William Sargent, Elizabeth, who was the wife of David Belcher; Susanna, who was the wife of Samuel Floyd; and Mary, who was the wife of James Tewksbury. Then after a few years, the house being arranged for two families, it was occupied on the westerly side by Samuel Floyd and on the easterly by Washington Tewksbury. Samuel Floyd's children were Josiah Floyd, Samuel Floyd, 3rd, Sally Ann, Emeline and Susanna S. The married names of these last three were Floyd, Kingman and Richardson. Washington Tewksbury's children were Lorenzo C. Tewksbury, George W. Tewksbury, Samuel H. Tewksbury, Hannah B., who married Thomas J. Belcher, and Sally T., who married Deacon David Floyd. The only other people who lived here and who were interested in this property I think lived in an adjoining house,--they were part



owners here at one time--and were Susanna Tewksbury, 2nd, Henry Tewksbury, 2nd, and Elizabeth.

This completes the local part of the exercises as far as the people of Winthrop are concerned, and we will next listen to a poem by a resident of Winthrop. We know, some of us, how beautifully he writes about his native island beyond the sea. We know how he has written for great occasions in Massachusetts, and how he was the poet last week at Washington when the statue of Columbus was unveiled in front of the great Union Station. As Winthrop people and as members of the Winthrop Improvement and Historical Association, we are proud that such a man is to have an important part in today's exercises. I am happy to introduce as the poet of the occasion, Mr. Denis A. McCarthy of Winthrop.

MR. FLOYD. Probably the Winthrop Improvement and Historical Association, in the opinion of some people, assumed too much for so young a society in asking the Massachusetts Historical Society, the great historical association of New England, to have its president here on this occasion. Our society dared, and the president is here. Perhaps it is enough to say about the speaker of the occasion that he holds that high office. It is hardly necessary to say more than that. His name, his father's name, his grandfather's name, his great grandfather's name are known all over the country. Every schoolboy is familiar with the names of John Adams, John Quincy Adams, and Charles Francis Adams, the ancestors of the next speaker. Well qualified to write and speak on almost any historical topic, he has paid especial attention to the period, the anniversary of which we celebrate. In his history of his own town of Quincy and the surrounding towns, he has written of the man whom the Ancients and the rest of us honor this afternoon. We know his reputation, what he has done in the business world, we know the place he has in literature, and all of us are glad that the Hon. Charles Francis Adams is to be the orator of this occasion. I have great pleasure in presenting him to the people of Winthrop and to our guests who come from many places. (Applause.)



MR. FLOYD. And now we are to hear from the commander of the organization which boasts a great deal of its age but which is not as old as the allotment at Pullen Point, we having the advantage of one year, only one year, over the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. This means that we are one year more ancient--shall I say one year more honorable?--than the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company. (Laughter.) We feel it is fortunate that the present commander lived in Winthrop for a number of years; we feel a little closer to him on that account, and we all want to hear from Capt. Francis Hawks Appleton. I present him to you. (Applause.)



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MR. FLOYD. In about three minutes these exercises will close by the singing of America by all present, the band accompanying. I want to make several announcements.

After the tree planting the Ancients and their escort will march through Winthrop, Revere, and Shirley streets to the Deane Winthrop House, where those who have received invitations will be entertained. It is interesting to state here that not only was the charter of this organization signed by Governor Winthrop, but eleven descendants of the Governor were members of the company during three centuries, and two of its earlier members, Deane Winthrop and his son Joseph, lived in the old Deane Winthrop House, which will be visited. In the west room you will see an original drawing of the coat of arms of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, made for the Historie Booke which was published when the English Company visited Boston.

The tree which is to be planted will be placed on land belonging to the Boston, Revere Beach & Lynn Railroad, just this side of the station. The band, the escort of U. S. officers from Fort Banks and the Ancients will go there first, and will everyone please fall back so that they can have the right of way. Then the people who care to can follow them down the hill. The ceremony will be entirely in the hands of Captain Appleton and those whom he will ask to assist him.

Perhaps it had better be stated, as there may be some question about it, that the white horse now coming down the hill is drawing a cart in which is the tree. It is a tree which was nurtured in Winthrop, and it is to be planted not more than a mile from the place where it has been growing for a few years.

And now America will be sung, after which the tree planting will proceed.