

**Fort Sewall Timeline
1644 to 1922 & 2022**

by

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**Based on an earlier timeline in a 1975 Report by F. C. Detwiller
(while on staff at SPNEA / now Historic New England)**

**and a 2014 report by McGinley-Kalsow & Associates
(which referenced F.C.D.'s 1975 report extensively)**

Expanded & updated 2020

**using Marblehead Town Records and the National and Massachusetts State Archives,
the journals of Ashley Bowen (Marblehead 1700s) & diary of Rev. Wm. Bentley (Salem early 1800s)
and other primary sources in various archives, as well as secondary & online sources**

with additional text & annotations by historian Judy Anderson of the Fort Sewall Oversight Cttee.

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Some background statistics:

(This and other additional notes by Judy Anderson)

c.1629	1 st ongoing settlement		
1649	aprx. 200 people (independent town government established that year)		
1700	50 house or land lots (population unknown; see Sidney Perley, <i>Marblehead in 1700</i>)		
1713	& onward – rapid population growth		
1765	4,954 pop. / 935 families	2 nd most populous town in Mass. (<i>per census</i>) &	
	519 houses	10 th most populous town in British North America	
1790	5,549 pop. / 690 houses	10 th highest population in new U.S. (<i>census / tied</i>)	
1765	1,199 white males over 16 & 100 Black individuals (79 males + 21 females)		
1775	1,141 served in Am. Revolution (1775–1781) (perhaps nearly 1,500 – mostly at sea after 1776)		
1812	1,121 served in War of 1812 (1812–1815) (more than half were still POWs in England in 1815)		
1861	1,048 served in Civil War (1861–1865) (1 st in MA to send troops; 112 died, mostly in prisons)		
1860	7,646 pop.	1930	8,668 pop.
1890	8,202 pop.	1940	10,856 pop.
1900	7,582 pop.	1950	13,765 pop.
		2020	20,478 pop.

pre-1629 English settlement **Summer encampments** on the future Marblehead peninsula by the native **Naumkeags** (part of the Algonquin group of North American Woodland tribes – per Donald Doliber, Town Historian and noted history teacher, whose family was in Marblehead by the 1630s)

(For more on Marblehead's Native American history, see: Lord & Gamage pg. 5-8, Roads pg. 1-6, and "Marblehead's First Inhabitants" by Donald A. Doliber in *Marblehead Magazine* & legendinc.com, plus online videos of public talks in Marblehead by Donald Doliber, Town Historian, 2015 to present.)

TIMELINE

- 1629 approx.** **English settlement of Marblehead begins, though the area officially remains a part of Salem until 1649.** (Roads) (some periodic English fishing encampments earlier)
- 1630** **A palisade fort (soon referred to as the Darby Fort) is erected at Naugus Head** (originally called Nogg’s Head) on a high point on the northwestern tip of the Marblehead peninsula (on the “Darby side”), near the site of an earlier Native American wooden palisade “fort.” (Priscilla Lord, informal notes at PEM)
- Note: The odd name “Nogg’s Head” derived from the landscape’s resemblance (when viewed from the Salem shoreline opposite) to a topographical headland on the southern coast of Devon, in England, where many if not most of the town’s earliest settlers came from. (Robert Booth, unpublished)
- Further note: Although most late 19th & 20th century publications state that Marblehead’s earliest settlers came from Cornwall and the Channel Islands, the majority were actually from Devon and Dorset, in England’s so-called West Country. Channel Islanders (especially from the Isle of Jersey, which had a long heritage of fishing) and folks from Cornwall (with their distinctive guttural dialect that was nearly unintelligible to others) generally arrived much later in the 1600s, and continued to immigrate into the 1800s. (Robert Booth, verbal history and unpublished manuscripts, and Thomas Gray, *The Founding of Marblehead*)
- by 1637 Earthwork palisade fort is erected at Salem, on the west side of Salem Harbor.
- 1643/44** **General Court of Province, agreeing to the necessity of securing the Harbor of Marblehead, approves a Town petition to fortify itself “by a breastwork or otherwise” and directs “two guns [cannon] be delivered with convenient ammunition thereto.”** (MA archives)
- 1644** **“Substantial works” are first erected at the edge of a rocky headland at the northeast point of the peninsula, at the northwest end of Marblehead Harbor, with permission of the Massachusetts General Court, which supplies two guns (two cannons).** (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Fort Sewall Pirates and the Great Head*)
- 1649 May** **Marblehead incorporated as an independent town.** (Roads, Town Records) (see also: [OCR-Marblehead-in-1649-Sidney-Perley.pdf](https://www.marbleheadmuseum.org/ocr-marblehead-in-1649-sidney-perley.pdf) - [marbleheadmuseum.org](https://www.marbleheadmuseum.org)) (for Marblehead in 1700, see [Marblehead in 1700 – marbleheadmuseum.org](https://www.marbleheadmuseum.org/marblehead-in-1700) and Thomas Gray, *The Founding of Marblehead*)
- 1666 -7** General Court orders that tax abatement be given and that two or three guns be furnished if inhabitants would erect a suitable fort or breastwork “considering exposed condition of the harbor.” Fort finished the following year: cost, £32. (F.C. Detwiler / SPNEA report) £167 set aside in town budget to build a fort for protecting the harbor. Out of this amount, £39 is used to cart and unload **2,500 feet of boards and 1,000 feet of planking.** The fort is to be a last measure of defense against enemy ships.
- The fort is seldom used, but its presence reassures the town. (Lord & Gamage)
- 1674** Moses Maverick (1611-1686), Marblehead’s principal town founder (whose few male heirs lacked children, therefore place names related to him did not survive), sells point of land to Ambrose Gale “except whereon the fort is built.” The point would become known as Gale’s Head.

1675/6 King Philip’s War: Fort “put in order.” Three “grate gunns” are granted by the General Court and placed in proper position for defense. The Town’s “Sundry Disbursements” lists planks and boards, an ammunition house, carriages for the “grate guns” plus powder and shot: cost one half of Town’s annual budget. Capt. Forbes (perhaps John Forbes, a Scottish prisoner of war who had been brought with others to New England in 1650, and who died in Marblehead in 1701) takes one demi-culverin (a 2,000-3,000 pound cannon) from the Marblehead fort on a military expedition to Nova Scotia. (Frederic C. Detwiller / SPNEA 1975)

1681 Oct. 12 Fortifications in New England port towns surveyed by Maj. Gen. Daniel Gookin, Sr. (MA Archives v.70:48)

1693 Nov.13 Fortifications along the sea at Marblehead are erected by the inhabitants, who request that they be supplied with "powder and ball." (MA Archives. vol.70: 201)

Note: This was during “King William’s War” between England and France (1688-1697, called the “Nine Years War” in Europe), during the reigns of England’s Queen Mary Stuart [d.1694 but reigned 1688-1694 with her husband, Willem of Orange in Holland, who d.1702 but was king in England 1688-1702], whose Protestant Stuart supporters (along with forces led by William, who then became King William III of England) overthrew the Catholic Stuart King James II in the “Glorious Revolution” of 1688 — thereby restoring a Protestant monarch to England’s throne. (Because the Stuart King Charles II [Mary’s father, reigned 1660-1685] had no legitimate male heirs, his younger brother James had assumed the throne after Charles’ death in 1685, causing much consternation in England.)

Further note: Along with hazards in the Atlantic due to that war with France, Marblehead traders and especially its fishermen also faced deadly dangers in the Gulf of Maine from attacks by Native Americans, which all severely crippled Marblehead’s fishing (and thus its entire economy) from the 1680s until 1713.

1694-5 Mar.6 Fortifications at Marblehead are viewed by a committee appointed by Lt. Governor and Council. (MA Archives vol. 70:239)

1699 - 1700 The coastal forts of Massachusetts Bay including Marblehead are surveyed and plans are made for their upgrade by engineers Col. Wilhelm Romer and his assistant Capt. John Redknap, a member of King’s Chapel in Boston. (misc. histories of Mass. and *Annals of King’s Chapel*, Boston)

A calamity occurs on June 12, 1699 at the fort on an island in Boston harbor popularly called the “Castle”: “The Govr. Goes to the Castle with Col. Romer and several of the Council: Was saluted by the Fort and Ships as passed by, and at the Castle. Afterwards Col. Romer desired a Shot might be made, the Gun [cannon] broke and kill’d Nathaniel Homes, the Under Gunner, who was buried at Roxbury the next day, just before Lecture. One Proctor, an old man was dangerously wounded; and the Governour’s Butler, so as to lose much Blood.” (*Diary of Samuel Sewall – Chief Justice in Boston / not his great-grandson Samuel Sewall of Marblehead (1757-1814), after whom the Fort was named c.1800, who was also a justice and then Chief Justice of the MA Supreme Court in 1814.*)

1700 The Province (colony of Massachusetts) appropriates £940 to repair Marblehead fortifications, ordering the Town to put another £260. The town refuses, sending back a petition stating that the fort and armament are in a “miserable decayed state” and that further financial pressure would be ruinous. However, their petition is rejected. (Lord & Gamage)

- 1701 Marblehead’s wooden fort is in a “miserable decayed state.” (Town Records)
 Massachusetts General Court approves Town petition that Queen Anne's powder tax be returned for necessary supplies and for rebuilding the “wood fort” on Gale's Head. The fort is rebuilt and is also used for a health checking station for foreign vessels [for smallpox]. (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, *Fort Sewall Pirates and the Great Head*)
- 1701 Aug 11 “The Castle” fort in Boston harbor is entirely rebuilt by Col. Romer, with one account by Judge Samuel Sewall colorfully depicting the process and shedding entertaining light on Colonel Romer: Sewall wrote: “Go [i.e. he went] down to the Castle [the fort in Boston Harbor] to try to compose [evaluate] the differences between the Capt. [Redknap] and Col. Romer: Order[ed] that the line next [to] the Channel be presently finished with Brick-Work; I told the young men that if any intemperate Language proceeded from Col. Romer, 'twas not intended to countenance that, or encourage their imitation; but observe his direction in things where he was Skillful and ordered to govern the work; or to that effect. Lest be thought the Council had too much wink'd at his cursing and swearing, which was complained of....” (*The Diary of Judge Samuel Sewall* of Boston). This is a classic (and entertaining!) example of the contentious situation in 1701 that foretold the ultimate fate of the two engineers a few years later, when Romer was succeeded by Redknap. (*see 1705 June, below*)
- 1701 Sep. 5 Fortifications in Marblehead were in a poor state of repair; Massachusetts House of Representatives resolved that £40 be disbursed for improvements, provided the town pays £60. (MA Archives v.70: 530)
- 1702 Oct 15 Town of Marblehead requests General Assembly that powder money collected there be directed for the use of the town. (MA Archives v.70: 581-2)
- 1704/5 Mar. 22 Letter from Col. William Dudley (1686-1743, son of Gov. Joseph Dudley) to Wm. Popple enclosing Col. Romer’s Account of Ordnance [cannon] and promising plans to replace those lost when Capt. Cary (probably Capt. Nathaniel Cary Sr., later of Chelsea) and his ship (and dispatches (letters) and trade goods on it that were to have been used to purchase “small arms, ... great gunns, ... barrils of powder and ball proportional for the fort at Castle Island) were taken by the French (who also took the Fort at Pemaquid, Maine). (Public Record Office, London) (Romer’s plans for Castle William, North and South Batteries, **Marblehead** and Salem are at UK Archives, Colonial Office: CO 0700 Massachusetts Bay Plans 1 -10.) (also [America and West Indies: November 1704, 1-15 | British History Online \(british-history.ac.uk\)](#))
- 1705 June Col. Wilhelm Romer is succeeded by Capt. [soon to be Col.] John Redknap as “Her Majestyes Chief Engineer of the American Continent.” The cantankerous Col. Romer was replaced by Gov. Dudley, who wrote to Col. Romer : “...Sr. I will now tell you plainly that your angry and harsh treatment of everybody these three years since my arrival (the Lt. Governour, the Councillors & Commissioners of the Works, officers and soldiers) has been such that there is universal displeasure taken against you; so as that I know no friend you have in these governments except myself, who have always showed you the just respect of your services and merits ... your place being filled with another was at your own earnest solicitation to the Right Honorable Board of Ordonance; and that I have their commands accordingly to receive Captain Redknap as her Majestyes Engineer in your place, & which I have obeyed, & desire you will inform him for her Majestyes service what wants to be finished or repayed ...”

1705-6 **PLAN Captain John Redknapp’s plan of the Marblehead Fort, dated 1705** and signed by both Redknapp and Gov. Joseph Dudley, is made as part of a series of plans for fortifications at Boston, Cape Anne and Newcastle, NH as well as at Casco, Maine. **The Marblehead Fort was apparently soon rebuilt according to Redknapp’s plan.**

Note: Gov. Joseph Dudley (1647-1720) of Roxbury was the Massachusetts governor for the duration of Queen Anne’s War (1702–1713) (called the “War of the Spanish Succession” in Europe), which took place throughout almost the entire reign of Anne Stuart, Queen of Great Britain and her colonies [reigned 1702-1714]. That was the second in a series of several wars between England and France and their Native American allies. The wars were usually about the balance of power in Europe, and often included Spain. They were fought on the western European Continent as well as in the Atlantic, the Caribbean, and in England’s thirteen North American colonies.

1705 Sep. 29 **“An Acompt of y^e Ordonance Ammunition & other Stores of Warr belonging to her Maj^{ty}s [Majesty’s] Fort at Marblehead in New England” was prepared by “Edward Brattle, Captⁿ of y^e Fort.”** Among numerous munitions, it lists seven large pieces of ordnance (described in 1741 as **“Great Gunns”**): “One Demiculverin of 3000 lb. wt., 1 Ditto of 2200 lb., 1 Ditto of 2000 lb., 1 Saker of 1800 lb., 2 Taper borde [the shape of the cannon bore] guns [cannon] of 1200 lb., and 1 Minion weighing about 900 lb. in addition to *“One torn old flagg”* * and numerous other supplies including 3 barrels of powder, 73 lbs. of powder in cartridges and four large powder boxes and six small ditto as well as 130 lbs. of “Shott” and 12 “Cross barr Shott” (for taking down ships’ rigging). (See Appendix for full inventory.)

* Note: That *“torn old flagg”* would have been a “Red Ensign” flag with the first version of the British Union Jack flag in the canton [field], formed as a square in the upper corner of a field of deep red. Also known as the Queen Ann Flag, it was used on British vessels and in Britain’s North American colonies, and was later amended to form the Continental Colors of the United States in 1775 (retaining the small Union Jack cross pattern in the small upper square, but with red and white stripes in the main field). (Wikipedia)

1705 Sep.29 On that same date, Capt. Edward Brattle made an “Accompt of Powder Expended at her Maj^{ty}s Fort at Marblehead from the 25th of March 1705 to y^e 29th Sept^r 1705” including “Apr^l 23^d On y^e Queen [Anne]’s Coronation Day” and on June 16th “For Capt. Gill, a Salute.”

1705 Oct. 27 As Judge Samuel Sewall of Boston wrote in his diary: “The Castle at Boston is ordered to be called *Fort William*; and the Governour [Joseph Dudley] went down yesterday, and caus’d the inscription to be set up, a pretty many guns was fired. ... the Govr told me twas so and directed me to tell my Brother [Major Stephen Sewall] that when he writ his account of Stores, he should style Salem Fort [i.e., call it] *Fort Anne*.” (Diary of Judge Samuel Sewall) (It was not named Fort Anne, but a century later it was named Fort Pickering. See June 17, 1794, and Notes for 1800.)

“The new fort [Fort William, formerly referred to as “the Castle,” and still afterwards as well], constructed chiefly of brick, was built in a substantial manner by Colonel Wilhelm Wolfgang Romer, an engineer of much ability.” (Shurtleff, *Topographical and Historical Description of Boston* (1891) pp.492-3)

1706 June 1 **A beacon is to be constructed and batteries are to be repaired at Marblehead,** and an amount of bread for the garrison is delivered there. (MA Archives v.71: 216-217)

- 1706 June 6 Committee “to effect gratification voted by General Court in Nov. last as a gratification to Col. Romer & his son.” (MA Archives v71: 219)
- 1706 June 7 The Town to be defended as directed in the memorial [memorandum] of J.[ohn] Redknapp, Engineer. Redknapp’s long report on seacoast defenses lists “For the Necessary Defence of Marblehead £30” — as part of a total overall budget for improvements, including at Boston’s North and South Batteries, Noddles Island [off Chelsea], Fort Ann at Salem, fortifications on Cape Ann, fire ships, flat bottom boats for transporting men at Castle William, and fortifying Boston Neck, for a total of £676. (MA Archives v.71: 220-221)

1706 July 18 Gunner to be maintained at fort in Marblehead. (MA Archives v.71: 235)

1706 Nov. 12 Gov. Dudley and Council paid to maintain soldiers at Marblehead. (MA Archives v.71: 271)

- 1710 Aug. 8 Stores in the Fort at Marblehead are requested by Capt. Forbes (a different Forbes than the militia captain Forbes noted earlier, in 1675) for an Expedition, indicated in the account of Colonel Fr[ancis] Nicholson. (MA Archives v.71: 666, 670)
That October, Col. Nicholson (1655-1728) led the expedition that captured Port Royal, Acadia (Nova Scotia) from the French, which gave Britain control of Nova Scotia from that time forward (even if not yet Cape Breton Island (France’s Ile Royale), until a treaty in 1763, two wars later).

Note: Around that time, **Col. Nicholson** also helped promote the establishment of Marblehead’s **St. Michael’s Anglican Church** (built 1714), and was “its most generous benefactor.” (St.Michael's Episcopal Church / stmichaels1714.org)

After Queen Anne’s War (1702-1712/13), Nicholson (Col. then Lt.-General) was governor of Annapolis Royal in Nova Scotia (1712-15), then of S. Carolina (1721-25). Before that, during and after King William’s War (1688-97), he had been gov. of Virginia (1698-1705), gov. of Maryland (1694-98), Lt. gov. of Virginia (1690-92), and Lt. gov. of the short-lived Dominion of New England (1686-89) which had been much despised by New Englanders along with the new DNE’s hated governor Sir Edmund Andros, who had been appointed by England’s equally short-reigning King James II (r. 1685-1688) who had succeeded his brother Charles II because the latter’s only legitimate children were two daughters rather than sons). Nicholson also served in New York and Africa, and is credited with planning the layout and design of the then-new colonial capitals of Annapolis, Maryland and Williamsburg, VA in the 1690s. (*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, and Wikipedia - Francis Nicholson)

- 1711 June 12 A “flag in poor condition” was [still!] [*sic*] in the fort at Marblehead, according to Major Stephen Sewall (of Boston, not Marblehead) and Capt. Edward Brattle (1670-1719) of Boston (and also possibly of Marblehead). (MA Archives v.113: 742)
This may be the same Edward Brattle who was also involved in business affairs in Marblehead and had married a daughter of Marblehead merchant John Legg. (per Robert Booth)

Note: Those two were not the more famous diarist and Judge Samuel Sewall of Boston (1652-1730), who presided at the Salem witchcraft trials and was the only judge to regret that and apologize during his lifetime, nor General William Brattle of Cambridge (1706-1776), lawyer, physician, Mass. Attorney General, and one of the wealthiest men in MA, and, eventually, a Loyalist military general after 1771.

Further note about Marblehead and both of the early 18th c. Boston Sewalls (*Stephen and Samuel*): In May 1704, during Queen Anne’s War against France, Major Stephen Sewall had led a party of military volunteers to capture the notorious pirate John Quelch, who was hung in Boston in June of that year after a 10-month spree of lucrative piracy raids in the Atlantic. As a Lieutenant on an 80-ton ship owned by prominent Boston merchants that was being outfitted in Marblehead harbor, bound for an official privateering cruise (legal during that war-time situation), Quelch and his crew had commandeered the vessel for illegal piracy after its legitimate captain fell ill (possibly poisoned), and was then thrown overboard (perhaps after he died, or not). The vessel had launched out from Marblehead in July 1703, and returned there in 1704, then launched out again in May. That time, after unloading and distributing the plunder, Quelch and some of the crew set off once more. But within a week they were captured off the Isles of Shoals, then tried in Boston (with Judge Samuel Sewall presiding), and hung. ([John Quelch \(pirate\) - Wikipedia](#) and its footnoted sources) (also information from Robert Booth)

The Marblehead fort would have kept watchful eyes on the off-shore waters during those events.

Booth wrote: “Quelch cruised off Rio de Janeiro, capturing Portuguese vessels and taking their gold—Portugal being an ally of Britain. It would not end well. John Quelch and his men eventually returned to Marblehead, where, amid much hard partying, the secret leaked out. While a court was being held at Capt. John Browne’s [in Marblehead], Quelch and company tried to escape up the coast. John Legg [of Marblehead] called out the militia, other towns mobilized, and a wild chase ended with Quelch and his men in chains. Tried at Boston for piracy, John Quelch, John Lambert of Salem, and four others would be adjudged guilty and met their ends on the gallows at Nix’s Mate in Boston Harbor.” (Robert Booth, manuscript draft – history of colonial 18th c. Marblehead, 2021)

Others from Quelch’s crew had escaped with their shares of the loot onto a ship under Thomas Larimore, a notorious rogue privateer off Virginia and New England. He was captured also, but was sent to England for trial. However, Gov. Dudley in Boston asked officials to pardon him due to his previous official privateer service to the English crown against the French and Spanish. Returning to New England, however, he was arrested again, “suspected of very ill designs and practices.” ([Thomas Larimore - Wikipedia](#) and its footnoted sources)

1727 Oct. 29 Cape Ann Earthquake. Rev. John Barnard, minister in Marblehead, Mass., pretty much got it right. He concluded that the earth’s surface shifted in response to subterranean shocks. (New England Historical Society, *1663-1727 Earthquakes*)

1727 Town of Marblehead sends a petition to Governor William Dummer for funds for repair of a seawall and for replacement of the decaying wooden fort with a “small fortification.”

The fort would serve 3 purposes: • Securing trade, • Protection from pirates and enemies, and • Providing a checking station for possible infections aboard ships before allowing them to enter the town’s harbor

Excerpt from the petition: "[It is a] well-known constant practice of the English Nation ... to look upon all the Valuable harbors as the care of the Public, and by a National Act to repair and defend them." A committee from the legislature in Boston visits Marblehead and agrees to advance the town several hundred pounds, but only for repair of the seawall. (Lord & Gamage)

- 1728 Jan. 15** Petition to General Court of Town (signed by Ambrose Gale et al) to erect a battery to protect the harbor, and to replace “a small battery formerly according to ye Plan of His Majestie’s Engineer Col. Romer, which being made of wood is long since gone to decay.”
- 1740 Town Accounts list “To an order to Capt. John Adams for £64 being for two Barrell of Powder bought for sd Town use.” (Town Records)
- 1741 Jun. 24** **Vote to raise “a sufficient sum for repairing the Fort and also for [wooden] Carriages for the Great Gunns and for other necessary things as may be thought proper for the Town.” Voted a Tax of £200 to add to the £400 already raised “for making [wooden] platforms and carriages for Cannon of the Fort.”** (Town Records)
- 1741/2 Jan. 4-8 Voted “That Col. Benjamin Marston, Major Joseph Blaney, Capt. Joseph Smethurst, Mr. Joseph Sweat & Capt. Thos. Gerry, or any 3 of them be a Committee ... (with leave first had & obtained from y^e Capt. Genl. [Gov. Shirley]) to Build a sufficient platform on each of the Batteries of y^e Fort in this Town and mount the Guns thereon on sufficient Carriages fit for Service, Charge thereof to be drawn out of the Town Treasury by Order of the Selectmen.” (Town Records)
- 1742 Apr. 10** **In anticipation of continued conflicts with the French and Spanish, the General Court issues a grant to the Town of £550 from the Province, with the condition that within 12 months "a good and sufficient breastwork" with platform and all necessary war-like stores be built.** (Town Records, Mass Archives)
- 1742 May 17 The Town votes “that Mr. William Goodwin, Capt. John Tasker, & Capt. Nathan Bowen wait upon the Capt. Generall of this Province [MA Gov. William Shirley] to know his Excellency’s Pleasure reflecting said Works ... for erecting a Breastwork &c. within the Town of Marblehead.” (Town Records)
- 1742 Jun. 14 Town meeting “to receive the report of ye Committee who was chosen to wait on ye Capt. General of this Province [MA Gov. William Shirley], to know his Excellency’s pleasure regarding said Fortification.” (Town Records)
- 1742 Sep 13 The *Boston Post* reports “His Excellency, Our Captain General [Gov. William Shirley] set out from hence to view and appoint the places for erecting the new batteries in the towns of Charlestown, Salem and Marblehead.” (Bauer)
- 1742 Sep. 20** The Town votes to Accept the Grant of the Province. **The project at the Fort is carried out** under the treasury (financial) supervision of Charles Henry (“Harry”) Frankland [not yet ‘Sir’ Harry until 1755], Customs Collector, but under the construction supervision of British Chief Engineer **Col. John Henry Bastide** and his assistant **Richard Gridley**. (Town Records, Mass Archives)

Note: This was during Atlantic tensions that led to **King George's War** (1744-48), not the French and Indian War (1754-1763) as is generally assumed. The fort was activated during the latter war as well, but saw no action in either conflict. (see 1755)

Further note: Richard Gridley had become an apprentice to a Boston merchant at an early age, but by the 1740s he apparently was a "scholar" studying under John Henry Bastide, a British engineer improving colonial defenses in North America. Gridley's study of military engineering likely led to his being chosen Lt. Col. in Gen. William Pepperell's successful and celebrated expedition against the French fort at Louisbourg on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia's Cape Breton Island. (Pepperell, from Kittery, Maine, became Sir William as a result.) Gridley (along with Bastide) was praised by Gov. William Shirley, and was rewarded with a Captain's Commission in Shirley's American Provincials (67th Foot) which garrisoned the captured fort of Louisbourg from 1746 to 1749. Bastide drew a plan (which still survives) for that captured French fort at Louisbourg, and it was rebuilt as an English fort under Bastide's direction.

(After the war, however, to the great consternation of the New Englanders who had fought so hard to capture it, the fort was restituted to France, in exchange for the more important port of Havana on the Caribbean island of Cuba. A decade later, in 1756, during the next Anglo-French war (the Seven Years' War, called the French & Indian War here in North America), as the English endeavored to re-capture that same French fort, engineer Bastide was ordered to blow up the fort for which he had so carefully directed the re-building ! — adding insult to injury !)

Three decades later, during the American Revolution, Gridley would become chief engineer of the American Continental Army during the Siege of British-occupied Boston in March 1776. (*Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. III (1741-1770), Hancock- Pepperell Correspondence, MHS, Harvard).

Further note re: Marblehead: It was during the reinforcement of the fort during King George's War in the 1740s that Agnes Surriage, the teenaged daughter of a fisherman, and a servant at the Fountain Inn tavern on Bailey's Head (below a gun battery across from the fort, up above the eastern-most cove of the Little Harbor, which would later be called Fort Bailey, then Fort Washington, and has been known as Fountain Park since 1881), first caught the eye of customs official Harry Frankland, who was the fiscal officer for the fort. He made Agnes his "ward" soon after, bringing her to his fine home in Boston (later building a country home in Hopkinton as well, in 1751) to "educate" her. In 1755, a year after he returned to England to inherit a baronetcy (when he gained the title "Sir"), he was appointed English consul to Portugal. While there, in Lisbon, an earthquake struck on Nov. 1st, 1775. (see also Nov. 18, 1775 in this report.) Many buildings were destroyed, and Frankland's carriage was trapped under debris. Agnes found him and saved him from being crushed to death. After that, he finally married her, so that she became Lady Frankland. Though Agnes returned to Boston after his death in 1768, she (as a member of British nobility through her marriage) eventually returned to England as Loyalists fled Massachusetts in 1775, then married a banker there. (See F. Marshall Bauer, *Marblehead's Pygmalion: Finding the Real Agnes Surriage*, 2010)

- 1742 Nov. 8 Town is awarded a Province Grant from the Massachusetts government "near two months ago, but have not paid y^e same over (as they were ordered) to y^e Treasurers Appointed to receive it, but still unjustly retain it, whereby y^e s^d work (to build a breastwork in this Town) is wholly obstructed. Vote to meet & vote lawful means to recover said sum." (Town Records)
- 1742 Nov. 26 Major Joshua Orne refused to serve, so Capt. Nathan Bowen (prob.1698-1776) replaced him to employ workmen, etc. for the fort renovations. (Town Records)

Note: That Capt. Nathan Bowen Esq. (1698-1776), who was a militia captain, not a ship captain, was also a notary and justice of the peace, kept a journal (shorter and not illustrated like that of his nephew Ashley Bowen), and published a yearly almanac. He was also not the Mhd. militia man and cabinet-maker Nathan Bowen (1752-1837).

Major Joshua Orne of Marblehead (1708-72) was the half-brother of the future Col. Azor Orne (1731-96). His first wife Sarah Gale died in 1743 (at 38), so perhaps an illness (of hers ?) might have been the reason he would not serve.

Major Joshua Orne, and then (after he died) his brother Azor, owned a portion of the westerly island in the Little Harbor. That subsequently passed to the Brown family through the widow of both Ornes (in succession), Mary, who married John Brown in 1797. (Hugh Bishop and Brenda Bishop Booma, *Marblehead's First Harbor*)

1742 Nov. 29 Mr. Wm. Goodwin, Capt. David Le Gallais, Capt. Bartholomew Jackson, Mr. Robert Hooper Jr. [later “King Hooper”], & Mr. Jonathan Proctor or the major part of them are a Committee “To procure & Purchase all suitable materials & Warlike Stores and Imploy Workmen & Laborers **for ye Building and Erecting a Brestwork and mounting the Guns....**” (Town Records)

1743 Jan. 7 Petition to General Court by James Skinner on behalf of Town of Marblehead for an abatement of their Province Tax due to the poor conditions they suffer in light of the current war, the General Court grants the town £225 in light of their present circumstances, consented to by Gov. William Shirley. (MA Archives V.115: 006)

1743/4 Jan.16 Vote to prosecute Marston, Smethurst, Blaney, James Skinner, Esq. and Capt. David [Le] Gallais in court to recover £550 in funds not accounted for. New Treasurers Capt. Giles Russell, Capt. Thomas Gerry and Capt. Nathan Bowen “to prosecute in any court thought proper.” (Town Records)

1743/4 Mar. 2 **PLAN** Gov. Shirley writes to the House [MA legislature] requesting payment for: “**Mr. [John Henry] Bastide His Majesty’s Engineer, who has** viewed the ground upon which I proposed to erect the several Batteries at Marblehead, Cape Ann, and Falmouth in Casco Bay, and projected the same and **drawn out plans for the works,** and given the necessary directions for carrying them on.” (Mass. Archives, cited by F. M. Bauer in his book about the actual history of Agnes Surriage)

Unfortunately, these plans remain elusive, and may have burned in the fire of 1748 at Boston’s Old State House, when many original records were lost.

In 1743 and 1744, Engineer John Henry Bastide aids Massachusetts Gov. William Shirley in the construction of fortifications at Castle William (the fort in Boston Harbor), and at Marblehead, Cape Ann, and Falmouth in Casco Bay.

In July 1744, **Gov. Shirley reported that Bastide had abandoned plans to erect new fortifications and was instead concentrating on putting “the old ones into the best repair they are capable of.”**

Note: Fortifications for Nova Scotia outposts such as Annapolis Royal also grew in importance — and when war came in 1744, Bastide was sent up there to shore up their defenses. Supplies for the project were provided and sent up by Thomas Hancock (one of the wealthiest men in Boston, and uncle of the more famous John Hancock, who would inherit his uncle Thomas’ fortune), whom Bastide visited when he was in Boston.

- 1743/4 Mar. 3 Capt. David Le Gallais appointed Treasurer. (Town Records)
- 1745 Oct. 21 Town meets to appoint a Committee “To receive out of the Province Treasury £225 ... and to know the minds of the Town what shall be done regarding the Town Treasurer’s Book now in the hands of Capt. David Gallais who refuses to deliver the same and to choose an agent to recover the Books out of the hands of sd Gallais if need be....” Vote that “Mr. Ebenezer Story as Town Treasurer to receive £225 Granted by the Great and General Court at their session in Sept. last to be applied to the finishing of ye Fortification in this Town, and to buy Gunn Powder, Cannon Shot &c. and to give security required in said Grant.” Capt. John Tasker and Capt. Thomas Gerry to be added to former Committee of said Grant. (Town Records)
- 1746 Sep. 25 Marblehead votes “Selectmen directed in behalf [*sic*] of Town to prepare a petition to his Excellency the Governor for some suitable cannon for field pieces for the defence [*sic*] of this Town.” (Town Records)
- 1752 Mar. 23 “Voted that the present Town Treasurer be and hereby is directed to wait upon Capt. David Gallais, former Town Treasurer, and receive from him the Balance in his Hands of the money Granted by the Great and General Court to this Town, for repairing the Brestwork here, and pass his receipt for the said Balance to sd Le Gallais and the said Sum to remain in sd Treasurer’s Hands to Answer the Ends of said Grant.” (Town Records)
- 1754 Sep. 16 Town votes £100 tax “to furnish Stock of Arms and Ammunition Agreeable [*sic*] to the Law.” (Town Records)
- 1755 Mar. 24 Powder House** Voted that there “be a Powder House or Magazine Suitable for the securing Ammunition, built in the Town in such a Place as sd Committee shall think proper & charge arising thereby to be drawn out of the Town Treasury by their Order.” The Town Powder House is erected during the French and Indian War on the Old Ferry Road (present Green St.). (Town Records).

The powder house’s construction was overseen by a Marblehead committee comprised of Colonel Jacob Fowle, Major Richard Reed, and Colonel Jeremiah Lee. (Roads) (Lee had been appointed Colonel in 1751, Fowle by 1755.)

Note: The Marblehead powder house is one of the earliest powder houses still standing, and one of the few remaining of 201 that once stood in New England — most of which were built after the Revolution. There were once 83 brick powder houses in Massachusetts, 30 in Maine (which had an extensive coastline and was part of Mass. until 1820 — though comparatively few were built after that time), 17 in New Hampshire, 10 in Connecticut, 8 in Vermont, and 5 in Rhode Island. (Matthew Thomas, *Historic Powder Houses of New England: Arsenals of American Independence*, 2013)

- 1755 Oct. 13-20 Town considers request by Capt. Thomas Gerry [father of Elbridge Gerry], Commander of the Fort, to raise £100 in addition to £300 already raised, for purchasing “necessary Warlike Stores for the use of a Brestwork in this Town,” but voted in the negative due to “poverty of the town.” (Town Records)
- 1755 Nov. 18 The region is shaken by a famous earthquake centered northeast of the tip of Cape Ann, in the Gulf of Maine (not actually on Cape Ann, as the 1727 earthquake was).

Two weeks before, a far more violent Atlantic earthquake in Lisbon, Portugal, on November 1st had demolished public buildings and 12,000 dwellings, and killed an estimated 60,000 people in that city alone. Because that day was All Saints’ Day, large numbers of people were in the streets and/or attending mass, and were crushed by collapsing churches.) (Encyclopaedia Britannica)

Note: Portugal was a principal trading partner for Marblehead vessels, supplying salt for curing the fish that was sent to Portugal and Spain, and the Caribbean West Indies.

Further note: It was in Lisbon, Portugal, after that earthquake, that Agnes Surriage (1726-1783), a former server in Marblehead’s Fountain Inn (c.1723-1789) and the former “ward” – then partner and later wife – of Charles Henry (“Harry”) Frankland (later Sir) of England (b.1716), a British customs official in Massachusetts in the 1740s (then a Baronet as of 1746, when he gained his title “Sir,” which he did not yet have when he was in Marblehead, and was then appointed consul-general to Portugal in 1755), rescued Frankland after he and his coach (and a female companion) were buried under stone rubble from crumbling buildings. Afterward, in appreciation, Harry Frankland legally married Agnes, having lived with her in Boston and at an estate in Hopkington, MA until they left for England in 1754, when he became “Sir” Henry. After Harry’s death in Bath, England, in 1768, Agnes returned to Boston, but fled back again to England in 1776 after the Revolution broke out. She married a banker in Chichester and died there in April 1783 — the year the Treaty of Paris ended the American Revolution. (See Bauer.)

1762 Jan. 23 Petition of Robert Hooper on behalf of the inhabitants of the town stating that the wall built for protection of the beach and harbour [on approach to the Neck] “was not sufficient and was much damaged by the Great Storm, etc. and asking that the residue of appropriation [for] its repair [be used].” Committee report on what is necessary to be done was accepted on April 21. (MA Archives (v.117; 787-789)

1775 Feb. 9 “Came His Majesty Ship *Lively* and moored above the Fort, ... her anchors lay east and west of each other.” (Bowen) (Feb. 15: “Captain Bishop dined on shore &c. at King Hooper’s.”)

1775 Feb. 26 On a Sunday morning (seven weeks before the first shots of the Revolution were fired on Lexington Green and at the North Bridge in Concord on the 19th of April – with a very different end result than this similar scenario in February), about 200 troops led by British Colonel Leslie landed at what is today known as “Leslie’s Cove” and marched through Marblehead to the North Bridge over the North River in Salem, to look for weapons that were being stock-piled there. In Salem, the British Regulars were met by the Salem militia, while the Marblehead militia assembled and followed behind the Regulars on their march to Salem. Although no shots were fired, as a compromise was agreed upon, the confrontation could easily have led to the first shots of the Revolutionary hostilities occurring on that date and in that location (Salem) northeast of Boston, instead of in the northwest towns of Lexington and Concord on 19 April, when and where almost exactly the same scenario played out, for the same reason, but with a very different conclusion.

The fort seems not to have played any role in this near-miss event.

On that Sunday the 26th, Bowen recorded: “Arrived a transport ship from Boston with 234 troops and landed in Homan’s Cove and marched through the town to Salem and over the North River bridge [there] and back again and embarked on board a ship.” (Bowen)

Elsewhere (according to his annotator P.C.F. Smith), Bowen wrote: “Came a transport from Boston with 246 troops, unloaded at 2 o’clock and marched through the town for Salem, and when came to the North Bridge it was hauled up, but on application it was let down and they marched over as far as they pleased and returned back again and embarked on board ship again.” (See Philip Chadwick Foster Smith, ed. *The Journals of Ashley Bowen*, p.430 and footnote on that page.)

There are several accounts of the event after the fact, and a Salem newspaper (not the *Salem Gazette*, as stated in an 1856 publication) published one on 28 Feb. 1775, which notes that Marblehead dispatched messengers to warn the Salem militia. See also Roads p.124-125 (1877), *Essex Institute Historical Collections* (1880) (both of which include the reference to Major John Pedrick as the one who rode to warn Salem), Charles Endicott 1856 (47 pages, for *Essex Historical Collections*, which reprints various older accounts at the end and includes a transcription of a tale recounted by Pedrick’s daughter when elderly), and *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, vol. 1, pgs. 101, 109, 111, and 114.)

Note: However, the often-repeated legend that Major John Pedrick of Marblehead (1733-1780) rode his horse past the column of Regulars to warn the Salem militia is apparently not true. That was a tall tale told by his youngest daughter Mehitable in her later years, apparently (most likely) to redeem and polish the reputation of her family and father — a textile merchant with Loyalist leanings during the Revolution, who died in 1780, before the war ended.

(See J.L. Bell, “The Myth of Major John Pedrick,” blog entry for 26 Oct. 2013 <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/2013/10/the-myth-of-major-john-pedrick.html>.)

(Pedrick’s large three-story house with a wooden rusticated (faux-stone) façade was probably enlarged c.1770, and was most likely modeled after the two mansions of Colonel Jeremiah Lee and Robert “King” Hooper in Marblehead (plus a rental property of King Hooper’s that had been enlarged and enhanced c.1769, per Robert Booth, and “King” Hooper’s country house in Danvers, now in Washington DC).

1775 April 19 About the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord, Bowen recorded: “A hubbub as no truth goes. A hubbub about soldiers. News from afar talks of war. Employed on schooner *Patty*’s blocks.” (*Patty* was likely one of Col. J.Lee’s vessels.) (Bowen)

1775 Aug. 9 “This day somewhat close. At 9 o’clock His Majesty Ship *Merlin* and a large ship said to be a transport with the poor of the poor town of Boston on board weighed anchor and came to sail and sailed for Salem, but the wind being to the southward and the ebb made they could not get past the Fort and came to an anchor below the Fort. Much cannon fired at Boston.” (Bowen)

1775 Aug. 18 “No schooners to fit out in Beverly as was talked of.” (Bowen, quoted in Nelson, James L., *George Washington’s Secret Navy*)

1775 Aug. 20 **J.-B.** [probably Jean-Baptist] **Dubuq**, a French engineer who worked with Gen. Charles Lee of the Continental Army on fortifications at Prospect Hill and Winter Hill in what was then Cambridge, was apparently in Marblehead working with the expansion of the fort, probably on behalf of the Continental Army’s Chief Engineer Richard Gridley. In August, Dubuq wrote: “I went to Danvers to wait for an occasion of going by sloop to Marblehead where I heard the man of war had sailed. **The sailors of that little town were too much kept by their arming a dozen of privateers.** They employed to that work all last Sunday. **I have yet heard a noise that they would have the same week six hundred men to mount them.** I embarked then at Marblehead Tuesday in the afternoon.” Dubuq had been living in Salem between the beginning of May and June 4th when he was summoned by Gen. Israel

Putnam to assist American engineers in Cambridge. Dubuq might also have been working on other local forts also — which might be why Putnam had heard of him and requested his assistance. (See Gen. Gage Correspondence, Clinton Papers, W.L. Clements Library in <https://allthingsliberty.com/2019/07/monsr-dubuq-the-first-french-officer-to-serve-the-american-cause/>)

1775 Aug. 24 “This day fair weather. Came from town a company of volunteers for privateering. They came from Camp at Cambridge and are to go on board Col. Glover schooner [*Hannah*]” (Bowen) Note: *Hannah* had been the first privateer fitted out at Continental expense. (Nelson, James L., *George Washington’s Secret Navy*)

1775 Aug. The Fort fires several shots at H.M.S. "*Milford*," a British frigate chasing American ship *Isaac* into Harbor. (Lord & Gamage)

1775 Sep. 18 “**Town Meeting about [the] Fort.**” (Bowen) Active fighting in the Revolution had been under way for six months. At Town Meeting, an Inspection Committee was chosen to inspect the fort and make a report of the materials and expenses necessary to “put it in a proper posture of defence.” Seven people were appointed to the committee: Capt. John Reed (chairman), Mr. Joshua Orne, Capt. Francis Felton, Capt. William Hooper, Mr. Samuel Giles, Mr. John Clarke, Capt. William Curtis. (Town Records)

The committee reported that the town will need 2000 planks for constructing platforms, carriage expenses, and timber for sleepers, at a cost of £232 for the materials. (Town Records) **Fort repaired by citizens: 100 men employed for seven days to complete breastwork.** Cost to town for carriages, planks, and other material was “exclusive of donations.” **Fort to mount 20 cannons.** (F.C.Detwiller, 1975 report for Town, citing Roads, and Lord & Gamage et al)

Committee of Defense reports **18 pieces of artillery at Fort.** Town erects gun batteries at Hewitt’s Head (toward the base of the harbor, near the causeway to the Neck on the mainland side) and elsewhere. (Lord & Gamage) Later, the battery atop Hewitt’s Head was popularly called “the Cow Fort” (20th c. and maybe in Civil War).

1775 Sep. 21 “Fair weather. Nothing new, but timber carting to make the Fort new.” (Bowen)

1775 Sep. 27 “...This afternoon stood in again the said schooner and came to off our Fort, and a number of our Marblehead men took a small schooner from our wharf and went and boarded her and turned her to our wharves and afterward the schooner went to the Ferry. The schooner is from New Providence [Nassau, Bahamas] for Boston.”

1775 Sep. 28 “This day fair weather. Our small prize [schooner *Industry*] at the Ferry.” (Bowen)

1775 Sep. 29 Marblehead captures a ship with delicacies, cash and supplies meant for besieged Boston (occupied by British forces): “In Council, September 29, 1775. Read and accepted; and thereupon, Ordered, That Charles Chauncy, Esq; and Joseph Palmer Esq; with such as the honorable House shall join, be a Committee to take the foregoing Matter under Consideration, and report what is proper to be done with the said Vessel and Cargo... That by the Log Book it appears, that the schooner *Industry* (being the Schooner mentioned in said Letter) Francis Butler, Master, sailed from Boston for New-Providence [the most populous island in the Bahamas], July 24, 1775; arrived at [New] Providence, August 25; sailed again from [New] Providence for

Boston, September 6, and came into Marblehead, September 27, 1775. And by the best Accounts we can at present obtain, she has the following Cargo, viz. [:]

About one Hundred and Fifty Turtle (one Hundred and fifty to one Hundred and eighty, as the Mate says) Nineteen Barrels of Limes. One Thousand four Hundred Lemmons (two Thousand as the Master says) Two Thousand one Hundred Oranges (twelve Hundred as the Master says) Cash, three or four Hundred Dollars, and thirty or forty number'd Chests or Packages opened. Josiah King Mr. Josiah Clark, and Owners. Capt. Butler.” (Journal of the Mass. House of Representatives, Watertown Saturday, September 30, 1775)”

1775 Sep. 30 General Orders for Army Head Quarters, Cambridge, September 30, 1775: Parole: [password] Fairfax. Countersign: [password response] Goshen. Officers: 74. Col. John Glover. 75. Col. Ebenezer Bridge. 76. Maj. Daniel Wood. 77. Maj. William Raymond Lee. 78. Maj. John Durkee.’ (Washington Papers LOC)

1775 Oct. 1-3 “Passed a ship for Boston. ...Tis said General Washington is in town. Fair weather.”

It is possible that G.W. was at the Fort (see also Oct. 13, 1775) — very likely inspecting fortifications and negotiating privateer outfitting and regulations. [They likely dined on turtles, oranges, lemons and limes!]

1775 Oct. 2 “Sir Pursuant to the Declaration I had the Honour of Communicating to you and the other Gentlemen last Saturday [September 30, from his Excellency] [G Washington], he has directed 3 Vessels to be immediately equipped....” (Joseph Reed [of Philadelphia, not M’hd.] to James Warren [of Boston], Washington Papers, LOC)

same date “The People at Marblehead have taken a Vessel from New Providence with Turtle and other delicacies the produce of that Island and designed for the delicate palates of the Rebels in Boston, but by a S. West Wind forced into Marblehead.” (Mass. Council President James Warren, Watertown, to Stephen Collins, cited in *Naval Documents of the American Revolution*, hereafter NDAR Vol.II p.268)

same date “Monday, 2 This day soft weather. News from Headquarters of three cruisers to be fitted out with all speed, Colonel Glover’s schooner [*Hannah*], John Gale [captain], and [a] small schooner [formerly British] which Captain Hugh Hill took at Marblehead and a brig [formerly British] which the Cape Ann men took are said to be the three, Captain Nicholas [Nicholson] Broughton, Commadore.” (Bowen)

1775 Oct. 3 “This day fair. Wind WSW. Came from Boston a brig and turned to Beverly. News &c. this afternoon a ship off fired guns for a pilot. [i.e., An incoming foreign vessel was off-shore and signaled for a pilot ship to guide her into the harbor.] Suppose a man-of-war, red ensign” [i.e., a British ship, because it flew a British naval flag (called a “red ensign” at that time), which an American ship would not have flown in 1775] (Bowen) (Note: There are no General Orders at Cambridge HQ for Gen. Washington on Oct. 2nd in Washington Papers at LOC)

1775 Oct. 4 “Instructions to Colonel John Glover and Stephen Moylan:

His Excell^y [G.W.] having resolved to equip two armed Vessels has impow^red you to negotiate this Business^l in which the follow^g Directions are to be observed....”

Note: G.W. left much of the correspondence concerning the fitting out of these vessels to [his Secretary] Joseph Reed [of Philadelphia, not Mhd.]. On Saturday 30 Sept. Reed discussed the matter with a committee of the Massachusetts house

of representatives, and on 2 Oct. he wrote to [Massachusetts Council President] James Warren: “Pursuant to the Declaration I had the Honour of Communicating to you and the other Gentlemen last Saturday from his Excellency, he has directed 3 Vessels to be immediately equipped:...” (Washington Papers, LOC [1](#). – link)

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-02-02-0090#GEWN-03-02-02-0090-fn-0001> [No General Orders at Cambridge Oct. 10th, 11th, 16th 1775]

- 1775 Oct. 5 Washington wrote to Congress: “I have directed 3 vessels to be equipped in order to cut off the supplies [to Boston] & from the Number of Vessels hourly arriving it may be an object of some importance.” (LOC quoted in Nelson, James L. *George Washington’s Secret Navy*)
- 1775 Oct. 6 “George Washington in Account with the United States – To Expense of Myself & Party visitg the Shores about Chelsea. [£] 8.5.6” (Note in *Facsimile of Washington’s Accounts from June 1773 to June 1783* (Washington 1833) 7; Quoted in NARA - Naval Documents of the American Revolution)
- 1775 Oct. 7 Capt. Broughton sails in Glover’s privateer schooner *Hannah*, after returning from a brief earlier sail on Sep. 28. (Bowen, quoted in Nelson, *Washington’s Secret Navy*)
- 1775 Oct. 13** “This day passed a ship and a brig for Boston. Helped dig potatoes. **The Grandees came to examine our Fort again, General Lee &c.**” (Bowen)
- Note: Gen. Charles Lee, second in command to Gen. Washington, had arrived at Cambridge with him July 2-3, 1775 and had taken charge of engineers fortifying Prospect and Winter Hills in Cambridge. It appears that the “Grandees” were probably the American Generals Washington and Lee and their entourage, including Sec’y. Joseph Reed and probably also Richard Gridley. Because Gridley was Chief Engineer (after his temporary replacement, Interim Chief Engineer Dubuq, had left in August), anything done at Marblehead would have been under his [Gridley’s] purview — however, probably not documented, because either secret — or simply lost). (G. Washington Papers LOC, F.C. Detwiler in *JAR*)
- 1775 Oct. 17 Washington Orders, to Glover et al, in Joseph Reed to William Watson et al: “Your Commissions will be regulated by the Agreements made at Marblehead and Salem [likely at Forts] for the same services....By Order of His Excellency General Washington J Reed Sec^{ty}” Followed by orders “To Colonel John Glover, Marblehead” dated at “Head Quarters, October 17th 1775” regarding preparation and regulation of privateer vessels. (LOC - George Washington Papers, Series 3, Varick Transcripts, 1775-1785, Subseries 3B, Continental and State Military Personnel, 1775-1783, Letterbook 1: June 25, 1775 - July 31, 1776) (Washington Papers LOC)
- 1775 Oct. 17 John Manley, c.1733-1793, was appointed captain of the schooner *Lee* by George Washington. He assumed command on 24 October 1775 with a crew of 50 men from John Glover’s Marblehead Regiment, and on 9 November, Manley sailed from Marblehead flying the **new pine tree flag** from the main truck [a wooden cap at the top of a flagstaff or masthead, usually with holes for flag or signal halyards]. Sources differ as to Manley’s first prize — either recapturing a small Continental schooner or capturing the British sloop *Polly* — but on 28 November, he captured a major prize — the British brigantine *Nancy*, which was carrying much ordnance and military stores for British troops in Boston. Those were not only invaluable to George Washington’s army, but proved to be one of the most valuable prizes of the American Revolutionary War (similar to the capture of the 300-ton British munitions

supply ship *Hope* in May 1776, eight months later, by Marblehead Capt. James Mugford in the *Franklin*). (https://military.wikia.org/wiki/James_Mugford) (see also below, Nov. 29, 1775 and May 17, 1776) and ([https://military.wikia.org/wiki/John_Manley_\(naval_officer\)](https://military.wikia.org/wiki/John_Manley_(naval_officer)))

- 1775 Oct. 20 Washington’s Secretary, Joseph Reed, wrote a letter to Colonel John Glover, commander of the Continental Army’s “Marblehead Regiment” proposing the design of the First Navy flag, the “Evergreen Tree of Liberty” flag.* Col. John Glover was the owner of a schooner called the *Hannah* (named for his wife or eldest daughter) and, along with Stephen Moylan, was the action officer for commissioning the other privateer ships of Gen. Washington’s “First Navy” (*Franklin, Hancock, Hannah, Lee, Lynch, Warren, and Washington*), often called the “Washington Cruisers.” Reed wrote: "What do you think of a Flag with a white Ground, a tree in the middle, [and] the motto (Appeal to Heaven)." ([Joseph Reed \(politician\) - Wikipedia](#) and [Joseph Reed letter to Col. John Glover - October 20, 1775 \(revolutionary-war-and-beyond.com\)](#))

Note: * The "*Appeal to Heaven*" flag was used originally by the squadron of cruisers commissioned in October 1775 under George Washington's authority as commander in chief of the Continental Army. It was also then used by both privateer and navy vessels sailing from the new state of Massachusetts. (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pine_Tree_Flag)

- 1775 Oct. 23 “Our laborers at work on our Fort.” (Bowen) However, **NO PLAN exists.**

It was at this time, during the Autumn of 1775, that the fort’s perimeter was extended from its original situation at the northeast point of the headland to its current southern and western boundaries, with the earthen ramparts (and, at that time, the wooden gun platforms) wrapping fully around the eastern edge of the headland from north to south.

- 1775 Nov.1-5 “Our Fort goes on briskly...This morning at 1/2 past 8 o’clock the old bell rung for laborers at the Fort and at 10 the drum went about for the Minutemen, and a fine Sabbath this ! [Rev.] Whitwell [minister of the First Church] administering the Sacrament and the men at work at the Fort.” (Bowen)

- 1775 Nov. 12 “Smart cold. A sail in the off[ing]. Preaching at both meetings [both the First and Second Churches, congregational (small “c”)] and at work on the Fort all day. A funeral this evening.” (Bowen) (Note: Bowen was a devoted member of St. Michael’s Anglican Church throughout his life.)

- 1775 Nov. 26 **Admiral Graves plans to take the Fort and burn down the town of Marblehead:** [British] “Vice-Admiral Samuel Graves wrote to Maj. Gen. William Howe proposing to destroy the Town of Marblehead. ...Three hundred soldiers, he felt, with two frigates could seize the Fort at Marblehead, and ‘with little assistance from the Artillery, burn the Town.’ ” (P.C.F. Smith footnote in Bowen *Journals* p.464, citing *U.S.N.D. of the Revolution*, vol. II, 1144) Fortunately, that did not happen — as it had, in fact, just a month before, in Falmouth, Maine, which was then still part of Mass., when Capt. Henry Mowat’s fleet burned the town (pop. 2,500) on 18 October 1775, leaving about 1,000 people / 160 families homeless. Both Graves and Mowat suffered professionally from the action in Maine. (Philip Chadwick Foster Smith, footnote in *Bowen Journals* p.461, and Levinsky, Allan, *A Short History of Portland*) Later in the war, Norwalk, CT and Norfolk, VA, as well as other towns, were torched by British troops as well.

- 1775 Nov. 29 “Tis said Captain Manley hath carried a brig into Cape Ann from London with warlike stores.” (Bowen) Capt. Manley of Marblehead in the privateer “*Lee*” took the British munitions ship “*Nancy*” off Gloucester. The huge shipment of munitions was off-loaded at Gloucester (guarded by Essex militia) and taken to Washington’s army at Cambridge. (The Inventory was published by Congress in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* Dec. 17, 1775 – see Appendix) (Also see a story of the capture at: Bell, JL. <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/2007/11/lee-captures-nancy.html> *and* <http://boston1775.blogspot.com/2007/11/what-americans-found-on-nancy.html>)
- 1775 Nov. 30 “This day moderate. Somewhat warm. The Salem cruiser took a sloop and carried [her] in to Salem. Passed a brig from Boston to the Eastward. Forty of our Minutemen are gone to Cape Ann to take care of the prize [vessel] and prisoners. Tis said the brig [*Nancy*] at Cape Ann is laden with a 13-inch mortar and brass field pieces, muskets, and all sorts of warlike stores.” (Bowen)
- 1775 Dec. 1** “... a gun burst at the Fort.” (Bowen)
- 1775 Dec. 6** "This day fair and pleasant for the time. Our laborers [Minutemen and/or Militia] have completed their fort." (Bowen)
- 1775 Dec. 9 “This day moderate. The brig [*Nancy*] that Manley took with King store [munitions and supplies from England, officially sent from the Parliament and Crown] passed to Beverly from Cape Ann. At noon Manley sent a ship and brig in to Beverly, the ship from England and brig from Antigua” (Bowen) [Note: It is likely that Manley was able to retain some of the Brig *Nancy*’s stores for Marblehead. FCD]
- 1775 Dec. 13** Threatened Attack on Fort at Marblehead, with a description in the *New England Chronicle* (U.S. Naval Documents of the Revolution): “An express arrived [at Cambridge HQ] from Marblehead, with advice that three British men-of-war were standing [i.e. heading] for that harbour. Col. [John] Glover’s regiment with Capt. [Thomas Waite] Foster’s company of artillery, and a company of riflemen, were ordered to March to Marblehead with all expedition.” (*Memoirs of Gen. William Heath*, cited in *U.S. Naval Documents of the Revolution*, vol. III, p.80)
- 1775 Dec. 13 “Cold. This morning [an] alarm beat as three ships are off. At nine o’clock the *Lively* tack[ed] off our Fort and stood out again and spoke the other ships as they were a-turning in, and the *Lively* weathered the whole of Cat Island.”... [and more] (Bowen)
- 1775 Dec. 14 “...last night came to town a pair of riflers as was sent for the day before. This day our men a-fortifying Mr. Rob[ert] Hooper’s Head, the eastern side of the New Wharf, so called. Moderate weather. The riflemen returned again.” (Bowen)
- 1775 Dec. 16** “...At 4 o’clock I was in the tower of St. Michael’s Church, which is founded on a Rock and the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against it notwithstanding there is two houses of worship and a gun house in this town of poor Marblehead.” (Bowen) (Bowen often seems to have served as a lookout for ships, and throughout his journal over many years, he often notes ships both arriving and departing.)
- 1775 Dec. 17 “This morning I find Captain Manley and his prize sloop in our harbor. Wind SSE. Some rain. I have heard cannon fired all the latter part of this night. Manley sailed for Beverly with his prize. Preaching at both public [congregational church meeting] houses. Captain Jonathan G[lover] and company at work on the NE battery [Fort

Washington / Bailey’s Head?]. Much cannon fired all day, supposed to be at Cambridge.” (Bowen)

- 1776 Mar. 5 “Our cannoneers have brought a gun to the small battery [Fort Washington / Bailey’s Head ? or perhaps Hooper’s Head ? (see Bowen, Dec.14, 1776)].” (Bowen)
- 1776 May 6 Money for repairs was appropriated at Town Meeting, and the fort is repaired. (Town Records)
- 1776 May 17 The Marblehead munitions supply was likely augmented by a famous local privateer: “Watertown May 18th 1776 Yesterday was brought into Boston Harbour by one Capt. [James] Muckford [Mugford] of Marblehead, in face of the Men of War, a Brig, loaded with fifteen hundred whole barrells of Gun Powder, containing about seventy-five Tons, one Thousand stands of Arms a large quantity of intrenching Utensils, a Number of travelling Carriages, a quantity of English Goods &c &c - If you want any thing farther, you may expect an Account thereof by the next opportunity, as the Privateers are gone after more. (USND V.5 p. 141) Sadly, Mugford was killed soon after in a subsequent encounter and buried at Marblehead on May 30th. The actual cargo inventory was published in the Boston Newsletter May 23rd and included among other items: Carbines, with bayonets, scabbards and steel rammers Carbine cartouch boxes, Slings, Spare travelling carriages - 24 pounder, heavy, 12 do-light Traversing , han[d]spikes for do. ... Powder, copper hooped, whole barrels, 1500“ (Office of Ordnance, 4th Nov. 1775. USNDAR V.5 p.216-17)
- 1776 June 8 Elbridge Gerry wrote letter to one of his brothers, Samuel [Russell] Gerry (1750-1807, whose wife was Hannah Glover 1755-1780, daughter of Colonel Jonathan Glover, 5th Essex) regarding the fortification at Marblehead. [Unable to locate that letter to date.] (Gerry Papers, Mass. Hist. Soc. <https://www.masshist.org/collection-guides/view/fa0267>)
- 1776 June 19 Report from Watertown: “The Committee appointed to view the Sea Coasts from Boston to Newbury Port and examine their state of Defence &c. – having attended that Business report as follows [descriptions of Salem, etc.] ... **The Situation and Importance of the Harbour of Marblehead, with the Strength and Beauty of their works, are equally conspicuous. They have 18 pcs. of Artillery in their Fort and 4 in one of their Batteries** viz. 2 of 24 [lbs.], 2 of 18 [lbs.], 2 of 14 [lbs.], 4 of 12 [lbs.], the remainder nines, sixes and fours [lbs.]. Four of the four pounders are expected to go on Board the armed schooner Tyrannicide and a part of the 14 and 12 pounders answer better for an Armament to the Fort than to Her [the vessel]. Besides this they have a six gun Battery well situated & very advantageous for the Defence of their Sea Coast but destitute of guns. [which battery referred to is not known] They are also erecting a five gun [battery] well manned and supplied with Artillery Battery at a Place called Hewitts Head and propose erecting another [battery] on the Back Part of the Town. These Fortifications we judged sufficient if well manned and supplied with Artillery.” (NARA)
- (<https://books.google.com/books>: *Naval Documents of the American Revolution: American theatre: May 9 to July 31, 1776*, United States. Naval History Division)
- 1776 Aug. 3 Sloop arrived “with timber for platforms for the small forts.”** [probably the other batteries at various high points around the peninsula] (Bowen)
- 1776 Aug 24 Declaration of James Young, First Mate, and John M’Kurdy Second Mate of the *Anne* Transport on board which were 100 Men of the 72nd Regiment: “That on the 8th of

June they were taken near Cape Ann by four privateers and carried into Marblehead; that they privately bought a boat and made their escape to Annapolis Royal about a fortnight ago. That the rebels have four forts, at or near Marblehead, but keep a guard only in one of them, where there are thirty pieces of cannon, two of which are forty-two pounders, which they brought from Boston; the trunnions being broke off, they have fixed them to wooden stocks, and mounted them on carriages....” (*Naval Documents of the American Revolution: American Theatre: Aug 1, 1776, pp. 289-290*)

- 1776 Oct-Dec Report of Ebenezer Hancock for payment to Richard Gridley as U.S. Chief Engineer. Gridley had been MA Gov. William Shirley’s engineer at the siege of the French fort at Louisbourg, along with John Henry Bastide, the British Chief Engineer who had made, and had been paid for making, drawings for Marblehead Fort in 1742-3. Gridley later designed redoubts at Bunker Hill and Dorchester Heights for the Continental Army during the Siege of Boston in 1775-6. (Walker, *Engineers of Independence*)
- 1776 Dec. Three British vessels (*Lively, Hinchinbrook, and Nautilus*) were spotted cruising outside Marblehead harbor. The fort’s cannons were pointed toward the enemy vessels in a show of defiance, to appear as if they were ready to pound the ships with cannonballs (though in fact there was [little] powder to fire the cannons). After observing the preparations for a few hours, the three ships headed back out to sea and the threat was averted. (Lord & Gamage)
- 1777 Jan. 1 “This morning three cannon was fired at the Fort and a flag of thirteen stripes were hoisted at the Fort. The wind SE. Rain. A thaw.” (Bowen)
- Note: The US Stars and Stripes was not adopted until June 14, 1777, so this must have been a very early version of the Continental Colors or Grand Union flag with the Union Jack in the canton and 13 stripes, very similar to the East India Co. flag (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Union_Flag)
- 1777 Feb. 12 “This day fair and pleasant. **The Lord of the NE hath made our fortifications look like stone and lime, but the sun will soon alter the looks of them.** Snow fell, nearly 9 inch.” (Bowen)
- 1777 Feb. 16 “Fair and pleasant, but no flags out at Fort nor preaching at St. Michael’s. Oh Lord have Mercy on us miserable creatures; the worst is to come!
- 1777 Feb. 17 “This day fine and pleasant. A muster in town &c. News of son Ashley being at Boston.” (Bowen)
- 1777 Apr. 5-9 “...this afternoon anchored here the *Hancock* frigate, John Manley, Esq., from Cape Ann. He gave [fired] seven guns [as a salute]. Our Fort returned five [in return]. All is well... Apr 6. Lay here the *Hancock* frigate. ... Monday Apr. 7 The *Hancock* beating up for men. Got two. ...Apr. 8 Lay here the *Hancock* frigate. This morning many cannon fired at Boston [under siege]. ...Apr. 9. The *Hancock* frigate warped [*] down our harbor and then came to sail and sailed for Boston. This afternoon a hubbub at Salem.” (Bowen) Note: The frigate *Hancock* was built at Newburyport and was placed under command of Capt. John Manley on 17 April 1776. ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USC_GS_Hancock_\(1776\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USC_GS_Hancock_(1776)))

* “Warped”: Like kedging, warping is a method of moving a sailing vessel, typically against the wind or out of a dead calm, by hauling on a line attached to a kedge anchor, a sea anchor, or a fixed object such as a bollard.

- 1777 June 14 “This day fair and moderate. Mr. Darling buried. Came from Boston schooner *Bucken* [sic], and at ½ past eight o’clock at evening anchored here the ship *Le Mars* [sic] from Boston, and the ship gave five guns. No notice taken by the Fort. (Bowen)
- 1777 June 15 “This day small winds easterly. Came from Salem the brig *Oliver Cromwell*, Captain [William] Coles, which gave five guns as she passed our Fort.” (Bowen)
- 1778** **Town fortifications built on Bartoll 's Head and Twisden's Hill.** Residents requested state reimbursement of 1775 cost of erecting those and other fortifications. (F.C. Detwiller / SPNEA 1975, Town Records)
- 1778 May 18 “Additions to the Committee Chosen to Examine and pass the Several Accounts against ye Town for erecting fortifications in the years 1775 and 1776. Vizt. Edward Fettyplace Esq., Capt. William Hooper & Jonathan Glover, Esq.” (Town Records)
- 1778 Jun. 1 At a Town Meeting with Azor Orne, Moderator “Voted that the Treasurer account examined by a Committee chosen to settle the Town accounts be accepted.” A new Committee was set up to determine what interest was due the Treasurer. (Town Records)
- 1779 July 5 “This day fair and pleasant. **Our gentry fired the cannon at the Fort for the Independency** [sic] [meaning Independence Day – from 1776].” (Bowen)
- 1780 Apr. 27 Thursday, by 2:00 in the afternoon **Lafayette’s ship *l’Hermione* “... found shelter in the small port of Marblehead, sixteen miles from Boston.”** An aide with Lafayette (Lt. Louis-René Levassor, Comte de Latouche-Tréville) noted that “**Brigadier General [John] Glover came on board to see Monsieur the Marquis de La Fayette.**” **Lafayette spent the night on-shore — presumably at Glover’s home or inn near the town landing** (as John Glover had been an inn-keeper before the Revolution began) — and wasted little time in sending a communique to George Washington, alluding to Louis XVI’s still-secret news that that French reinforcements of troops, frigates, supplies and money were coming to the Americans’ assistance:
- “Here I am, My dear General, and in the Mist of the joy I feel in finding Myself again one of your loving Soldiers I take But the time of telling you that I Came from france on Board of a fregatt Which the king Gave me for my passage — I have affairs of the utmost importance that I should at first Communicate to You alone...and do Assure You A Great public Good May derive from it.”
- At 2:30 in the afternoon of April 28, 1780, *l’Hermione*, with French flag flying high, arrived in the port of Boston and saluted the American flag that was displayed at the fort on Castle Island with thirteen cannon shots.
- (The above quotes from Lt. Louis-René Levassor, Comte de Latouche-Tréville, *Le journal de bord de l’Hermione* and Lafayette (at Boston Harbor) to Washington, April 27, 1780, Lafayette Papers, 2:364-68) in https://allthingsliberty.com/2015/04/lafayettes-second-voyage-to-america-lafayette-and-lhermione/#_edn19 Kim Burdick, 2015)
- (See also: R.A. Selig *Washington- Rochambeau National Historic Trail in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, 1780-1783*, Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, 2017, pp. 95-97.)
- 1781 Oct. 19 Battle of Yorktown (Virginia), the decisive last major battle of the Revolutionary War (though tensions were still volatile, and hostilities still occurred after that).

1782 Coastal cruisers were therefore still on alert, as the coast was still potentially vulnerable until a formal treaty was signed.

1783 Sept. 3 Treaty of Paris officially ends the Revolutionary War

1783 May 19 Town voted to “take up platforms [remove the wooden cannon stages] from all the several fortresses” [the smaller batteries] in Marblehead and “sell the Stuff for the most they can, for the benefit of the Town.” (Town Records)

1784 Nov. 2 The Marquis de Lafayette is said to have dined with Gerry, General Glover, et al in 1784 (perhaps at the Elbridge Gerry House, if Gerry was then living in the home where he and his three brothers and a sister had been raised), during his extended farewell tour of the new United States. Lafayette visited Marblehead specifically to honor General Glover, with whom he had served in the war, and both had shared a friendship with Washington. On that occasion, church bells pealed, and (as everywhere, along his route throughout the former Colonies), everyone in town came out to celebrate him. In return, Lafayette expressed his admiration for Marblehead, “which so lately fought and so truly bled” [Lafayette’s words] in the noble cause of freedom. Honoring the fishermen of Marblehead, he wrote on Nov. 2, 1784 that he wished “unbounded success to their fisheries.” (Original letter in Town of Marblehead historical collections, and newspaper article by Pam Peterson, while director of Marblehead Museum)

(<https://marblehead101.wordpress.com/2012/05/03/lafayettes-first-visit-to-marblehead-in-1784/>)

(See also another website mentioning Lafayette’s three visits to Marblehead: <https://marquisdelafayettememoryspaces.home.blog/massachusetts-ma/>)

1784 Oct. Toward the end of an extended two-year journey around the new United States, Venezuelan revolutionary and military leader Francisco de Miranda describes the conditions at Marblehead in 1784.

“The road is very good until just a little before arriving at this fisher-place, when all about are nothing but rocks, and on these are built the houses. The houses are poor, and crowded, especially with children, the number of which, in proportion to adults, is greater than in any place I have seen. We counted five hundred boys playing in a street. . . . Nevertheless, all of them were decently cloathed which shows that there was no misery. As we went down to the harbour by the rocky and crookedly intercepting streets, we saw everywhere fish spread out a-drying, — no small addition to the fishing scene which the place itself represents.

We saw also a **fort** which was built at the entrance of the little harbour, which is there formed, where vessels shelter themselves for their protection ... The women of the town have fame as being of scandalous habits and it is said there that Marble-Head is remarkable for its many boys and for red-haired people. During the last war the place suffered exceedingly, but since peace came, it has made great progress toward recovering its former prosperity. Two buildings are noteworthy, beside the Church of the place, the houses of Colonel Lee and of Mr. Hooper, plain proof that poor people always make some others rich.”

(Francisco de Miranda quoted by P.C.F. Smith, ed. in Bowen *Journals* footnote)

Miranda’s covert goal was apparently to secure cooperation and/or support from New England or elsewhere toward revolutionizing Spanish colonies around the Caribbean — as would soon happen in Santo Domingo (Haiti) in 1791 (before the French

Revolution of 1792) and later in Bolivia, Peru, Chile, and elsewhere. (For a dramatic recounting of some of those revolutionary efforts in South America, inspired by the American Revolution, see Robert Booth, *Mad For Glory*, 2015.)

Additional note: In Boston, shortly before he departed the U.S., Miranda met the Marquis de Lafayette, the dashing French hero of the American Revolution, describing him as “a mediocre character endowed with the activity and perpetual motion of a Galician ... This trip of the Marquis appears to me to be one of those sleight of hand performances by which France tries to delude mankind, and which on many occasions produces the desired effect ... Yet to the eyes of discerning persons, such performances are only ridiculous political farces. These guileless people [i.e. sincere and inexperienced Americans], as yet inexpert in politics, have made excessive and absurd demonstrations of pleasure, even in such small towns as Marblehead; so that the hero, in order to receive adulation, has passed from one town to another with the velocity of a Rolando.” (Miranda, *Diary*, p.121) (from William Spence Robertson, Univ. of N. Carolina Press, *The Life of Miranda*, 1929)

1784 Oct. 7 Another visitor, Simeon Baldwin, added insight to Miranda’s description the same year: “After diner [sic – not in Mhd.] & paying extravagantly for it we travelled thro’ several little settlements tho’ little good Land, till we came to Marblehead, a town of about 4 or 500 houses on the sure foundation of a rock — they a[re] famous for the curing of Cod. The people are savage in their nature & education — are very poor in general — amazingly prolific & exceed all places in the habit of begging, one can hardly ride thro’ the Town without being accosted in that way by one half the old women & children in it. We viewed the crates, got what information we could & rode round to Salem(*Life & Letters of Simeon Baldwin*, pg. 222)

1788 Jan 25 “I find a bark-rigged ship at anchor off our Fort belonging to Salem.” (Bowen)

1789 Oct. 21 President George Washington, personal diary entry during his tour of New England:

“After leaving Cambridge at the distance of 4 miles we passed through Mistick – then Malden – next Lynn (where it is said 175,000 pairs of Shoes (women’s chiefly) have been made in a year by abt. 400 workmen). This is only a row of houses & not very thick on each side of the Road. After passing Lynn you enter Marblehead wch. is 4 miles from Salem. This latter [Salem] is a neat Town and said to contain 8 or 9000 inhabitants. Its exports are chiefly Fish Lumber & Provisions.... the Boston Corps of Horse escorted me to the line between Middlesex and Essex County where a part of Horse with Gen. Titcomb met me, and conducted me through Marblehead (which is 4 miles out of the way, but I wanted to see it) to Salem. The Chief employment of the People of Marblehead (males) is fishing – about 110 Vessels and 800 Men and boys are engaged in this business. Their chief export is fish. About 5000 souls are said to be in this place which has the appearance of antiquity. The Houses are old – the streets dirty – and the common people not very clean. Before we entered the Town we were met, & attended by a Comee. [committee] til we were handed over to the Select Men who conducted us **saluted by artil^y** in to the Town — to the House of a Mrs. Lee where there was a cold Collation prepared — after partaking of which we visited the Harbour — their fish flakes for curing fish — &ca. [etc.] and then proceeded (first receiving an Address from the Inhabitants) to Salem.”

1789 Oct 29 Extract of Town’s reply to the new President: “Your presence has inspired the inhabitants of the Town of Marblehead with the most unbounded joy: But they cannot express, as they would wish, their grateful sense of the honor done them

on this occasion. ... The too visible decay and poverty of this Town must be their excuse, that they have not offered to the illustrious character who now visits them a reception more becoming his dignity and more expressive of their veneration ...”

(For the town’s full reply see:

From George Washington to the Citizens of Marblehead, 2 November (archives.gov))

1789 Oct. 29 “On Thursday, Oct. 29, General Washington the President of the United States visited Salem. Notice of his approach from Marblehead was to be given by hoisting a flag at Gardiner's Mills, two miles from the town and at the head of the bay, which makes the harbour of Salem.” (*Diary of Rev. William Bentley – hereafter “Bentley”*)

1791 Two years later, Reverend William Bentley described the citizens of Marblehead: “Marblehead is a town composed of all nations, instructed in various religious superstitions, which have left no other than the same fears, without any light to enable them to enter into controversies, with their instructions, which are rather their fears plain upon their credulity, they have so little knowledge of moral life, that they are as profane, intemperate, & ungoverned as any people on the Continent. ... From this general character, for there are some noble exceptions, every person expected entertainment from the folly which the day would exhibit...” (Bentley, a year after he also recorded the death of Robert “King” Hooper in 1790 at age 81.)

1792 Dec. 13 “This day I helped Rich Prince at the fort where he makes [dries / cures] his fish. 3 hours at 4. Fair weather.” (Bowen)

1794 Feb. 28 Marblehead is included on a list of 16 U.S. ports that a committee appointed by the U.S. Congress in January recommended should have first priority for defense against both or either England or France, due to escalating tensions over threats of raids or attack by the Royal Navy of either country, or even full-scale war with France over Atlantic trade and the French confiscation of hundreds of American merchant ships as the French Revolution raged. Though the ports were not listed or ranked according to their importance, Marblehead was on the list. (Wade, Arthur P., *Artillerists and Engineers ... 1794 - 1815*. pg.12 – hereafter “Wade”) (See also his extensive footnotes for his sources.)

1794 **PLAN** **Stephen Rochefontaine** (Étienne Nicolas Béchet, Sieur de Rochefontaine), a professional military engineer and former Continental (American) Army officer who had come to America from France in 1778, was sent by the U.S. Army (which had developed a military engineering department that would later evolve into the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) to survey the area and recommend an improved fortification. **He produced a hand-drawn plan** for a small earthen-walled redoubt for defense of the harbor. The plan called for three of the 7-foot high walls to be supported on the inside by 2-foot thick dry stones, which would be built at the upper end of the older Revolutionary-era fort. A small blockhouse bisected the fourth rear wall, which was to be constructed of stones or bricks 18 in. thick and 9 ft. high. On top of the old battery in the lower parade extension (extended in 1775), 275 feet of the parapet was left in place to serve as a “Covered Communication from the Town to the Fort.” The lower parade parapet of 1775 was left intact, but without guns; it remained simply to cover troops moving between the fort and the Town, but later disappeared at some point.

The fort had facilities to mount one 42-pounder cannon, five 24- and 18-pounders on coast carriages, and four 9- and 6-pounders on travelling carriages. [*It is not clear if*

that meant five + four cannons of each of the four sizes, or nine cannons total of four different sizes (6, 9, 18 & 24-pounders — meaning the size of cannon ball each type fired)] (Thompson, U.S. Engineering Dept. / later Army Corps of Engineers)

1794 background “At the beginning of 1794, “there was hardly a coastal fortification in serviceable condition from Castine, Maine to Savannah, Georgia. Indeed, only at Castle Island in Boston, Goat Island in Newport, and Mud Island below Philadelphia had fortifications worth repairing. **Nor [were] there ... trained soldiers to man the heavy guns of a coast-defense fort.** The four artillery companies of the Legion [the new national military force, established in 1792] were artillery in little more than name; they manned tiny howitzers in the field and light guns in the frontier forts, but they were little more than infantrymen, entirely untrained in constructing seacoast fortifications or in serving the heavy guns required by seacoast artillery. (Wade, p. 12)

After the Revolution, the newly organizing U.S. had been less concerned about the sea-coasts than its northern (Canadian) border (where the British maintained a strong and threatening presence with their border-area forts which had largely been taken from the French) and its western frontiers (west of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and the Appalachian mountain range, where waves of Americans were settling in former Native American or ‘Indian’ or ‘Northwest’ territories that would later become Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee. (For a short synopsis of that, see Wade, *Artillerists & Engineers* p.5-8 & p.8-15 and related footnote sources.)

“The year 1794 marked a new low in postwar relations between the U.S. and Great Britain. Not only was Britain supporting tribes ... in the northwest, she was also pursuing a maritime policy that threatened American shipping and the neutral rights of the new nation... [as] one facet of her [England’s] war against Revolutionary France... [But] the French had actually been the first offenders; [because] by early 1793, ... France had begun seizing [entire] American ships, and confiscating their cargos” [rather than just “impressing” a few crewmen — i.e. kidnapping them, under the guise (whether real or merely alleged) of re-claiming British Navy deserters, as English vessels had been doing since the 1780s, and continued to do until the War of 1812.] That often included the entire cargo AND most crewmen on American and M’hd. trading vessels, whether in the Atlantic or in the Caribbean, despite America’s insistence on its neutrality. Both France and England also restricted “free trade” through related antagonism against American ships, crews and commerce — often imprisoning their crews or impressing them into the French or British royal navies.] (Wade, p.6-7; similar material is in other sources as well)

The response was reinforcement of American seacoast fortifications, including Marblehead, as part of the still-new United States’ newly implemented national system of coastal defense — just a decade after the Revolutionary Continental Army was disbanded with the Peace of Paris in 1783 which ended the Revolution. (see Wade, p. 6-17)

This is when the Marblehead Fort gained most of its current visible appearance. (1794 – 1801)

1794 Aug. 25 The U.S. government officially takes possession of the fort — which was still called simply “the Marblehead Fort” or “the fort at Marblehead” — to strengthen and further develop it as part of the First System of Defense. The fort was therefore turned over to the United States government by the Town of Marblehead, which votes to “cede to the

United States” the whole tract of land and rights of way to the fort, and “consent to the erection of a new fort” on that site “for the defense of the harbour” and that the Town Selectmen “are empowered to make a proper deed” to the land on behalf of the town” for that transfer of the land to the U.S. government for major renovations. (Town Records, vol. 4, p.118) (Original deed in U.S. National Archives)

(Even in 1775, during the Revolution, when the fort first ceased to be under Crown funding and control, the fort’s operations and renovations had largely been under the official direction of professional Continental Army engineers, as pointed out in this report.)

“In Marblehead, ...the selected site was the ruins first called Fort Head and later Fort Sewall, on Jack’s Point at the western side of the harbor entrance. The [Marblehead] town meeting ceded the public land, and added an adjacent lot [which portion of the site is not known] for \$310. Rochefontaine rebuilt Fort Sewall as a battery of masonry and sod with a brick citadel and block house, designed to mount six heavy guns on seacoast carriages and four light guns on travelling carriages.” (Wade, p.17)

The “brick citadel” was shown on the 1794 sketch-like hand-drawn plan of the fort by Stephen Rochefontaine. It probably refers to the Bombproof Quarters (the brick structure with three brick arches and protective dirt and sod on top of the structure), which were built slightly later (c.1798-1808), and which still survive and stand out so prominently. **That is the most visible fort structure that still exists on the site today.**

The “block-house” (no longer standing) was a squarish brick building with a hipped roof (meaning a roof with slopes on all four sides that slanted downward from a ridge-line or point at the top), which served as officers’ quarters. It was apparently located on the upper parade ground — since its upper section is visible in the c.1860 drawing by Benton Lossing, as well as in a painting after that drawing in the Marblehead Museum collection. (See “Illustrations” document that accompanies this report.)

The Marblehead fort’s new officers' quarters or “block-house” was probably similar to one built at Fort Pickering at about the same time, also penned under Rochefontaine’s direction, on top of the subterranean brick magazines (as Marblehead’s probably was). The Salem block-house drawing shows a four-sided building with a hip-roof topped by a cupola that served as a sentry look-out box. Marblehead’s probably looked very much like it — including what looks like a cupola in the images of it noted above. (See Figure 11 & 11a in the “Illustrations” document that accompanies this report.)

Note: Although Stephen Rochefontaine had come to America in 1778 as a military engineer and served in the Revolution, then worked on most of New England's sea-coast forts in the 1790s, he was dismissed from the American Army in 1798 due to his French origins and background — despite his skilled military engineering experience and his valuable service to the Continental Army during the Revolution and to the fledgling U.S. military for many years after that, right up until that unfair dismissal.

1794 May 21 Salem’s loquacious Reverend William Bentley recorded: “This day I visited Marblehead with intention to examine the Neck which forms their harbour, but not having my compass I was obliged to content myself with a very superficial surveyWe...came to the Sea Bank called river’s head. We passed on the outer side, & on the further part we saw the new works [a newly constructed sea wall] against which the public has so much complained. We found the Stones thrown up at considerable height

as we approached the Neck...[A detailed description of a particular residence and 3 remaining (of formerly 12) houses barns and fish houses on the Neck follows:]

“The point opposite the Fort & which makes the mouth of the Harbour is called Point Black Jack & within it is formed a Cove called Carders Cove. The Fort was erected on a Headland below the Town & which is never separated at the highest tide from the mainland, & beyond it lays Orne** Island, which can be approached on land only at the ebb. Above the Fort lays Ingolls’ beach upon which Leslie landed his troops at the commencement of the war in 1775.” * (Bentley v. 2, p. 91)

[* Note: That event was on 26 February 1775, seven weeks before the first shots of the Revolution on Lexington Green and at the North Bridge in Concord on the 19th of April. See 1775 Feb. 26, earlier in this report.]

[**Note: *The island to the west of the fort, and closest to the fort, is Gerry’s Island, whose name refers to Elbridge Gerry’s father, Captain Thomas Gerry, commander of the fort in the 1740s and 1750s, who owned that easterly island of the two in Little Harbor from 1750 until his death in 1774. Orne’s Island was the island farther west. It became known as Brown’s Island sometime after 1797, and then, in the mid-1900s, as Crowninshield Island. Those names all refer to its partial ownership by the brothers Joshua and /or then Azor Orne from the mid-1700s until 1797, when their sequential widow Mary married John Brown, passing through many Brown descendants until 1918. That year (when World War I ended), that westerly island came into full ownership by the Crowninshield family, which had owned the other portion of it starting in 1887, when it passed to Benjamin Williams Crowninshield, who advocated for the return of the Fort to Marblehead from the U.S. government — and for removal of fort embankments on the western land that had been leased in 1864 for expansion of the fort during the Civil War. That western island was donated by Louise du Pont Crowninshield to the land trust called The Trustees of Reservations in 1955, and the eastern island (“Gerry’s”) was donated to The Trustees by Ted and Julie Moore in 2017. Both are therefore now preserved in perpetuity.]*

1794 Jun 13 “RocheFontaine intends to remedy the complaints against forts in barbet without embrasures by raising the parapet, & elevating the guns upon high & new constructed carriages. He prefers the situation of the old fort [at Salem], which he will contract, & mentions two cannon at the Juniper.” [Juniper Point / Fort Lee] (Bentley v.2, p. 94)

1794 Jun 17 “RocheFontaine has been staking out our [Salem’s] intended new fort.” (Bentley v.2, p. 94)

[Note: This fort was Salem’s oldest and principal fort, which was later renamed Fort Pickering. (It was not Fort Lee, which had been established circa 1776). (See “1800” for notes about the new names of the Marblehead and Salem forts c.1800.) Salem’s Fort Pickering eventually had a moat around it.

1794 Jun 18 “As RocheFontaine has staked out the fort [at Salem] it will be within the present [Bentley then gives rough paced out dimensions 46, 39, 49, 26] but the SW line is the present brick wall & the fort is to be continued on that side into the outer works, & the barracks are to be removed.” (Bentley v.2, p.95)

1794 June 21 “Pleasure of dining with Gen. Fiske in the company of Gen. [Col.] RocheFontaine, the Engineer appointed to survey &c. forts &c. I found him an agreeable [*sic*] man.” (Bentley v.2, p.95)

1794 June 21 That same day, **Engineer Rochefontaine added notes to his drawings of the proposed renovation of the fort** (which was still simply called the fort at Marblehead):

“The shaded lines represent the redoubt which is to be erected as soon as his Excellency the governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts [Samuel Adams] has given his approbation to the plan. The dotted lines represent the old battery which is to be left in the state it is now in to serve as a covered communication from the town to the fort. Capitals A, B, C, D, E, Enclosed Redoubt to cover the block House from the fire of the shipping & to contain seven pieces of Canon for the defense of the Harbor of Marblehead.

The parapets will be supported inside with the wall of dry stones 2 feet thick at least and faced only toward the redoubt. The height of that wall must calculate upon the that object of covering the block house, it is to say to be 6 or 7 feet high and the parapet thus supported is to be about 1 foot higher. The back part of the redoubt is to be enclosed with a wall of stone or brick 18 inches thick, 9 feet high and pierced with loopholes. Its erection from A & E to the Blockhouse. The plan traced on the ground is exactly like this except CDE brought nearer to the Blockhouse to cover it with much less expense. 20,000 bricks made be contracted for to be furnished on the spot as soon as possible, also, conditional one, might be pressed for the parapet wall but to begin only after the arrival of his Excellency’s consent, the plan for the Blockhouse Will be then sent.”

Salem June 21 1794

Rochfontaine
Engineer

Note on the Blockhouse reads:

**“Block house for the Garrison
To live in & the Powder Magazine”**

1794 Sep 3 “Had a walk from the [Marblehead] fort with Gen. Rochefontaine. He has been laying out the fort & buildings, & the work is to begin immediately.” (Bentley was with a committee that further established the boundary between Marblehead and Salem.) (Bentley v.2, p. 103)

1797 Marblehead is one of 9 of the 16 forts recommended for improvements for U.S. defense back in 1794 which remains ungarrisoned. (It remains without a garrison until 1799.) But the U.S. Engineers Dept. recommends to Congress that some basic repairs be funded for those improvements, though the specific work done here (if any) and the amount spent is not known.

1798-1800 Because there was a so-called “Quasi War” [undeclared, but hostilities occurred] with France for two years, **Henry Burbeck** was made chief engineer in place of Rochefontaine, who was French. A Patriot artillery officer during the American Revolution, Henry Burbeck was the son of Lt. Col. William Burbeck. a former British colonial officer in the ordnance department and second in command of Castle William in Boston Harbor before joining the Patriot side as an artillery commander. He (Henry) was in Boston in 1809 and 1813, and may have added several structures to Rochefontaine’s upper redoubt and blockhouse, including building the bomb-proof structure attached to the old magazine and fronting on the upper level parade.

- 1798 Oct.1-2 “The workmen at the fort [probably in Salem] trying to get an advance of thirty dollars for their labor. One platform on the north quarter is finished in stone, but the fort otherwise remains the same.” (Bentley v.2, p. 284) [Much of the stone construction of the Salem fort still remains there.]
- 1798 Oct. 9 “Association at Marblehead & my turn to preach. The congregation thin at the old Church. Walked around the town. Visited the Fort. It is now without men. A Sergeant & three men were stationed there for three months. The new brick building of Rochefontaine & the wooden house of the old fort are standing, & the latter repaired. Nothing is finished. They have proved [tested with a double charge of powder] their Cannon & [they] now remain dismounted. Six pieces, three of which are good, 2 of 42 pounders & one 24 pounder & there are 2 of 18 and one of nine [pounder]. (Bentley v.2, p. 284)
- 1798-1801 **PLAN** Further alterations were carried out under Major Louis Tousard, another Engineer of French descent. The fort was expanded to include the remaining Revolutionary War-era structures, and a casemated powder magazine and bombproof barracks were added. (Thompson, Army Corps of Engineers)
- Tousard had lost an arm at the siege of Rhode Island in 1778, went back to France, then in 1795 returned to the U.S. and its new Army to serve as an engineer under President Washington (the Com-mander-in-Chief of the new U.S. Army). By 1800 Tousard was a lieutenant colonel and Inspector of Artillery. As Inspector, he supervised the construction of several forts along the eastern seaboard of the U.S., and the construction and testing of cannons. In 1809 he published *The American Artillerist's Companion, or Elements of Artillery*, a book that became the basic manual for U.S. artillerymen. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_de_Tousard
- Plans for the Marblehead Fort at this period were probably lost in 1814, when a half dozen government buildings in Washington, DC were burned by British troops in August 1814, during the War of 1812.***
- 1799** Nine forts were to be garrisoned that year, including Marblehead’s, which was “repaired and manned by a small detachment from Boston.” (Wade, p.57)
- 1799 background The threat of war with either France or England reached its peak in 1799, the year former first U.S. President George Washington died (in December) and two years after John Adams of Massachusetts was elected as the new nation’s second President. U.S. Congressional appropriations for defense increased significantly in 1798 and even more so in 1799. Marblehead, however, received no appropriations in 1798, and only \$6,000 in 1799. (Wade, p.56)
- (For comparison, Newport, RI received \$50,000 in 1799 while NYC received \$30,000 (each) in 1798 and 1799, Philadelphia \$51,000 and \$43,000, and Charleston SC \$4,200 and \$11,500. Eight other coast fortifications received comparatively smaller amounts.) Wade pointed out that “no federal funds were expended for Boston Harbor forts because those fortifications remained a state responsibility since Massachusetts declined to cede those fort sites to the U.S. government — whereas Marblehead and Salem’s forts were federally funded. (See Wade, p.56-57)
- 1800 July Henry Burbeck assumed the duties of Chief of Artillerists and of Engineers (both regiments), because Louis Tousard of the U.S. Army’s 2nd Regiment had become the army’s Inspector of Artillery two years previous.

1800 Dec.1 Burbeck assumed command of fortifications along the Atlantic Seaboard and in the Eastern and Middle States, including the Georgia frontier. (Henry Burbeck Papers, William L. Clements Library, Michigan)

1800 – 1802 The commander of Fort Sewall and Fort Pickering was Captain Alexander D. Pope. In 1802 and 1803, a detachment from commander Daniel Freeman’s Company took charge. (Robert Arthur, “*Coastal Forts of Colonial Massachusetts*” cited in Wade, Appendix H, p.248)

c. 1800 The newly renovated fort was named Fort Sewall in honor of Samuel Sewall, a former congressman and Marblehead resident who was appointed to the Massachusetts Supreme Court in 1800. He would become Chief Justice in 1814, though he would die soon after, in June of that year. (Thompson, Lossing, others)

Samuel Sewall of Marblehead (1757-1814) was born in Boston, graduated from Harvard in 1776 & 1779, married Abigail Devereux of Salem (1766-1847) in 1781, and set up a law practice in Marblehead. In 1783, he served as an early member of the Mass. state legislature, and again for eight years, from 1788 to 1796. From 1796 to 1800, he represented Massachusetts in the U.S House of Representatives, and from 1800 to 1814 he served as a judge of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, becoming Chief Justice in 1814. In June that year, he died suddenly at Wiscasset (still in the state of Massachusetts’ District of Maine at that time, until Maine entered the Union as a separate state in 1820), while holding a court session there.

Marblehead’s Samuel Sewall was the great-grandson of the more famous Samuel Sewall of Boston (1652-1730) who kept a diary and presided at the witchcraft trials, and was the only judge to regret that and apologize during his lifetime.

Notes about the two forts at Salem:

The principal fort in Salem (whose fort was first established in 1643) was re-named **Fort Pickering** in October 1798 by the U.S. Secretary of War at that time (former American Revolutionary War army surgeon James McHenry of Ireland then Philadelphia then Maryland), in honor of **Timothy Pickering** of Salem (1745-1829), who was appointed as the second U.S. Secretary of War (1795, under first President George Washington) and the third U.S. Secretary of State (1795-1800, under George Washington and again under John Adams), then a U.S. Senator (1803-11) and a U.S. Congressman (1813-17) during the War of 1812. (McHenry succeeded Gen. Pickering as Secretary of War, serving from 1796 to 1800.)

During the Revolution, Pickering had served in the Continental Army under General Washington, first as a Colonel (1775-77), then as Adjutant General (1777-80), and finally Quarter-Master General of the Army (1780-84). Though considered by Washington to be a “great military genius,” he was a controversial figure to others.

Salem’s other fort (Fort Lee) was probably named after Revolutionary War General Charles Lee) from the time it was first built in 1776 at the point of Salem Neck, atop Juniper Point, where guns had previously occasionally been mounted when needed. No early wooden structures survive there, though its earthwork ramparts retain their original four-point star shaped form. (see [Fort Lee \(historicsalem.org\)](http://historicsalem.org))

1802 The Marblehead fort is repaired for the Second System of Defense, at a cost of \$6,200. The fort, now at its height, can quarter 40 men and 2 officers, and is equipped with a spring of water and eight 18-pound guns mounted on the gun platforms. (Army Corps of Engineers).

- 1803 As tensions with France and England continue, the forts at Salem and Marblehead are manned by detachments from Fort Independence (the colonial “Castle Island”) in Boston Harbor (at the eastern edge of South Boston, below Logan Airport). (Wade, p. 92)
- 1805, Feb. 16 “Marblehead Dock is under a Committee from the General Court.... Questions of whether to enclose from Peachy Head to Orne’s Island & so shut up only Little Harbour... or to extend the breastworks from Orne’s to Gerry’s Island or still farther to Fort point & cut through Fort Neck...It is opposed by [Marblehead resident] Capt. [John] Selman who has built [new ?] works [unspecified] upon his rights, [location unknown] & expence is beyond the finances at Marblehead.” (Bentley v. 3 p 141)
- 1806 Jan. 13 “I spent the day at Marblehead with Capt. John Prince. Our old friend Ashley Bowen [chronicler of 18th c. Marblehead in his *Journals*] was with us and gave us some of his long but not cold stories. The old man put fire enough into them...The singular freedom of speaking and acting which characterizes Marblehead, proves their sincerity but makes a mixed impression on a stranger who does not know the cause of it....” (Bentley v. 3 p 211)
- 1808 Jan. 26 “The travelling artillery destined for Salem has reached us [in Salem]. Three 24 pounders were displayed this day on their carriages upon Crowninshield Wharf. One of them was discharged. The shot passed the fort to the aquae vitae [the waters beyond Salem harbor] & struck the water in the northern part of that Ledge. The distance short of one mile. The soldier at the fort informed me that he stood at the fort to see the shot strike. Several attempts to force shot have reached about the same place.” (Bentley v.3 p. 341)
- 1808 Feb. **Engineer Joseph Gardner Swift** was promoted to Major and assigned to the Eastern Department of coastal defense, covering the New England coast. Repairs to Stephen Rochefontaine’s works at Salem, Marblehead and Gloucester were made under Swift’s direction c.1804 to 1809 due to new British threats to American seamen and shipping, since the forts were generally in good enough condition to simply be repaired rather than replaced. Various sheds, storehouses, and shot furnaces (one on each of the upper and lower parade grounds) were also added. Parapets generally kept the same form they had from when they fort was extended during the Revolution, but some were thickened. A brick wall was added along the fort’s long western boundary, where a new stone wall was added alongside the new slope of the newly accessible pathway that was laid in 2020 after granite substrate was blasted away). (See 1820 plan by the Army Engineers Department, which documented those changes.)
- 1808 Sep. 16 “Gen. Dearborn, Sec. of War, in town & Major Swift, who has charge of our fortifications. I was in company with Col. Harthorne at the fort with them. The General has a good person and & great firmness. The Maj^r is modest & well informed. ” (Bentley v. 3 p. 384)
- “The Secretary also decided to reduce the size of the ‘Eastern district,’ comprising all of New England, which had been assigned to Major Joseph G. Swift, as the entire coastline northeast of Portland [in Maine] would probably have to be defended [with the District of Maine still remaining part of Massachusetts until 1820] ...about 1 April, Dearborn wrote to Major Moses Porter, [who was] then on leave in Massachusetts, assigning him responsibility for surveying the exposed coast for the best locations for

beach defense guns. Major Swift, who retained responsibility for the coast from Portland to New London [CT], made some preliminary surveys of his area, and selected ‘*Naugus Head at Salem* [on the northwest tip of the main Marblehead peninsula, on the east side of Salem harbor], *Black Point on the Merrimack* [River], *Kittery* [Maine, still part of MA] *opposite Fort Constitution, New Hampshire, Spring Point and House Island at Portland* [Maine], *for new positions for defensive works.*’ He also proposed to repair the works erected by Stephen Rochefontaine at Marblehead and Gloucester, which he found in surprisingly good condition.”
(Wade, p.129, citing and quoting part of Dearborn’s letter *in italics*)

1808 Dec. “Status of seacoast fortifications as of December 1808”: “The fort at this place ... has been repaired.” (Report of Secretary of War Henry Dearborn (in *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Washington 1832-61, vol. I, p.236-239) printed in Wade, Appendix F, p.236 [to 241])

1809 After Congress lifted President Thomas Jefferson’s seacoast embargo of 1807 (which closed U.S. ports to trade, devastating the economies of most U.S. seaports) in 1809 (three days before Jefferson left office), most defensive fortifications along the seacoast were again repaired, renovated, or constructed as part of the national Second System of Seacoast Defense (1807-1810), since fortifications from the First System had already fallen into disrepair (Wade, p. 142).

1809 when ? Minor renovations occurred at Fort Pickering and Fort Sewall, which “mounted eight guns, with room for twelve more.” (Wade, p. 140)

Generally speaking, the Fort was enlarged to 20 guns between 1795 and 1810.

1809 May 11-13 Rev. Wm. Bentley wrote: “Much ridicule is spent upon the Cape Ann Fort at the harbour. [Gloucester]. It is said that it fell at the mere concussion upon firing a gun. ... Cape Ann Fort did fall & Capt. Ranie [Ranney] who is in command in this district, supposed [it was due to the fortifications] being built in frosty weather [,] but if we may judge from occasional labours here, from the incapacity of the undertakers, as the public was shamefully imposed upon in this quarter. The Capt. tells me we are to have a flag at the fort in Salem, as we now have a few guns for firing. The greater part of the soldiers are in the fort at Marblehead under Lieut. [first name ?] Welsh.”
(Bentley, v. 3, p. 432) [*ck. Mhd. Mus. Archives 1810 leger.*]

1809 Ag.-Sep. U.S. Army Chief Engineer Henry Burbeck, after his arrival in Boston in August of 1809, began a tour of the forts in the northeast with the newly appointed Secretary of War (later MA Gov.) William Eustis. Burbeck spent the next three years traveling between New York and Washington DC as Chief Engineer. (FCD 1975 research)

1809 Oct. 9-12 “This morning with several friends, accompanied Mr. Pope* to Marblehead. We were received with great attention. The guns at the Fort were discharged... We called on Mr. [John] Selman a worthy patriot & were conducted to the Fort through the principal streets of the Town.” Pope and Bentley dined in Marblehead on the 12th when they were “... received at Mr. Wilson’s & a company met us at Rhea’s Tavern. They provided us a handsome dinner, received us cordially & after tea at Capt. Wilson’s we returned to Salem. The second visit after every attempt to accommodate us had not the zest which distinguished our first visit. The Officers of the Fort with us.” (Bentley v.3, p. 467)

Note: *This “Pope” may have been Alexander D. Pope who commanded Forts Sewall (Marblehead) and Pickering (Salem) in 1800-1802, or his father the author John Pope, or their cousin the Honorable Senator John Pope (1770-1845), republican (old style) from Kentucky, who became Senate President in 1810. An ardent supporter of John Quincy Adams, his wife was the sister of Adam’s wife Louisa. (The latter Pope had lost his arm during his youth and was known as “One-Arm Pope.”) (wikipedia)

(John Quincy Adams (1767-1848) was the son of second President John Adams and his wife Abigail. In 1777, at age 11, during the Revolution, the younger Adams had sailed to Europe on a Marblehead vessel commanded by Capt. Samuel Tucker of Marblehead, along with his father who was seeking Dutch and French financial and other aid for America’s Revolution. Later, during his father’s presidency, and periodically in between various political offices later on, the younger Adams was a diplomat in Europe (as his father had been) under 1st, 2nd & 4th Presidents Washington, Adams and Madison, a MA state Senator (1802-03) and a U.S. Senator from Mass. (1803-08, including during the 1807-09 U.S. coastal Embargo prior to the War of 1812), then U.S. Secretary of State (1817-25 under President James Monroe), then sixth U.S. President (1825-29), then a U.S. Congressman from Mass. 1831-48 for 17 years, until his death in 1848 — just 3 years after the death of his friend, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Joseph Story of Marblehead then Salem (1779-1845), who had been appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1811, when he was just 32.

1809 - 10 “On a peninsula that projects eastward of Salem is Marblehead, a town celebrated for its activity in the fisheries....A fort, erected close to the village, is provided with nineteen or twenty guns, but has no garrison. Belonging to the scenery of the place are its stacks of fish.” (Kendall’s Travels in the United States 1807-1810 v.3, p.28-9)

1809 - 1812 Capt. (later Col.) Stephen Ranney, from Litchfield, CT, who served in both the Revolution and the War of 1812 (1812-15), was in charge of Fort Sewall and Fort Pickering from 1809 to 1812. In his book *Artillerist and Engineers*, Wade lists the men in charge of Fort Pickering and Fort Sewall from c.1794 to 1815. (Wade, Appendix H, p.248)

Note: A receipt exists for Stephen Ranney and Stephen Ranney Jr. (probably the Capt. Ranney noted above), who had been a Surgeon’s Mate during the Revolution [in Col. Comfort Sage’s (3d) CT Regiment / Wadsworth’s Brigade], noting that he had lost clothing during the retreat from Long Island on Sep. 15, 1776 (either some-time after the retreat on August 27, or during or after the Battle of Harlem Heights on Sept. 16, 1776 — or perhaps, on his pension application years later, he simply conflated the two battles as an error of recollection). He was wounded in the leg and hands at the Battle of Monmouth in 1780 and was presented with a sword by Lafayette for his gallantry there. His fourth wife, whom he married in 1812, toward the end of his tenure at the Marblehead and Salem forts, was Elizabeth Hathorn of Salem, MA (d.1822, age 39), a descendant of one of the judges in the Salem witchcraft trials and a relative of another descendant, author Nathaniel Hawthorne (originally Hathorn). (Findagrave.com)

1810 Feb. 21 Rev. William Bentley recorded that he attended a funeral for Hiram Howe, 25, a soldier from Litchfield, CT in Capt. Ranney’s Company at Fort Pickering, who drowned between Cat Cove & Winter Island and was buried with military honors in a grave near the [Salem] Pest House. (Bentley)

- 1810 Feb. 22 “Notice of the birth of Washington and a few guns fired [at the Salem fort, but likely at Marblehead’s fort as well] irregularly in the evening... A few flags were hoisted but nothing general.” “This shows how party [politics] may injure names in the best circumstances.” [as political rivalry impeded the celebration]. (Bentley v.3 p. 500)
- 1810 Feb. 24 “The U.S. troops at Marblehead fort appeared on Naugus Head & performed all their evolution & firing & then at sundown returned to the fort.” (Bentley v.3 p. 500)
- 1810 Mar. 21 “Went with Mr.[John] Prout to the Fort of Salem. The 2nd Lt. commands. They have 22 men. The Captain takes his quarters at Marblehead with the first Lieut. The recruits which are ordained in this quarter are to be sent to Salem. The Cannon at the fort are all dismounted & the Carriages housed by order.” (Bentley v.3 p. 505-6)
- 1810 July 11 “Capt. Rannie [sic] has the M[arblehead] Fort in excellent order & under the north wall has furnished himself with a good garden. From the appearance of the walls on the neck it is not in so high cultivation as formerly & probably has not so many inhabitants.” (Bentley v.3, p. 431)
- 1810 Oct. 15 Essex County / Marblehead census lists: “United States Soldiers in Fort Sewall under Command of Cap^t. Stepⁿ Ranney.....47 [men, age 26 to 45] ...3 [men, age 45 and upwards].” The younger men would probably be enlisted and the older men likely were officers.
- 1811 Dec. “Report of the Secretary of War on Seacoast Fortifications and Batteries, Dec. 1811”: “Marblehead – Fort Sewell [sic]; situated on the west point of the entrance into the harbor; an enclosed work of masonry and sods, mounting eight heavy cannon, covered by a block house ...” (Report of Secretary of War Henry Dearborn (in *American State Papers, Military Affairs*, Washington 1832-61, vol. I, p.307-311) printed in Wade, p.243, Appendix G, p.242 to 247])
- 1812 June 18 War against England is declared on June 18/19, 1812. A total of 1,121 men and boys from Marblehead would serve — mostly as captains and crews on board privateer vessels. But 100 were in the Marblehead Light Infantry, and others were in the U.S. Navy on board officially chartered frigates. By the war’s end by the Treaty of Ghent in February 1815, and well into that year, about half of those men and boys still remained as POWs – mostly in England’s notorious Dartmoor Prison (built in 1813 for American as well as French prisoners of war from England and Europe’s long-running Napoleonic Wars, which ended in 1815). This would prompt the establishment of the Marblehead Female Humane Society by the Marblehead Unitarian Church’s Rev. John Bartlett in 1816, for relief of widows and orphans as a result of that and the losses of men and boys in that war. (See Samuel Roads *History and Traditions of Marblehead* for much detail about the years during and leading up to the War of 1812, and Robert Booth, *The Women of Marblehead* for the intense impact of this much-forgotten war on the townspeople of Marblehead, and its economic recovery afterward.)
- 1813 During the War of 1812, the presence of British sloops in the bay prompted the U.S. to muster a company at Fort Sewall under the command of Capt. John Bailey (1761-1828) of Marblehead. (Roads, p. 313)**
- “The town was divided into two wards, and all the able-bodied men remaining at home were enlisted into companies and detailed for guard duty The Marblehead Light Infantry, which now numbered 100 men in its ranks, acted as a reserve force

to be called upon in case of an attack. A company was also recruited and mustered into the service of the United States, for duty at Fort Sewall. This company was under the command of Capt. John Bailey, and Joshua O. Bowden, the efficient commander of the Light Infantry, was its first lieutenant. Guards were stationed along the coast, on the Neck, and at various localities in the town, for the purpose of alarming the inhabitants should an attack be made. On several occasions the alarm gun was heard, and the citizens rushed to arms; but in every instance the vigilant sentinels were mistaken, and no attack was made. These precautionary measures were not adopted by the town, however, without sufficient cause. The British cruisers had become so bold that in several instances unarmed American vessels were captured within full sight of the shore, and almost within range of the guns of the fort.” (Roads, p.313)

Capt. Bailey assumed his role as Commander of Fort Sewall at age 54, after service in the Revolutionary War at sea while a teenager, followed by an Atlantic trading career in the mid-1790s, including to southern France. His handsome pastel portrait, painted in France in the 1790s, when he was in his 30s, is now displayed in Abbott Hall. (Robert Booth) (Marblehead Historical Comm. Collection, formerly in collection of descendant Helen Paine (Mrs. E.C.) Doane.)

After Capt. Bailey died in 1828 at age 67, his wife took over the care of the Fort. (Robert Booth)

1813 Feb. 4 “Was at Marblehead at the funeral of Capt. Ashley Bowen [1728-1813] my old friend. He fell sometime since from a deck & was injured. Lately on a step & was confined. He died after a short illness, probably from a mortification. The same firm man. With all his prejudices & with sacred attachment to British everything, Navy, Church, State, so much did he love the memory of 1759 & his intimate friendship with Cooke the Circumnavigator.

I had the consent of the Capt. at the Fort for the troops in procession, but the wife refused. The Cong. minister prayed at the house & the Eng. Ep[iscopal] at the Grave. He was interred in a spot chosen by himself in the New M[ee]ting H[ouse] ground, with his kindred, but so as to rise & face St. Michael’s Church [at the resurrection of Saints, in which Bowen firmly believed]. He was a man of as fine stamina of life as I ever knew. His understanding quick, his pursuit eager, resolute & inexhaustible. His probity sure & undisguised.

His friendship sovereign & eternal. My father was with him among the Carpenters of 1759, when he was among the seamen. Mr. Bowen had his journals, his plans, his notices of all occurrences, but he was as completely [in]formed upon the Quebec expedition as the human mind can admit & his last thought as powerful as his first.”

(Rev. William Bentley, as quoted in PCF Smith, Ashley Bowen, 1728-1813, Journals)

1813 August Tensions are high due to potential threats from Britain’s war-time activities and naval blockade of most of the Atlantic Coast. “On one occasion, ... two English ships of war sailed close into the Neck and captured six coasting vessels which were bound to Boston. During this period of excitement, two men were killed by the guards in the public streets of the town. Both of the unfortunate incidents occurred in the night, when it was impossible for the sentinels to see who was approaching. One of the victims was a young man named Joseph Butman, who was foolishly trying to alarm the sentinel stationed at the Town House. The other was a negro known as Black Charley, who was shot by the sentinel stationed at Lovis Cove. Charley was on his

way home from a dancing party, where he had performed the important service of fiddler, and being somewhat deaf, it is presumed did not hear the challenge of the guard. These sad events cast a general gloom over the community and were deeply regretted; but the stern necessities of war demanded that the guards should be commended for the faithful performance of duty.” (Roads, p.314)

1814 Feb. British prisoners of war are transferred to the dungeons of Fort Sewall. (Roads, p.315)

1814 March 3 A town meeting is held to consider the petition of Captain John Brown and others regarding concerns about holding British prisoners at the fort, and a vote to for a committee of three people to send a petition to the U.S. government protesting the use of the fort to hold these prisoners, as the fort is felt to be too vulnerable to attack, being on the coast, should the English navy attempt to retrieve their captured servicemen. (Town Records)

(See also Roads p.315, Lord & Gamage p.212 (their reference to the locals’ concern about this, also quoted in Appendix 2 and the end of this report), and 1814 Aug. 9 in this report for account of those English prisoners’ subsequent transfer to Halifax.)

Apr. 3, 1814 Early on a Sunday morning, two British frigates are spotted chasing the *U.S.S. Constitution*, which had run the British blockade en route to Boston harbor for repairs (though she had changed course to aim for Portsmouth due to the pursuing British vessels). The British frigates have superior speed and firepower. One of them, the *Tenedos*, gains on *Constitution*. *Constitution* pumps its bilge, throws provisions overboard (including the rum, which was the last to go), and seeks refuge in Marblehead Harbor. Many of *Constitution's* crew are from Marblehead and know the harbor intimately*; quartermaster Samuel Harris Greene pilots the ship between Marblehead Rock and the Neck (with certified pilot Knott Martin, also of Marblehead, on board, later receiving “half pilotage” **), and *Constitution* drops anchor at 1:30 pm under the shelter of the fort’s guns. The British vessels cannot follow without charts of the rocks and channels — so, observing that the fort's cannons are aimed at them, the pursuing ships turn around and retreat out to sea. (Many sources recount this event, including *Marblehead Messenger* 7/10/31, Lord & Gamage, and USS Constitution Museum research. One of the best is by former USS Constitution Museum researcher Matt Brenkle: <https://ussconstitutionmuseum.org/2014/04/02/a-marblehead-escape/>. He found the co-piloting information later; so, for that, see Further note below.)

Note: * It has been estimated that nearly 20% of the *Constitution's* crew during the first two decades after she was built (1794 to 1797) were from Marblehead.

Further note **, re: piloting the *USS Constitution* into Marblehead harbor:
 “The United States Navy Department To Knott Martin for the Frigate Constitution April 3 1814 To half Pilotage of the Frigate from Sea to Marblehead drawing 22 ½ feet [Constitution’s draft] \$28.46” (4th Auditor’s Settled Accounts, RG 217, National Archives; selected information transcribed by CDR Tyrone G. Martin.)
 “Quartermaster Samuel Green was in fact piloting the ship, but Navy regulations required a certified pilot on board when entering a port, which Martin apparently fulfilled.” (That information above according to former USS Constitution Museum researcher Matthew Brenkle and *USS Constitution* civilian historian Margherita Desy, USN NHHC DET Boston.)

Later that day, *Constitution* sails to Salem’s more sheltered harbor (once the British frigates had sailed away from the area, since she was still at potential risk at the mouth of Marblehead harbor), then safely back to her home port of Boston Harbor about two weeks later. The pilot from Marblehead Harbor into Salem harbor was Capt. Joseph Perkins, a ship’s pilot from Salem who was on Baker’s Island that Sunday and saw the frigate’s danger, predicament, and continued vulnerability at the mouth of Marblehead Harbor.

The two paragraphs below are by the ed.[s] of *The Diary of Rev. William Bentley*:

“On [that] Sunday, in the middle of the service, one of the Parish, Capt. George Crowninshield, came to the western end window, which was in the pew of Deacon James Brown, and told him of the rumor that the *Constitution* was in Marblehead harbor, in danger of capture by two British cruisers. Dr. Bentley stopped at once to inquire ‘Mr. Brown, is there any news?’ And when the news was reported he said, “This is a time for action not words, let us go to do what we can to save the *Constitution* and may God be with us, Amen.” Seizing his hat, he rushed out with the men, each resolved to do and dare his utmost.

A highly esteemed member of his parish, Capt. Joseph Perkins, was keeper of the light on Baker's island. He was a most skillful pilot and knew every rock, shoal and channel of the locality. He saw the Constitution's peril and resolved to save her as he alone could. He went to her in his little boat and assumed his duty as pilot. The tide was at ebb and the commander of the frigate seeing the shoal water in the little channels through which the pilot was steering the precious vessel, so dear to the country and to him, was dismayed at the risk. However, the pilot persevered till he had brought her into a safe place* under the protection of our forts. What a thanksgiving there was over this heroic feat of her salvation by our brave and skillful townsman.”

In November 1897, a Salem resident, Marguerite Dalrymple, then in her 87th year, recounted the events of that momentous day in 1814 (when she was seven years of age, but still recalled the events clearly), from memory, and without notes, before the Woman's Alliance of the Second Church, Salem, Mass. Miss Dalrymple had been in the East Church, which then stood at the corner of Essex and Hardy Streets, on that Sunday when Dr. Bentley closed the service and started for Marblehead “to help save the frigate *Constitution*.” (Ed., *Bentley Diary*)

1814 Aug. 9 Selman Journal: The newspaper gives an account of the English “hostages” that were in Marblehead Fort being released and were to be sent in a cartel to Halifax. (Roads)

1817 President James Monroe visits Fort Sewall (*Marblehead Messenger*, 7/10/31)

1820 **PLAN** **The fort and its 1794-1801 renovations are documented by plans drawn by Major William (formerly Guillaume) Tell Poussin circa 1820.** This plan includes the “Bombproof” structure, Officer's Quarters, and outbuildings. (US Army Corps of Engineers) Notes on this and a second plan by Major Poussin dated 1820 showing profiles through the fort parapets, indicate that a square brick building with a hipped roof on the Upper Parade was an Officers Quarters, and the subterranean stone masonry “Bomb Proof Quarters” on the Lower Parade was for enlisted men. Two small square masonry structures labeled “Furnace” were brick ovens for hot shot used to set enemy vessels on fire. Other buildings such as storage sheds and probable privies are scattered along the perimeter of the parade grounds. Below the parapet facing the town is a “Dock Yard” with a large square building shown with stalls suggesting it was

a stable. Joints depicted / illustrated on the timber gun platforms indicate that the fort was designed for approx. 20 guns at that point.

A note on the 1820 Plan says that it was attached to a plan of Marblehead and its Harbor, which is also dated 1820.

A plan of the Naugus Head [west] side of the peninsula was drawn by “Lieuts. McNeill and Whistler Corps Arty” in 1822. So, clearly, yet another leading military engineer apparently worked in the neighborhood of Fort Sewall in the 1820s, and may also have worked on those drawings.

Note: The first name of Lt. **McNeill** is unknown. But the Lieut. Whistler, Engineer in the Corps of Artillery, turns out to have been Lt. **George Washington Whistler**, who was an instructor of engineering drawing at West Point and the father of artist James McNeill Whistler, who was born in Lowell, MA and also attended West Point (when Robert E. Lee was Commandant there), though “his poor performance at chemistry and demerits for behavior” led him to pursue an art career instead of his father’s career in army engineering). And perhaps Lt. Whistler chose his son James’ middle name to honor his colleague Lt. McNeill.

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Washington_Whistler)

1821 Fort is abandoned and left without a caretaker. (Army Corps of Engineers report)

1824 Aug. 31 The Marquis de Lafayette visits Marblehead for the second time. (The first was in 1784.) He is said to have visited the Glovers (Gen. John Glover’s daughter Mary Glover Hooper) and dined at the Lee Mansion, which was owned at this time by the Marblehead Bank (from 1804 until the bank closed shortly before the Lee Mansion was purchased by the Marblehead Historical Society in 1909). In 1789, George Washington had also been received at the Lee Mansion by town officials during his inaugural tour of New England as the first U.S. President.

1835 Tensions between the United States and France, which had been escalating for some years ever since the late 1790s, reach “an all-time high” as President Andrew Jackson and the French imperial government of King Louis Philippe I trade threats and insults over France's refusal to pay the United States reparations which the U.S. government insists France owes from the so-called Quasi-War of the 1790s. (Wikipedia)

(For background on the foreign policy situation in the 1830s that created the defense concerns, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Jackson#Foreign_affairs) As a U.S. president, Jackson was generally popular in Marblehead. He was also about the same age, and lived about the same time and length of years as Marblehead’s Samuel Sewall and Joseph Story.

1835 was also the year of the Texas revolution (by pro-slavery American settlers who won Texas’ independence from Mexico, then demanded annexation into the U.S. as a slave state) and an escalation of national wars against Native American tribes in many areas of the expanding U.S. (many under the two-term presidency of former General Andrew Jackson (1829-1837) and the 1840s, but for decades before and after as well).

1835 Feb. 25 Fort Sewall is in a state of disrepair. The state legislature passes an act in relation to the "Coast Defense of Massachusetts" requiring that coastal forts again be repaired and readied. (Mass. Archives)

Colonel ___ ? Alexander of the U.S. Army visits the fort in order to inspect the area and make recommendations for repair. He finds that the "fort is worth repairing ... [and] ought to be coupled with guns to fire west of Cat Island. The parapet of this fort is in a good state of preservation, covered with grass. Scarp wall visible in places, originally pierced for musketry". (Army Corps of Engineers, Confidential Report on the Condition of Fort Sewall by Col. Joseph Gilbert Totten, Feb. 25, 1835)

The Town appeals to the Governor for financial aid for repairs to Fort Sewall, arguing that the state's act imposes an undue burden on the Town, and that Fort Sewall is of strategic importance to the entire coast, not just the Town of Marblehead. The matter is forwarded to Brig. Gen. [Ebenezer W. ?] Pierce, who meets with the town and assures them that although most of the state money budgeted for coastal fort repairs is already earmarked for rifled cannon, they will eventually receive reimbursement in some form. (Town Records)

1835

Mrs. Maria Twist Perkins takes up residence at Fort Sewall and later becomes the "U.S. agent in charge of the property." Mrs. Perkins whose father and brothers are active in military service, resides in the brick officer's quarters for the next 30 years. In 1860, she entertained historian and traveller Benson Lossing with stories of the carpet she made from her father and brothers' War of 1812 uniforms. (Lossing)

Note: Mrs. Maria Twist Perkins (1801-1874) was the daughter of Martha ('Patty') Pierce Twist (d.1846) and Stephen Twist of Mhd. (d.1844), who also seems to have been affiliated with the Fort until his death. (*note below, "U.S. Pensioner at Fort Sewall" in Marblehead Vital Records:*)

Twist, Stephen, "U.S. Pensioner at Fort Sewall," palsy, Jan. 13, 1844, age 78 y.

Twist, Martha, b. Boston, wid. Stephen, palsy, Sept. 10, 1846, age 76 y. 5 m. 5 d.

Twist, Joseph, Capt., formerly a branch pilot, age 62 y. Issue of Aug. 22, 1837.NR9

Perkins, Maria Twist, b. 1801, d. July 16, 1874, age 73, in Lynn, MA (Town Clerk)

Because Mrs. Perkins began living at the fort in 1835, perhaps she helped her father with his role there as her parents aged, until his death in 1844, when she perhaps took on her official responsibility as "resident agent in charge of the fort." She may have ceased living at the fort by 1861 (when the war began), or sometime shortly after.

Maria Twist Perkins *may* have been married to Capt. Joseph Perkins of Salem (b. ca.1785 - d. after 1834), a Salem ships' pilot and keeper of the twin light-houses on Baker's Island for several years after 1815. (Joseph Perkins (abt.1785-aft.1834) | WikiTree FREE Family Tree) If she was, she might have married him around 1835, the year she moved to the fort (perhaps with him), or a little after, since Capt. Perkins' (first) wife (Elizabeth Hunt of Salem, m. 1810) died in 1834.

The Capt. Joseph Twist listed in the Mhd. Vital Records (*above*), was also a ship's pilot, and must have been a relative of Maria Twist. Capt. Joseph Perkins' role as both a pilot and a resident care-taker under government pay (as Mrs. Perkins was) might indicate a connection between Joseph Twist and Maria Twist Perkins.

[Additional research needs to be done about Maria Twist Perkins and Ft. Sewall between 1835, when she took up residence at the fort, and 1861, when the Civil War began, and the Fort returned to more active management by the U.S. Army. Did she lose her job and home then? or did she stay on at the fort until the brick officers' quarters were removed sometime after 1864? None of that is clear.]

1835 Oct. 10 In this year, Marblehead’s first lighthouse is erected at the point of Marblehead Neck, after a Congressional appropriation of \$4,500. Built of brick, it was a relatively short white tower connected to a small two-story keeper’s house by a covered walkway. It was first lit on October 10, 1835. Its first keeper, until 1860, when he was nearly 70 and nearly blind, after a quarter of a century in that role, was War of 1812 veteran Ezekiel Darling, who had served as a quarter-deck gunner on the U.S.S. *Constitution* and had been injured. The second keeper was Jane Martin of Marblehead, starting in 1860. (Marblehead Lighthouse, Massachusetts at Lighthousefriends.com Also Conly, William, *History of Marblehead Light* and Dolin, Eric Jay, *Brilliant Beacons.*)

Further note about local lighthouses (Baker’s Island Light): In 1816, following a severe storm a year after the War of 1812 ended and a year after the Captain Joseph Perkins mentioned earlier began his tenure on Baker’s Island (through the late teens or early 1820s), the U.S. government replaced the two lights on Baker’s Island with a single temporary light while repairs were made to the two lights. After several shipwrecks due to delays in the repairs, private citizens in Salem, Beverly and Marblehead provided funding so that the repairs could be completed, and two lights were finally reinstated in 1820. Starting in 1825, after an interim keeper and his assistant were killed in a storm, the new keeper of the Baker’s Island lights was Ambrose Martin, assisted by his daughter Jane, who later became the second keeper of Marblehead’s first lighthouse (the low brick building noted above) from 1860 to 1862, during the Civil War. (Bakers Island Light history - NEW ENGLAND LIGHTHOUSES: A VIRTUAL GUIDE)

1849 Sep 10 Marblehead receives an offer to Lease the site of Fort Sewall, with a description of its disgraceful condition by Amory Holbrook, 10 Sept. 1849. (U.S.N.A.) A graduate of Bowdoin College, Holbrook, of Rowley, MA became a Mass. justice of the peace in 1845 and served in the Massachusetts Militia the next year.

In 1850, less than a year after his report about Fort Sewall, he moved with his Marblehead wife Mary Hooper Broughton (1823-1899) to the new Oregon Territory (1848) and became an attorney and politician there. In 1850 he was a Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and became a corresponding member of the Essex Institute in Salem, MA in 1853. Still in Oregon in 1864 (having started a Know Nothing political party there in the early 1860s, in the waning years of that short-lived party), he died in 1866 (either in Oregon or Rowley, MA) and was buried in Rowley. (For more on his career in Oregon, see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amory_Holbrook and <http://archiveswest.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv53027/op=pretrieve.aspx>)

1851 Nov. 1 “To repair old Fort Sewall which may be necessary if the new works are not soon begun, will require ten thousand dollars.” (Report of General (formerly Colonel, in 1835, *above*) Joseph Gilbert Totten on National Defenses, p.58)

1854 May 15 Request by Mrs. Maria Perkins, keeper of the fort, for Repairs to be made to the roof of the Commandant’s House, where she resides. (U.S.N.A.)

1861 April 12 **The Civil War begins**, in the same month the American Revolution did, and less than a century after it. Marblehead musters and sends a regiment by train to Boston, which arrives before any others from Massachusetts. (“First in Revolution, First in ’61...”) Over a thousand men and boys (1,048) will serve in the South and southern campaigns over the next four years. Over one hundred (112) will die, and hundreds will be wounded and/or imprisoned. (See Roads, chapters 17 & 18, and online video: First in '61- Marblehead in the Civil War- Lecture by Don Doliber at the Marblehead Museum.)

Coastal threats are of concern, of course especially as the war continued. Therefore, the fort and other fortifications need to be readied for service

- 1861 Fort is “in ruins.” The fort is surveyed by **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Capt. Charles Blunt**. Many wooden buildings, shot furnaces, and gates had disappeared. But magazines, officers’ quarters structure, and a small wooden house “recently built” are in good condition. Masonry of “bomb-proof” quarters [most visible building, still standing] is “very much damaged” but arches “appear sound.” (Charles E. Blunt, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)
- Without regular use and maintenance, the fort had fallen into near ruins soon after the War of 1812 ended. (Manuel, Dale A.. *“Massachusetts North Shore Civil War Forts”* in *Coast Defense Journal*. vol. 33 no.3 (Summer 2019), McLean, Virginia: CDSG Press)
- 1861 Dec. 18 Drawing notes on Poussin’s plans of ca. 1820 state that “Engineer Dept. Dec. 18, 1861 sent to Capt. Blunt with a letter of this date.” (U.S.N.A. Drawer 18 Sheet 5)
- 1862 Jan. 11 Report on the Condition of Fort Sewall by Capt. Charles E. Blunt. US Army Corps of Engineers (U.S.N.A., cited in McGinley-Kalsow 2014 fort report, but no details)
- 1862 Jan.13 Drawing notes on Poussin’s plans of ca. 1820 State that “Engineer Department Jan. 13, 1862 returned with Capt. Blunt’s letter of Jan. 11, 1862. (B8979)” (U.S.N.A. Drawer 18 Sheet 5)
- 1864 Dec. 3 Quartermaster General requests that Major Blunt cooperate with Capt. J.W. McKim of Boston in locating proposed temporary buildings at Fort Sewall. (U.S.N.A.)
- 1863 Dec 4 -19 Progress Reports on New Construction at Fort Sewall which is nearly complete, by Maj. Charles E. Blunt. (U.S.N.A.)
- 1864 Dec. 10 Acknowledgement of Receipt of letter re. temporary buildings and intention to obtain plans of them from Quartermaster, by Maj. Blunt (U.S.N.A.)
- 1864 early Fort Sewall is enlarged and updated, with addition of an upper parade to the west, barracks, and wooden earthworks magazine.** \$4,000 appropriated by the Town, matched by \$1.25 from the U.S. government for every \$.50 from the Town (\$10,000). (Town Records)
- The bulk of the work includes extending its perimeter to the west to create a larger encampment area. In addition, more permanent gun emplacements are built to the south of the work, and a new magazine added in this southern area. As built, it includes 12 gun emplacements of 24 and 32-pounders (very large cannon!). (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) Laborers are paid \$1.75 a day (50 cents from the town, the rest from Government wages). (Town Records and (Roads) Fort Sewall is garrisoned by Massachusetts companies until the end of the Civil War (Lossing) and is then occasionally used for holding dinners honoring returning veterans (*Marblehead Messenger* 7/10/1931)
- 1864 early The fort is nearly doubled in size, expanding to the west, under U.S. Army engineer Major Charles E. Blunt**, with a “bombproof shelter” added. (Manuel, pg. 27-30) A report on the fort's armament dated January 31, 1865 shows one 24-pounder smoothbore gun, eight 24-pounder rifled guns, and three 32-pounder rifled guns. (Manuel, pg. 39)
- The land to the west had apparently been leased from the Pitman / Brown family. It took many years of efforts for the land to be officially restituted to the family. (see entries for Oct. 28, 1865, 1876, 1881 & 1885 in this report) Evidence of the fortifications can still be seen on an 1882 map of Marblehead (published by O.H. Bailey, Boston Public Library, & online at [Marblehead, Massachusetts - Digital Commonwealth](#))

- 1864 May 31 Completion Report and Request for Garrison for Fort Sewall** by Maj. C. E. Blunt. (U.S.N.A.)
- 1864 summer After the fort is rebuilt, Massachusetts militia troops are garrisoned at the Fort, and 12 [new] pieces of artillery are mounted to defend Marblehead Harbor. A few Confederate prisoners of war were held there. (Matthew Thomas, *Powder Houses of New England*, 2013) [Fort Sewall - en.LinkFang.org](#)
- 1864 May “From May 16 to Aug. 15, 1864 Fort Sewall was garrisoned by the 11th Unattached Company of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia (formerly Company I, 8th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia). On August 15, 1864 the 11th Company was relieved by the 20th Unattached Company (formerly Company E, 4th Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia) which also garrisoned the fort at Salisbury Point in the town of Salisbury. The 20th Company was mustered out shortly after the end of the war on June 29, 1865.” (Ancestry.com, U.S. Returns of Military Posts, 1806-1916, in [Fort Sewall - en.LinkFang.org](#))
- 1865 May 6 Report on Further Work at Fort Sewall including Magazine Entrance, Traverses, and proposed work, by Maj. Charles E. Blunt. (U.S.N.A.)
- after 1864 Brick officers’ quarters (former block-house) disappears sometime after 1864. (FCD / SPNEA 1975) The building is not visible on 1880s maps, though its rooftop appears in a widely published engraving after a drawing by Lossing, and also in a painting in the Museum collection that appears to have been a copy of that engraving. ([PAINTING, FORT SEWALL, EARLY SCENE](#) ([pastperfectonline.com](#)))
- 1865 Oct. 28 After the war’s end, a “Claim for Land Taken for Enlargement of Fort by U.S.” is made by Marblehead resident Henry F. Pitman (1808-1885). (U.S.N.A.)
- 1867 July 17 Letter from Col. Henry Washington Benham transmitting armament schedule for Fort Sewall to Chief of Engineers. (U.S.N.A.)
- 1870s Sgt. _____ McDonald, a civil war veteran, takes over upkeep and maintenance of the fort. (Salem Evening News) [*check for a list of Civil War veterans from Mhd.*]
- 1871 Ordnance Sergeants’ Quarters built for fort keeper. (FCD / SPNEA report)
- 1871 The Town resolves that no earth or gravel is to be dug or removed within eighty feet of the center of the "Old Indian Fort" [[on Naugus Head](#)]. (Town Records)
- 1876 Letter of Brig. Gen. Andrew Atkinson Humphreys, Chief of Engineers, regarding the Fort Sewall property dispute (*see above, October 1865*). (PEM Phillips Library)
- 1879 Cannons are still present at the fort. Report on Fort Sewall Signed 2nd Lieut. Frank S. Harlow of the Artillery at Fort Warren, MA, Dec. 1879: “Fort Sewall, situated at the west entrance of Marblehead Harbor, is an old earth-work, it having been built by the English in 1749....The work was enlarged in 1863 at a cost of \$37,837.92. The title to that portion of the site north and north-west of the line “G” on the drawing (“Boundary of Old Fort”) is in dispute, the case still in the hands of the U.S. Dist. Atty. No flag staff at Post. The land on the Northeastern, eastern, southeastern, southern and southwestern sides of the Fort is covered with rocks and slopes very rapidly to the sea. On the North and west the ground is practically level. One 24 pdr, smooth-bore, Eight 24 pdr. Rifles and three 32 pdr rifles mounted at Post.” (“Major Raymond’s Annual Report for 1884,” cited in 2014 McGinley Kalsow report)

- 1884 Armament Schedule – “From Maj . Raymond's Annual Report for 1884: The post is an old one, at the Northwest extremity of the Harbor of Marblehead, Massachusetts. The fort is a low earth-work of irregular outline, rebuilt and enlarged in 1863-5. The armament of the fort consisted of the following guns: One 32 pdr. [pounder – the weight of the cannon ball] Smooth, three 32 pdrs. and eight 24 pdrs rifled but not banded; all were mounted on wooden carriages, on temporary wooden fir platforms. They have been condemned and sold, and the platforms are entirely worthless. There is one brick magazine and one brick bombproof in fair order, but the wooden magazine and wooden bombproof quarters are worthless. The earth traverses and slopes are generally in fair order, as is also the parapet, although the latter is damaged in places by the undermining action of the sea.” (The latter echoes an ongoing problem.) (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers MSS)
- 1881 April Claim made by Benjamin G. Brown on behalf of his father Samuel H. Brown for land taken for enlargement of Fort by U.S. c.1861-63. (U.S.N.A.) (See also above, Oct. 1865 & 1876, and below, 1885 & 1889)
- 1885 Memorandum on Claim of Henry F. Pitman and Samuel H. Brown for land taken for the enlargement of Fort Sewall c.1861-63. (U.S.N.A.)
- 1888 Wood earthwork magazine of 1864 had fallen in. (FCD / SPNEA report)
- 1889 Fort is turned over to the town of Marblehead by the U.S. government. “The site has been turned over to the town (of Marblehead) to be used as a pleasure ground under the custodianship of Mr. B. W. Crowninshield.”** (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Annual Report for 1889) This was apparently informally.
- 1890** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Annual Report for 1890 states "there are no guns or carriages on hand and no platforms are ready for armament."
- 1890 July 21** The town officially accepts custody of the fort from the U.S. government. **“Art. 6. [Voted] That the Custody of Fort Sewall be accepted be [sic] the town, and that the Board of Selectmen be the Custodians.”** (. (Town Records, bk. 10, p. 300)
- 1890 July Town also votes to appropriate \$5,000 to build an Armory for the use of Company C8 Regiment. (At the same time, \$1,500 was voted for repairs to Abbot Hall.) (Town Records) But the Armory was apparently never built.
- 1892 Upper parade ground is levelled and built upon. (Town Records) What buildings were constructed is not presently known. But in the lower parade ground, a small structure visible in post card photographs (situated near the main brick “bomb-proof” structure from the 1790s) may have been an early “comfort station” built before the current brick restroom building (“comfort station”) was constructed in 1920.
- 1898 April Entire coast is placed on alarm after the U.S.S. *Maine* is blown up in Havana harbor, Cuba, by the Spanish — an event that launches the “Spanish-American War,” which would only last four months.
- 1898 May Plans made by U.S. government to reactivate fort due to the Spanish-American War, but those were not carried out. (Source ?)
- 1898 June Fort Sewall is temporarily reactivated and garrisoned by U.S. volunteers.** (Roads)

“...the 5th Company at Marblehead ... It fell to the lot of certain volunteer “batteries” (companies – see Note below) to reconstruct and man ancient earthworks whose history ran back many years. At **Salem**, Fort Pickering was put into commission; at **Gloucester**, the old Stage Fort where Myles Standish once came near having a battle; near **Portsmouth**, Forts Constitution and McClary; and at **Marblehead**, Fort Sewall. This is very romantic to relate. No doubt the renovated works with their armament of obsolete field pieces could have afforded some protection against Spanish raiders. But those who were called upon to occupy works built for seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century warfare, and modernize them so as to render them useful under twentieth century conditions, agree in testifying that the romance is all in the narrative and not any in the fact.” (for more information, see Frederick Morse Cutler, B.D., First Lt., Chaplain, *The Old First: Massachusetts Coast Artillery in War and Peace*)

Note about the terms “batteries” and “companies”: On June 1st in 1897, “... by act of legislature, the [Massachusetts artillery] regiment received a new name — it became the 1st Regiment of Heavy Artillery. In point of fact ... this act of legislation officially recognized a transition that had already taken place. ... Massachusetts was the first state to have heavy artillery in its militia [of that time, and] the old regiment was again ‘first.’ Companies were rechristened “batteries” in connection with the change of service.” (Cutler)

- early 1900s The fort becomes a popular viewing place once more. Benches are present. Two distinct generations of benches (1890s ? and after 1898) are visible in postcards of the fort from this time, but the specific dates of their construction are unknown.
- c.1900 A tall, thin structure on the upper parade ground is visible in photographic post cards. This was probably a storm warning signal, similar to one that Town Meeting granted permission for the U.S. government to erect on Crocker Park in 1901.
- 1901 Nov. 26 Town meeting agrees to permit the U.S. government to erect a storm warning signal at Crocker Park. (Town Records) A tall pole visible on postcards of Fort Sewall from this time is probably the same type of beacon.
- 1921 “Action was begun in the 67th Congress by [Senate Majority Floor Leader Henry Cabot] Lodge to convey the “Fort Sewall Military Reservation” permanently to Marblehead, instead of the mere custody the town had obtained in 1890.” (Lord & Gamage)
- 1922 Feb. 16 “Voted. That the Board of Selectmen be authorized to receive and record in [sic] behalf of the town the deed from the United States of America of the Fort Sewall Property, and that the property remain in the custody of the Selectmen, said property not to be let for hire for any purpose whatever.”** (Town Meeting Records, article 66, vol. 12, p.384)
- 1922 Feb. 25 Deed to Fort Sewall land and all of its structures is turned over to the Town of Marblehead by the U.S. Congress, to be kept open to the public in perpetuity as a park.** U.S. Senate Bill S.2736, dated Feb. 25, 1922 and executed by the Secretary of War, stipulates that the land must not be sold, let out for hire, or used for other purposes; otherwise the 2½ acre property will revert back to the United States. (Marblehead Historical Commission archives (official letter from U.S. Senate), Lord & Gamage p. 211, and Town Records, vol. 12, p. 390-392)

- 1922 Feb. 16 The Town also appropriates \$3,500 to build a brick "comfort station" at the fort. (Town Meeting Records, article 67, vol. 12, p.384) That restroom building still exists, and was renovated in 2020 (including replacement of its original slate shingles).
- 1935 Plan of improvements to Fort Sewall. These include wooden steps replaced with concrete steps, and interior of barracks repaired by Town. (Town Engineer's Office)
- 1936 Fort caretaker William Mason retires; Frank Barron replaces him. (*Marblehead Messenger*, 7/28/60) This is an annually salaried Town position. (See annual town meeting records, through 1961)
- 1959 Russell Broughton is appointed as night assistant for fort caretaker Frank Barron. (Town Records)
- 1960 Last Fort caretaker, Frank Barron, retires at age 92, after nearly a quarter of a century. (*Marblehead Messenger*, 7/28/60)
- 1975 Virginia Gamage and Marblehead Historical Society contract with SPNEA (Consulting Department for preservation) to make recommendations for potential repairs or restoration of the fort, and to document the fort through an outline history of the fort. Report of the principal aspects of the fort's history written in timeline format by Frederic C. Detwiller of SPNEA, with simple annotated plans of each major stage of renovation are also drawn by FCD.
- 1976 Marblehead Bicentennial Commission applies for state funds to restore the fort; receives \$3,520.
- 1976 Town meeting votes to indefinitely postpone restoration and improvements to the Fort, referring the matter to the town's Bicentennial Committee. (Town Records)
- 1981 Improvements and repairs to Fort Sewall postponed indefinitely again. (Town Records)
- 1997 A Fort Sewall Oversight Committee is established by Town of Marblehead.
- 1998 Town applies for MA DEM (state Dept. of Environmental Management) grant; receives \$25,000 for a master plan for the fort.
- 2001 Feb. 25 Master Plan for Improvements to Fort Sewall Marblehead, MA by Paul C.K. Lu & Assoc., Landscape Architects & Planners, for Fort Sewall Oversight Committee.
- 2014 - 2020 Fort Sewall Oversight Committee and its volunteers work with McGinley-Kalsow & Associates to further expand timeline and develop construction documents for repair of Fort Sewall — to stabilize the masonry structures and make the fort accessible to all mobilities.
- 2019 For the Fort's 375th anniversary, grant proposals are written by Judy Anderson on behalf of the Fort Sewall Oversight Committee for deeper research and this report about the history of Fort Sewall over its 375 years. They are awarded the next year.
- 2020 Spring Preservation work on the fort's masonry structures, funded by MA state grants from Massachusetts Historical Commission.
- 2020 - 2021 Renovations for accessibility in progress using voter-approved Town funds and state grants from various sources (Massachusetts Cultural Council, administered through the MA Department of Environmental Management, and others).

2020 Autumn Preservation and improvements to 1922 comfort station using FSOC donor funds.

2020 - 2021 Historical architect Frederic C. Detwiller, New England Landmarks, undertakes further and deeper study of Town Records, Massachusetts Archives as well as national and international sources to expand and update the history of the Marblehead Fort.

Grants awarded by the Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati, the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Wars, and the General Society of Colonial Wars are administered by the Town and Judy Anderson on behalf of the Fort Sewall Oversight Committee.

Grant proposals for this research were written by Judy Anderson, a member of the Town's Fort Sewall Oversight Committee, in 2019 for the fort's 375th anniversary.

2020 - 2021 Script prepared for a "Fort Ranger" docent program at the Fort anticipated to begin in 2022 (funded by individual donations to the FSOC's Fort Sewall endowment fund) by Bette Hunt, Pam Peterson, and others.

2020 May. 26 Virtual online program about the Fort renovation project is presented through the Marblehead Museum by Larry Sands, Chairman of the Fort Sewall Oversight Committee (FSOC).

2020 Nov. 6 Virtual online program about the Fort's historical Atlantic context over 375 years is presented by Judy Anderson for the Marblehead Museum and the FSOC.

2021 Mar. 25 Virtual online program about the Fort's development and renovations over 375 years is presented by Frederic C. Detwiller for the Marblehead Museum's annual meeting and the FSOC.

2021 June 10 Virtual online program about the Fort's development and renovations over 375 years is presented by Rick Detwiller for the Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' summer online meeting.

2021 Aug. 19 In-person program about the Fort's development and renovations over 375 years is presented by Judy Anderson for the Marblehead Arts Association, as part of its exhibit of artworks crafted by volunteer artists from the beloved large sycamore maple tree at Fort Sewall that was irreparably damaged by a microburst storm in July 2020.

2021 Sept. 23 Auction of the best artworks crafted by volunteer artists from the sycamore maple tree at Fort Sewall raises \$18,475 for the FSOC, with the MAA receiving a percentage.

2021 A booklet about the Fort and its history based on this research report by Frederic C. Detwiller and his public presentations about the fort is designed by Amy Drinker for the FSOC.

2022 Booklet published for the Centennial of the fort's ownership by the Town of Marblehead, for free distribution to the community's residents, funded by private donations to FSOC.

2022 Educational signage at the Fort showing the fort plan drawings and site overlay maps that were produced by fort historian Frederic C. Detwiller.

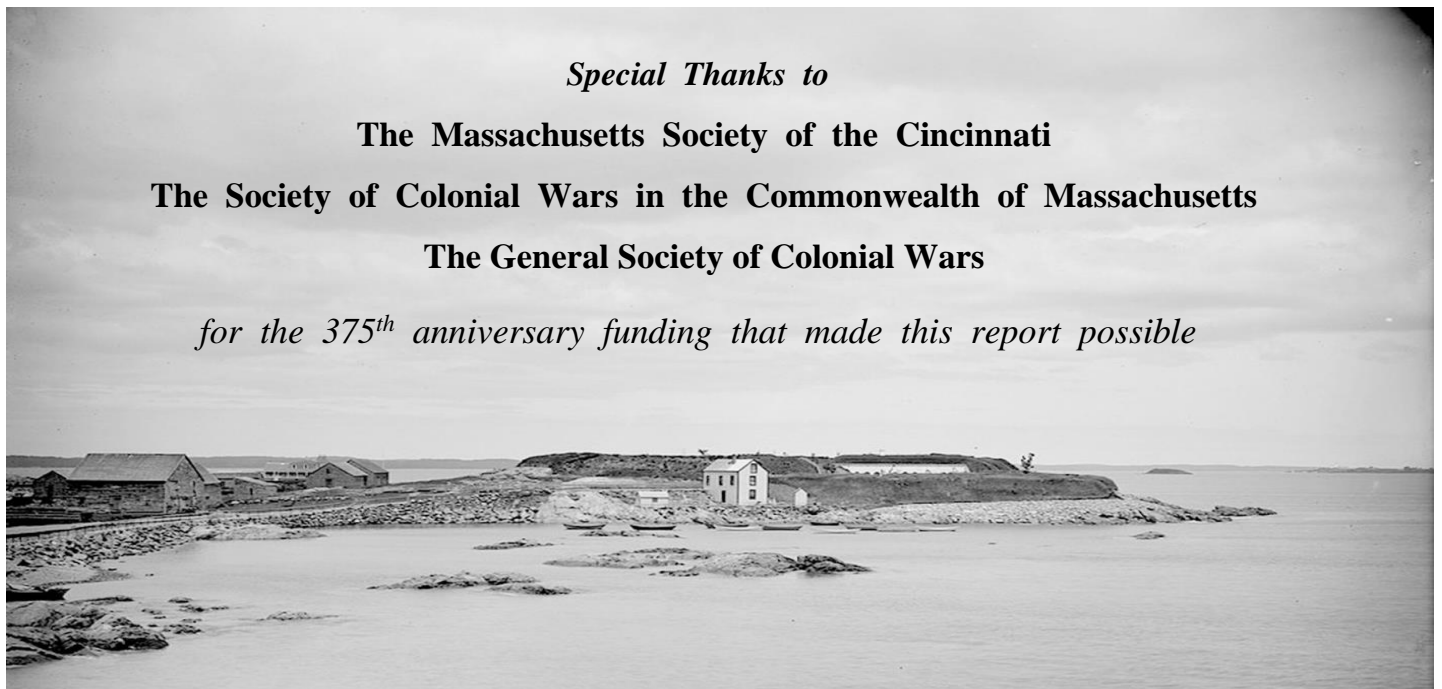
2022 Fort Ranger docent program for summer weekends will be implemented, enabling the interior of the fort to be opened when hired and trained high-school students or others will be present at the fort, funded by a specific endowment created from private donations to the FSOC.

Note from the researcher and author of this report, Frederic C. Detwiller:

Grateful thanks to the heritage funding organizations below for the funding that made this 375th anniversary report possible.

Additional thanks to social and cultural historian **Judy Anderson**, for writing the grant proposals, for her help during the research process, and for writing local context additions to this report.

Thanks is also due generally to the **Fort Sewall Oversight Committee** for the Town of Marblehead (Larry Sands, Chair, and Rebecca Curran Cutting, Town Planner and FSOC manager / liaison) for their care for the Fort and their interest in the long and significant history of the Marblehead Fort / Fort Sewall — which spans nearly four decades as of this 375th Anniversary report.



Special Thanks to
The Massachusetts Society of the Cincinnati
The Society of Colonial Wars in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The General Society of Colonial Wars
for the 375th anniversary funding that made this report possible

View of Fort Sewall in 1870s (detail) ~ Frank Cousins photograph

Prints in the photograph collections of Historic New England & the Peabody Essex Museum's Phillips Library



Fort Sewall
in or after the 1870s

Artist unknown

Oil painting on canvas
(after an 1860 print
by Benton Lossing)

Marblehead Museum
collection ~ 1989.12

APPENDIX 1

FORT SEWALL ENGINEERS & Major Wars for Context

Dates of the Fort's most major renovations & related plans by professional military engineers:

by Judy Anderson based on research by Frederic C. Detwiller

As a colony of England – until 1775:

- **1704–05 – Queen Anne's War (1702 – 1713)** England against France
Plan by Colonel Wolfgang Wilhelm (William) Roemer (English but Dutch origins)
 drawn by Captain > Colonel John Redknap (English)
 The end of this war impacted Marblehead dramatically, as its concluding treaty in 1713 opened the North Atlantic Grand Bank area east of Newfoundland to New England fishing, enabling Marblehead's rapid growth and prosperity, which continued until the American Revolution began.
- **1741–43 – King George's War (1744 – 1748)** England against France
Plan by John Henry Bastide (English but French origins) (*plan drawn but missing – may have burned*)
 probably with assistant **Richard Gridley** (later the first U.S. Chief Engineer at Boston 1775-76)
 (This was a decade before the so-called "French & Indian War" (1754-63), also against France.)
 The latter prompted construction of Marblehead's round brick **Powder House** in 1755, beyond the edge of the town on the Ferry Road (today's Green St.), for storage of gunpowder.

As the United States – after 1776:

- **1775-76 – American Revolution against England (1775 – 1783)** American rebellion against England
no Plan under **Richard Gridley & [Jean-Baptiste?] Dubuq** (*no plans exist for M'hd., but for other forts*)
- **1794–97 – Undeclared war with France (1797 / 98 – 1801 and beyond)** New U.S. against France
Plan by **Stephen Rochefontaine** (Étienne Nicolas Béchét, Sieur de Roch.) (U.S. but French origins)
 This was just 13 years after the French navy had helped the new U.S. in its Revolution against England. But after the French Revolution (1792-1793), U.S. shipping, trade, and mariners at sea were victims of both the English and French navies, in an Atlantic war between those powers. So, tensions were high, U.S. frigates were built, and a second war with England followed 1812-15.
- **1798-1801 – Continuing tensions** between the new U.S. and both France & England, who were again at war
no Plan under **Major Louis Tousard & Henry Burbeck** (U.S. but French origins) (*plan may have burned*)
 ★ **Named "Fort Sewall" toward the end of this 7-year renovation phase, which included the current familiar white brick structure with three doors facing the large flat parade ground.**
 ★ **The fort reached most of its current appearance between 1794 and 1801.**
- **1808-1820 – Continuing tensions** between U.S. and both France & England, who were still at war until 1815
Plan (1820) by **Guillaume Tell Poussin** (U.S. but French origins) (*plan documenting the earlier renovations*)
 The tensions resulted in a coastal embargo decreed by President Thomas Jefferson in 1807-1809.
 The following year, as tensions continued, Marblehead voted to construct a **Gun House** (on Back St. today's Elm St.). The new nation's three-year War of 1812 against England followed, ending 1815.
Plan (1822) by Lt. **George Washington Whistler & Lt. _____ McNeill** (*plan of Naugus Head area*)
- **1813-14 – War of 1812 (1812 – 1815)** between U.S. and England as almost a second war for independence
no Plan **Henry Burbeck** (artillery commander in the Rev.) & **Joseph Gardner Swift** (West Point grad. & Supt.)
 More than 1,100 men and boys from Marblehead's 1,000 families served in the new nation's 3-year War of 1812 against England — mainly at sea. When it ended in 1815, over half were POWs.
- **1861-64 – U.S. Civil War (1861 – 65)** when the fort was temporarily expanded to the west, to twice its size
Plan by **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, drawn by Major Charles E. Blunt** of the U.S. Engineers Dept.
 A western embankment was constructed on formerly private property to the west of the fort

APPENDIX 2

Excerpts from publications by Virginia Gamage 1976 & 1980s

- **Heritage site & National Registered Historic Landmark ~ from “*The Lure of Marblehead*”**

Fort Sewall might best be called a "stabilized ruin" of one of the earliest forts in the American colonies.

Since 1644 the earthen breastwork has been the key to the defense of Marblehead with major reconstructions in 1742 [during King George's War JA], [in 1775 FCD] during the American Revolution, and again when [after] it was ceded to the new United States in 1794. As an official [U. S.] military reservation, the fort was reactivated in the War of 1812, the Civil War, and the Spanish-American War. Its cannon protected the "*Constitution*" ("Old Ironsides") as she scudded into the harbor to avoid capture by British vessels in 1814.

The fort was named for native Samuel Sewall, Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court. It was officially returned to Marblehead in 1922 for a public park.

Moses Maverick's 1674 bill of sale of 2 acres to Ambrose Gale excludes where "... the fort is built and a high-way link" (Fort Beach). [First known as "Maverick's Head," the topographical landmass became better known, and for a longer time, as "Gale's Head."] As a defense against England's enemies [usually France, but sometimes Holland in the later 1600s], marauding pirates, or fierce northern Indians, its preparedness see-sawed from peacetime neglect to frantic reconstruction in wartime. In 1701 Queen Anne's powder tax was returned for the rebuilding of the "wooden fort" on Gale's Head and to provide a health station for checking contagion aboard vessels from foreign ports. ~~Sir~~ Harry Frankland and £550 arrived in 1742 to renew the main fortification of one of the busiest and most successful seaports [in Great Britain's North American Colonies JA]. [Charles Henry Frankland did not become "Sir" Harry until after he returned to England in 1746 to claim his inheritance of a baronetcy. FMB & JA]

In the desperate years of the American Revolution, patriotic volunteers [enlarged,] rebuilt and manned the fort, putting on an impressive show of strength whenever enemy vessels patrolled offshore. British spyglasses observed this activity and the fort was never attacked. Little did they know that the fort had [virtually FCD] no gunpowder!

As a national military base (1794), the fort had its heyday with quarters and parade grounds covering the whole headland and bands playing for drills, parades and parties for famous visitors. One diarist [Rev. William Bentley FCD] wrote: " general neatness, habitual discipline ... the salute from the artillery handsome ... the fort in the best style"

In 1814 the U.S. "*Constitution*," piloted by a Marbleheader, sailed in to safety under the fort's guns, out of the range of the British attackers. Only during the War of 1812 were prisoners kept in the lower dungeon which is still under the earthwork, as are the magazine, the kitchen and guard quarters (which, hopefully, can be open to the public in the future). Soldiers were stationed there in the Civil and Spanish-American wars; the fort was then put in the custody of the town until Congress returned it to Marblehead ownership after 128 years. The title states " ... for perpetual use as a public park"

pages 50 & 41

- **Excerpts from *Marblehead: The Spirit of '76 Lives Here* by Virginia Gamage & Priscilla S. Lord**
(*next page*) (published in 1976)

- **Excerpts from *Marblehead: The Spirit of '76 Lives Here*** by Virginia Gamage & Priscilla S. Lord

[pg. 38] Fort Sewall was one of the earliest official colonial forts in America, for in 1644 the [MA] General Court's permission to build is recorded with agreement to supply two guns. From then on it appears in the abutters' deeds, as when in 1674 Moses Maverick sold the point of land to Ambrose Gale, “. . . except whereon the fort is built” It was this Gale after whom the headland was named.

[In 1666] The mounting tension caused by the prowling French, Dutch and pirate ships is evidenced by a new item in the town budget, the fort, which would reappear regularly for the next two centuries. The second largest expenditure in a total budget of £167 was £39 for the carting and landing of 2,500 foot of boards and 1,000 thousand foot of planking "for the forrt." It was simply a last defense for the harbor if any enemy vessel should maneuver the hazardous offshore islands and, though seldom used, the fort stood as a sentinel of reassurance to the town.

Lookouts were kept on the Neck to watch to the east and south, though that was a lonely post, for only a few families lived there. By 1669, the Commoners thought better of the island and not only claimed all the land not specified in earlier Salem grants, but also laid out a convenient way for the drift of cattle.

[pg. 211] The town's "Sundry Disbursements" in 1691 listed planks and boards, an ammunition house, carriages for the "grate guns," powder and shot which cost the town one half its annual budget.

At the beginning of the next century the Colony sought to recover its additional fort expenses from the British throne, "... Marblehead ... being [an] avenue by which the enemy may make Impression upon us." [*i.e. An enemy could invade via Marblehead — specifically via several of its wider beaches, and especially the beach between the western side of the fort and the headland on the western side of the future Gas House Beach. JA*] [*The source for that quote is not noted in the "Spirit of '76" book.*]

From then until 1775, the support of the fort by the town, the colony, or the throne was dependent on the mounting tensions and/or series of wars with France. [*Those tensions with France were renewed in the 1790s, just a decade after France helped the new United States win its revolution against England. JA*]

[pg. 67] The Colonies were now [1702 -1711] involved in the parallel version of Europe's War of Spanish Succession, which in America was attributed to Queen Anne. As in the other indecisive wars, this was confined to the northern frontier and eastern seaboard, so the northeast seaports were seldom free from war alerts or defense expenditures. Thereupon began a long jousting match between Marblehead and the Province to decide who was going to foot the bill. [In 1704,] The Province appropriated £40 to repair the Marblehead fortifications, provided the town would put in £60. The town shot back a petition decrying the "miserable decayed state" of the fort and its armament and insisting that further financial pressure would "damnify the Principall Manufactory." That petition failed. A few months later Marblehead went back complaining that the collectors of the "powder tax" from ship entries were remitting the money to Salem or for her Majesty's castle and forts at Boston. The demand that powder tax collected at Marblehead should remain there to support its fort was voted on affirmatively, but, said the Assembly, Marblehead must insist there be "great exactness" in tax collection, with no one escaping.

[pg. 211]

The most thorough and professional reconstruction of the fort occurred under **Sir*** Harry Frankland in 1742 when the "good and sufficient breastwork" supported twelve mounted cannon. The captains of the fort were local men who, from Azor Gale to Thomas Gerry, were always outstanding citizens of the town.

[* *Charles Henry Frankland was not titled "Sir" until he returned to England in 1754 to claim his inheritance of a baronetcy. And Harry Frankland's oversight role (if any) was financial rather than actual management of the 1740s renovation. JA & FM Bauer*]

[And actually, as this full report points out, it is now realized that the Marblehead Fort in its various stages ALWAYS had professional military oversight and construction management — even during the Revolution. JA]

Never was the fort rebuilt so rapidly [though] as when Marblehead became a cornerstone in the battle for independence. The British threatened but never attacked the fort, which provided a training ground for [page 212] the militia, and acted as a guardian of a vital privateering and naval seaport.

[It should be remembered that during the first year or so of the war, and prior to that, the mouth of the harbor was guarded by a British man 'o war vessel, whose Captain kept a close eye on the actions of any merchant ships, let alone privateer ships. Therefore, in 1775, Marblehead's early privateer vessels had to be outfitted in Beverly Harbor. And later, after 1776, when most Marbleheaders (other than Colonel Glover, who was promoted to General in February 1777 thanks to Marblehead's feats of heroism and grit during several pivotal military actions the year before) had ended their service in the Continental Army, fewer privateer vessels were owned or commanded by Marbleheaders. Many later privateer crews served on Salem vessels instead — once again making Salem rich, just as the fishermen had in the 1600s. JA]

[pg. 212] Its postwar condition, as reported in 1791 by Dr. [Rev. William] Bentley of Salem after reviewing 300 men in blue and white uniforms and carrying rusty arms, was “disappointing” — and may have contributed to its conveyance to outside government hands for the first time in history.

[Note: Actually, up to 1775, the fort had always been “in outside government hands” because until then, the fort's renovations (or lack thereof) had been under official direction the English Crown government through its military officers. And during the Revolution, it was overseen by Continental Army engineers. It only briefly came into Marblehead's control between 1783 (when the revolution ended by Treaty), and 1794, just a decade later. JA]

Town Meeting on August 25, 1794, ceded the fort to the United States of America. A witness to that release was [future] justice of the peace Samuel Sewall.

[In 1794, Sewall was still a member of the Massachusetts state legislature. He was a U.S. congressman 1796 until 1800, when he was appointed to the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. JA]

The entire neck of land was then covered with barracks, officers quarters and a parade ground adjoining a well-maintained fort. *[Well maintained for a short time anyway, since most forts quickly fell into disrepair after hostilities ended, and Marblehead generally endured great poverty between 1775 and 1830. JA]* Yet, the fiercely independent town didn't take kindly to all the soldiers their midst, as one tragic incident in early 1812 revealed. Two tired soldiers returning from Boston on a wintry night were refused entrance to several homes; next morning their frozen bodies were found a mile from the fort where they had perished in the storm. Their formal funeral service was attended by almost three thousand grieving citizens who formed a procession to accompany the cortege. A commentator *[Rev. William. Bentley of Salem JA]* observed the public embarrassment, and added: “Such is our aversion to a standing army and the vulgar fear of soldiers ...” *[Bentley's quote actually ended with “in such close proximity.” JA]*

Garrisoned during the War of 1812, the fort served nobly during the British naval blockade battles and was very instrumental in protecting the vessel “*Constitution*,” but was subsequently, abandoned by the military and deteriorated, except when national war emergencies in 1861 and 1898 temporarily restored it.

The fort was given an official name only once in history — Fort Sewall, after Samuel Sewall.

This longtime town official and state and national representative, who in 1814 became Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Court *[after a tenure of 14 years as a justice on that highest state court JA]*, was so appreciated in Marblehead that the town named its oldest extant public site for him.

On September 19, 1898, a national military garrison left Fort Sewall for the last time, and the fort was already in the custody of the town. Finally, in 1922, Fort Sewall, protector of Marblehead for 278 years, was returned to the town “forever.”

[pg. 211] Action was begun by Senator [Henry Cabot] Lodge in the 67th Congress to convey the Fort Sewall Military Reservation permanently to Marblehead, instead of the mere [*unofficial*] custody the town had obtained in 1890. In 1922, Senate Bill S.2736 was passed by both houses of Congress and Fort Sewall was returned to Marblehead for its perpetual use as a public park without the right to ever sell the property; if not used for public purposes, the two-and-one-half acre site would revert to the United States.

The fort had originally been conveyed by the Marblehead selectmen to the new United States in 1794 [*when it was absorbed by the new United States into its coastal Second System of Defense — after only a decade of “ownership” by the Town JA*] And for 128 years, the fort’s use and maintenance had swung on the pendulum of war and peace, just as it had in the colonial days when it was simply the breastwork on Gale's Head. [*“Maverick’s Head” until 1674 – see note below JA / R. Booth*]

Note:

The large promontory of land on which the fort was built — at the eastern border of Little Harbor (the original Marblehead Harbor) and at the northwest end of the larger future main harbor (thereafter known as Marblehead Harbor) — would become known as “Gale’s Head” at some point after 1674, when it was sold to early selectman Ambrose Gale. The land mass had earlier been called “Maverick’s Head,” after Moses Maverick, its first (non-Native) owner, from 1635 to 1674.

Maverick had been Marblehead’s de facto town founder and principal organizer, but died in 1686, at age 75, without male heirs or descendants to remember or carry on that early place name in perpetuity.

Just below and to the west of the headland, the portion of the cove now known as “Little Harbor” and the island it surrounds, now known as “Gerry’s Island,” were also known as “Maverick’s Cove” and “Maverick’s Island” in the 1600s. JA (per historian Robert Booth)