

**NEW YORK STATE LOCAL HISTORY
TOWN RECORDS. PREPARED BY THE
DIVISION OF ARCHIVES AND
HISTORY. THE RECORDS OF
HUNTINGTON, SUFFOLK COUNTY**

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New York State Local History Town Records. Prepared by the Division of Archives and History. The Records of Huntington, Suffolk County by Romanah Sammis

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ROMANAH SAMMIS

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**THE RECORDS OF HUNTINGTON,
SUFFOLK COUNTY**

ROMANAH SAMMIS, LOCAL HISTORIAN

ALBANY

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

1921

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TOWN HALL — BUILT 1910

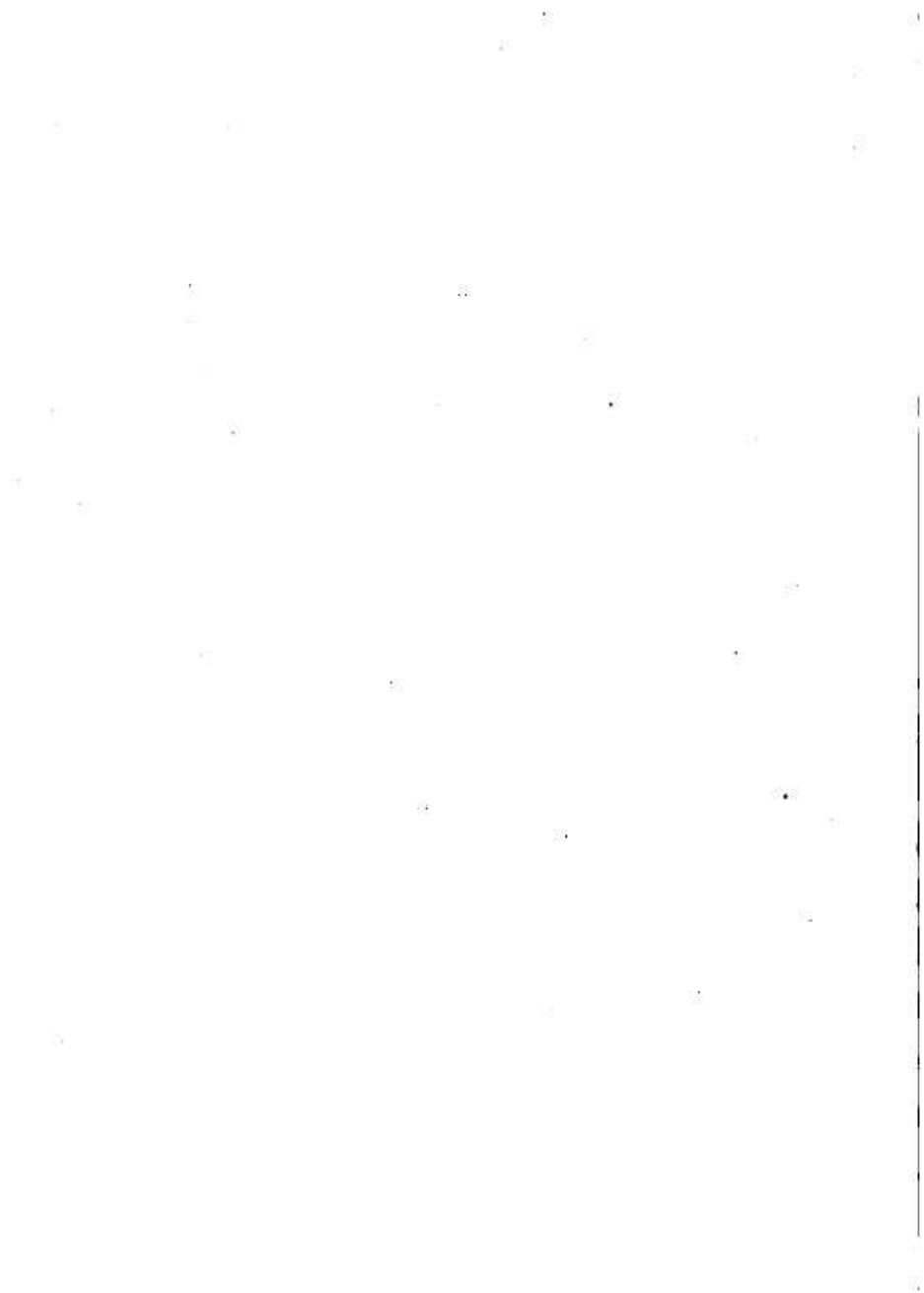
PREFACE

This inventory of the Huntington town records was made by a committee of which Mrs Irving S. Sammis, the local historian of Huntington, was chairman. Another form of classification in which all the records would be arranged according to the offices which were responsible for their making might be considered more desirable. In the case of Huntington, however, some records were so changed about and then bound up in permanent bindings at the time when the printed volumes referred to in the inventory were published that a scientific system of classification is out of the question. Another difficulty in the way is that no thorough study of the history of town government and town offices in New York State has ever been made, so that we are in no position at present to arrange records according to the best archival methods. Until such a complete study has been made, so that we shall know all the town offices that have ever existed, when they came into being, when they ceased to exist and what records were supposed to be kept in connection with them, we shall never know how complete or incomplete our town records are. Desirable as such information is from the point of view of trying to locate missing records, it is of the utmost importance at the present time for us to have an inventory such as Mrs Sammis has made, for it shows us what records we have in the year 1920 and establishes a starting point for future activities.

JAMES SULLIVAN

State Historian

Director of the Division of Archives and History



HUNTINGTON TOWN RECORDS

Introduction

By purchase from the Indians at various times, that body of land lying upon Long Island to the east of the Queens (now Nassau) county line and stretching from Long Island sound to the Atlantic ocean came into the possession of the whites and soon assumed the nature and title of a town known as Huntington. The first purchase, or the northwest portion, was made in 1653; the second, or the northeast portion, in 1656; the various necks of both north and south shores were purchased separately, as were also the Baiting Place and other south upland sections; and finally there were bought "all other unpurchased lands" in the interior. Naturally these purchases were indefinitely bounded and controversies and court proceedings were necessary to settle the limits of individual holdings and to establish township lines.

On the east the line decreed by Fletcher's patent (1694) to begin at the north with the west side of the Fresh pond and run south by the west side of Whitman's hollow to the Sumpwam's river and thence to the sea is the line that was finally surveyed and marked in 1872 and 1884. Defining the limits among the islands to the south of the mainland, valued so highly for fisheries, thatch and meadow grass, was a troublous business, but in agreement with the towns of Islip and Brookhaven a line was finally drawn in 1834.

The establishment of a permanent western boundary by agreement with Oyster Bay township was made in 1860, this settlement still leaving Lloyds Neck a part of Oyster Bay. In 1886, by act of the State Legislature, after petition by the inhabitants, that neck — originally Horse Neck and later the Lordship or Manor of Queens Village — became, as its geographical position naturally makes it, a part of Huntington township.

In the meantime it was deemed advisable to divide the original township of Huntington and by act of the State Legislature of March 13, 1872, the township of Babylon was created from the southern part.

Very early in our town records we come upon regulations to prevent nonresidents taking clams, fish etc. from the waters of the town. It was a question that was forever coming to the front, nonresidents disputing the town's ownership of lands under water. In 1859 the trustees decided to employ counsel and determine the town's

rights. A suit brought to trial at a circuit court at Riverhead was decided against the town. In 1871, after an exhaustive examination of the subject, the case was taken to the Court of Appeals which decided that, under the colonial grants, the lands under water in Northport bay—the particular region in question—belonged to the town. A stubborn fight by nonresidents was continued and the case was carried before the United States Supreme Court which in 1894 upheld the decision of the Court of Appeals, since which the town's territorial claims have been unquestioned.

Coincident with the 1872 division of the territory of the old town, the trustees of Huntington township contracted for an examination and revision of the town records and for a binding of some of them into volumes with indexes. As a result of this work, a considerable part of the general town records were, in 1887, 1888 and 1889, printed in three volumes of these dates, and, as all the material so printed pertained to the old town, the township of Babylon bore a certain portion of the expense of this printing and received a like proportion of the volumes. It is probable that a special effort was made to obtain subscribers to the first volume, with the idea that its owners would want the other volumes as issued. That it did not work out that way is evidenced by the comparative scarcity of volume 1. The town now owns 20 copies of that volume, 62 of volume 2 and 92 of volume 3, and the set may be bought for \$10, single volumes for \$3.50. At the time of printing, the revision committee contemplated a fourth volume which should include certain land grants and highway records to that date. Could such a volume now be printed containing, in addition to these, a complete detailed index of the four volumes it would be invaluable, as the indexing of the three printed volumes is inadequate.

For the original material of the printed volumes readers are referred to Court Records, Town Meetings, Deeds, Surveys, Land Grants, Trustees' Proceedings (these being bound manuscript volumes), to "O" (signifying Onderdonk's Revolutionary Incidents) and to File Numbers (these designating certain unbound manuscripts arranged in numerical order and tied in packages).

In the half century since the 1872 revision of the records, custodians of greater and less efficiency have come and gone and the town's effects have been moved from place to place. Finally settled into the new town hall in 1910, the confused mass of accumulated material, now carefully gone through for the first time, discloses that losses have occurred and that some officials have been careless in not leaving behind them proper records of their work.