

Starke married M. E. daughter, Margaret

is-Review

FEATURES

ad News and The County Review

URSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1955

1-B

Gardiner's Island Leased By Sportsmen

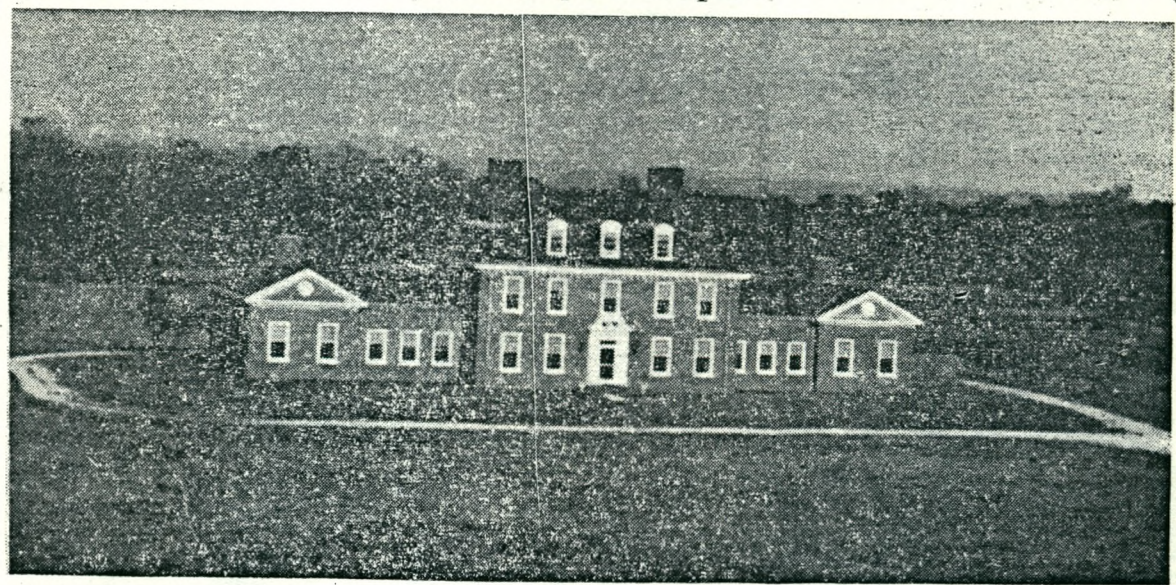


Bayberry Ventures Corporation Takes Over 3,300 Acres For Exclusive Hunting Preserve—Eight Minutes By Plane From East Hampton Airport

By EUNICE TELFER JUCKETT

to be-
ent the
es-ery
ur-liest
we are
em-d."
ing of
In-
em-ate
idi-
has
Jr,
the
ent.
re-
the
in-
on-
rip
ck-
tur-
nts,
of
s C
on
iter,

A 3,300 acre island believed to be the only English royal grant to have remained in the hands of the original family for more than 300 years has a new tenant. A group of sportsmen who have formed a corporation called Bayberry Ventures, has taken over the Gardiner's Island lease of sportsman Marion C Gale who in 1952 sublet the island from another well-known sportsman, Winston Guest. Mr Guest in 1938 had taken over the Clarence Mackay lease which began in 1920. According to George Starke of East Hampton and New York who is president of Bayberry Ventures, Inc the new lease, the shortest of any of the leases negotiated since 1920 when the Gardiner family decided they no longer wished to make their home on the island, will run until March 1, 1956. Following the policy of previous lease holders the island will be used as an exclusive hunting preserve, although at present there are no plans for stocking game as was done in the days of the Mackay



Aerial photo of 28 - room manor house built in 1949.

lease when game birds were im-ported from all over the world and a large staff of bird handlers was quartered on the island during the fall hunting season. Because of the island's isolation and this previous stocking, the preserve is well supplied with pheasant, grouse, wood- (Please turn to Page 8-B)

Just W. of "Pecunia House" just five miles all thru it - please -

of the Feast Do-

PART 1

Fred Glander (left) of Allstate Insurance Co, in behalf of the Allstate Foundation, presents a \$300 check to Leone W Corwin, chairman of the 1955 fund-raising campaign committee of the Central Suffolk Hospital in Riverhead. At right is Blair M Patterson, administrator of the hospital. -Star Photo

Island

(Continued from Page 1-B)
cock and all manner of ducks, making it ideal for sport shooting.

Gardiner's Island is an irregular tract of land which has over nine miles of shoreline although it is less than three miles wide at its widest point. It lies twelve miles south of Connecticut and three miles from the southern fork of Long Island at East Hampton.

The site of the first English settlement in New York State, the former Isle of Wight has been in the possession of the Gardiner family since 1539 when the first Lion Gardiner, an engineer was sent from Holland to build Saybrook Fort at the mouth of the Connecticut River. Learning of the island Gardiner inspected it, called it "an island paradise" and purchased it from the Indians for "ten coats of trading cloath." This purchase was backed up by a royal grant from Charles I of England, and the island was re-named Gardiner's Island.

Although the town of East Hampton was settled in 1648, nine years after Gardiner established a thatched manor house on his island, Gardiner's Island remained a completely independent and practically self-sufficient community for many years. In her day Sarah Gardiner Tyler, wife of President Tyler, describes the island as having two thousand loads of hay stored in the barns each autumn, three hundred cattle grazing in its sunny pastures and ten times as many sheep. The island dairy produced butter in large quantities and cheese production averaged as many as twenty pounds per day for the season. The lord of the manor rarely stabled less than sixty of the finest horses and raised annually a hundred hogs. Carpenters, tanners, weavers and tin-smiths were kept busy supplying island needs while Indians were employed to grow maize and catch whales to provide sufficient whale oil and whale bone, so much a part of colonial life. Wild turkeys hovered about in great numbers and a large herd of deer roamed at will among the old trees.

During the past three hundred years the island has acquired considerable lore and legend. Different sections, known as "Hoopole Thick-

et", "Whale Cliff" "Eagle Plain," "Smokehouse Pightle", "Cherry Tree Swamp" and "Tobacco Lot" (although no tobacco has been grown on the island within white man's memory) have witnessed many interesting events of varying historical importance.

In 1699 Captain Kidd, after burying in Cherry Tree Swamp treasure which contained among other items bags of gold dust, coined gold, silver coin, unpolished gems, Cornelian rings, silver buttons and lamps, presented Mrs Mary King Gardiner, wife of the 4th proprietor, John Gardiner, with a piece of cloth of gold and departed for Boston where he was arrested. Mr Gardiner returned the treasure to the authorities in Boston and the receipt which he demanded is still in existence. This should serve as a wet blanket for would-be fortune hunters, who, although warned by numerous no trespassing signs, still persist in landing on the islands lonely beaches and attempting to locate Kidd's pirate treasure.

Aside from a few minor changes Gardiner's Island remains today much as it was in colonial days. An antique windmill near the boat basin, barns and farmhouses set in a cleared area below the manor house, and a fisherman's shack on a far shore are the only buildings. The few roads are rude dirt paths, but jeeps and trucks rather than the horses and coaches of earlier days are used. The island has its own water and electrical systems. A ten minute jeep ride from the manor house is an airstrip to accommodate planes making the eight minute flight from the East Hampton Airport. There is also a protected boat basin and this and the airstrip have solved the transportation problem which has plagued the island residents since the days when a bonfire on the beach at Fireplace signalled a boatman. Since telephone service which had linked the island with East Hampton was broken during the 1938 hurricane, a flag is used today in much the same manner as the bonfire, only the flag signals passing aeroplane pilots rather than boatmen.

A twenty-eight room manor house, built in 1949 to replace the colonial manor which was burned in 1947 will accommodate the sportsmen during their visits to the island. The house, the fourth to be

built on the island, was erected by Miss Sarah Diodati Gardiner, 14th proprietor who herself never lived on the island after she became proprietor, but left it in her will to her niece and nephew Alexandra Gardiner Creel and Robert Gardiner when she died in January 1953.

