A GOULD ISLAND CHRONOLOGY

And Some Associated Historical Notes

By

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Gould Island, the small oblong island that lies off our eastern shore between Jamestown's North End and Middletown, is an unexplored and, because of its dedicated uses, essentially unexplorable part of Jamestown.

On August 9, 2003, during our Sunset History Cruise, Captain Frank Snyder, a retired Captain in the United States Navy and formerly a professor at the Naval War College, told us about the history of Gould Island, especially its use by the Navy. He provided the society with a detailed chronology of the island's history. The following pages are excerpted from his talk and accompanying notes.

Rosemary Enright

A chain-link fence divides Gould Island into north and south. The 17 acres north of the fence – administered by the U. S. Navy – is closed to visitors. The area south of the fence – administered by the State of Rhode Island – is a bird sanctuary and is also closed to the public except by special permit.

Statements of the island's area vary from 40 acres (in the Providence *Journal*) to 56 acres (in early Navy documents). In fact, since the shore line varies 5 to 6 feet with the tide, the area varies from 46.5 acres (at mean *high* water) to 52 acres (at mean *low* water). For most purposes, it seems safe to say that the area is about 50 acres.

The island is about 1,000 yards long, and between 200 to 250 yards wide. If the island were a perfect circle, it would be one mile around, but with its long and narrow shape, it has a shoreline of about a mile and a third.

March 28, 1657: Gould Island (then *Aquopimoquk*) is sold to Thomas Gould, for whom the island is now named, by Scuttape, a grandson of Conanicus. The same year Conanicut Island is purchased from the Indians by a group of Newporters.

May 20, 1673: Thomas Gould transfers one-half of Gould Island to John Cranston, and then, a year later, conveys the remaining half to Mr. Cranston.

April 20, 1674: John Cranston conveys on-half of Gould Island to Caleb Carr.

August 12, 1700: Samuel Cranston, Governor of the Colony under the Royal Charter, conveys one-half of Gould Island to Nicholas Carr, son of Caleb Carr.

June 8, 1761: The executors of the will of Nicholas Carr, Jr., transfer 144 acres in Jamestown, land on Dutch Island, and the south end of Gould Island to Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr., for about £41,000. Edward and Sarah Carr then sell the other half of Gould Island to Colonel Wanton for £4,000.

1769-1775: Joseph Wanton, Sr., is annually elected seven times to be the Royal Governor of Rhode Island.

June 1775: After his reelection as Governor, Joseph Walton, Sr., is prevented by the Rhode Island General Assembly from taking the oath of office because he refuses to sign the commissions for officers to serve in George Washington's American army.

December 25, 1775: Colonel Joseph Walton, Jr., refuses a request made by Major General Charles Lee, in accordance with the Test Act of 1775, to renounce his Tory views, to assert faithfulness to the patriot cause, and to declare his willingness to bear arms when called upon to do so by Congress. After his refusal, Wanton is taken into custody for a few days.

July 8, 1776: Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr., is ordered to his Jamestown farm. Following the British occupation of Aquidneck Island, he returns to Newport and, as an active Colonel, raises several companies of troops for the British.

1779: Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr. leaves Newport with the evacuating British forces and moves to New York City, then occupied by the British, where he becomes the Superintendent of Police.

1779: The State of Rhode Island declares Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr. – even though a previous Colonial Deputy Governor – to be an "alien" and confiscates his property, including Gould Island, parts of Conanicut and Prudence Islands, and the Hunter House, his Newport mansion.

1780: Colonel Joseph Wanton, Jr., dies in New York City.

1781: Colonel Wanton's widow, Sarah Brenton Wanton, petitions the state unsuccessfully for the return of the confiscated Wanton land in Jamestown.

August 3, 1803: Caleb Gardner of Newport purchases the confiscated Gould Island at auction from the State of Rhode Island for $1,050.

1803-1859: Gould Island has six successive local owners.

1859-1871: The island is summer home for the Maitland family of New York.

1861: The world's first self-propelled torpedo is produced by the English engineer, Robert Whitehead. The torpedo is propelled by the use of compressed air.

1869: The Naval Torpedo Station, Newport, is established at Goat Island to be a Navy experimental station for the development of torpedoes and torpedo equipment, explosives, and electrical equipment.

1871-1901: The island is summer home for the Homans family of New York.

1878: The first successful wartime use of self-propelled torpedoes occurs when a Russian navy torpedo sinks a Turkish ship during the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78.

1887: The Fall River Steamship Line installs a navigation light on the east side of Gould Island.

1889: Gould Island Lighthouse, a conical tower made of brick, is established on the east side of Gould Island. The half-acre lot on which the Lighthouse and the light-keeper's cottage are built was sold to the U.S. Government by Frances E. Homans for $2,500. The lower half of the lighthouse was plain red brick, the upper half was painted white. The light itself was 28 feet above ground level, and 54 feet above high water. A white light flashed every 10 seconds. This light replaced the light 250 feet to its north that had been maintained privately for two years by the Fall River Line. Gould Island Light continues to function for 58 years.

1890: The U.S. Navy conducts its earliest test firing in Narragansett Bay of a propeller-driven torpedo.

1908: Construction of a Navy Torpedo Factory on Goat Island is completed.

August 23, 1909: Richard L. Howell purchases Gould Island as a summer home.

February 1910. Richard L. Howell dies. Soon after, his widow, Gwendolyn Howell, marries Percy D. Haughton.

June 18, 1911: The *Boston Morning Globe* reports that during the summer Harvard's football coach, Percy D. Haughton had routinely exercised the Harvard football team on Gould Island.

1912: Rear Admiral Bradley Fiske, USN, is issued a patent for a torpedo plane.

July 1914: Six days before the start of World War I, an airborne British plane launches a 14-inch (diameter) Whitehead torpedo weighing 810 pounds – the first recorded drop of a live torpedo from an aircraft.

August 1915: British Navy seaplanes conduct the world's first aerial attacks with torpedoes when they attempt to sink Turkish ships in the Dardanelles with mixed success.

November 1916: A German aircraft torpedoes and sinks a British ship in the estuary of the River Thames.

1917: With torpedoes a proven threat in World War I, the Navy Torpedo Factory on Goat Island is put on a three-shift basis, and the workforce is enlarged to 3200 employees.

January 26, 1918: An explosion occurs in one of the magazines at Goat Island, killing 12 employees and injuring 7, one of whom later died of his injuries. Three of the magazines are totally destroyed, and one partly so. The cause of the explosion is never determined.

May 24, 1918: A powder flare occurs in the primer room at Goat Island. Several men are injured, and two die. The two incidents during the year of 1918 underscored the need to relocate explosives at sites away from Goat Island.

July 1, 1918: The U.S. Congress authorizes the President to seize for the United States eight tracts of land, mainly in states along the Eastern Seaboard, and to make just compensation for them. One of the tracts to be seized is Gould Island, which is to be used to store torpedoes and explosives, as well as to provide a base for aircraft that test-fire aerial torpedoes

August 7, 1918: On behalf of the United States, the President takes title of the tracts authorized by Congress, and directs the Secretary of the Navy to take possession of them.

September 18, 1918: A letter to Mrs. Haughton notifies her of the United States government's requisition of Gould Island and of the expectation that all occupants would vacate the premises in approximately 30 days.

September 21, 1918: Mrs. Haughton acknowledges receipt of the September 18 letter, and states that all people and personal property will be gone from Gould Island by the middle of October 1918.

1919: New construction on Gould Island by the Navy includes Air Detail hangars for seaplanes and kite balloons, a water tower and underground distribution lines, a wooden pier for personnel at the north end of the island, and a concrete pier for torpedoes at the southeast point of the island. The former Haughton family residence is converted to a barracks for the Marines who guard the magazines.

1920: Construction begins on a torpedo storage building and on two warhead-storage buildings on the southern portion of the island. An industrial railroad connects the new concrete pier to the new buildings. The length of the rail line from the pier to the magazines is about 350 feet; the distance from the pier to the torpedo storage is about 800 feet. Later, a rail line is built from the torpedo storage building to the seaplane hangar at the south end of the island, a distance of about 500 feet. Models of the island that show this new construction also show a large pile of coal between the seaplane hangar and the warhead storage buildings. The power house, later called the South Power House, is erected west of the torpedo storage building.

1920: A Naval Air Detail is established under Lieutenant Thomas H. Murphy, USN.

May 12, 1920: A U.S. Treasury check is issued to for $80,000.00 in settlement of the claim of Mrs. Gwendolyn Howell Haughton, and of Bridgham Curtis and Mrs. Gwendolyn Howell Haughton (Trustees under the Will of Richard L. Howell) for land and improvements of Gould Island, taken over by the United States. At the time, the land,

buildings, and personal property were assessed for tax purposes by the town of Jamestown at $21,000.00 - $18,000, land; $2,000, buildings; $1,000 personal.

1921: The first torpedoes arrive on Gould Island.

August 20, 1921: Two naval torpedo planes – modified by the addition of pontoons – arrive at Gould Island, and are based at a newly built hangar of steel-frame and wood construction near the south end of the island. A concrete platform and ramp are constructed, oriented toward the west. The aircraft are to be employed to test-drop aerial torpedoes. They are subsequently used to track and locate torpedoes that have been test-fired from a large barge or, later, from the Firing Pier at the north end of Gould Island.

November 2, 1921: Lieutenant Murphy, Head of the Air Detail, makes the first successful U.S. air drop of a torpedo in the waters off Gould Island. Not long after, the first squadron of torpedo planes (VT-1) is formed.

March 20, 1922: Torpedo Squadron ONE reports for duty aboard USS *Langley* (CV-1), the Navy's first aircraft carrier.

1922: The U.S. fleet is reorganized into two main groups: a Battle Force (battleships and destroyers) stationed on the West Coast, and a Scouting Force (cruisers, destroyers, and seaplanes) stationed on the East Coast.

1920s. The Scouting Force comes to Narragansett Bay in summers. The seaplanes operate from Potter's Cove.

May 8, 1926: In the waters outside of Narragansett Bay, a live-warshot torpedo with a Mark 6 magnetic influence exploder that was developed at Newport is fired against a submarine hulk with resounding success. This is the last live test of the exploder for 16 years.

1930s: The Navy builds more substantial roads, and – at the seaplane hangar site – a new concrete ramp facing south.

August 18, 1930: The Navy directs the development of a new torpedo for aircraft, capable of being launched at 100 knots from a 50-foot altitude, with a range of 7,000 yards, a speed of 30 knots, and weighing 1700 pounds with a 400-pound warhead. The result will be the Mark 13 torpedo.

1931: The National Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots petitions the Lighthouse Service to correct a problem caused by trees that obscure the Gould Island Light when viewed from the south.

1932: The Lighthouse Board erects an acetylene green-flashing light on a tower at the center of the south end of the island near the Naval Air facility. It functions for 56 years.

August 13, 1937: A torpedo fired from the submarine *Cachalot* off Gould Island passes between Vincent Astor's yacht *Nourmahal* and Frederick H. Prince's yacht *Lone Star*, strikes a ledge, leaps into the air, and plows through an iron fence at *Pen Craig*, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton Fish Webster, not far from *Harbour Court*, then the residence of John Nicholas Brown and now a clubhouse of the New York Yacht Club. A similar incident occurs 14 months later, when a torpedo fired by the test-firing barge off Gould Island comes to rest in Brenton's Cove near *Beacon Rock*.

September 21, 1938: The 1938 hurricane brings an estimated $17,900 of damage to the Navy installation on Gould Island. As the winds build, two seaplanes are made fast outside, and all other planes are placed in the hangar. The hangar doors are closed. The tide rises around the hangar, and the area is swept by violent seas that break in the east door of the hangar. The hangar's south windows are covered with water. Shortly after 6 o'clock in the evening, the seaplanes secured outside break loose and drift northward. One plane is badly damaged and sinks about one mile north of Gould Island. Several days later, pieces of a seaplane's main float and a small section of its fuselage are recovered near Beavertail Lighthouse about seven miles south of the point that the plane was last observed afloat. The main doors of the hangar have been carried away. Nine planes are damaged to the extent that they require major overhauls.

1939: Test drops begin from Gould Island aircraft of a turbine-powered torpedo, originally of British design, that will become the Mark 13 torpedo used by aircraft in World War II. From 1941 to 1945, a total of 4,300 test drops of the Mark 13 torpedo are conducted in the waters east of Gould Island.

1939: Douglas Aircraft begins production of its torpedo plane, TBD-1 *Devastator*. The first production TBD-1 is fitted with a pair of floats, and then sent to Gould Island for drop tests of the Mark 13 torpedo. The addition of the floats makes the TBD-1 (designated TBD-1A) 20 knots slower than the standard TBD-1.

1940: YW-5, a water barge, sinks off the Naval Hospital, while taking water to Gould Island.

1940: Barracks for Navy enlisted personnel are constructed at a site adjacent to the Marine barracks.

1941: The newly constructed Naval Air Station at Quonset becomes the operational base for four squadrons of seaplanes. The Gould Island air facility is designated an auxiliary landing area.

December 1941: The United States enters World War II. The U.S. Navy brings to the battlefront three new types of torpedoes: Mark 13 for aircraft, Mark 14 for submarines, and Mark 15 for ships. The earlier Marks 7, 9, 11, and 12 torpedoes are used from storage, and the older Marks 8 and 10 continue to be manufactured.

February 7, 1942: Dredging and around-the-clock construction work begin on a number of new buildings in the northern portion of Gould Island. The new firing pier is designed for proof-firing of 100 torpedoes per day under favorable conditions. The west side of the new firing pier is 500 feet long and dredged to depths of from 30 to 65 feet, so that destroyers and submarines can moor alongside while loading torpedoes.

1942: A new building is constructed at Coddington Cove, and a major portion of the Research, Design, and Torpedo Equipment Department is transferred there from Goat Island. The principal means of transportation to Gould Island is now by boats from Coddington Cove.

Torpedo Testing

The purpose of the test firings, or proof firings as the Navy preferred to call them, of torpedoes in Narragansett Bay was essentially to determine whether or not a torpedo's propulsion systems functioned satisfactorily, and whether or not its guidance systems correctly controlled the torpedo's course. The torpedo's "exercise head," which replaced the warhead during test runs, contained water that would be blown out at the end of a run so that the torpedo would surface and be retrieved.

The course was tracked using hydrophones on the bottom of the bay. A torpedo's depth was established not by external observations, but by reference to recorders inside the torpedo itself. About seven percent of the torpedoes that were fired were lost; that is, they left the range, although most were later recovered.

Test firings, therefore, could not determine whether or not firing mechanisms in torpedo warheads would have caused the torpedoes to explode, an on-going problem with the Mark 14 torpedoes used by submarines in the Pacific during World War II.

During firings, a red signal flag flew at the firing pier, and before each firing a whistle was blown. Because the whistle could not always be heard at the YWCA camp on Jamestown, a cable was run under water from the firing pier to the camp. Whenever the whistle blew, a light turned at the camp pier, alerting lifeguards to warn swimmers to get out of the water.

Pairs of Torpedo Range Markers were placed along Jamestown's eastern shore at thousand-yard intervals, starting at a position 1000 yards north of the firing pier and continuing to the southern tip of Prudence Island. The markers facilitated the realignment of hydrophones on the bottom of the bay along the course of the firing range.

Over 50 range boats, including 35 torpedo-retriever boats, were moored on the northeast side of Gould Island in an area protected to its north by a breakwater.

1942: A new barracks for Marines is built next to the Ferry Slip and Marine Guard House on the east side of Gould Island. The former Haughton home, used until then as the Marine barracks, is razed.

April 9, 1942: The Navy anti-aircraft gun crews who had manned four 1.1" quadruple-gun mounts on Gould Island are relieved by the Army's Battery A, 207th Coast Artillery (Anti-aircraft), Eastern Defense Command.

1942: Construction begins for a new hangar and a larger, south-facing ramp for the air facility at the south end of Gould Island. The new ramp is 50 feet wide and 350 feet long, with a slope of 6 degrees. It extends 10 feet below the low-tide level.

October 23, 1942: First torpedo test firing from the new Firing Pier. Torpedo Testing Barge #4, previously used for test firings, is unmoored from its position off Gould Island and shifted to Goat Island, pending its transfer to the Torpedo Testing Range at Montauk, Long Island.

Spring 1943: The new buildings – including the torpedo-overhaul building and power station – are occupied and operative. A second coal pile is established near the new power station at the north end of the island. The construction of these new buildings at the north end required the leveling of some of the hills that previously existed in the northwest corner. The excavated land is not removed from the island, but stands above the streets that had been built at a lower level.

1943: Quonset huts are installed to augment the Navy barracks built in 1940.

April 1943: The Army's Battery A, 207th Coast Artillery (Anti-aircraft), is relieved by the 701st Coast Artillery Regiment (Anti-aircraft).

April 1943: Construction of the aircraft hangar at the south end of the island is completed. At the peak of aviation activity in 1944, the Air Detail included 11 officers, 119 men, and 26 planes.

August 2, 1943: An Electric-Torpedo School and the Torpedo School Annex for training in the overhaul and firing of steam torpedoes are relocated from Goat Island to Gould Island

October 1943: Construction of the Firing Pier and the adjacent overhaul shop at the northern tip of Gould Island is completed. The Firing Pier has four torpedo tubes for firing torpedoes, two for test-firing surface-ship torpedoes, and two, on elevators that lowered into the water, for test-firing submarine-launched torpedoes. The six-mile firing range extends for 10,000 yards and is oriented in a northerly direction to pass between Prudence and Hope Islands. The Firing Pier becomes the primary site for test-firing torpedoes. By the end of World War II, over 65,000 torpedo test-firings have been made from its launchers.

March 13, 1944: A K-Type Navy Blimp based at Naval Air Station, South Weymouth, Massachusetts, is assigned to hover over the north range for observations of proof-firings. The hovering blimp proves very effective for overhead observation and is employed daily, weather permitting, until at least May 1945.

October 1944: During the month, 2,575 test-firings are conducted from the Test Firing Facility, the highest monthly total ever, though fewer than the 100 a day for which the facility was designed.

1944: A degaussing station is constructed on the southwest shore of Gould Island to measure the magnetic signatures of ships and to assess the effectiveness of their degaussing cables. A "gauss" is a measure of magnetic inductance, named for the 19th Century German mathematician Karl Friedrich Gauss. The purpose of degaussing is to reduce the likelihood that a ship's magnetic signature will set off magnetic mines that are triggered by the disturbance in the earth's normal magnetic field when a ship with a strong magnetic field of its own approaches or passes near the mines. Near the degaussing station, three ranges are established for ships to pass through so that their magnetic signatures can be measured: two west of Gould Island measure medium and deep draft ships, and one off the air facility on the south end of Gould Island is for shallow ships.

1945: The Air Detail is renamed the "Naval Air Facility."

1947: Gould Island Light is discontinued and the lighthouse is replaced by a white steel tower.

1951: The Torpedo Test Facility on Gould Island becomes part of the Naval Ordnance Station at Coddington Cove, which had succeeded the former Naval Torpedo Station on Goat Island. The Naval Torpedo Station in Keyport, Washington, is designated as the depot activity responsible for proofing, storing, maintaining, and issuing fleet torpedoes. Newport's mission changes from torpedo production to research and development of specialized instrumentation for acoustic homing torpedoes to be used for anti-submarine purposes.

1960: Gould Island Lighthouse is torn down, but the automated green flashing light continues to operate from a steel tower at the south end of Gould Island.

1975: The Navy begins transferring the southern 70 percent (about 39 acres) of Gould Island to the State of Rhode Island. The State gains ownership of 16.9 acres in 1975 and 22.25 acres in 1989. Within the northern area administered by the U. S. Navy, four buildings are declared "historic" by the Department of the Navy and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission.

October 24, 1988: The green flashing navigation light at the southern end of the island ceases to operate temporarily when the base that supported the tower crumbles, and the tower supporting the light falls over. A new tower was built, and the flashing green light has resumed operation.

November 21, 1989: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency includes the following statement about Gould Island in its "National Priorities List:"

> "On Gould Island is a disposal area on a steep embankment along 200 yards of the west shoreline. Wastes disposed of included domestic trash, scrap metal, wood, pipes, rusted drums, two diesel fuel tanks, and concrete blocks, and possibly electroplating and degreasing wastes. In 1982, 10 drums, contents unknown, were removed from a bunker which was later demolished. The disposal area is in the southwest portion of the island within 100 feet of Narragansett Bay. This portion of the island is now under State control and is accessible to the public by boat. The Gould Island Electroplating Shop produced wastes similar to those deposited at the disposal area. The wastes probably were dumped into the bay. The shop is not accessible to the public."

Gould Island during World War II

June 1999: Although the Department of the Navy and the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission had previously designated four of the remaining Navy buildings to be historic, the Navy decides to demolish these four buildings. It intermittently continues to test-fire torpedoes from the firing pier.

2000 and 2001: The four Navy structures within the roughly 17 acres that are still Navy property are torn down. These buildings are the overhaul shop, the power plant, the acetylene building, and the upper two floors of the firing pier. The rest of the firing pier is retained.

2003: As part of the agreement to demolish the four historic structures, the Navy agrees to develop a display that depicts the history of the Gould Island Facility in order to provide the public with a knowledge of the significance of the facility and its importance to the war effort during World War II. That display is on exhibit at the Naval War College Museum in 2003.

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The birth of new lands - Intrigued by the unusual quirk of Verdiaâ€™s diverse ecosystem, Alarielle takes up residence within that subcontinent. There, all the life-forms are female, and every birth season they mate with the inhabitants of the landâ€™s counterpart, Thyria, where all the life-forms are male. Thyria enjoys divine patronage too, for this is a land where the Hunter God is often seen, migrating over from the eastern land of Kurnotheal. Each spring the lands themselves mate, and the seeds of new... This chronology is a portion of an ongoing re-analysis project for tropical cyclone events along the Georgia and northeast Florida coasts, including inland north Florida and southeast Georgia. The domain for this study ranges from Savannah, Georgia in the north to Flagler Beach, Florida in the south, the adjacent coastal waters, the inland cities (and their surrounding areas) of Palatka, Gainesville, and Lake City in Florida and Waycross, Georgia.Â Several listings of tropical cyclone landfall events have been complied by various authors over time. These listings were the first sources consulted for the timing of potential landfalls affecting the re-analysis area. For the purposes of this study, these... Placing island archaeology and early voyaging in context 3. The origins of mammals on the Mediterranean islands as an indicator of early voyaging Jean-Denis Vigne. 4. Cosmic impact, the Younger Dryas, Abu Hureyra, and the inception of agriculture in Western Asia Andrew M. T. Moore and Douglas J. Kennett.Â 12. Temporal placement and context of Cyro-PPNA activity on Cyprus Sturt W. Manning. B. The Aegean. 13. The Aegean Mesolithic: material culture, chronology, and networks of contact MaÅ‚gorzata Kaczanowska and Janusz K. KozÅ‚owski. 14. The Aegean Mesolithic: environment, economy, and voyaging Adamantios Sampson. Gould Island lies east of Conanicut Island in Narragansett Bay in the U.S. state of Rhode Island. It is a part of the town of Jamestown, Rhode Island, and has a land area of 55.3 acres (22.4 ha). The Narragansett Indians named the island "Aquopimokuk", and Colonist Thomas Gould purchased it from them in 1657. Gould sold the island to Thomas Cranston, and later owners included the Carr family and Joseph Wanton, Jr., who lost the property for having Loyalist sympathies during the American Revolution... Philip Island Parakeet - John Gould volume 5. Norfolk Island Kaka. Image: Leone Lemmer Â© Research Library. Recognising the lack of any comprehensive publication on The Birds of Australia, John Gould sailed for Australia in May 1838 to collect data.Â Sauer, G. C. and Datta, A. (1998-2001) John Gould The Bird Man: correspondence: with a chronology of his life and works. In 4 vols. Maurizio Martino Publisher: USA.