



Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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(Colonial New England Ironworks) [Early 19th-century manuscript copy of 1674 New England land transaction involving John Gifford; mention of early ironworks in Massachusetts]

Stock#: 93113
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1674 [but written ca. 1830]
Place: n.p. (Salem, Massachusetts?)
Color: Pen & Ink
Condition: Good
Size: 8 x 12 inches
Price: \$ 950.00



Description:

17th-century Ironworks in Massachusetts

An interesting manuscript document, written in the early 19th century, transcribing New England land documents dating from 1674. The early texts relate to land transactions involving John Gifford of Lynn, Massachusetts, who ran the first successful ironworks in America. Other individuals named herein: Ezekiel Fogg and David Fogg, connected to Salem, Mass. The document contains notes written by someone with the initials E.D.P. mentioning early iron mines in New England. The document is addressed by E.D.P. to "Mr. Foote" who edited a "Gazette" -- almost certainly Caleb Foote (1803-1894), publisher and editor of the *Salem Gazette*. Whether the 1674 documents were published in the *Salem Gazette* is not known.

John Gifford and Early New England Ironworks



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John Gifford's career in New England is written up in Edward N. Hartley's book, *Ironworks on the Saugus* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1957). The first successful iron works in North America were built in 1645 in a part of Lynn now called Saugus. The works consisted of a large blast furnace, a forge, and various outbuildings for the harvesting and treatment of raw ore and treated iron. At the time it was one of the most technologically advanced iron works in the world. By 1650, John Gifford and William Aubrey managed the Ironworks and were known for their shady business practices. Many of the ironworkers, some of whom were British prisoners of war, were arrested for crimes such as drunkenness, adultery, gambling, fighting, cursing, and not attending church. The works were in operation until about 1670. In the 1940s the site was reconstructed as a museum, the Saugus Ironworks, now a National Historic Site.

Excerpts from the Document Text:

Mr. Foote,

I send you copies of two ancient documents, if you think they will interest your readers; you can give them a place in the Gazette and oblige. Yor. lo: friend, E.D.P.

21: 2 Ma. [April] 1674

Memorandum, this day Ezekiel Fogg of London, Marcht., aged thirty-two yeares or thereabouts, came before me, & tooke his Corporall oath, that he being in London, in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred seaventy three and meeting with Mr. John Gifford of Lyn in New England, did then & there covenant, bargaine, contract & buy of the sd. John Gifford three fourth parts of all his Interest, right, title, claime, whatsoever, in all those his lands & Edeffices herein expressed viz. four hundred acres of land, more or less, one house, twenty fouer foot long, twenty foot wide, with six acres of land in fence, & broaken up; with garden, oarchard, cow house & stable, one house twenty six foot long, & eighteen foot wide, with two acres of land in fence, with a small oarchard, one house fifty foot long & sixteen foot wide, for the potters to work in & another house forty foot long & twenty foot wide, & also a furnace to cast Iron ware in, as pots, kettells, suger roles, gunnes, & the like, together with flumes, dams, water courses, flood gates & utensells belonging, together with all mines & mineralls of what nature soerier. Alsoe all woods under woods & all other appertenances belonging to the premises & relating to the said John Gifford all lying & scittuat betwixt the aforesaid Lyn & Reading in the Coloney of the Massachusetts in New England, formerly knowne or caled by the name of the giluer worke....

4:7: [Sept.]



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Mr. David Fogg: Sr., I doe heare inclosed send the conveyance or assignement of ye land you know Mr. John Gifford hath taken in pt of paiment of ye one eight pr of ye estate he hath sould the company, in which I am concerned, this & the goods he hath received wil be in full for my sd one eight pt soe you may deliver over the assignement to him he givinge you for mee a counter pt, which pray lett him give, he hath an order to Mr. Sampson of Bostone, from Mr. Hen: Allen to sd. Sheafe, with whome the originall mortgage of John Woodberyes & other papers concerning the premises were left, by sd. Mr. Allen, I desire yor care in this & all other, the companyes affaires, referring you to the Genell. Advice. I am yor. lo: friend Jo: Williams.

The mine was, probably that mentioned as "the Nehaunt Myne" in a letter of William White, dated 24 July or 5 month 1648, in Mass Hist. Collections.

"I should have come over about the tyme that Mr. John Wintrupp cam over. If I had, the iron mynes of Newe England had been tryed with less cost, for I tryed most of the mynes in Derbasharre with a bloom harth. I told Mr. Dr. Child more of the Nehaunt myne than I can now spick of."

An early writer speaking of New England says "The Mountains and Rocky Hills are richly furnished with mines of Lead, Silver, Copper, Tin and divers sorts of minerals, branching out even to their summits, where in small Cramies you may meet with threds of perfect silver; yet have the English no man to open any of them, whether out of ignorance or fear of bringing a forraign enemy upon them, or (like the dog in the manger) to keep their Sovereign from partaking of the benefits, who certainly may claim an interest in them as his due.

Ezekiel and David Fogg were sons of Ralph or Ralph Fogg, sometime of Salem, admitted freeman in 1634 - one of the first clerks of the QuarterCourt, and probably Register of Deeds....

An interesting historical manuscript source document for Salem, Massachusetts.

Detailed Condition:

Folio. Two folio sheets (the second a double sheet) of wove paper. Some edge nicks and small tears. Overall condition is good.