

Society, dating from July 2d, 1662, is four years more ancient than that parchment which is so highly prized in Massachusetts. Its being written on paper is an illustration of primitive simplicity, when parchment, though used four years later, was not yet to be had.

Aside from associations, the ancient manuscript, picked from the worm holes of long vanished days—has intrinsic attractions. It is addressed "To all Christian People." Its dimensions are 23x17 inches.

The boundaries of the land in question are described in a way to astonish those familiar only with western rectangular surveys—ranges, sections and sectional sub-divisions. The land conveyed is said to be "bounded on the one side, that is the southeast, with the land of Samuel Bulling, on the other side with the land of Joseph Morse, that is northwest, and both ends butt upon the waste lands belonging to the town." The Nantasket parcel was bounded "north by the highway leading to Dedham, southeast by a swamp, and by waste lands on all other quarters."

Again, it is noticeable that while Daniel Morse, the husband, writes his name, his wife, Lydia, makes her mark. Female education was still neglected in a commonwealth where free schools had been already established, which were destined to become world-famous. The maiden name of Mrs. Morse was Fisher—and at this making of her mark she was forty-one years of age. She was already mother of nine children, the youngest but one year old. Her father had been admitted a freeman in Dedham seventeen years before, in 1645.

One of the witnesses to the deed, Ralph Wheelock, no doubt wrote it throughout, and that in a hand where every word is plain except his own signature. He was graduated at the University of Cambridge, in England, in 1626, and represented Medfield in the general court of Massachusetts for four years. He was possibly an ancestor of the founder of Dartmouth College.

The legal instrument of which I have been speaking, relates to a plot of ground no more than eighteen miles from Boston—in a town which only eleven years before had been set off from one still nearer that city; yet it was a frontier settlement, at which