

## "Burnham's Rock" at The Falls; The Gill Side

The Battlefield study currently being undertaken at Turners Falls and Gill, Massachusetts involves the incursion of Captain William Turner with his troop of soldiers and settlers upon the Indian encampment (May 19, 1676) that was located on the Gill shoreline at "The Falls," what we know at present as Turners Falls, located between the towns of Gill and Montague, Massachusetts.

This project is quite involved and its purpose is to arrive at a practical and plausible conclusion as to what actually happened prior to, on, and after that significant date. Numerous historical writings and interpretations offer varied accounts of the goings-on during the portion of King Philip's War (1675-1676) in the Connecticut River Valley and more specifically the areas aforementioned.

This paper will not delve into those accounts, per sé, but it will offer a tributary of the project that must be included in the learning process. It's an important—and may very well have been overlooked—segment concerning; what did the immediate area look like during that time.

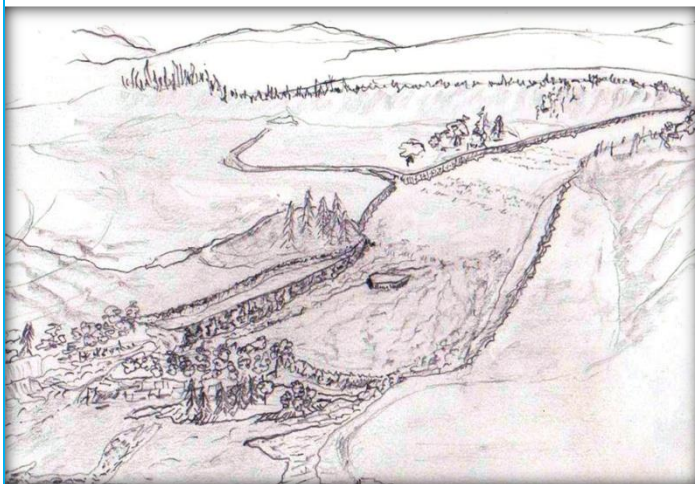
A group of interested historians that attend the Battlefield Project meetings coalesced to form a study group to endeavor to do just that . . . identify the immediate area that involves the Captain Turner assault. The core group consists of:

Gary Sanderson, Historian and Out-Door Columnist for The Recorder (Greenfield, MA, based newspaper).

Peter A. Thomas, PHD, Archaeologist and former Research Professor at UVM.

Lynn Stowe Tomb, Gill Historical Commission; Gill Historian. (Lynn Stowe Designs).

Ed Gregory, Turners Falls Historian; Montague Historical Commission Chair. Member Montague and Greenfield Historical Societies.



Peter A. Thomas illustration; Nov. 29, 2015

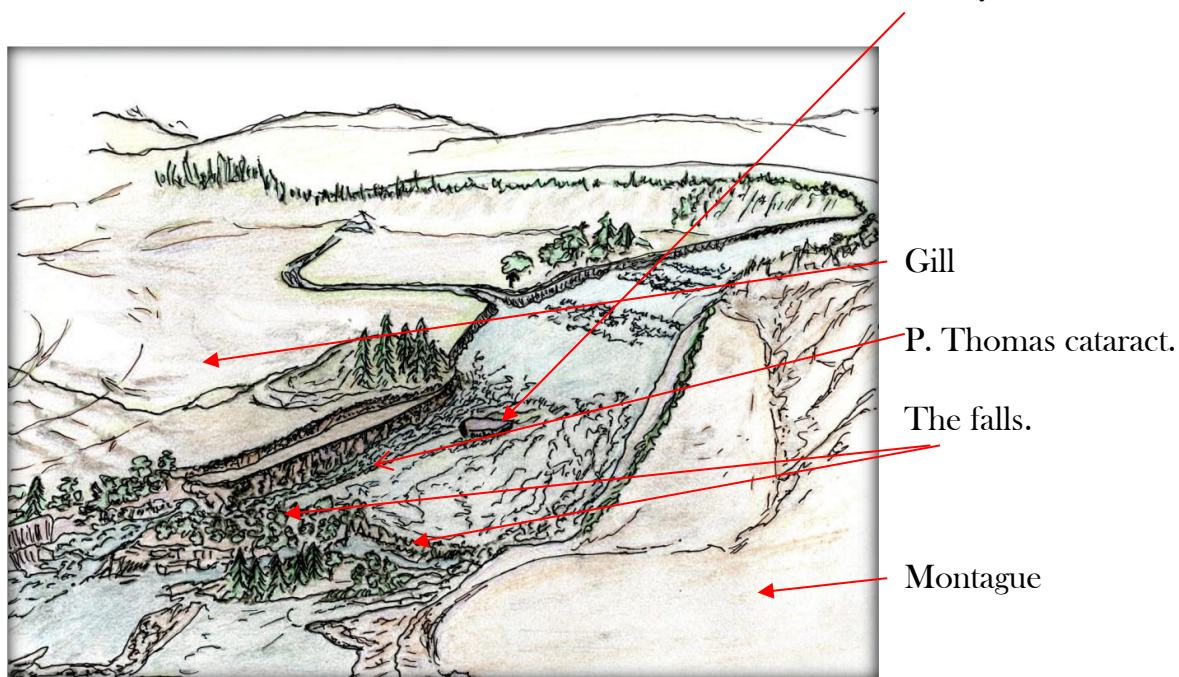
In short order, Peter Thomas came up with a neat grayscale visual to present to the group for study and critique. Its content has been gleaned from various historical accounts of the Gill and Riverside areas that Peter has researched for his presentation to the Battlefield project depicting what the area *may* have looked like in 1676. Thomas (The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape; Dec. 29, 2015)

With work cited; Thomas, (The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape, 2015) Peter has written a professional paper that depicts his rendition of what the changed landscape may have looked like in 1676. Peter's work is extensive and thorough. His dedication to the task is admirable.

One of the aspects of Peter's drawing is the placement of a sizeable land mass or *rock*, shown as an island in his sketch. This *rock*, "Burnham's Rock," so-called, was the location of a favorite fishing spot for Indian gatherings and local settler fishing locations along the Gill shoreline of the Connecticut River for a time preceding, and during the 17th Century.

Peter's placement of "Burnham's Rock" (BR) is now undecided by Ed Gregory<sup>1</sup> as Ed has offered another—more plausible—location for the rock via historical accounts of the area.

Burnham's Rock as located by Peter A. Thomas.



Colorized by Ed Gregory. Nov. 30, 2015

With the difference of opinion brought to-the-fore, a meeting was arranged at the residence of Gary Sanderson in Greenfield, on December 12, 2015. In attendance is the core group to discuss and view subject-related maps and a power-point presentation given by Ed.

The meeting, from 11 a.m. till 2 p.m., shed light on a plethora of information brought for discussion and dissection on the location of not only Burnham's Rock, but also another pertinent land mark known as Foster's Rock (FR) that has significance in relation to the location of BR.

<sup>1</sup> Ed has substantial local knowledge as the first twenty-three years of his life is a learning experience for Turners Falls and adjacent areas. He has known of the existence of BR for some time and offers his interpretation in this work.

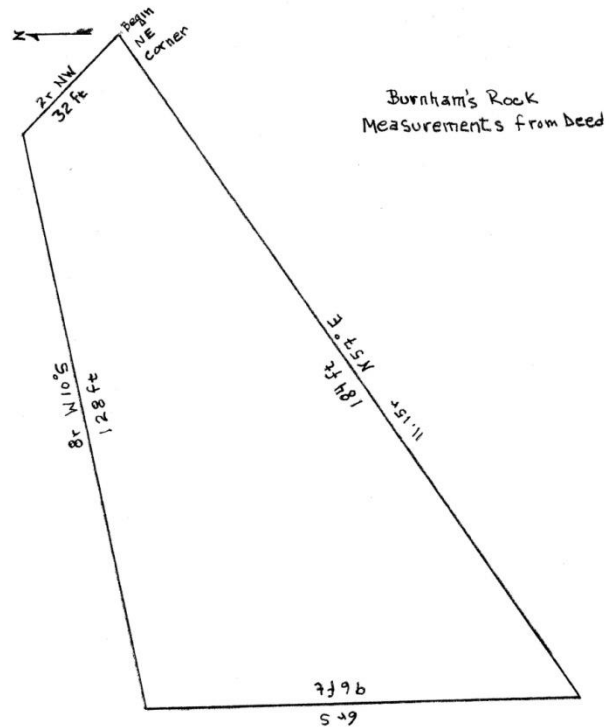
The gathering went well as Gary is the consummate host. However, any relevant conclusion to aid our quest to place the enigmatic rock(s) proves unfilled. The dialog is continued via numerous email transmissions generated by the group, et al. The email is an interesting study in itself.

My work carries on in regard to arriving at a reasonable and more credible location for BR and FR . . .

Peter has a drawing of the physical layout of BR; it follows.

“BR” dimension drawing: P.A. Thomas (12.18.2015) This illustration along with the text may be found in; Thomas (The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape; Dec. 29, 2015).

The size and configuration of Burnham’s Rock is provided in a deed dated October, 1792 by which the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sold William Smalley and his associates exclusive rights to the salmon and shad fishing from Burnham Rock. In the deed, the rock is bounded, as is any other property: “the aforesaid Rock Island called “Burnham’s Rock” lying in the Connecticut river between the towns of Greenfield and Montague, beginning at the northeast corner of said Burnham’s Rock, called the “boiling place,” and running on said Rock northwest two rods [33 feet] thence running on said rock west ten degrees south eight rods [132 feet], thence running south on said rock six rods [99 feet], thence running on said rock to first mentioned corner [184 feet]” (Copied at the Franklin County Registry of Deeds (book 6 Pp44-45) by Lynn Stowe Tomb, transcribed by Bill Schweikert; also in Francis M. Thompson, (*History of Greenfield, Shire Town of Franklin County, Massachusetts*, Vol. I: 530-531).



Now that we have a graphic of the geometry of BR, placement may be possible as I propose my model.

This document references Peter Thomas' work "The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting An Early Landscape" (12. 29.2015 Rev.1.3.2016) so as to make comparisons by each author as to the location of Burnham's and Foster's Rocks.

This paper will not be in the style<sup>2</sup> of Peter's. I'll make an attempt to present my hypothesis offering the simplest terms.

I'd like to begin with direct quotes from mentioned historical accounts as to the location of Burnham's Rock at the "falls" located at the Gill side of what we know today as the Turners Falls Dam.

Initially, it will be helpful to the reader to become familiar with the geography, names of certain areas and landmarks. The following image (e.g. 1.3.2016; base image via Google Earth) is provided for that purpose.



Fig.1 e.g. 1.2.2016

I'd like to entertain several descriptive terms used by various historical accounts to describe specific locations for the placement of Burnham's and Foster's rocks. Certain individual, but pertinent words will be defined. I do believe that most of these words are often taken for granted or misconstrued in their meaning when it comes to spatial relations.

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<sup>2</sup> Peter A. Thomas, PHD, is a professional Archaeologist and has prepared a very concise and professional paper, as it should be for a study such as this. I admire his dedication to the task and his generosity to share his work. I very much appreciate his effort and extend a sincere thank you to him for his thoughts in regard to his early landscape rendition. e.g.

(History of Gill 1793-1943; Pg.34 Ralph M. Stoughton)

**Great Island** in the Connecticut River at Turner's Falls originally towered high above the normal water level, a rugged pinnacle of rock with a sheer drop on its western side to a lower expanse containing some three acres of fertile soil producing a heavy crop of hay mowed each year by the first settlers. Eastwardly it extended **slightly farther up stream** than present appearances indicate, with "Burnham's Rock," prized by fisherman, **just above it on the Gill side**. Here the river, except at flood times, entered a **flume** about 5 yards wide and 400 yards long between the island and the Gill shore, with walls of jagged rock through which the water hurled itself precipitously.

The highlighted text, the tinted words; may have subtle, or not so subtle interpretations. This of course is dependent upon reader. I do believe they will play a substantial roll in the definition of terms for my work. (All definitions are provided by the English Encarta Dictionary 2015) unless otherwise stated.

slightly; very small in size, degree, amount, or importance.

just; barely, by only a small degree or margin.

flume; a narrow gorge with a stream running through it.

Great Island's present location—its north east corner, or section above the dam as one views the outcrop from an upstream or aerial vantage point—abuts the south end of the Gill Dam. *This geographic location comes into play with certain historical descriptions.*

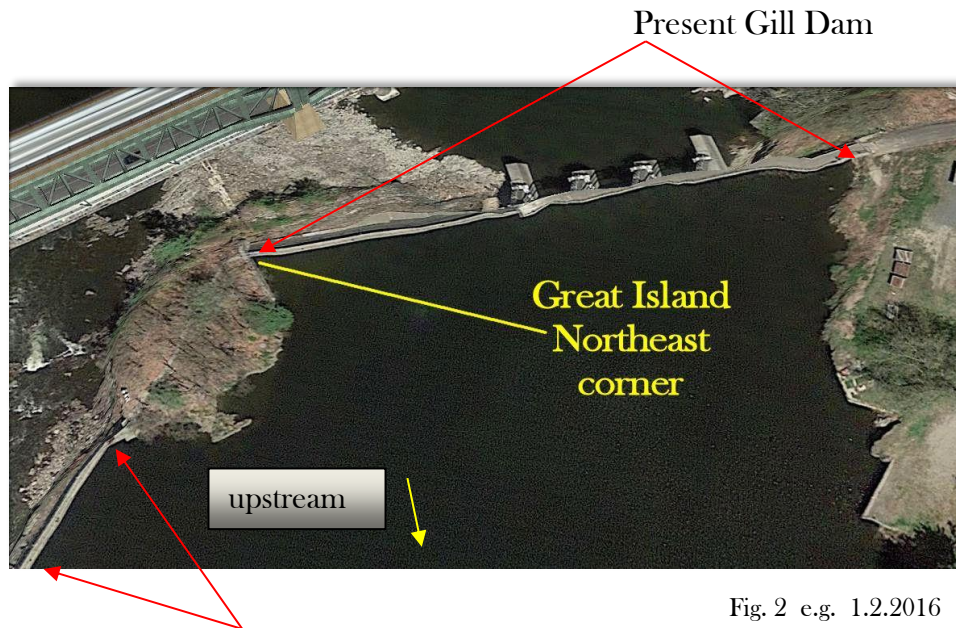


Fig. 2 e.g. 1.2.2016

Portion of the present Turners Falls Dam.

Note: All contemporary photographs by E.G.. Image dates will be given.



Gatehouse

Great Island

Riverside shore  
1 12.26.2015



From my vantage point on the Gill abutment of the Upper or "Red" Suspension Bridge that stitched Turners Falls to Gill (1878-1942), the view above is west, n.w.

1. The Turners Falls-Gill Bridge (1938-), the Turners Falls Dam, and, left-center, Great Island.
2. Looking at the Turners Falls Power Canal gatehouse (center)

2 12.26.2015

(Greenfield Gazette; Centennial Edition, 1892; Olden Times at Turners Falls By Josiah D. Canning)

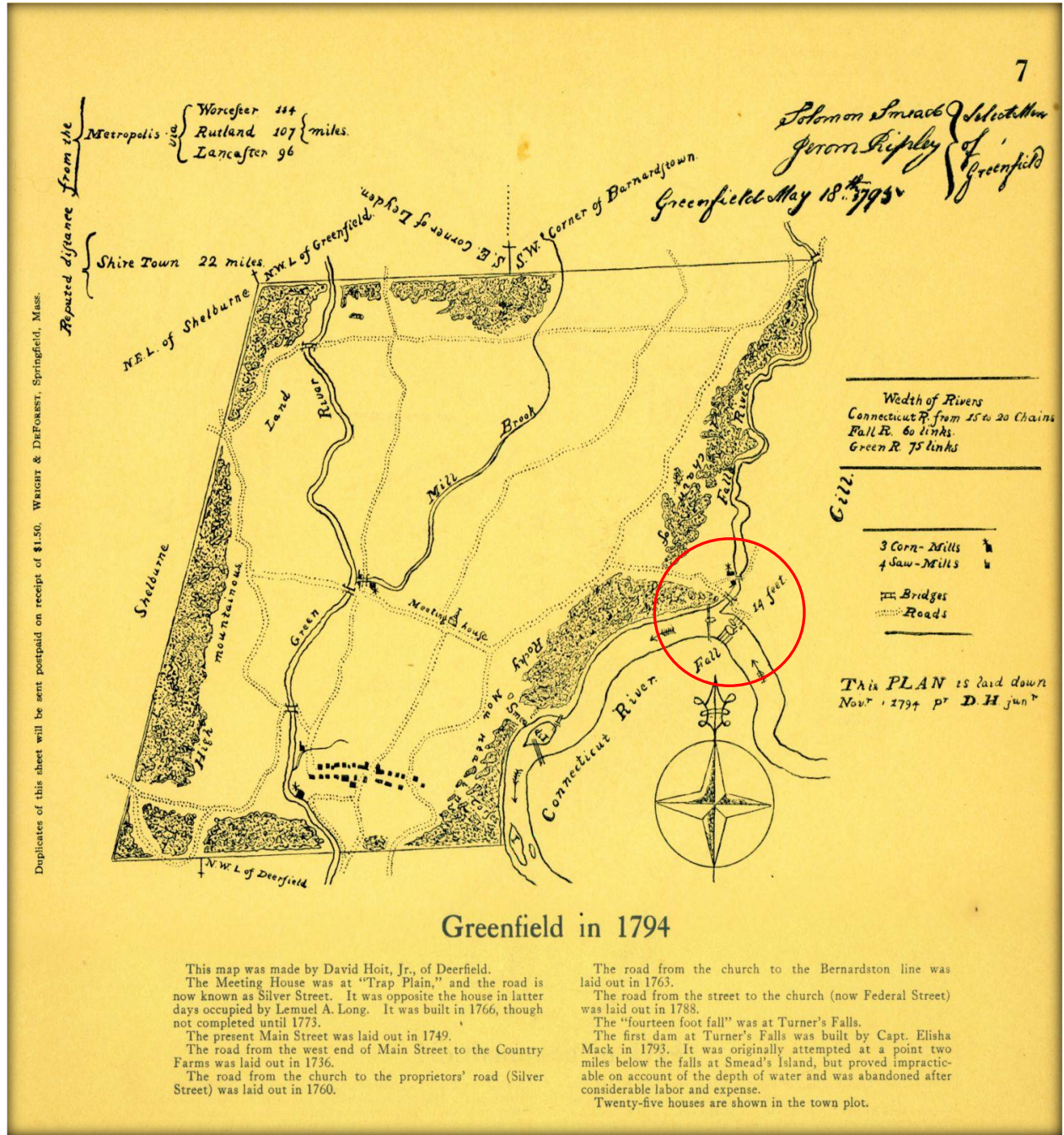
The fishing was mainly performed by the use of the seine and scoop nets. These latter nets were dipped from two noted points, *one a projecting rock over the cataract from the Gill shore, called "Foster's Rock,"* and the other *an offsetting spur on the east side of "Great Island," known as "Burnham's Rock."* Both of these famous rocks were easily seen and pointed out until the construction of the dams at the falls. In olden times, instead of a perpendicular fall of water, as now, the falls were a mad rush of waters down a rocky declivity with irresistible force.<sup>3</sup> Woe to the poor fisherman who slipped from Foster's or Burnham's rock! He was a doomed man, and had ten to one his body was never again seen.

offsetting; Geology; the horizontal displacement that occurs as a result of the movement of a rock mass along a fault.

spur; Something that projects outward at an angle from a larger object. (*BR was in actuality a part of GI.* e.g.)

olden times; A reference made to an undetermined time, albeit some millennia ago.

<sup>3</sup>J.D. Canning's description "In olden times . . ." "the falls were a mad rush of waters down a rocky declivity . . ." "Olden times" must have been millennia past as it would take that much chronological time to transform a "rocky declivity" into a "perpendicular fall of water." Declivity by definition: A downward slope, as of ground.



1794 David Hoyt map.

Early Maps of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts 1911; Wright & DeForest, Springfield, Mass. Ed Gregory archive

The times now (in this newspaper account (Greenfield Gazette; Centennial Edition, 1892); and in the 1794 David Hoyt/Hoyt) map show the cataract as a fourteen (14) foot perpendicular fall. Following . . . Study area for our purpose is circled in red.

The next four cuts define the study area.

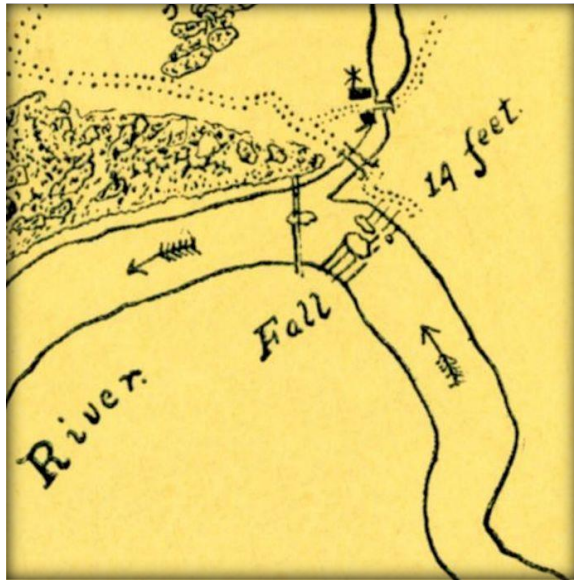


Fig. 3

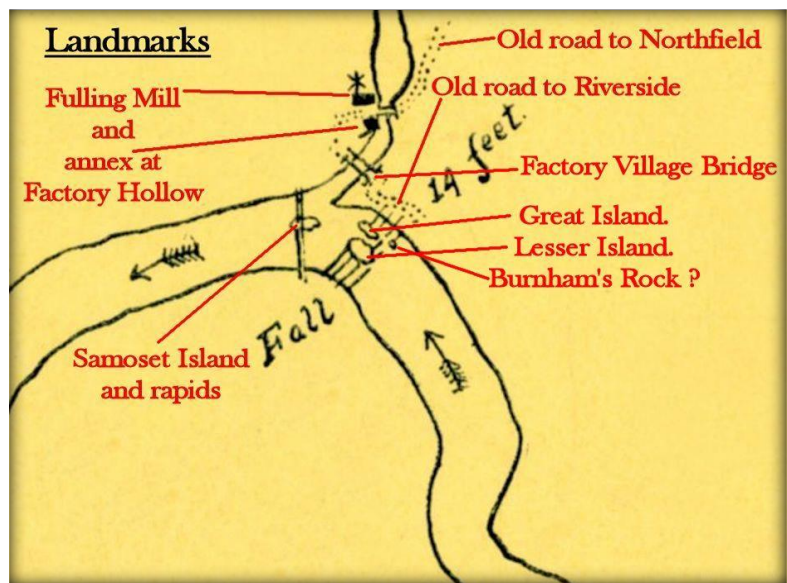


Fig. 4

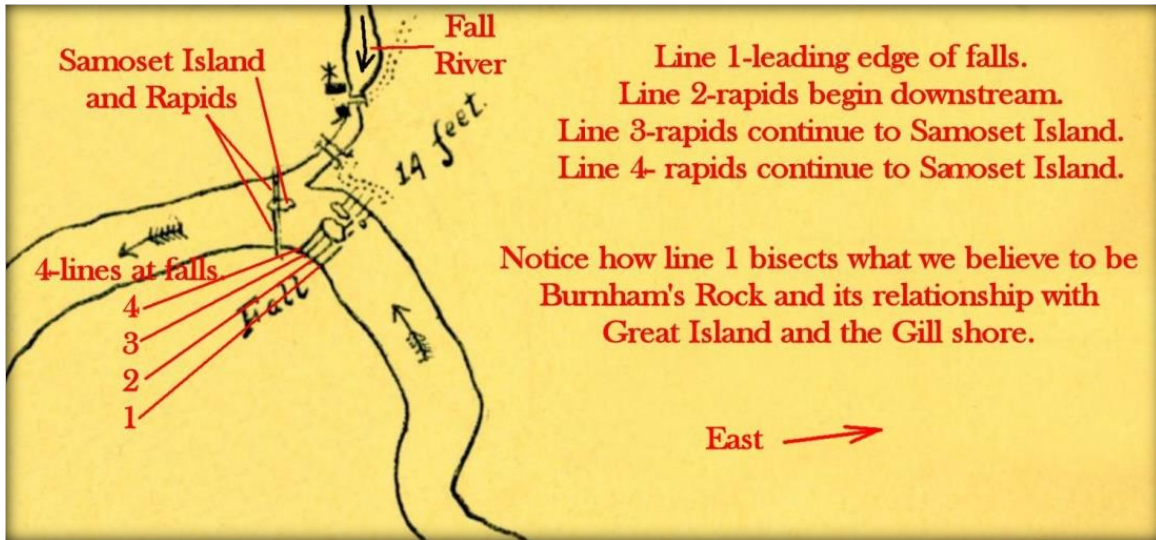


Fig. 5

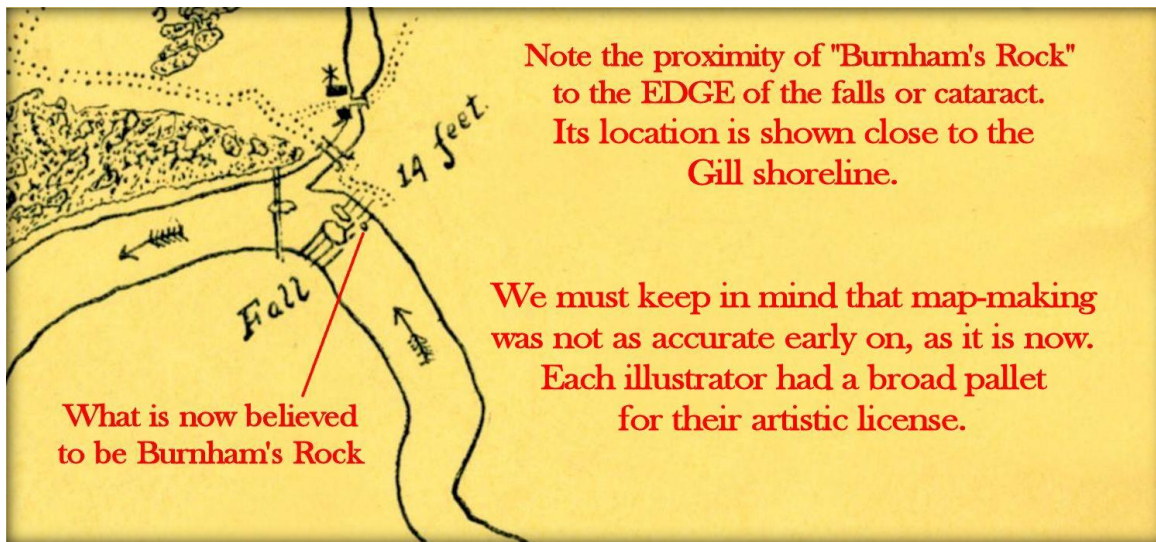


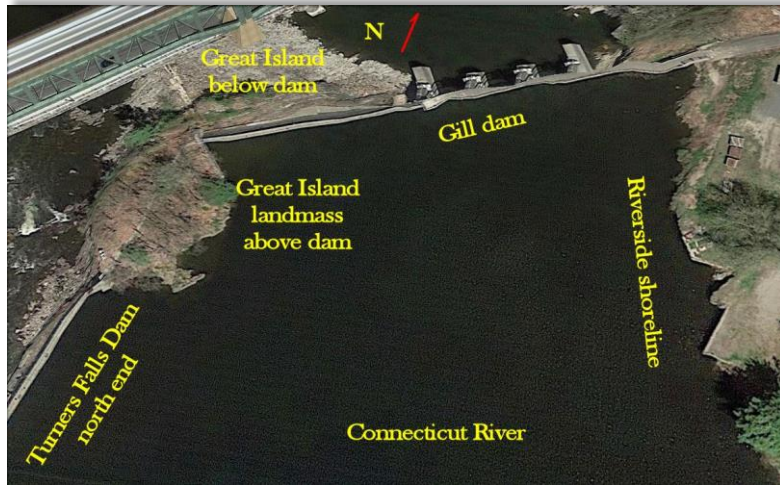
Fig. 6

As stated in the above illustration, i.e., . . . Artistic license. Persons interpreting a map, plan or plat also may exhibit a form of "Interpreters' License" when it comes to the definition of terms as aforementioned in this paper.

(History of Gill 1793-1943; Pg. 23 Ralph M. Stoughton)

“The fish were caught with seines and with scoop nets. The upstream **projection from Great Island** that formed the western head of the cataract ended in a long, flat rock exposed above the surface of the water just before the rapids began the initial plunge.”

**projection**; Something that juts out or overhangs.



This contemporary image (Google Earth, 5.10.2014) shows the Gill dam and Riverside shoreline. Great Island is to the left, along with its above and below dam locations.

Fig. 7

Great Island had more land mass prior to the dam-building sequences that took place, (1794,1820,1824,1866,1915,1971) (Ed Gregory, The Turners Falls Canal: History and Description 2006) as depicted in the image below; the *hypothetical reconstruction* of the area. With that knowledge, the location of Burnham's Rock might now be placed in the following images, as mentioned in; Stoughton, History of Gill 1793-1943, 23.

*"The upstream projection from Great Island that formed the western head of the cataract ended in a long, flat rock exposed above the surface of the water just before the rapids began the initial plunge."* (see fig. 9)

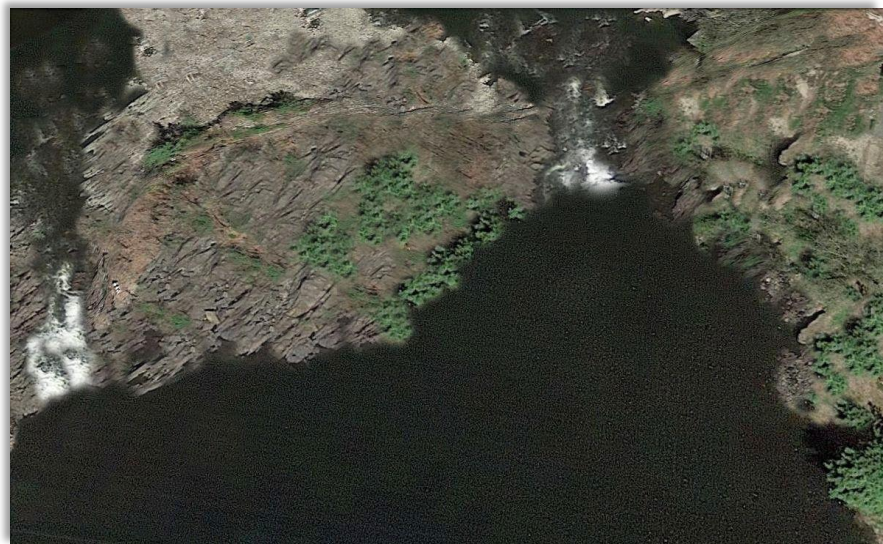


Fig. 8



This illustration depicts the western head of the cataract in relation to the Gill shoreline. The next graphic will show my thoughts as to the placement of Burnham's and Foster's Rock(s).

Fig. 9

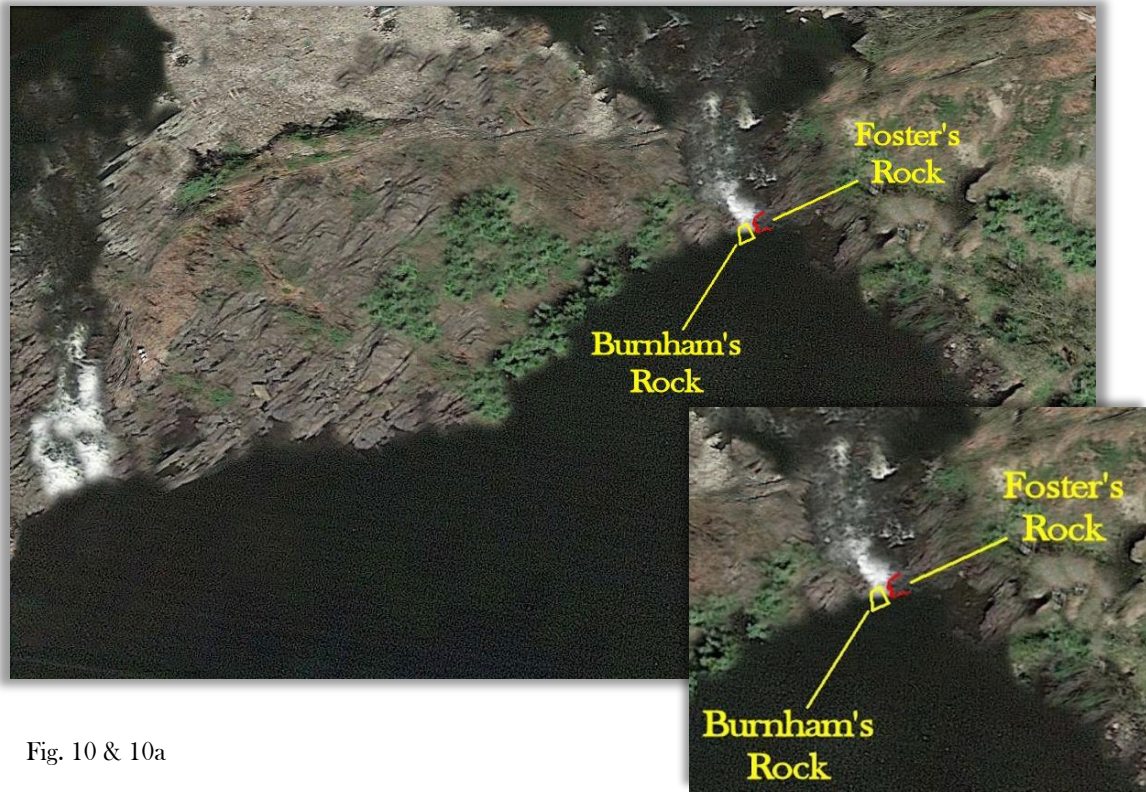


Fig. 10 & 10a

(Greenfield Gazette; Centennial Edition, 1892; Olden Times at Turners Falls By Josiah D. Canning)

“The fishing was mainly performed by the use of the seine and scoop nets. These latter nets were dipped from two noted points, one a projecting rock over the cataract from the Gill shore, called "Foster's Rock," and the other an offsetting spur on the east side of "Great Island," known as "Burnham's Rock.” Both of these famous rocks were easily seen

and pointed out until the construction of the dams at the falls. **In olden times, instead of a perpendicular fall of water, as now, the falls were a mad rush of waters down a rocky declivity with irresistible force.**

\_\_\_\_\_ **olden times**; A reference made to an undetermined time, albeit some millennia ago.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Over time**, this "rocky declivity" metamorphosed into the perpendicular fall via the constant pounding of water upon the relatively soft sedimentary bedrock. This fall is shown in the 1794 Hoit/Hoyt map, (ref. pg.7 this paper) and later still, the 30-foot fall that was recognized by Edward Hitchcock, et al., in various historical descriptions. (ref. below Hitchcock & Stoughton)

\_\_\_\_\_ **Over time**; A reference made to an undetermined time, albeit some millennia ago.

(1841 Final Report on the Geology of Massachusetts pp 275-276: Edward Hitchcock).

*"The proper point for viewing Turner's Falls is from the road leading to Greenfield, on the north shore, perhaps 50 rods below the cataract. Here from elevated ground, you have directly before you the principal fall, intersected near the center by two small rocky islands,<sup>4</sup> which are crowned by trees and brushwood. The observer perceives at once that Niagara is before him in miniature. These islands can be reached by a canoe from above the falls in perfect safety. Fifty rods below the cataract, a third most romantic little island<sup>5</sup> lifts its evergreen head, an image of peace and security, in the midst of the agitated and foaming waters, swiftly gliding by. The placid aspect of the waters above the fall, calmly emerging from the moderately elevated and wooded hills at a distance, is finely contrasted with its foam and tumult below the cataract."* (1841 Final Report on the Geology of Massachusetts pp 275-276).

(History of Gill 1793-1943; pg.79 Ralph M. Stoughton)

*"At this point the fish were compelled to scale the swift descent of rapids in a narrow cut through jagged rocks some 400 yards long **between the Gill river-bank and the island**. Eastwardly it extended slightly farther up stream than present appearances indicate, with **"Burnham's Rock,"** prized by fisherman, just above it on the Gill side. **Here the river, except at flood times, entered a flume about 5 yards wide and 400 yards long between the island and the Gill shore,** with walls of jagged rock through which the water hurled itself precipitously. From the other side of the island to the Montague shore, the river, in times of high water, formed a natural waterfall."*

(P. Thomas; The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape; pg. 30)

"This is the only description of a long flume that ran past the Gill shore. The distance given of 400 yards is the full distance between the former "Red Bridge" at the pitch of the cataract to a point midway in the channel located between Great Island and the Gill shore, i.e., that area that has been submerged since 1794. With the construction of six dams, the

<sup>4</sup> Great Island and the Lesser or "Cave" Island.

<sup>5</sup> This would be Samoset Island.

flume has long since been filled. I interpret Stoughton's depiction of "just above it" to mean that the up-stream end of Great Island extended upstream far enough so that the lower end of the flume lay between the island and Gill shore. The critical dimension of the flume is its 5-yard width. Today, the natural channel between the east side of Great Island and the Gill shore is over 40 yards wide."<sup>6</sup>

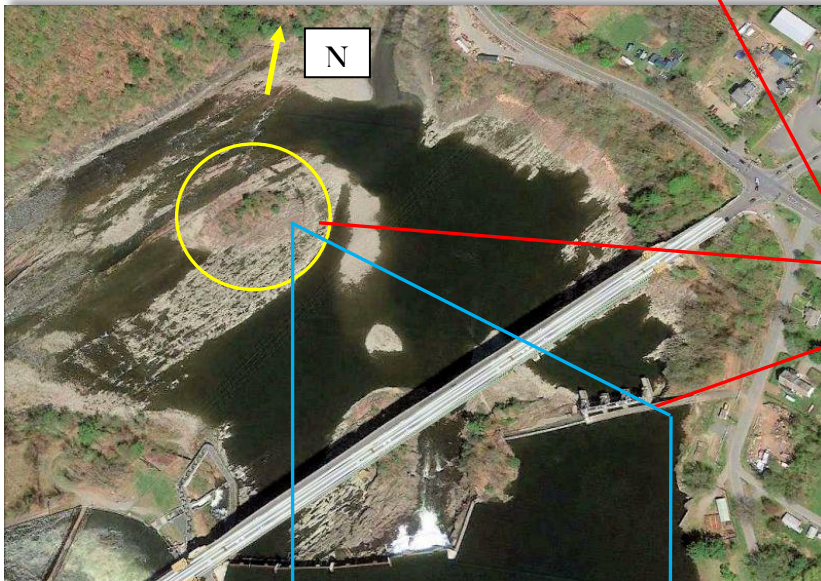
Today the natural channel is 40-yards wide due to the dam-building processes that Peter mentions; "*With the construction of six dams*" In 1676 and before, it may have been only five yards wide. (see Fig.10)

My interpretation of Stoughton's depiction "*Here the river, except at flood times, entered a flume about 5 yards wide and 400 yards long between the island and the Gill shore, with walls of jagged rock through which the water hurled itself precipitously.*"

The 400 yards mentioned by Stoughton, I believe, would be the outrun of the "flume" as it flowed due-west "*between the Gill river-bank and the island*". (see fig. 10.) The island being Samoset Island shown below. (also Fig. 11)



3 8.30.2015



400 yards +/- 50 yds.

This aerial image (Google Earth, 5.10.2014)

Shows the relationship of Samoset Island to the Gill portion of the Turners Falls dam.

Distance from dam to island is 400 yards +/- 50 yds.

Fig. 11

<sup>6</sup> I'm unclear as to Peter's "critical dimension" of 40-yards wide. The area is submerged. I believe his 40-yard wide dimension is hypothetical at best.

Samoset Island from Turners Falls shoreline during spring freshet.



4 4.24.2013

(History of Gill 1793-1943; Pg.79 Ralph M. Stoughton)

*Eastwardly it (Great Island) extended slightly farther up stream than present appearances indicate, with "Burnham's Rock," prized by fisherman, just above it on the Gill side.*

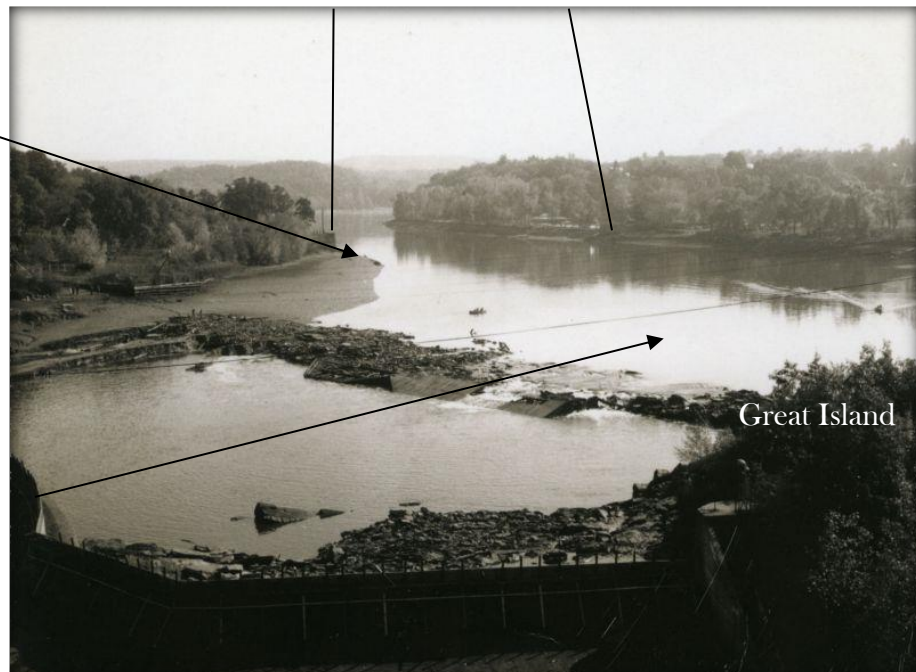
\_\_\_\_\_ slightly; very small in size, degree, amount, or importance.

I believe this eastward extension "*slightly farther up stream*" is not so far up stream to locate Burnham's Rock at the site of the Riverside abutment for the Upper Suspension Bridge, the site of the early ferry crossing (Bissell's Ferry) from the Gill (Riverside) shore to the Montague shoreline. My interpretation; *slightly*, doesn't equate to 400 yards.

Upper Suspension Bridge (1878-1942)  
abutments:  
Gill side                      Montague side.

In his initial sketch (Pg. 2 this paper) Peter places Burnham's Rock roughly here, slightly north of the Upper Suspension Bridge Gill abutment.

My placement would be here at Great Island extension that was above the waterline in 1676.      Fig. 12



If Burnham's Rock was at the site Peter suggests, I do believe Bissell's Ferry could not have operated due to a very swift current running in the would-be "flume." The "flume" would have been located perpendicular to the ferry route (north-south) across the river.

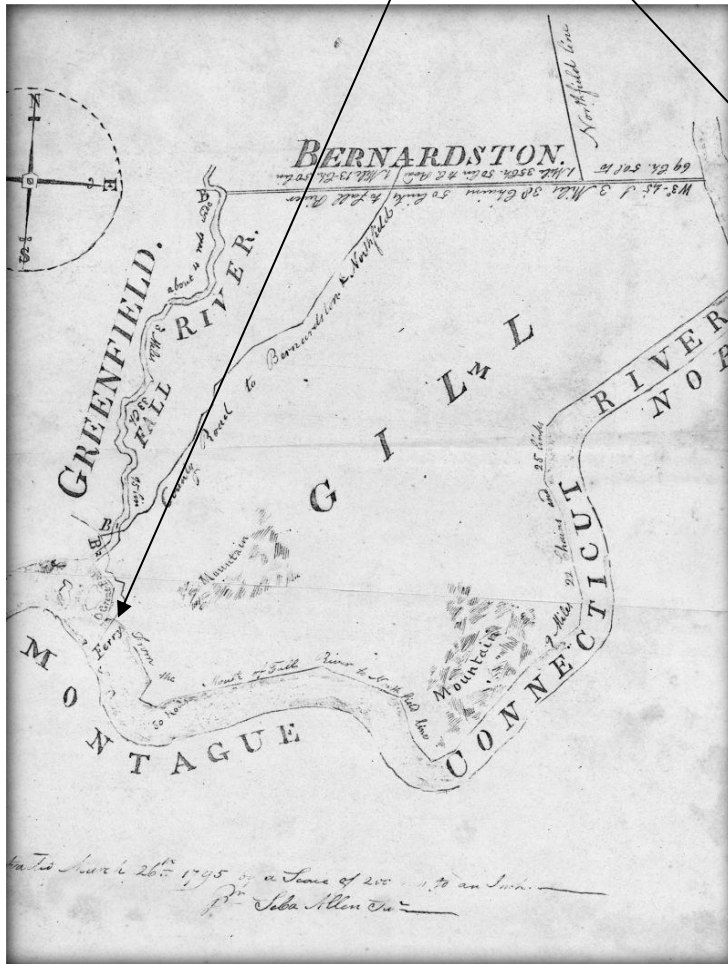
(History of Gill 1793-1943; Ralph M. Stoughton, p.112)

The earliest ferry in operation here was the one over the Connecticut River just above the falls at the location later occupied by the Red Suspension Bridge.

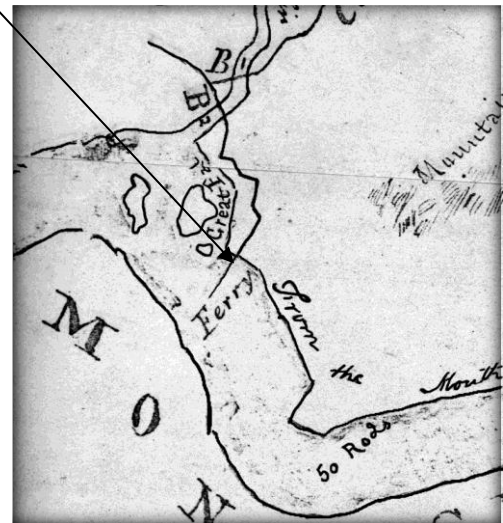
"just above the falls" in essence equates to one-fifth of a mile (1056 feet).<sup>7</sup>

(History of Montague Edward Pearson Pressey, 1910 pp.138 & 200) (map from Lynn Stowe Tomb)

A map of 1794, surveyed by Sela Allen, of Greenfield, (1762-abt.1837), there is a county road running from "Bissell's Ferry," near the future (1878) upper suspension bridge location. This was the road to Factory Village and Bernardston . . .



This cut digitally enhanced by Ed Gregory, 1.13.16.



Map-maker, Allen used his "artistic license" in depicting the size of the islands at the falls. This perspective shows the ferry much closer to those islands than in actuality. In Peter's interpretation, I believe he envisions Burnham's Rock much closer to the Ferry site than it should be.

Figs. 13 & 13a

<sup>7</sup> I measured the distance from the Gill (Riverside) abutment of the Upper Suspension Bridge to Oak Street, on Dec. 24, 2015. I set my odometer to zero at the Gill abutment and measured first to Pine Street. Distance; .01 mile. From Pine Street to Oak Street. Distance; 0.1 mile. Total 0.2 miles = 1056 feet = 1/5 mile. (1 mile = 5280 feet)

... In July, 1872 *The Turners Falls Reporter*, a weekly paper was started by A. D. Welch. He sold to Cecil T. Bagnall, the editor and proprietor, in the fall of 1874. "*The upper suspension bridge was called for this same year, on the site of Bissell's ferry, which had operated for over one hundred years.*"<sup>8</sup>

*on the site of Bissell's ferry, which had operated for over one hundred years.*

The time of the newspaper reference is 1874; less one hundred years implies that the ferry was operating in 1774, or earlier (*for over one hundred years.*) I do believe that if the "flume" for the cataract was located at the upper suspension bridge—possibly then (1774), the flume was in decline by geologic occurrence—i.e., the deposition of silt by the river flow, that there would still have been substantial, swift, water flow that would have been an influence on the safe operation of the ferry. No dams were built at the falls as yet. The completion date for the first dam is 1794.

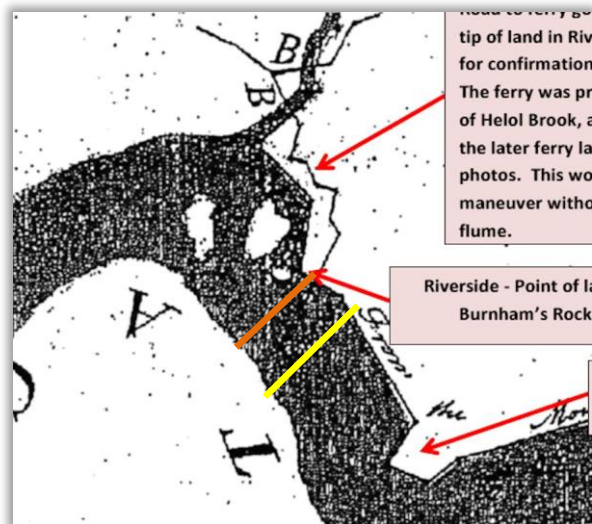


Fig. 14

On page 36 of Peter's (Thomas') work, he places Bissell's ferry about 450 feet +/- east of the present Riverside abutment at the mouth of "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook.<sup>10</sup> (yellow line) "*The ferry was probably tied up at the mouth of Helol Brook.*" This map interpretation, I believe is incorrect. The map used (Fig. 14) does not show the actual ferry line projecting from the Gill (Riverside) shoreline. (orange line)<sup>11</sup>

As in (Figs. 13 & 13a) map-maker Allen, in depicting the size of the islands at the falls, (shows the ferry much closer to those islands in (Fig. 14), than in actuality.

In this Thomas' interpretation (Fig. 14) Burnham's Rock is further away (west) of the Ferry site at "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook that's shown in (Figs. 13 & 13a). If indeed this was the case, then now the location of Burnham's Rock is more in line with my offering for its

<sup>8</sup> 1874 less 100 = Bissell's Ferry was in operation in 1774.

<sup>9</sup> From an email response (12.1.2016) to questions pertaining to Helol/Heal-All, from Lynn Stowe Tomb.

"Good morning and Happy New Year. Up at my usual 6:00, as I was in bed before 11:00.

**Re: Helol vs. Heal-All.** Although the Europeans and later residents of Riverside called the spring and brook 'Heal-All' in most of our sources, Pam and I have noticed that on a few of the oldest maps and plans, the handwritten name of the brook is "Helol." I have not seen any written explanation, although I'll keep looking. Is it possible that "Helol" was a version of the original Native name for the brook, and sounded like and eventually evolved to "Heal-All"? To be continued . . . Lynn

<sup>10</sup> Thomas' "The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape" Jan. 07, 201 pg. 11

<sup>11</sup> (History of Gill 1793-1943; Ralph M. Stoughton, p.112) "The earliest ferry in operation here was the one over the Connecticut River just above the falls at the location later occupied by the Red Suspension Bridge."

location at the falls. Albeit, there is no specific proof of the ferry being at the "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook location.

Images that follow were shot by me on December 28, 2015. I had the opportunity to visit the contemporary Gill Dam and Great Island. Let's take a look.



On the Gill Dam headin' west to Great Island (GI).

5 12.28.2015



Looking south as we set foot on GI

6 12.28.2015

Upper Suspension Bridge Gill side abutment.

7 12.28.2015

Image 7 shows what remains of the exposed extended land mass of Great Island. We're looking due east from the north east "corner" of GI to the Riverside shoreline and the Gill (Riverside) abutment of the Upper (red) Suspension



## Bridge. (1878-1942)



8 12.28.2015

From the tip of the extension remains we now look east across the river. I've superimposed imaginary lines for the two most recent dams that existed in the times mentioned in the image; 1915 concrete dam and the 1866 wood crib dam.

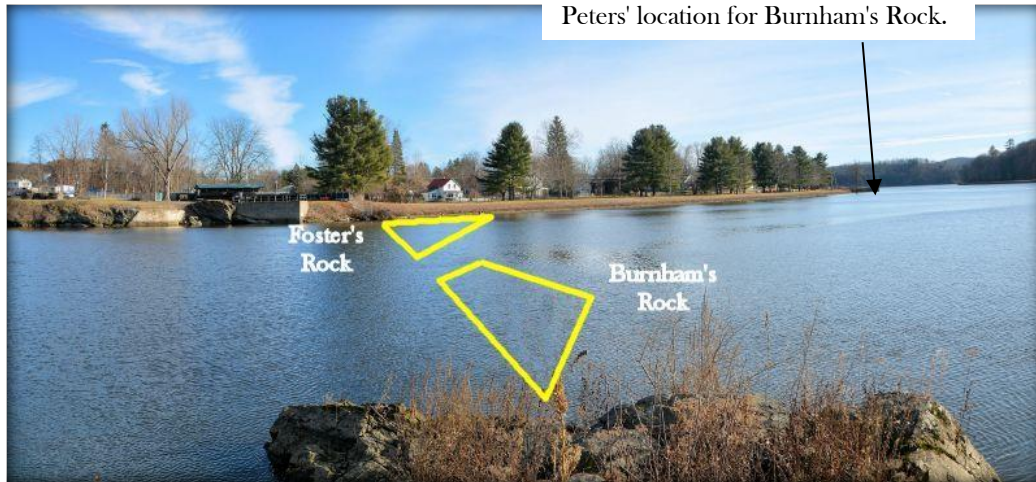
*The upstream projection from Great Island that formed the western head of the cataract ended in a long, flat rock exposed above the surface of the water just before the rapids began the initial plunge.* (History of Gill 1793-1943; Stoughton).

I believe the 1866 crib dam site was the site of the upstream portion of the flume that carried its way due west **between** the Gill shore and the north eastern wall of Great Island some 400 yards downstream. (See fig. 10). Please keep in mind that "*between the Gill shore*" does not necessarily mean the distance was "tight" to the shoreline. The operative word here being *between*.

**Between;** An intermediate point between two places.

— Foster's Rock —

The next photo will show, in a simple portrayal, my thought as to the location of Burnham's Rock and Foster's Rock.



9 12.28.2015

Note the variation in distance (image 9) from my would-be location and Peter's would-be location at the Riverside abutment. This equates to 600 feet +/- 50 feet.



10 12.26.2015

I've been unable to locate any physical dimensions for Foster's Rock. It simply being described as a "projection from the Gill shoreline." As hypothesized in Fig.10.

(Greenfield Gazette; Centennial Edition, 1892; Olden Times at Turners Falls By Josiah D. Canning)

"The fishing was mainly performed by the use of the seine and scoop nets. These latter nets were dipped **from two noted points, one a projecting rock over the cataract from the Gill shore, called "Foster's Rock,"** and the other an offsetting spur on the east side of "Great Island," known as "Burnham's Rock."

(History of Gill 1793-1943; Pg.80 Ralph M. Stoughton)

"Nearly opposite at a higher level, "Foster's Rock" jutted out over the cataract from the Gill shore."

opposite; positioned so as to face somebody or something from the other side of an intervening space.

Image 10 endeavors to show from the vantage point on the Riverside shoreline what the view may have looked like from Foster's Rock looking toward Great Island.



11 1.28.2015

Image 11 . . . could it be . . . Foster's Rock? A reflective no; but it looks impressive. Below, view west from fig. 11.



Other considerations:

- (History of Gill 1793-1943; Pg.82 Ralph M. Stoughton)

Burnham's Rock, the most coveted fishing place here, was an irregular area over 100 feet long, but due to its dangerous position on the **brink** of the cataract.

**brink**; The very edge of something such as a steep drop or riverbank.

- (History of Greenfield 1682-1900; Pg. 532 Francis M. Thompson)

Rock Island called "Burnham Rock" lying in Connecticut river between the towns of Montague & Greenfield, beginning at the northeast corner of Burnham's Rock, called the "boiling place" & running on said Rock northwest two rods, thence running on said Rock west ten degrees south eight rods, thence running south on said Rock six rods, thence running on said Rock to the first mentioned corner. (Registry of Deeds book 6 Pp 44-45).

(See Peter Thomas' drawing of the geometry of Burnham's Rock; pg 3, this paper.)

- The postcard on page 44 of Peter Thomas' work suggests that a portion of Burnham's Rock has been exposed.

*"But might this postcard show the only surviving image we have of Burnham's Rock – that elevated behemoth of rock that extended over the flume at the head of the once mighty cataract? There is little doubt that Burnham's Rock, although much diminished in size, occasionally reemerged exactly where Epaphras Hoyt and later residents and historians placed it."* p.t.



1

The supposed rock.

The postcard has been artistically enhanced by the addition of the dwelling (white house/red roof) on the right side of the upper suspension bridge, and quite possibly the other red roofs directly in back of the entrance to the bridge, and, the structure segments to the right, behind the trees.

In an email from Lynn Stowe Tomb, (Gill Historical Commission & Gill Historian) she explains the postcard content in regard to the *never-present* house.

- On Dec 30, 2015, at 2:23 PM, Lynn Stowe Tomb wrote:

*Here's the postcard (1) at the highest resolution I have. It's really strange, though. If we're looking at Riverside, the house on the upper right was never in that spot! There was a house in Riverside that looked like that (a duplex built about 1900) on Walnut St., but we're looking at Fairview St. As Ed found in that other photo, some pics for postcards etc. were faked (before Photoshop). Anyway, it looks like a biggish rock is just to the left of the bridge abutment on the Riverside side.* 2

*I've also attached a different postcard (2) from the same era, sameish view. Lynn*



The supposed rock

Note: See following email banter for correction of the above statement.

An email was generated by Ed Gregory on 1.17.2016 to let the core group know that I have completed my offering as to the location of Burnham's and Foster's Rocks.

**From:** [Lynn Stowe Tomb](#)

**Sent:** Sunday, January 17, 2016 4:52 PM

**To:** [Ed Gregory](#)

**Cc:** [Gary Sanderson](#) ; [Ivan Ussach](#) ; [Peter Miller](#) ; [Peter Thomas](#)

**Subject:** Re: Ed's Burnham's Rock Location Ed's Revised BR Location

*"Hi Ed, I have read (rather quickly) your Word doc. It doesn't translate perfectly on my Mac, so some of the images and text are overlapping, which makes it tough to read. Such a lot of work and interesting. I will let you and Peter comment on the content. However I'd like to make two points:*

*1. Near the end where you talk about my comment that the duplex house didn't exist in that spot (on the postcard). That was a mistake on my part. I had not seen that house from that angle (looking straight on) in pictures. I had only seen it from the side. If you look at the ice harvesting photo you sent me, the house is there. Only the coloring in the postcard is fanciful. The rest is factual. So that whole discussion about the house is moot."*

Peter Thomas replies . . .

- On Dec 30, 2015, at 4:10 PM, Peter Thomas <[pthomas@gmavt.net](mailto:pthomas@gmavt.net)> wrote:  
*"Yes, I've enhanced it as much as I can. It certainly appears to be the remnants of a rock just downstream from the bridge, which is actually where Gallagher says it should be. Are you sure the house in question isn't the white one there now? I think it has the same roof line. Pete"*

Note: It was a common practice to enhance selected postcards during *that* period,<sup>12</sup> et al., to add to the archetype. This was done to encourage sales of the postcard by giving more than what was actually there. *e.g.*

In analysis of the comments made in the aforementioned email(s), I offer this . . .

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<sup>12</sup> Deltiology (from Greek "writing tablet, letter" is the study and collection of postcards. Professor Randall Rhoades of Ashland, Ohio, coined a word in 1945 that became the accepted description of the study of picture postcards. It initially took about 20 years for the name to appear in a dictionary. Compared to philately, the identification of a postcard's place and time of production can often be an impossible task because **postcards, unlike stamps, are produced in a decentralized, unregulated manner.** For this reason, some collectors choose to limit their acquisitions to cards by specific artists and publishers, or by time and location. For further edification regarding postcards, please visit <http://www.emotionscards.com/museum/historyofpostcards.htm>

Lynn . . .

*"Anyway, it looks like a biggish rock is just to the left of the bridge abutment on the Riverside side."*

Peter . . .

*"It certainly appears to be the remnants of a rock just downstream from the bridge,"*

Considering the comments made by Lynn and Peter, their assumption that *"it looks like a biggish rock . . ."* and *"It certainly appears to be . . ."* I feel that I must interpret this as conjecture at best.

With postcards offering more than actuality, and the fact that the postcard that Lynn offered with the would-be "rock," is **not very well defined resolution-wise**, I cannot agree with their assumption that this is a rock, per sé. There's something there, what it is remains an anomaly. Assumptions typically lead to confusion or questions at best.

Is this a rock? Maybe-so, maybe-no.

Is it a portion of Burnham's Rock? Comment reserved. Myself, I'd not describe it as such.

I would interpret this "projection" as a remnant log/logs from the bygone logging day.

—Others so involved with interest and who have made contributions to the *overall area* identification project; this would be to Peter Thomas' initial endeavor.

\* A contribution to Ed Gregory's effort to locate Burnham's Rock.

David Brule, Battlefield Commission Coordinator (Capt. Turner/King Philip's War)

Howard Clark, Nolumbeka Project Historian/Researcher

David "Bud" Driver, Deerfield Historian (King Philip's War)

David Graci, Deerfield Historian (King Philip's War)

\*Joe Graveline, Nolumbeka Project Historian/Researcher

Kevin McGrath, Ph. D., Director of Research; Mashantucket Pequot Museum/Research Center

Peter S. Miller, Greenfield Historical Commission, Local Historian

William "Bill" Schweikert, Northfield, Ma., Historian and Researcher

Ivan Ussach, Gill Historic Commission (Chair)

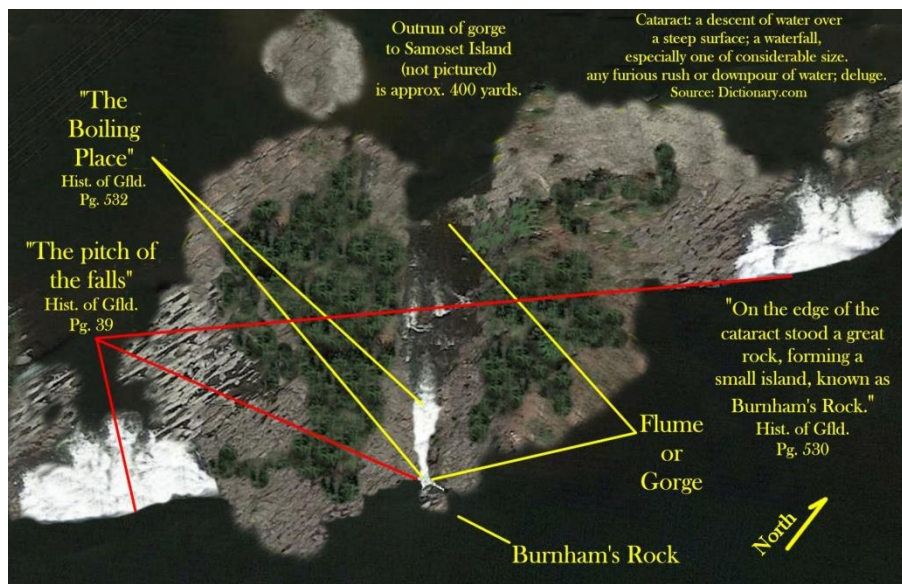
Ancillary information.

It's all in the interpretation of available historical data.

My *initial* location of Burnham's Rock is as follows:

My hypothetical position for observing the area is 100 yards upstream,—given as an aerial perspective—and east, of the falls and Great and Lesser Islands, looking directly toward the center of the falls, i.e., between the Montague and Gill shorelines.

My initial illustration depicting that location follows:



Montague side.

Gill side.

This rendition was given to the research group<sup>13</sup> via email on December 6, 2015 for critique.

Since that offering, we—the core group—have gathered additional historical accounts in regard to Burnham's Rock (BR) and Foster's Rock (FR). With that additional information being analyzed it becomes obvious to me that my first consideration of the location of B.R. is incorrect.

Initially, I placed B.R. on the south side and east end of Great Island (GI) at the head of the falls or cataract. See illustration above. I believed it to be an extension of Great Island that was then exposed due to lower water levels in the Connecticut river (for this study) in the mid to late 17th and 18th Century.

Information recently received now shows BR was an extension of GI but on the northeast side of GI and closer to the Gill shore. (Hoyt's 1794 map or plan of Greenfield, Ma. "Early Maps of the Connecticut Valley in Massachusetts" e.g.) ([Allen] 1795 map or plan of Greenfield, Ma.)

Note: This geologic formation (the cataract or falls) have not migrated upstream and have been in this location since their formation millennia ago.

The Gill shore is mentioned as an ambiguous distance in many of the writings describing the location of Burnham's and Foster's Rock(s).

<sup>13</sup> Lynn Stowe Tomb, Peter Thomas, Gary Sanderson.; along with myself, is to be considered the core-research group.

Subsequent research provides additional pertinent information.

P. Thomas: *The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape* p. 39

Epaphras Hoyt of Deerfield, writing at age 30 in 1824, is the only identified author who is likely to have seen the falls/cataract in its original state before 1795. His statement about the rock's or island's location is clear. Burnham's Rock . . . "was situated *at the pitch [top] of the cataract* [falls], and none but the most skillful watermen attempted to navigate a light canoe or bateaux to it; and even by these the task was considered extremely dangerous. It was approached from above by a delicate use of the paddle, and an eye that could measure a mite, and resolve compound forces at a glance. A deviation of a few degrees in steering was *certain to plunge the adventurer down the rugged cataract*, in which case, drowning must ensue. These phrases combined specify that the "pitch" was at the top of the cataract or falls, i.e., at the upstream point where the water began to drop. Both the Greenfield and Gill Town Maps of 1795 depict a small island in this location.

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The 1824 entry from Epaphras Hoyt's;  
"Antiquarian Research Comprising a History of the Indian Wars in the Country Bordering Connecticut River and Parts Adjacent" A first edition book resides in my library. *e.g.*

#### P127

"No river in New England afforded a greater abundance of fish than the Connecticut; and no place on the river presented a more favorable station for taking them, than the falls between the present towns of Gill and Montague. Many of our present inhabitants will recollect the time when upwards of five thousand shad have been taken in a day, by dipping nets at Burnham's rock, at that place. This rock was situated at the pitch of the cataract,<sup>14</sup> and none but the most skilful watermen attempted to navigate a light canoe or batteau to it; and even by these the task was considered extremely dangerous. It was approached from above by a delicate use of the paddle, and an eye that could measure a mite, and resolve compound forces at a glance. A deviation of a few degrees in steering, was certain to plunge the adventurer down the rugged cataract, in which case, drowning must ensue. The rock is now covered by the water, raised by a lofty dam<sup>15</sup>, constructed below, for the purpose

#### P 128

of diverting the stream from its natural course, into a canal.<sup>16</sup> The river for some distance above, **flowing smoothly** in a southwest direction, makes a sudden turn to the northwest,<sup>17</sup> about half a mile above the fall, and curving to the right assumes nearly a north course;<sup>18</sup> here it meets with a chain of rocks, stretching across the whole channel, crowned by two

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<sup>14</sup> The edge of the falls.

<sup>15</sup> The dam referred to here is the 1866 crib dam.

<sup>16</sup> Canal construction began in 1866.

<sup>17</sup> This would be the river's bend at the "narrows."

<sup>18</sup> From the "Narrows" to the falls.

rocky islands, and falls abruptly forty or fifty feet into a cavity, in wild confusion.<sup>19</sup>

Continuing its boiling course a short distance it receives *Fall river*, a small stream from the north, then making a sharp flexure to the left, and passing over a smaller bar some distance below, and several islands, it takes its usual southerly course a little below Deerfield river. By the erection of the dam, for the accommodation of the canal, the cataract has lost much of its original wildness, but nothing of its sublimity, and is visited as a curiosity."

*"This rock was situated at the pitch of the cataract, and none but the most skillful watermen attempted to navigate a light canoe or batteau to it; and even by these the task was considered extremely dangerous. It was approached from above by a delicate use of the paddle, and an eye that could measure a mite, and resolve compound forces at a glance. A deviation of a few degrees in steering, was certain to plunge the adventurer down the rugged cataract, in which case, drowning must ensue."*

With the above stated, if one considers the "cataract" that Peter has drawn as a cascading, rapid flow of water along the immediate Gill shoreline, it would have been quite improbable for anyone attempting to launch a canoe or batteau from the Gill shoreline to reach the Thomas' location of Burnham's Rock without immediately being swept down stream by way of the fast-flowing cascading cataract.

With Burnham's Rock being located where I propose, and as Hoyt describes, "*at the pitch of the cataract*", launching a canoe or batteau from the Gill shoreline would have been perfectly safe and then the slow and careful travel downstream toward the fall or cataract could have been achieved "*by a delicate use of the paddle, and an eye that could measure a mite.*"

Descriptions of Indians fleeing Captain Turner's men at the 1676 raid on the Indian gathering along the Gill shoreline tell us this . . .

The 1824 entry from Ephapras Hoyt's;

"Antiquarian Research Comprising a History of the Indian Wars in the Country Bordering Connecticut River and Parts Adjacent"

P 129

"Day was now about to dawn, but all was still in the Indian camp. Preparations for the attack were momentary, and the march was promptly commenced; crossing Fall river, and climbing up an abrupt hill, the English pushing rapidly through an intervening wood, rushed upon the back of the camp and found the Indians in a profound sleep, without even a watch. Housed from their slumbers by the sudden roar of musketry, they fled towards the river, vociferating *Mohawks! Mohawks!* believing this furious enemy was upon them. Many leaped into their canoes, some in the hurry forgetting their paddles, and attempting to cross, were shot by the English, or precipitated down the dreadful cataract and drowned, while others were killed in their cabins or took shelter under the shelving

<sup>19</sup> The "cavity in wild confusion" would be the outrun or flume formed by the rushing water below the falls.

rocks of the river bank, where they were cut down by their assailants without much resistance. Captain Holyoke is said here to have dispatched five with his own sword; nor did the soldiers evince less activity; all performed their duty in a most gallant manner, and the affair was soon over, with the loss of only one man on the part of the assailants. The loss of the Indians was severe; one hundred were left dead on the ground, and one hundred and forty were seen to pass down the cataract, but one of whom escaped drowning."

*"Many leaped into their canoes, some in the hurry forgetting their paddles, and attempting to cross, were shot by the English, or precipitated down the dreadful cataract and drowned,"*

With the above stated, if one considers the "cataract" that Peter has drawn as a cascading, rapid flow of water along the immediate Gill shoreline, it would have been quite *improbable* for anyone "*attempting to cross*" from the Gill shoreline to reach the south side—what is now the Turners Falls shoreline—without immediately being swept away by the rapid flow of water in the "flume." Would the Indians knowingly launch their canoes into an almost certain death situation? They launched above the falls where the water was relatively slow moving, but without paddles, were caught in the ever increasing current flow that would draw them over the "cataract" or falls.

To consider.

P. Thomas: The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape p.36.)

Bissell's ferry is placed about 250 feet +/- east of the present Riverside abutment at the mouth of "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook. "*The ferry was probably tied up at the mouth of Helol Brook.*" (see pg. 30 this work, fig. 14 & text) This map interpretation, I believe is incorrect. The map used (Fig. 14, pg. 16, this work) does not show the actual ferry line projecting from the Gill shoreline.

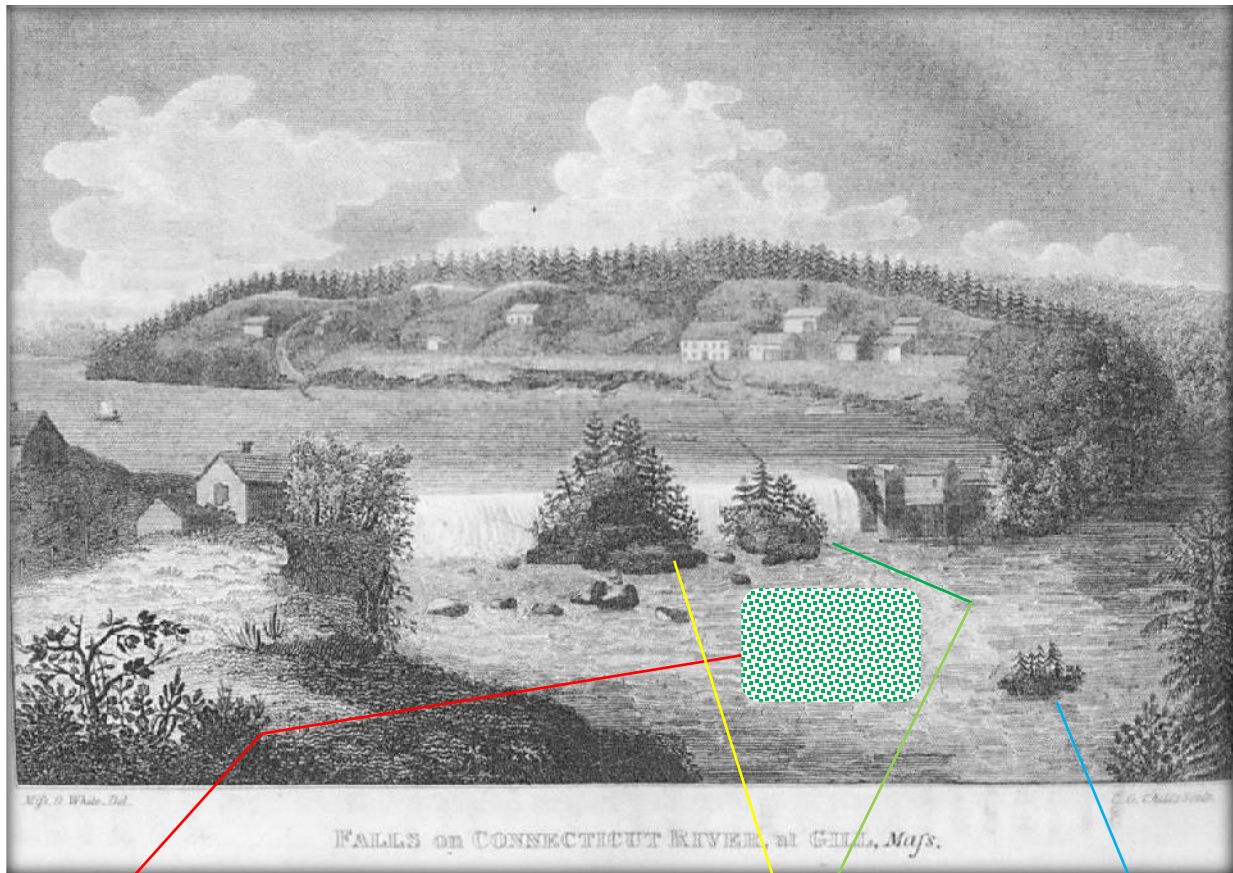
As in (Figs. 13 & 13a pg. 15 this work) map-maker Allen, in depicting the size of the islands at the falls, (shows the ferry much closer to those islands in (Fig. 14, pg. 16, this work), than in actuality.

In the Thomas' interpretation (Fig. 14, pg. 16, this work) **Burnham's Rock** is further away (west) of the Ferry site at "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook that's shown in (Figs. 13 & 13a, pg. 15 this work). If indeed this was the case, then now the location of **Burnham's Rock** is more in line with my offering for its location at the falls. Albeit, there is no specific proof of the ferry being at the "Helol" or "Heal-All" Brook location. The "Helol" location would also be a wider section of the river. Ferry routes would have been laid-out at the most narrow stretch from shore-to-shore.

To consider.

P. Thomas: The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape p. 17

The dam in the following sketch (Orra White Hitchcock 1818) was built in 1794/95 as part of the canal project to bypass the rapids and falls between the mouth of the Deerfield River and this large cataract. Great Island is in the center with the first log crib dam built across its upstream tip; "Lesser" Island is to the right. Note the high river bank on the Montague side, initial clearing and dense woodlands beyond. The neighborhood of Riverside is not visible in this rendition; it is located farther to the left. The building visible on the left side sitting on the bluff above the river in Gill *may* be associated with a mystery sawmill. *In this 1818 sketch, it is clear that a three-acre parcel of low meadow described by Stoughton (1978) as lying between Great Island and a small island and used for haying* (P. Thomas work Pg. 17) in the right foreground (see later section) is no longer there.



By the above description, "*lying between Great Island and a small island*" the approximate location of the three-acre parcel is shown.

Is the "*small island*" the one to the viewer's right of Great Island, *or*, is Samoset Island the referenced "*small island*"? The latter seems more reasonable.

I find it highly unlikely that there was a three-acre parcel immediately below the fall used for haying.

Reasoning:

1. *"it is clear that a three-acre parcel of low meadow described by Stoughton (1978) as lying between Great Island and a small island and used for haying."*

There is no clarity in the above sketch that a three-acre parcel ever existed. The river bed is flooded.

2. The bed below the fall is of sedimentary bedrock and various current-strewn and deposited boulders and rocks. Spring freshets and periods of heavy rain would have elevated water levels and inundated the entire area below the fall except for Samoset Island, which is bedrock, and only emerges as an island during periods of high water. Presently, some<sup>20</sup> refer to Samoset Island as Peskeompskut Island . . . a misnomer.

3. Access to the riverbed below the fall would have been a difficult—or inaccessible—as the river banks on both sides of the area below the fall is rocky and steep.

4. Stoughton may have inadvertently been referring to Ames' Island, 2.5 miles below the falls; (today just opposite Cabot Station.) Ames' Island was about three-acres in size at that time and it was used for haying up to the early 20th century.

These two offerings may induce the reader to form an additional opinion(s) as to the location of Burnham's and Foster's Rocks. If another scenario may come to-the-fore, it would be germane to these writings to offer additional opinions as to the historical worthiness for future researches and discussions.

*e.g.*

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<sup>20</sup> Recently arrived residents/visitors (last 20 years) to Turners Falls or the Town of Montague who are history ignorant in many cases prefer to remain as such for self-serving purposes.

To consider.

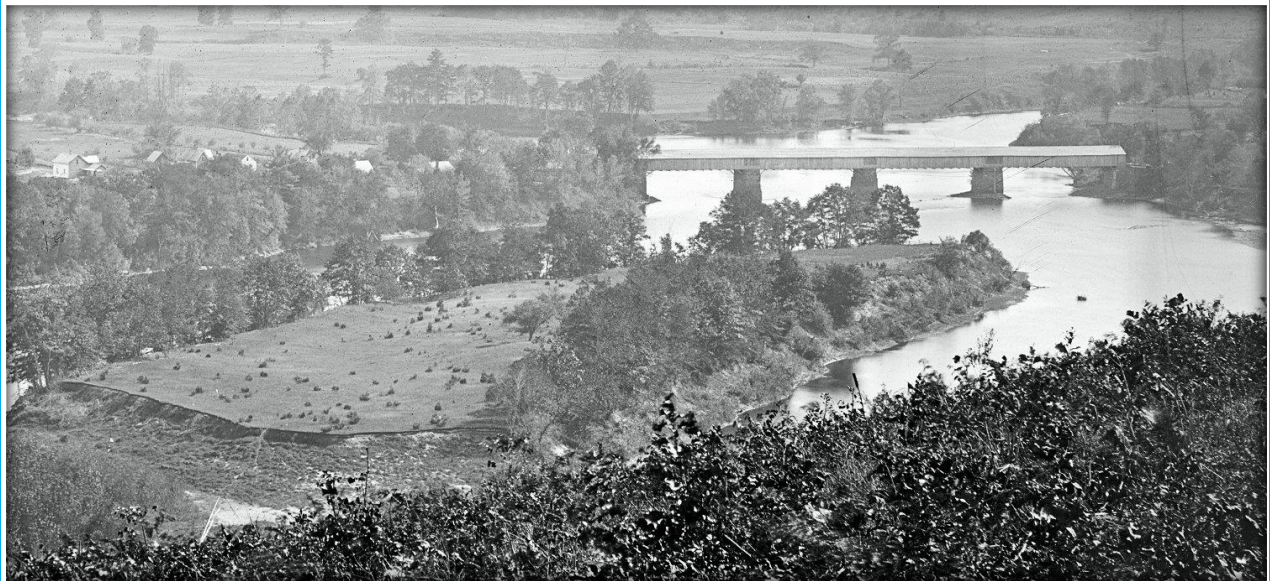
P. Thomas: The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape p. 17

*"In this 1818 sketch, it is clear that a three-acre parcel of low meadow described by Stoughton (1978) as lying between Great Island and a small island and used for haying*

I find it highly unlikely that there was a three-acre parcel immediately below the fall, that was used for haying. *e.g.*

Reasoning:

4. Stoughton may have inadvertently been referring to Ames' Island, 2.5 miles below the falls; (today just opposite Cabot Station.) Ames' Island was about three-acres in size at that time and it was used for haying up to the early 20th century.



Ames' Island, Montague City 1860

Greenfield Historical Society

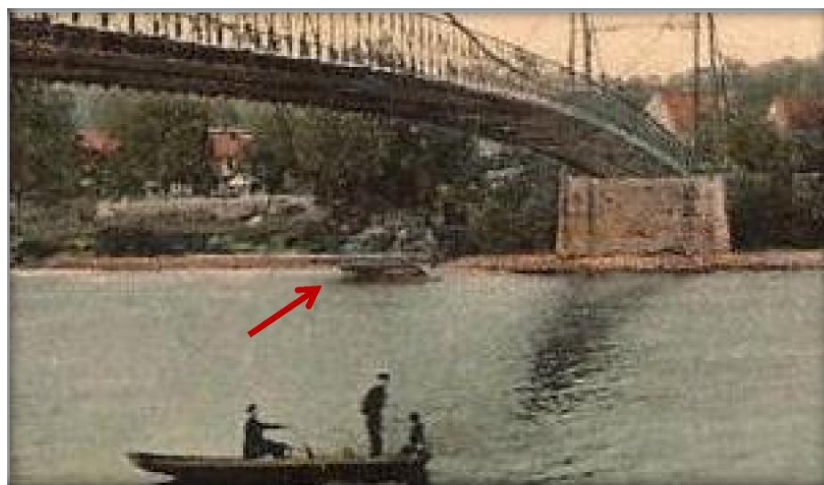
Ames' Island is a more probable site for the 3-acre parcel as the island—during times of low water—is easily accessible from the east bank (houses) of the Connecticut River. The island pictured is about 3 acres +/- .

These two offerings may induce the reader to form an additional opinion(s) as to the location of Burnham's and Foster's Rocks. If another scenario may come to-the-fore, it would be germane to these writings to offer additional opinions as to the historical worthiness for future researches and discussions. *e.g.*

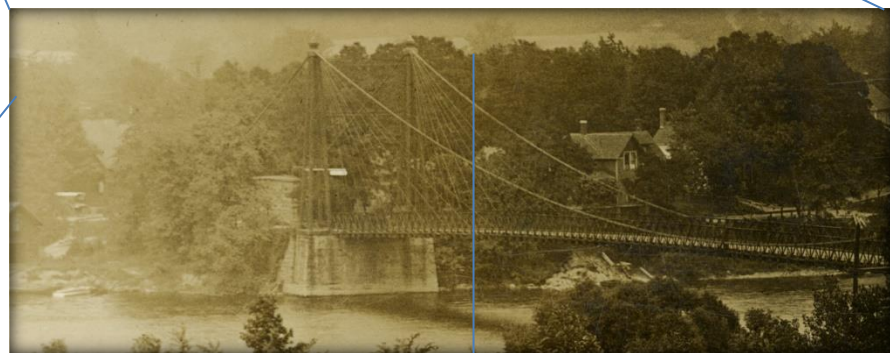
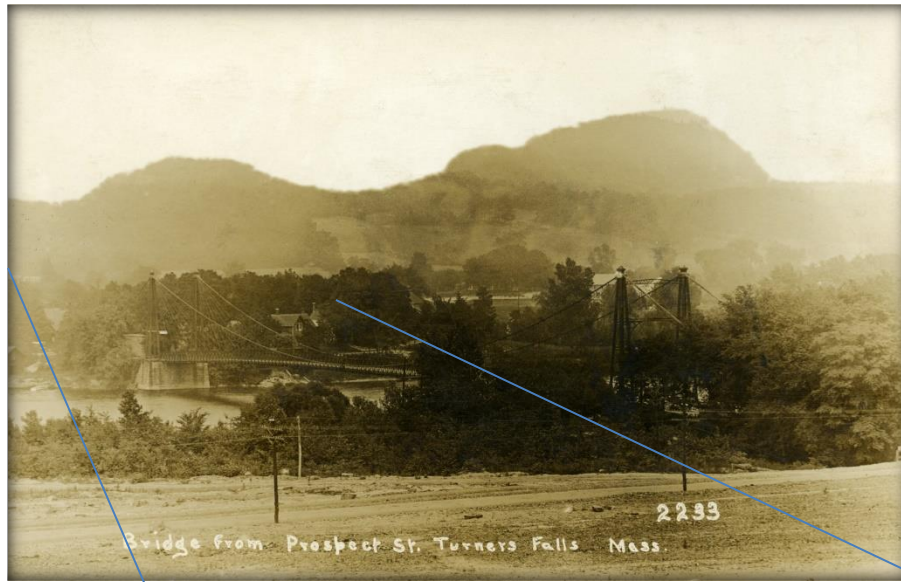
Additional imagery to dispel the Burnham's Rock location at the Riverside abutment of the Upper Suspension or "Red" Bridge.



This post card—c1920s—shows an object of undetermined origin along the north shoreline and a bit west of the Upper (Red) Suspension Bridge. It is thought by Peter Thomas to be the site of Burnham's Rock. (P. Thomas "The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting an Early Landscape" (2016) 44).



The following images dated c1880 and c1878 predate the aforementioned post card and the actual photographic content show nothing in the location as in the 1920s post card.



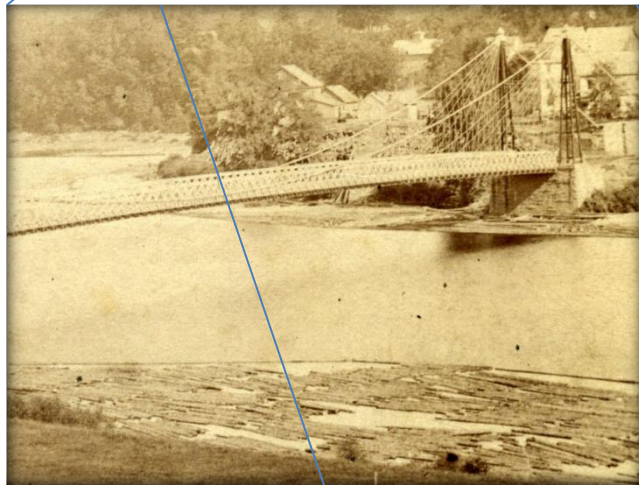
c1880

The river is about 3-4 feet **below** the *typical* water level.

*Typical* water level.

The top of the white space.

Is it possible that the object of undetermined origin in the post card is the boat dock/wharf shown in the photographic image?



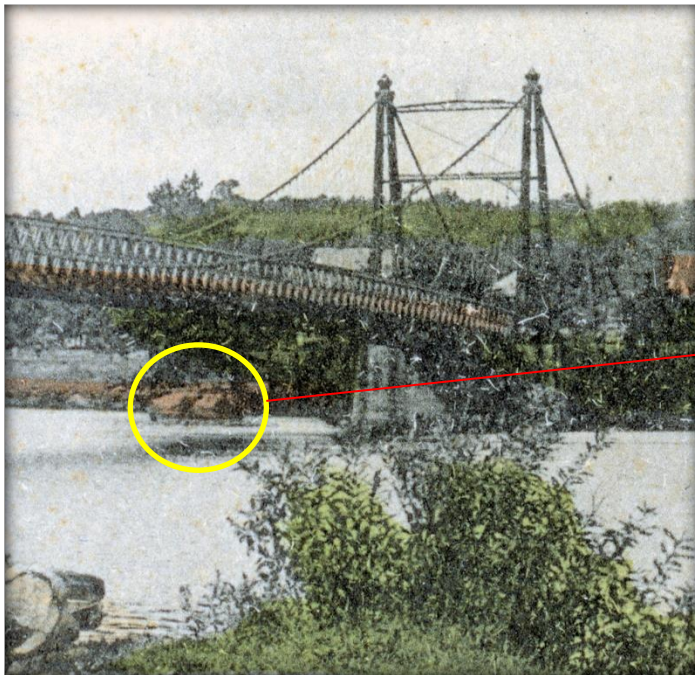
c1878

Water level is substantially lower than what might be considered a *typical* water level. (see third image previous page.)

Nothing occupies the space shown in the postcard image. *If* there was a large "rock" here, portions of it would surely stand out. *e.g.*



Another post card—ref. page 31 of this paper—may show a more tighter resolution image of the would-be location of Burnham's Rock as thought by Peter Thomas.



The item(s) depicted in the image *appear* to be resting upon a linear base. Could this be a dock for a pair of canvas-covered boats moored here? The object(s) also appear linear in design.

Located very close to the Riverside shoreline would make them easy to approach. If this was Burnham's Rock, this location would dispel the fact that Burnham's Rock was difficult to approach. Today's low water levels (typically on Sundays) would reveal a portion of a rock of this size . . . if it were there.

## Burnham's Rock.

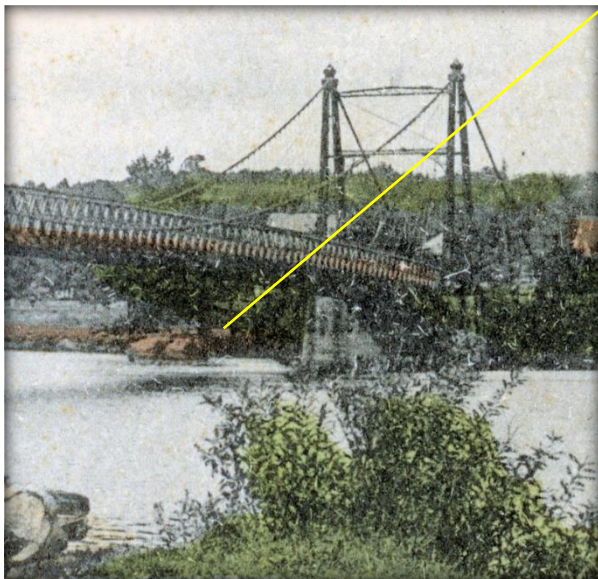
Peter A. Thomas, PHD, Archaeologist and former Research Professor at UVM.  
Ed Gregory, Town of Montague Historian with emphasis on Turners Falls.

Subsequent research provides a more definite answer to the speculative location of Burnham's Rock at the Riverside (Gill, MA) shoreline very near the abutment of the old Upper or "Red" Suspension Bridge, (1878-1942). (The Falls in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape: 44, P. Thomas 2015).

We focus on an object shown in this 1906 post card that Peter Thomas defines as Burnham's Rock. ("Burnham's Rock" at The Falls; The Gill Side: 34, E. Gregory 2016).



From the Turners Falls shoreline east of the pictured Upper or "Red" Suspension Bridge. Looking north to the Riverside (Gill, MA) shoreline.



Object near the Riverside shoreline is thought to be the location of Burnham's Rock.

*"But might this postcard show the only surviving image we have of Burnham's Rock - that elevated behemoth of rock that extended over the flume at the head of the once mighty cataract? There is little doubt that Burnham's Rock, although much diminished in size, occasionally re-emerged exactly where Epaphras Hoyt and later residents and historians placed it."* (The Falls

in 1676: Resurrecting and Documenting a Changed Landscape: 44, P. Thomas 2015).

Does the object resemble a rock?  
Considerations.

The object (has the *appearance* of a pair of “something”) in the above image (cut from post card) *appear* to be resting upon a linear base. Might this be a dock for a pair of canvas-covered boats moored here? The object also appears linear in design. It is more likely to be a crib-type boom anchor used by the log drivers during the 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. (see following log boom suggestion.)

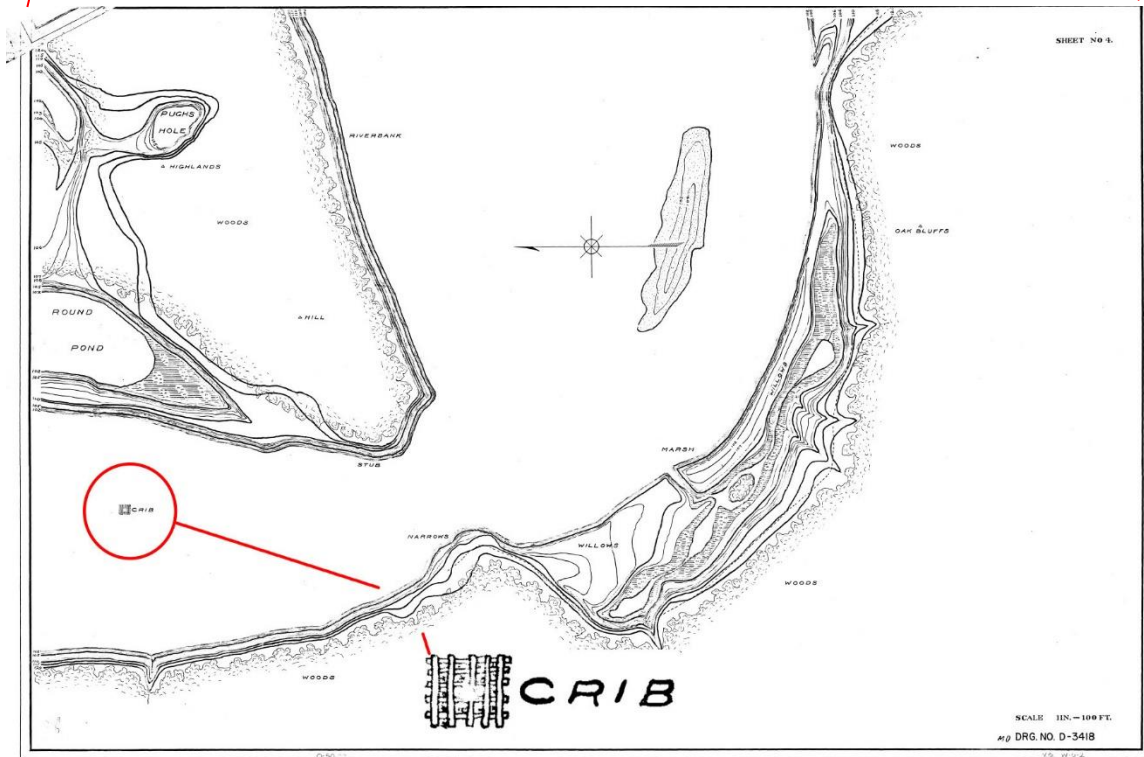
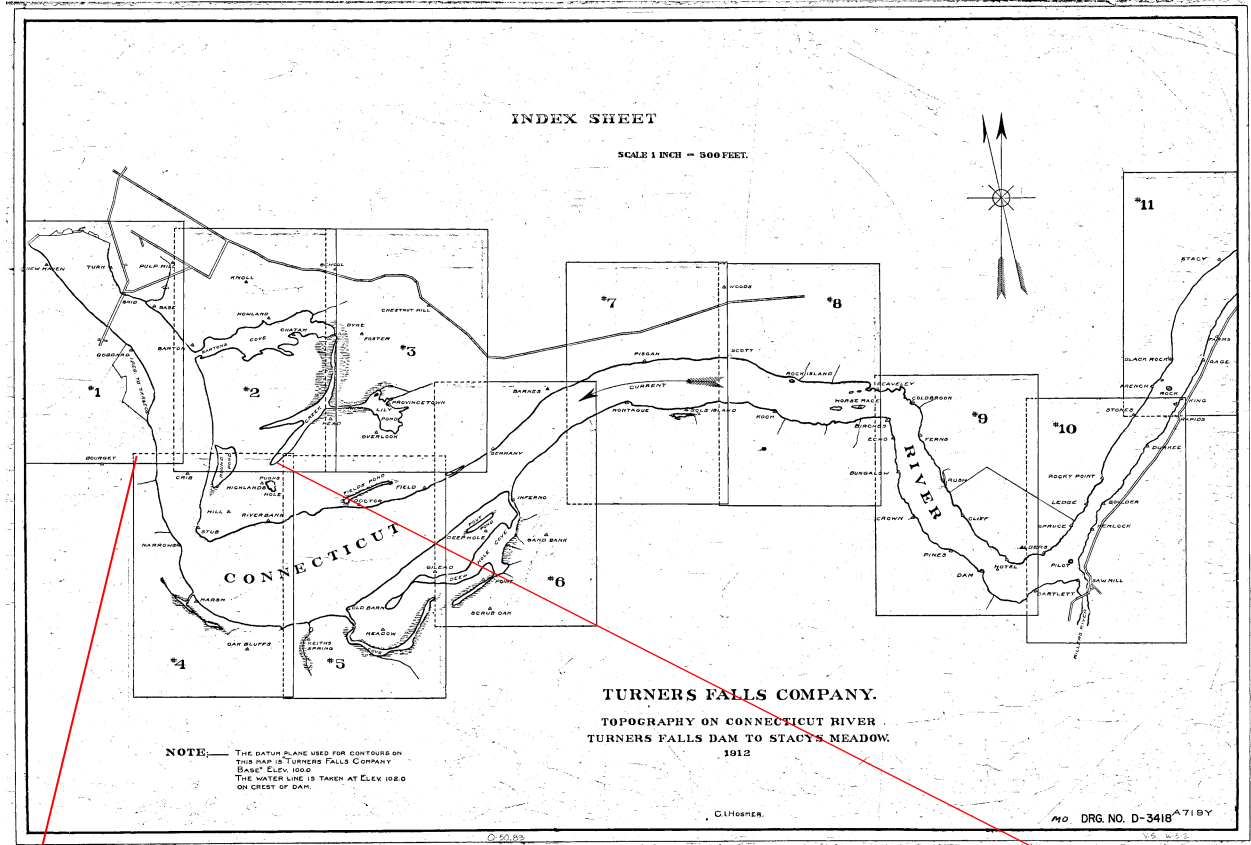
Located very close to the Riverside shoreline would make the object easy to approach. If this was Burnham’s Rock, this location would dispel the fact that Burnham’s Rock was notoriously difficult to approach. Low water levels in the river (typically on Sundays) ought to reveal a portion of a rock of this size . . . if it were there . . . nothing is evident.

Thomas mentions a “flume” in his comment that accompanies the above “cut.” The “flume” is another speculative entity as his description of the location of such may be misinterpreted via ambiguous text (Greenfield Gazette; Centennial Edition, 1892; Olden Times at Turners Falls by Josiah D. Canning). (The Falls in 1676 . . . 6 Thomas). I don’t accept Thomas’ – would be—definite description of the post card image. It’s Thomas’ opinion only.

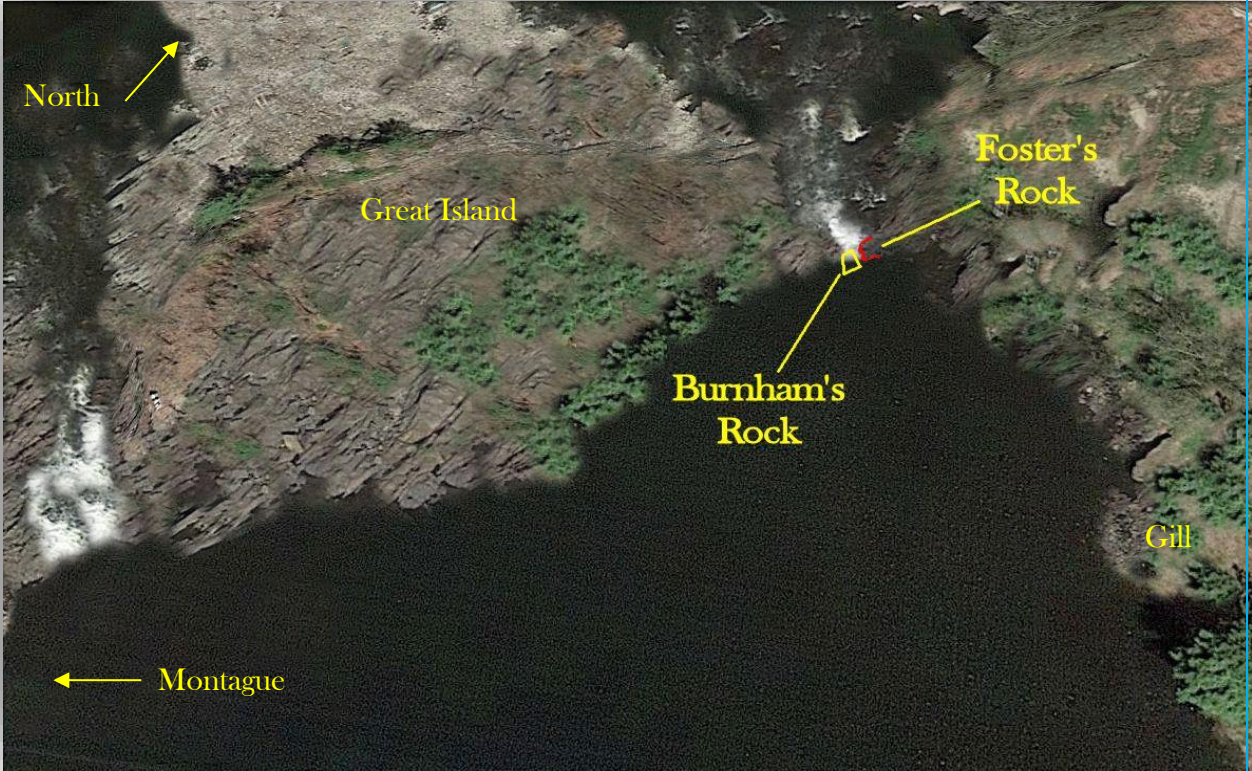
A series of twelve (12) Connecticut River drawings (Turners Falls Co. 1912) will contribute to the “crib”-type boom anchors theory. Images follow.

Boom anchors were used to anchor steel cable that was used to guide the flow of logs coming down the Connecticut River to specified locations. In this case, a predetermined quantity of logs (by linear footage-approximated) would be corralled by the booms and sent to the Turners Falls Lumber Company located along the Riverside, Gill shoreline, just above the dam.

The “crib” boom anchor shown is well upstream of the contended “crib” at the Upper (Red) Suspension bridge location.



# 4



Great Island digitally enhanced to depict its larger size during the period of time discussed in this record.

Via geological, factual historical, and common-sense reasoning regarding the aforementioned essay, the accurate location of Burnham's Rock is now realized. *e.g.*

Subsequent research provides the following accounts . . .

Excerpts gleaned from . . .

*American Battlefield Protection Program Site Identification and Documentation  
Project*

*The Battle of Great Falls / Wissantinnewag-Peskeompskut*

*May 19, 1676*

*Technical Report (GA-2287-16-006)*

*January 19, 2017 Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center*

*This material is based upon work assisted by a grant from the Department of the  
Interior, National Park Service.*

. . . in regard to various references to Connecticut River crossings  
that are considered germane to the Burnham's Rock documentation, i.e.,

"Burnham's Rock" at The Falls;  
The Gill Side  
By Ed Gregory

P. 80

Roger L'Estrange (A True Account of the Most Considerable Occurrences. Pp. 3-4) provides the most graphic and disturbing account of the massacre:

Our soldiers got thither after a hard march just after break of day, and took most of the Indians fast asleep, and put their gums even into their wigwams and poured in their shot among them, whereupon the Indians that durst and were able to get out of their wigwams and did fight a little (in which fight one Englishman only was slaine) others of the **Indians did enter the river to swim over from the English**, but many of them were shot dead in the waters, others wounded were therein drowned, **many got into canoes to paddle away**, but the paddlers being shot, the canoes over-set with all therein, and the stream of the river being very violent and swift in the place near the great falls, most that fell overboard were born by the strong current of the river, and **carried upon the falls of water from those exceeding high and steep rocks**, and from thence tumbling down were broken in pieces and cast ashore, above two hundred.

Critique:

*"Indians did enter the river to swim over from the English."* An attempt is made by the Indians to swim to the south shore; the Turners Falls side of the river. If there was a fast flowing "flume" running along the north (Gill) shoreline, anyone or anything entering it would immediately be swept away. Attempts were made to reach the other (south) side because, although the water had a fast current, it was possible to reach the other side.

*"many got into canoes to paddle away."* As above.

*"carried upon the falls of water from those exceeding high and steep rocks."* The *"high and steep rocks"* do not suggest a cascading "flume."

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A Pawtuxet Indian named Wenanaquabin also confessed that he was at the fight with Captain Turner, and there lost his gun, and **swam over a river to save his life**. (Easton. A Narrative of Other Causes. P. 79) It is not clear if the testimony of these men described events at the Peskeompskut village fight or the retreat battle (or both).

The sense one gets from Wecopeak's testimony is that he was at the Peskeompskut fight and then presumably made his way to the confluence of the Green River and Cherry Rum Brook where Turner was killed. That would be a distance of several miles but given that the English delayed along the river after the battle counting the dead and taking plunder, it is entirely possible. Alternatively, he may be referring to somewhere along the retreat where heavy fighting took place and then made his way to the Green River. If so it would suggest the English fought very hard along the retreat, consistent with Russell's inference that upwards of 30 Native men were killed in the retreat battle. Wenanaquaban's statement that he "**swam over a river**" is probably not a reference to the Connecticut given the current and the number of people who were swept over the falls. It is more likely he was referring to the Green or Deerfield River. Either way it suggests heavy fighting along the retreat.

Critique:

**"swam over a river to save his life."** (Easton) "It is more likely he was referring to the Green or Deerfield River."

I strongly disagree with Easton's statement for the reason that; the Green or Deerfield River(s) at this time of year (May 19, 1676) would be shallow enough to wade across. Chances are the spring freshets have ended by this time and swimming would be unnecessary. However, if Wenanaquaban "*swam over a river to save his life*", it would have been the Connecticut River at Peskeompskut.

p. 83

Thomas. (Rev. Stephen William's Notebook." P.18

If the casualty figure of 50 men given by Menowniott refers only to the Peskeompskut massacre it would seem to be a very high number given that Thomas Reed estimated a total of 60-70 men between the two villages on both sides of the Great Falls. However, as mentioned previously there are many examples during the war where Native men were willing to sustain extraordinarily high casualties to protect women and children to give them time to escape, and to defend wounded comrades, and to recover the dead. It may also be that some of the casualties occurred as men from the village on the opposite bank **canoed across the river to engage the English**. Two English soldiers were wounded during the attack and one was killed by friendly fire: "Of our men, one was killed in the action, by his friends, who takeing him for an Indian as he came out of a wigwam shot him dead."

Critique:

**"canoed across the river to engage the English."**

An attempt is made by the Indians to canoe from the south shore; the Turners Falls side of the river. If there was a fast flowing "flume" running along the north (Gill) shoreline, anyone or anything entering it would immediately be swept away. Attempts were made to canoe to the other (north) side because, although the water had a fast current, it was possible to reach the north shore battle area.

p.84

Mather. (A Brief History of the War With the Indians in New England 1676)

The initial counter attack came from Native **men coming across the river in canoes from the village opposite Peskeompskut**. Jonathan Wells was with the group of 20 men that "tarried behind" to fire at the Indians coming across the river. It is not clear if the 20 men were purposely left behind as a rear guard or were simply left behind by the main group in their rush to retreat. At this point Turner's command was split between the main body of approximately 110 soldiers who had begun a panicked and disorganized retreat to where their horses were tied a half mile or so away on the west side of the Fall River, and the group of 20 men along the river. It is not clear from the narratives when the main body of men under Turner was initially attacked, but it appears to have been when they crossed the Fall River as suggested by Mather:

Critique:

**"Native men coming across the river in canoes from the village opposite Peskeompskut."**

An attempt is made by the Indians to canoe from the south shore; the Turners Falls side of the river. If there was a fast flowing "flume" running along the north (Gill) shoreline, anyone or anything entering it would immediately be swept away. Attempts were made to canoe to the other (north) side because, although the water had a fast current, it was possible to reach the north shore battle area.

— end —

Non omnia possumus omnes

*Not all of us can do all things.*

Virgil