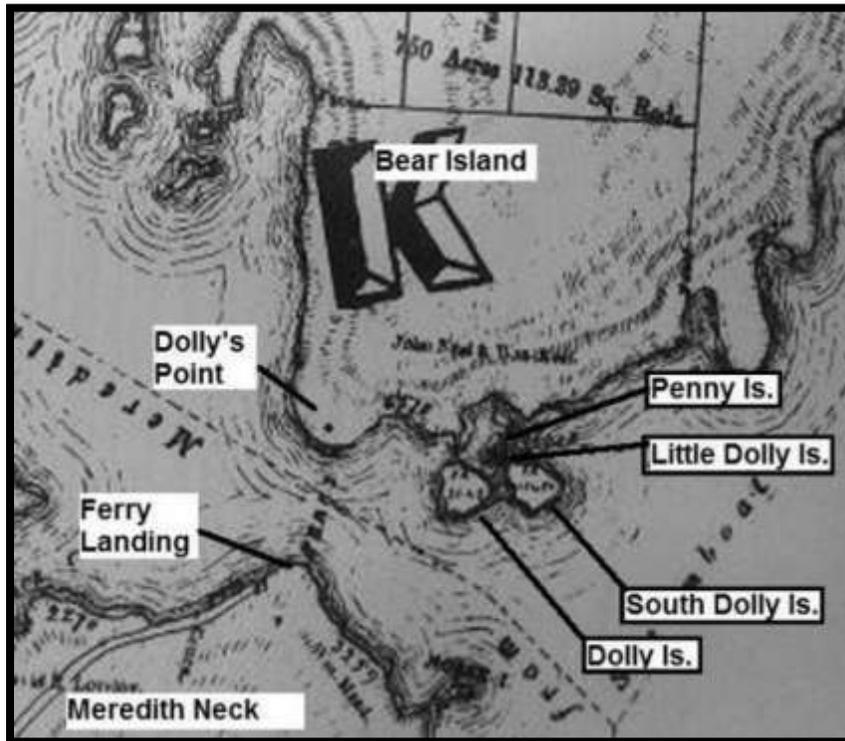


## Dolly's Islands (Dolly, South Dolly, Little Dolly, and Penny)



In the late 1800s, these small islands were simply known collectively as the Aunt Dolly Islands.<sup>1</sup> Today, they go by four names: Dolly Island, South Dolly Island, Little Dolly Island, and Penny Island.<sup>2</sup> These islands entered the summer era during the 1880s, although the exact timing is uncertain. By 1890, there were five separate camps on them, nearly all occupied by local men from Gilford.

The Dolly Islands were not among the numbered islands when the Masonians drew their lots in 1781. Ownership of them, therefore, moved along when the group of unnumbered islands was sold during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. George W. Sanders acquired them in 1864.<sup>3</sup>

**Dolly Island** is the largest of the four at about two acres in size. It is located to the north of the group. The first known owner was Clinton E. Banfield, who acquired it sometime during the 1880s.<sup>4</sup> There is no record of when or from whom he bought it, but in all likelihood, he purchased it from George Sanders.<sup>5</sup> Banfield was a machinist who lived in Lake Village with his wife, Sarah. Very early on, he built a small, one-room cottage there.<sup>6</sup> By the latter 1880s, he owned his own steam boat, making him one of the earliest vacationers to have one. The Banfields owned the island for more than 30

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, the 1891 deed, B/P 85/574. No individual names were given to them.

<sup>2</sup> The Meredith tax records incorrectly show addresses for only two islands, Dolly and Penny, with the latter encompassing South Dolly and little Penny.

<sup>3</sup> Some or all of the Dolly Islands might have been part of Bear Island until 1851, when the Lakeport dam was improved and the lake level rose.

<sup>4</sup> See reference in B/P 83/256.

<sup>5</sup> None of these islands appeared on Fullerton Wells list of unnumbered islands in 1912, suggesting that they had all been sold legitimately.

<sup>6</sup> The one room cottage is still part of the existing house on Dolly Island.

years. Clinton died in 1925, and his wife sold the island the following year.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, ownership passed through five different owners. A second lot on the island was subdivided in 1948.<sup>8</sup>

**South Dolly** is the second largest in the group at 1.5 acres. Its early deed trail is also quite murky. By the 1880s, it was owned by George A. Sanders, a son of George W. Sanders. George A. Sanders used the island during the summers, along with Frederick E. Gilford, who lived on the island with him. They built one of the earliest houses found on the islands near Bear.<sup>9</sup> Both men were from Gilford, NH, and they undoubtedly used it as a fishing camp.

In 1890, George A. Sanders sold South Dolly to Fred Gilford.<sup>10</sup> He was originally from Manchester, NH, where he was a machinist with the railroad. By 1900, he was living with his family in Concord, NH. In 1923, Gilford sold South Dolly to Harry C. Richardson, of New York City, who owned it until 1947.<sup>11</sup>

**Little Dolly**, about one half acre in size, was apparently occupied illegally during the 1880s by George W. Sherwell of Gilford, NH. At the time, the island was owned by a group of seven people, led by John and Sarah Ames of Charlestown, NH. Their ownership basis was not found. In 1891, they sold the island to George Sherwell of Gilford.<sup>12</sup> George's brother, Harry, was also living on Little Dolly at this time.<sup>13</sup> George Sherwell owned South Dolly until his death, after which his widow, Sadie, and his daughter, Dora, sold it in 1927 to Harry C. Richardson, the same man who had purchased South Dolly in 1923.<sup>14</sup> Richardson owned it until 1947. Today, Dolly, South Dolly, and Little Dolly are all owned by one family, with the exception of the second lot on Dolly Island.

**Penny island** is the smallest of the four and barely large enough to support a tiny camp. The island was acquired in 1907 by J. Frank Sanders when he purchased all of the remaining 'unnumbered islands' from the heir of George W. Sanders. In 1911, J. Frank sold it to Harry E. Sherwell of Laconia, who had been summering next door on Little Dolly with his brother, George, since the 1880s.<sup>15</sup> Sherwell and his wife owned the

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<sup>7</sup> B/P 176/211; 179/216.

<sup>8</sup> B/P 300/243.

<sup>9</sup> Meredith's on-line tax card for 6 Penny Island (an incorrect identification) states the house was built in 1880.

<sup>10</sup> B/P 83/256. The seller in this case was George A. Sanders, not the George W. Sanders who owned all the unnumbered islands. This was the same Fred Gilford who sold Shepherd Island to E. C. Mansfield in 1904. Gilford and Mansfield bought undivided halves of Timber Island in 1903. Gilford sold his half of the island to Mansfield in 1917.

<sup>11</sup> B/P 169/190. See also, B/P 83/256 regarding his living on Little Dolly.

<sup>12</sup> B/P 85/574.

<sup>13</sup> See B/P 83/256.

<sup>14</sup> B/P 183/131. See also, B/P 183/133.

<sup>15</sup> B/P 131/432.

island until 1941.<sup>16</sup> It was sold three times thereafter (1941, 1961, and 1963), ending up in the Linstrom family.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> B/P 253/206.

<sup>17</sup> B/P 253/206; 417/516; 436/59. An intra-family sale between Linstroms in 1972 left sole ownership in the hands of Carl Linstrom. B/P 582/127.