

The First Church in Pembroke

1708 - 1908

A bleak and arid moorland, barren save for the brown poverty-grass and a growth of hardy savins deriving meagre support from the poor soil and stormbeaten air—until the year 1700 such was the site now known as Pembroke Centre. Commanding a wide view of fertile slopes and pleasant valleys where small homesteads were already beginning, it rose above these itself uncultivated and unbroken by the settler's plough. Its southern extremity was the property of Abraham Pearce, Junior, on the north Isaac Barker held a large estate, and the central summit with its approaches remained still a part of the common or undivided lands of Duxbury.

Not many years after 1700 the village of Mattakeesett had grown large enough to become a parish by itself. The hardships of a weekly journey through the woods to Duxbury meeting house were great, and it was thought best in some degree to separate from the parent church. In 1708 a small building was constructed—we are told—near Sabbaday Orchard, home of Huguenot legend: it was raised on June 8, and within its walls thenceforth the little company met for weekly service. Apparently this building was moved before 1712