To The Westport Library

I have been researching Horseneck history for a few years now, simply because I love Horseneck Beach.

This is a partial copy of my album that I've put together for the past four years. Unfortunately some of the old newspaper clippings didn't copy well, but I've still included them outlining source and dates. If anyone is interested they can be looked up at the New Bedford Library.

I hope someone out there will enjoy these pre 1938 pictures and articles as much as I enjoyed collecting them.

Most of the pictures are copies of old post cards kindly loaned to me by Alan Shaw of Westport.

Joan Plante Lowther
56 East Beach Rd.
Westport, Mass
April 1991

TRIPP & LAWRENCE

GROCERIES

CONFECTIONERY, CIGARS
PASTRY AND NOTIONS

TELEPHONE CONNECTION BOTH PHONES

Horse Neck Beach - South Westport, Mass.

STREET DIRECTORY BOOK 1910 Page 119

The Little Brown Betty

TEA ROOM AND GIFT SHOP

HORSENECK BEACH
SOUTH WESTPORT

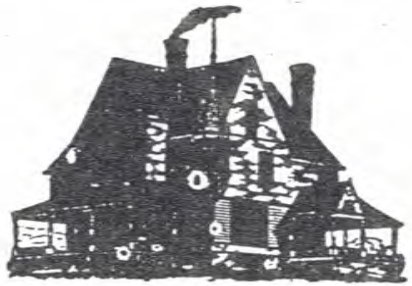
OPEN EVERY AFTERNOON

Special Arrangements for Small Parties

1915 S. MAUDE DOANE Westport Directory Pg 9

REED & BROWNELL

Contractors and Builders



JOBBING OF ALL KINDS

ESTIMATES FURNISHED

Horse Neck Beach, - South Westport, Mass.

STREET DIRECTORY BOOK 1910 Page 110

I found these adds in old Westport Street directories. Location of these places are unknown to me. But another add I found, The Kingfisher, I did locate. See pg 48.

Also below is an attempt to index the rest of this album.

J. L.

A

ALLENS PAVILION 29, 31
ARMY (GOOSEBERRY) 38
A & P (FIRE) 33

B

BAR (to Gooseberry) 32
BOWLING 28
BREAKERS (FIRE) 43

C.

CATTLE GRAZING 13-14
CAUSEWAY 33, 35, 41-42
CHURCH 23
" BELL 25
CRANBERRY BOGS 71-72

D

DEED OF DARTMOUTH 1-2

E

EAST BCH. RD. 21, 27, 52, 56

F

FIRE (1928) 43
" (1933) 27

G

GIFFORD 19-22
GOOSEBERRY 33-40

H

HALL, DR 24
HASSENEGHK 2
HEAD 5-15
HORSENECK HOUSE 69-70, 71
HORSENECK RD. 51
HOWE, Col. 67-68
HURRICANE STORIES 5-6
23, 24, 30, 47, 53-54
HUTCHINSONS 60

K

KINGFISHER 48-50

L

LIFE SAVING STATION 31

M

MAP 1871 7
" 1895 8
MAW NAN TUCK INN 29
MIDWAY 60

O

OCEAN HOUSE 27, 56, 59
" " BOWLING 28

P

PLANTES 59, 63-66
POST OFFICE 21

R

RAIL ROAD (1903) 44, 59
RIDE TO HORSENECK 9-10
RIGHT OF WAY 45-46

S

SMALL 45, 47
SPINDRIFT 66
STACIAS 58
STATE 26
STATE O'MAINE 57
SURFSIDE 19-22, 56

T

TOWERS GOOSEBERRY 38
TOWN BEACH 48-50
TRAFFORDS 11-12, 56
TRIPP BROS. 69
" " HOUSE 64

W

WEST BEACH RD 59
WEST BEACH PICTURES 61-62

Y

YANKEE 37

Z

ZIMMERMANN 16

Poor Bells Almanack

ON THE COVER

Vol 1 No 21 Dec 6, 1971

DEED OF DARTMOUTH (which at the time included Westport & New Bedford).
Taken from the book "The Wampanoag Indian Federation" by Milton A. Travers

New Plymouth, November the 29th, 1652

Know all men by these Presents that I Wesamequin and Wamsutta my son, have sold unto Mr. William Bradford, Captain Standish, Thomas Southworth, John Winslow, John Cooke, and their associates, the purchasers or old comers, all the tract or tracts of land lying three miles eastward from a river called Cushenagg to a certain harbour called Acoaksett, to a flat rock on the westward side of the said harbour. And whereas the said harbour divideth itself into several branches, the westernmost arme to be the bound, and all the tract, or tracts of land from the said westernmost arme to the said river of Cushenagg, three miles eastward of the same, with all the profits and benefits within the said tract, with all the rivers, creeks, meadows, necks and islands that lye in or before the same, and from the sea upward to go so high that the English may not be annoyed by the hunting of the Indians in any sort of their cattle.

And I Wesamequin and Wamsutta, do promise to remove all the Indians within a year from the date hereof, that do live in the said tract. And we the said Wesamequin and Wamsutta have fully bargained and sold unto the aforesaid Mr. William Bradford, Captain Standish, Thomas Southworth, John Winslow, John Cooke, and the rest of their associates, the purchasers or old comers, to have and to hold for them and their heirs and assigns forever. And in consideration hereof, we the above mentioned are to pay to said Wesamequin and Wamsutta, as followeth: Thirty yards of cloth, eight moose skins, fifteen axes, fifteen hoes, fifteen pair of breeches, eight blankets, two kettles, one cloak, 2 pounds in wampum, eight pair stockings, eight pair of shoes, one iron pot, and ten shillings in another comoditie. And in witness hereof we have inter-changably set our hands the day and year above written.

In presence of
Jonathan Shaw
Samuel Eddy

John Winslow
John Cooke
Wamsutta His mark

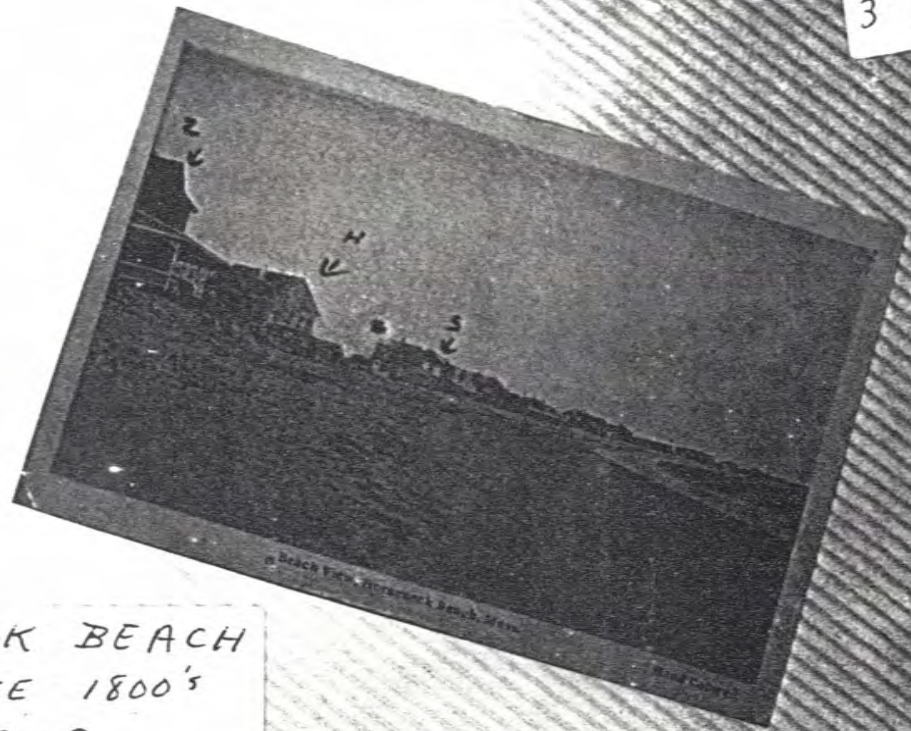
The Wampanoag Indian Tribes with the Pequots, the Narragansetts, the Massachusetts, and the Pawtuckets were the confederated tribes which comprised the Algonquin Indian Nation native to New England.

The Wampanoag Indian tribe included the Assawompsett tribe which inhabited the section of Pokanoket country lying within the area now including the Town of Lakeville, Massachusetts and Middleboro, Massachusetts and parts of Freetown, Rochester and Acushnet, Massachusetts, in the vicinity of Assawompsett and Long Ponds. Another was the Nemasket tribe whose village was at what is called the Four Corners of Middleboro, Massachusetts, nd also parts of that town that lie close to Taunton. The other tribes of which very ittle was mentioned, are: the Coaxet Tribe, the Apponagansett Tribe, the Acooshnet Tribe, and the Sconticut Tribe.

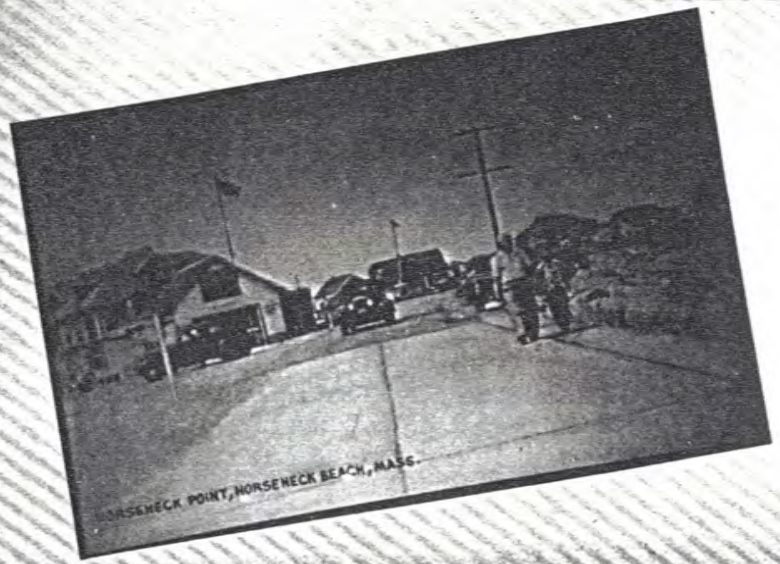
"These small Indian villages all occupied the territory of acnient Dartmouth. The Sagamore of these tribes, in King Philip's (Wamsutta's brother) time was called Monyocam. The Acooshnets (Acushnet) occupied the territory that later became New Bedford, Massachusetts. The Apponagansetts inhabited the area now known as Dartmouth, Massachusetts. The Sonticuts roamed the territory now designated as Fairhaven, Massachusetts, and the Coaxets resided in the sections now known as Acoaxet and Westport, Massachusetts, particularly those parts now South Westport, Head of Westport (called then by the Indians, Paquachuch, and meaning, "the clear view hill") along both sides of the Westport River, and that part of the country now known as Horseneck.

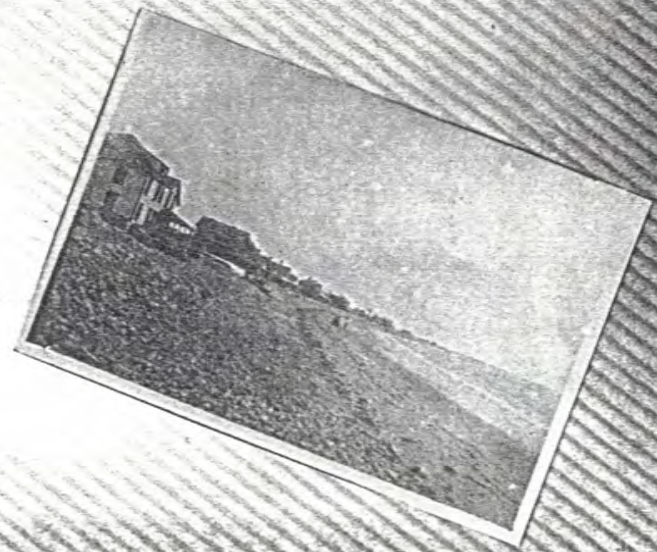
At this point it might be interesting to note another example of the easy corruption of Indian words. We take, for instance, the last mentioned section, "Horseneck" --- this being a corruption of the Indian word, "Hassaneghk;- which was the Indian descriptive word applied to a white settler's dwelling situated in the locality. This dwelling consisted of four stone walls with a pitched roof, and the only word in the Wampanoag language that best described it was Hassaneghk. thereby, it is easy to see how through the years, the white man in imitating the phonetic Indian sounds for the word, finally corrupted it into the present Horseneck.

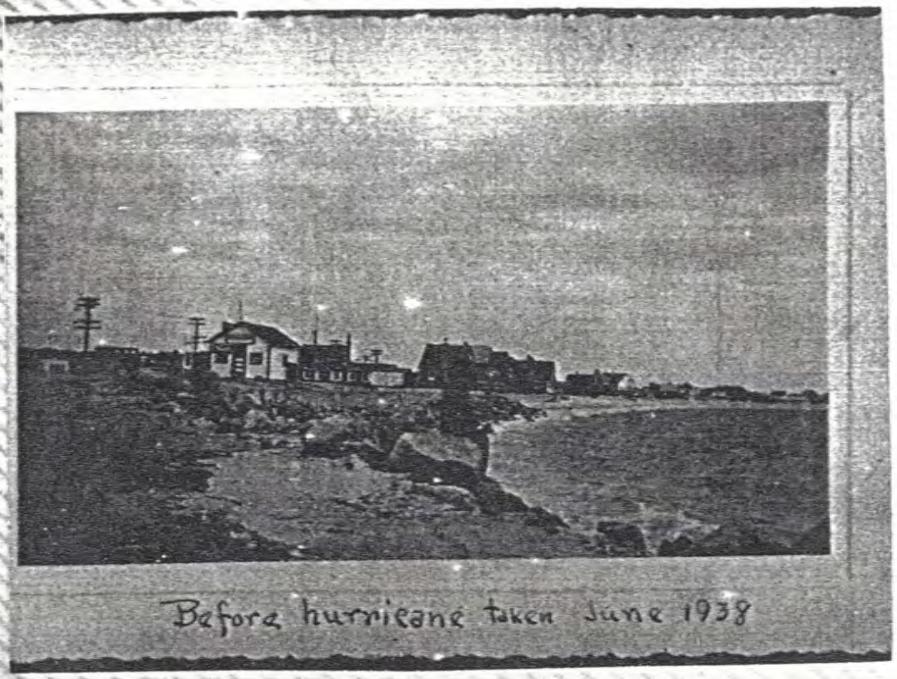




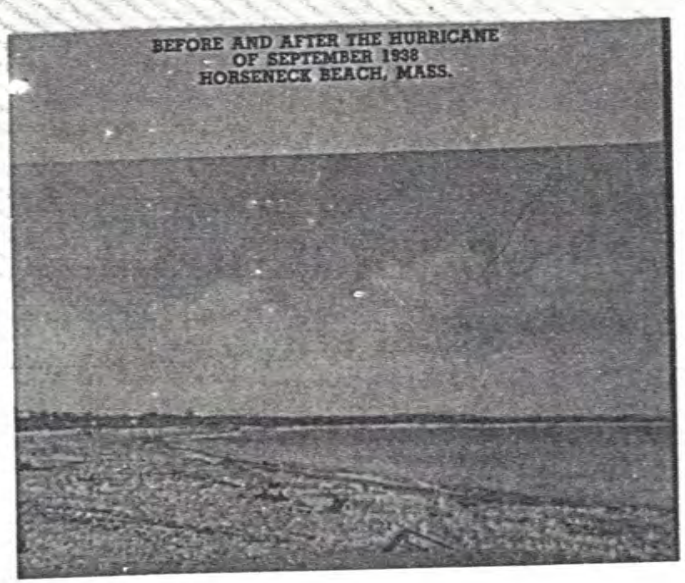
HORSE NECK BEACH
FROM LATE 1800's
TO 1938







Before hurricane taken June 1938



Little did anyone know on this peaceful June 1938 scene that disaster would strike in 3 short months, when the Hurricane Sept. 21, 1938 struck New England without warning. Horseneck was devastated in the storm, & East Beach was swept clean.

The hurricane of 1938 is now history. All that is left are memories and pictures of Horseneck in its hey day.

J. L.

Poor Bell
Oct 25, 1971

ON THE COVER

The Standard - Times Saturday, October 1, 1938

Stories of the hurricane that swept Southeastern Massachusetts, taking a staggering toll of lives and property, will be handed down through the coming generations. It was the worst storm in the history of New England, striking without warning and wiping out entire communities.

No words can describe the horror of that afternoon and evening of Wednesday, Sept. 21, 1938 when the world seemed to be coming to an end. Nature vented her fury upon man and beast, and when the wind and waves subsided, the very topography of the coast of Southeastern Massachusetts had been changed.

Residents in this area awoke on the morning of that disastrous day to behold a clear sky and a bright sun. Little did they realize that before night would fall, death and ruin would run rampant through this New England sector. There was a crispness in the September air, as people turned to their daily tasks.

During the morning a light breeze became noticeable, and waters of Buzzards Bay became slightly choppy. This was nothing unusual. Early in the afternoon the wind velocity increased, and about 1:30 p.m. there was a strong southeast wind blowing in from the sea. Still there seemed little cause to worry.

As the afternoon wore on the wind increased, the sky blackened and rain beat down. Records in the engineering department office here show that the average speed of the wind was 60 miles an hour, at the peak of the storm, at 4:50 p.m. But the wind came in gusts and reached much greater velocity at times.

Twigs and leaves broke from the trees and littered streets. Store windows crashed under the pressure of the storm, and the wind roared stronger and stronger.

Waters along the coast were, by this time, churned to a froth, and boats rocked crazily, tugging at their moorings. Pushed by the wind, the tide rose to an all-time high of 11.53 feet above mean high water in New Bedford. This tidal wave engulfed the whole waterfront area.

About 3:30 p.m., long before the hurricane had reached its full force, residents of Summer resorts in Westport, Dartmouth, Fairhaven, Mattapoisett, Marion, Wareham, Falmouth and throughout Cape Cod and the Islands, began to abandon their homes for the safety of higher ground. Many remained too long, fighting to save their homes and belongings, and met death.

Survivors of the hurricane tell basically the same storyof what to them seems a horrible nightmare. They relate how the wind increased and the water rose higher until they had to wade waist high through swirling water to higher ground.

They tell of the roaring of the wind, the cracking of timber as their homes gave way, the relentless power of the waves that swept buildings about like match boxes. Survivors at Horseneck Beach in Westport say that the waves were 20 feet high.

All West Beach residents were saved because they found refuge in the high sand dunes eastward, but East Beach people were trapped between the sea and the East Branch of the Westport River, which became all one body of water. Fifteen have been found dead in Westport, nearly all of them at East Beach.

Most of the men whose bodies were recovered had boots on, indicating that they had remained to fight the onrushing waters, believing every moment that the waters had reached their peak.

Scores of boats anchored at Padanaram Harbor broke their moorings and either went ashore or were wrecked on the causeway of Padanaram Bridge.

New Bedford's shoreline was the scene of great damage to homes and industrial property. Fairhaven Bridge was damaged, Coggeshall Street Bridge was put out of commission and the bridge at the foot of Wood Street was wrecked. Hix Bridge in South Westport was swept away and the Westport Point Bridge was damaged.

Nearby Summer resorts were a dreary sight. Where scores of cottages had lined the shores, nothing remained but the foundations protruding from the sand. In some places, such as East Beach, Horseneck, even the foundations disappeared. "Unbelievable," was the comment of those who visited these places the morning after.

So complete was the demolition of cottages in most places that owners had difficulty finding the wreckage of their homes. Large pavilions and stores at the Summer resorts met the same fate. Built only a few feet above sea level, these structures were engulfed by the surging waters and torn to pieces.

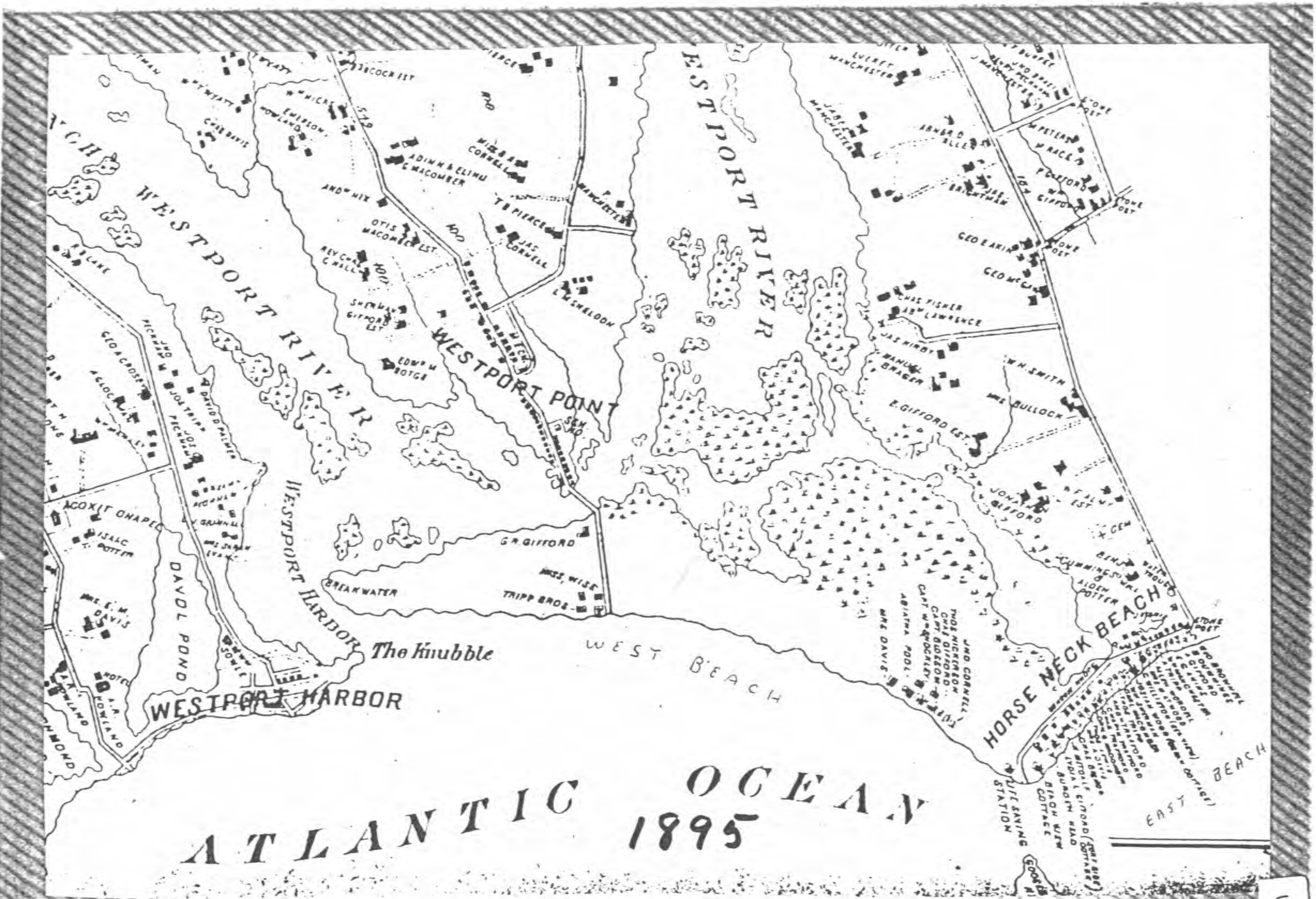
At Westport Harbor where were located many pretentious Summer homes, the property loss was great. A row of about 30 cottages was swept up on the Acoaxet golf course, a mass of wreckage. The top floor of a two-story house near the Charlton mansion was ripped off and deposited some distance away from the rest of the building.

Despite the downheartedness that followed the hurricane disaster, New Bedford and towns nearby have set themselves with traditional courage to the task of rehabilitation. Without doubt these communities will triumph over nature's destructive work.



HORSENECK BEACH
1871

BEERS - 1871
BRISTOL COUNTY ATLAS


WESTPORT RIVER
WESTPORT RIVER
WESTPORT POINT
WESTPORT HARBOR
WESTPORT HARBOR
The Knubble
DAVOL POND
WEST BEACH
HORSE NECK BEACH
EAST BEACH
BREAKWATER
G.R. GIFFORD
TRIPP BROS.
LIFE SAVING STATION
ATLANTIC OCEAN
1895



50 years ago

would be 1921

June 27, 1971
Standard Times

By Lucy M. Wallbank

A ride to Horseneck

TRAFFORD

TRAFFORD

BLOOMINGDALE (SCA 12)

It was a good 20 miles from New Bedford to Horseneck over narrow country roads, through farmland and woods, often as not by horse and carriage to catch the real flavor of the journey. As the houses of the city petered out, the way led through friendly miles where farmhouses dreamt beside the dusty road. An occasional turnout invited the mare to drink from a rippling brook, refreshing her feet at the same time. Occasionally, a farmer's boy cultivating the young corn or potatoes, would turn for a moment to wave at the passing rig – a friendly gesture returned in a world of quiet and peace broken only by some bird's song, the faint whish of gentle winds in the trees, the steady clip-clop, clip-clop of the horse's hoofs.

Favorite places were to be watched for – over the hump at Russell's Mills and the remembered pleasure of the little river as it sang its way over the stones in the shallows before rushing eagerly onward on its way to the sea; the long downhill with the pond at the bottom and the slower pace uphill, then a sharp turn left. Eventually, the strong stinging smell of the ocean's breath, salty, borne on a gusting southwest breeze. There, a beautifully ordered farm, its wide fields separated from each other by ancient stone walls, large trees clustered around the house protectively. In the near distance, salt meadows, a valuable asset to any farm.

Around another bend to the right and the full impact of Horseneck was felt: The sweep of the shoreline and the booming of the surf as it struck, then receded, dominating, reckless with power, the waves like white-maned steeds as they broke on the wet sand, pounding it so hard that horses could race along it at low tide. Another mile, and there was the long white sweep of sand extending out to sea – Horseneck Bar. This ended half a mile away in Gooseberry Island, a 100-acre island at high tide.

Twice a day, with the tide low, the long bar was a sort of isthmus, a hard packed roadway safe to cross. But at flood tide, the bar was under 10 to 20 feet of rough water, the green breakers crashing across it from both sides with such force as to hurl tons of salt spray as much as 50 feet in the air. Woe betide those who over-stayed on the island – they just had to remain there until the tide went out. Promoters of Gooseberry Island as a summer resort had contemplated for many years building a bridge there, and boulders had been placed along both edges of the bar on the theory that in time the sand would sift in to make a solid foundation, perhaps for a government-built causeway.

There were those who thought the island should have been called Strawberry Neck because of the great quantity of tiny, sweet-fruited strawberry plants that once covered it like a carpet. Old-timers told of the Great Shark, who, summer after summer, left his cohorts in southern waters while he cruised alone, back and forth, "outside, off the Horseneck." But, 50 years ago, the island still was wild, and the view of Penekese, Naushon and Martha's Vineyard was unexcelled. In the other direction was Spain. (This is still true, of course, provided one can get over to the island.)

One more old tale of the bar (which gives Horseneck its name) – once a man driving a team of oxen with a lead-horse hitched ahead of them, tried to get his cart across when the tide was too high. The water lifted the cart and washed it back and forth, nearly tipping it over. Half way across, it lifted the horse off its feet. He swam into deep water, and the oxen, perforce, had to follow, so that all were swept out to sea. The man and his horse perished; the cart sank. But the two fat oxen, in their great wooden yoke, were torn loose from the cart and finally washed ashore on the west beach in the surf. It was several hours later that they were discovered wallowing in the undertow, a mile down the beach. Men brought ropes and finally hauled them out alive. But they had been so tossed, one over the other, so buffeted by the waves, that they were half drowned, and their yoke was wrong side up on their necks.

Even beaching a boat in the Horseneck surf on a quiet day took skill because if the boat's weight overbalanced the edge of the wave, the wave would curl it under itself, and woe to the boatman unless he had a rescuer nearby to haul him out from under before he drowned in three feet of water. Away from the reaching waves, sand dunes rose in ever changing undulations, held to some degree by sawtoothed beach grass that grew in wispy clumps and the overwhelmed scrub pines that reached above the sand with despairing arms.

Behind the dunes, a sand strewn road was lined with cottages and a sprinkling of small hotels, welcoming seasonal occupation, if only for a few days, by those who relished the quiet of the place. Folks said that the outstanding characteristic of Horseneck was that there was plenty of it; that it was in no danger of ever being exhausted by any conceivable mass of mere human being. "All cheap and childish waste," they said, "gradually sink into oblivion in the presence of its magnificance. The high tides of Horseneck are a cleansing and rejuvenating force for good."

RESIDENCE OF W. C. TRAFFORD, HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.



Cottages and Beach at Horseneck Beach, Mass.



H.L. TRAFFORD W.C. TRAFFORD THOMAS TRIPP OCEAN HOUSE



W C. TRAFFORD H.L. TRAFFORD

The Traffords were about midway on East Beach.



The Sinclairs bought this house in 1936 so they were the ones to suffer the loss in the hurricane.

The Sinclair daughter, Mrs Buffington told me this house had 5 fireplaces. It was full of antiques & artifacts that they never found a trace of.

J. L.

CHAS ↑ TRAFFORD H L ↑ TRAFFORD W C ↑ Trafford →

Bloomingdale House shown on pg. 9 was built in later years between Chas & H K. Trafford



HORSENECK

by Irene Wilbur

In the 1800's Horseneck Beach was a large land area used as food by grazing animals. And, sometime in the late 1930's there was opposition to develope Horseneck Beach by the State, as a recreation area. This was not the only time Westporters' opposed development at this spot.

Westport townspeople and Massachusetts Legislatures in the early 1800's were more interested in that section as cattle-grazing grounds.

March 2, 1809 the Legislature passed an act making Horseneck "and all of the salt meadows adjoining" a common and general field. This meant that the various owners of the land at Horseneck could let their cattle graze over the entire area, eliminating the need for fencing off individual properties.

Some property owners wanted the status quo to remain, and claimed the petitioners wanted the act passed to save themselves "the expense of fencing the meadow." Opponents of the act also feared the petitioners intended to prohibit the feeding of cattle on some areas of the general field during the summer months.

TEXT OF PETITION

Unique wording of the petition presented by those in favor of the act to make Horseneck a common and general field is as follows:

"The petition of us the subscribers, proprietors and owners in the Horseneck so-called, and salt meadows adjoining, humbly shows that we are the owners of the greatest part of said Horseneck, as will appear by a plot of the same wherein our rights are described, which consists principally of sand hills and beach and a few cranberry bogs whereon grow some pitch pines and a few other bushes and green friars and beach grass that grows in bunches and some cranberry vines, but in many places it is entirely barren.

"Said Horseneck lies adjoining the seashore on the south about 4 miles distant, including a peninsula of land called Gooseberry Neck which is contiguous to said Horseneck so that at low water there is a narrow beach or isthmus that is bare and passable on to Gooseberry Neck, yet a few rods to fence will enclose or seperate that from said Horseneck and at high water the said isthmus is all overflowed with water and impassable.

"On the west said Horseneck adjoins the harbor of Westport Rivers — on the north side it adjoins said rivers and salt meadows, and is a very crooked line which makes a distance of between 5 and 6 miles and seventh-eights of this side adjoins salt meadows. On the east it adjoins the water and a beach or isthmus so narrow that less then 20 rods of fence will enclose all this tract of Horseneck (of about 10 or 11 miles circumference) and all the salt meadows adjoining, which are very extensive and which meadows have been very much damaged for many years by horses, cattle and sheep going from said Horseneck and feeding said meadows, so that in some places one-half the grass on said meadows has been destroyed yearly, and in many places considerably eaten up.

"And to fence the meadows off from Horseneck is a great distance of about 5 miles and not only so but very expensive and difficult to keep the fence up, and what makes it more so is that some of the owners live 8 and 10 miles distance off.

"And some seasons of the year people pass across said Horseneck to Gooseberry Neck a-fowling and a-fishing and some of those people frequently tarry all night on said Horseneck, which necessitates them to the want of fuel, etc. From which circumstances and taking into view that the profit of feeding the whole of said Horseneck all the year

exclusive of what is got by feeding said meadows is far less than the damage done on said meadows, and even far less that the one-half of the expense of fencing where the meadows adjoin said Horseneck.

"These considerations with others induce your petitioners to pray that the said Horseneck and salt meadows adjoining might be incorporated into a common and general field and be under the same regulations and vested with the same power and authority that other proprietors of common and general fields have in this Commonwealth."



SIGNED PETITION

Petitioners for the act were: William Macomber, Barney Hicks, Arnold Wood, Gideon Cornell, Wesson Kirby, Micah Dean, Isaac Cory, Christopher Cornell, Humphrey Macomber, George Allen, Elizah Gifford, Ebenezer Allen, William Wilcox, Benjamin Wilcox, Samuel Wilcox, Jr., Humphrey Wilcox. Also, Warren Gifford, Thomas Allen, Daniel Allen, Humphrey Howland, Jonathan Peckham, Stephen Brownell, Samuel Bailey, William Sanford, Philip Corey, Abraham Gifford, Lemuel Milk, William Wood, Philip Sisson, Henry Sowle, Nathaniel Sowle and John Davis.

The memorial opposing the legislation was signed by Job, Christopher, and Thomas Almy, Richard Kirby and Gideon Cornell.

So far as is known, the act never was prepealed by its provisions have not been enforced, and the area was abandoned as cattle-grazing ground and Horseneck became a Summer resort. Today, the beach, not the salt meadows and sparse grass, make Horseneck important, and sometimes a night mare for the law enforcement personnel of the town.

5

I found this at the Westport Library. Source unknown. J.L.

Sept. 6, 1937

Oldest Horseneck Beach Resident, Still Active, Feminisces About the Old Days.

Frederick B. Head Still Shows Up Younger Men In Duck Shooting.

Although the duck hunting season is a long way off, Frederick B. Head, the oldest resident of Horseneck Beach, fondles his shot gun these days and looks forward eagerly to another session of fowling in that section of Westport. "Burt", as his many friends call him, will be 89 years old next Feb. 10 but his hand is steady and his aim still true.

Mr. Head lives on the Horseneck Road at East Beach in an 18-room gunning camp boarding house that he built 61 years ago when there was not one house at Horseneck Beach. He has made his home in that building since then, with the exception of one Winter which he spent in Conn.

(BUILT HOUSE 1876 ? J.L.)

Shipped On Whaler

This energetic little man has had an advanturous career. Born at Spontic near Russells Mills, Dart. Mr. Head shpped before the mast on the whaling bark Antelope from New Bedford when he was 16 years of age. His father, the late Frederick Head, had been mate on the whalers John Windslow and Thomas Winslow, Both had been built at the Head of Westport and floated up the shallow river on casks to the open harbor.

"When I sailed on the "Antelope" Mr. Head reminisced, "I weighed only 84 pounds. Nevertheless, I was stroke oar in Mate Bill Sisson's whaleboat, took my turn at the wheel, and did all the work required of an able seaman, They didn't favor me any because of my size. I did a man-sized job.

"We were gone 31 months on that voyage, spending most of our time off Greenland. Whales were quite plentiful but our ship was not well equipped. With 500 barrels of oil aboard, the Antelope dragged anchor in a gale and was blown ashore at Dog Island, Hudson's Bay. She was wrecked there, on the rocky shore.

Crew Rescued

"Two English boats, the Lion and Wolf, took aboard the crew and what oil was salvaged from the Antelope. I happened to be on the Lion, a ship equipped with sail and steam power. She brought me and others of the crew to St. Johns, Newfoundland. We loafed around there three weeks before the American Counsul sent us home.

"I didn't think much of the whaling business then and came back home to Dartmough. I went to work on a farm about two miles from my home and a year later went to Horseneke.

"There was not one building at Horseneck Beach then, excepting for a bowling alley with some bedrooms. I took over this alley and opened the room to gunners, who were very numerous in those days. There were no laws limiting the duck hunting season or the number of ducks that could be killed. Hunting was excelent at Horseneck and it was the mecca for hundreds of sportsmen.

"During the Summers, many people came from New Bedford and Fall River to bath and on picnics. A great duture was predicted for Horseneck as a resort.

Built Boarding House

"Business was so good that I built my boarding house shortly after I came to Horseneck. For quite awhile it was the only house at the beach. As many as 150 gunners roomed at my house in earlier years during the season when ducks and other fowl were plentiful. I went hunting a lot myself and was and still am a crack shot

* "I shot as many as 86 ducks in one day and shipped them to the markets in Boston and New York. Loons, quail and other birds made good game, too, and were in demand for the table. I shot four deer at Horseneck. One of them weighed 310 pounds and was the largest ever killed in that section of Westport.

"During the Summer seasons I fished for the market. When I first came to Horseneck, seining along the beach was allowed and I caught a lot of fish that way. Later this was banned and I trapped lobsters and fished with hand lines. I quit fishing for the market about four years ago but I still row out in one of my three rowboats and fish for pleasure."

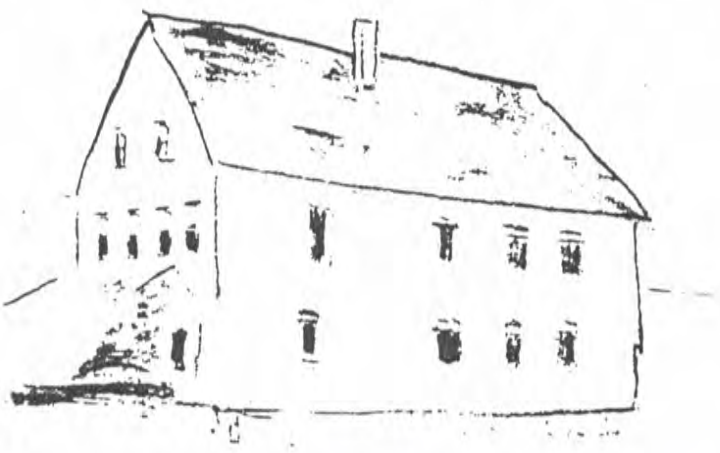
Mr. Head says that duck hunting at Horseneck Beach is not as fruitful as it used to be. Nevertheless he is the first gunner out at Gooseberry Neck, off Horseneck Beach, when the season opens every year, and he bags his share of the birds. He remins a crack shot with the shotgun, his accuracy almost as good as it was when he was in his prime. "Burt" shows up the younger men every year.

Occasional Boarders.

This year there has been only an occasional boarder at the Head house. A faithful housekeeper who has been with Mr. Head more than 30 years tends to the household duties. When the duck season comes around, some of the gunners will stay at the rooming house of Mr. Head and he will surely be their host.

Despite his age, Mr. Head is in excellent health and is very active. Only his sense of hearing has been impaired. He chops wood and is responsible for a winter's supply of kindling wood piled ten feet high outside his home. Yesterday he was out picking beach plums. Tomorrow one might find him a good distance from shore, fishing from a rowboat. He walks with a short, rapid step.

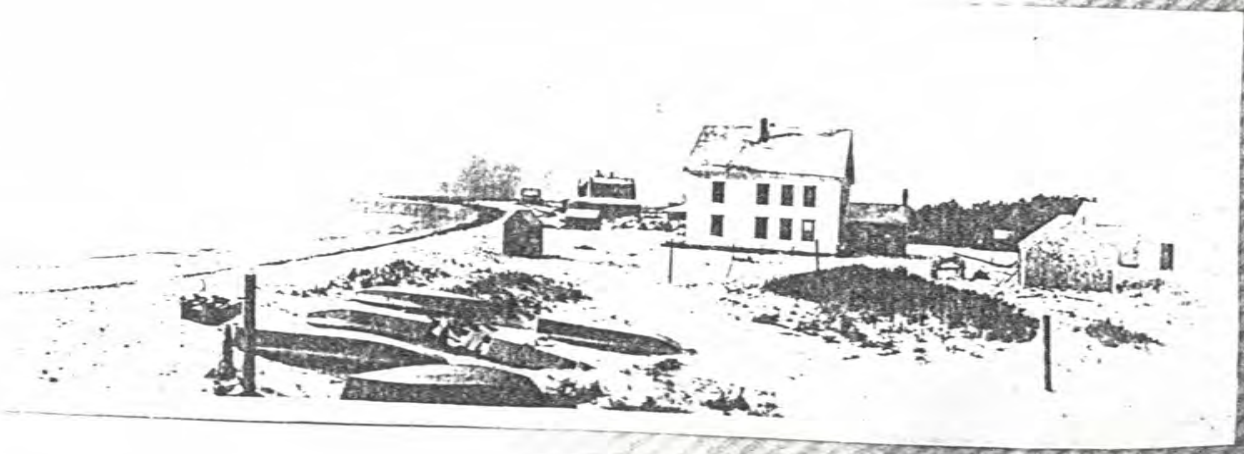
Mr. Head was married twice and survives both his wives. He has a son, William S. Head, living at Westport Point, and a brother, Walter Head of Dartmouth, Lieutenant Edmar S. Head of the New Bedford Police Dept. is a cousin.



STANDARD TIMES
SEP 2 4 1938

FREDERICK B. HEAD

Searchers today found the body of Mr. Head, 89-year-old Horseneck Beach resident, in marshes three-quarters-of-a-mile from East Beach. Mr. Head's many friends called him Burton Head. He had been a year-round resident of East Beach 64 years and witnessed the development of that section into a popular resort.



Body Found



STANDARD TIMES SEPT 21, 1988
50 YEARS ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

John DeNadal recalled people sifting through the rubble trying to find bodies several days after the storm. He recalled Boy Scouts helping to comb the beach.

"There were a lot of people missing," he said.

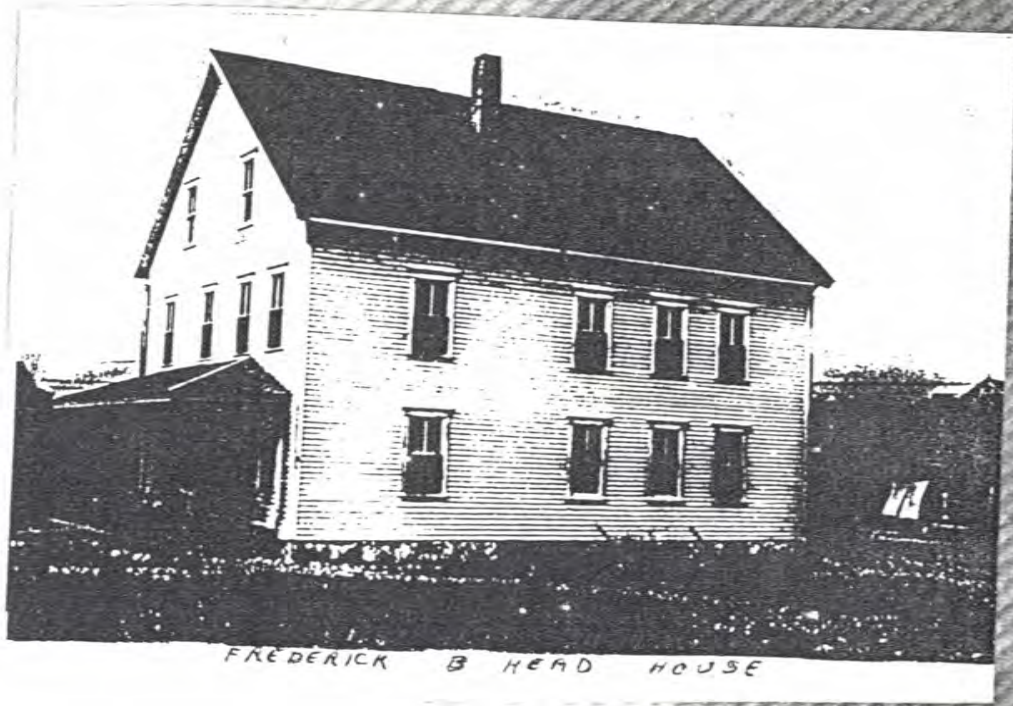
He recalled William Head, who was a well-known local sports fisherman, searching, determined to find his father.

Combing the beaches, Mr. Head came across an arm sticking out from the rubble and debris. It was his father, Frederick.

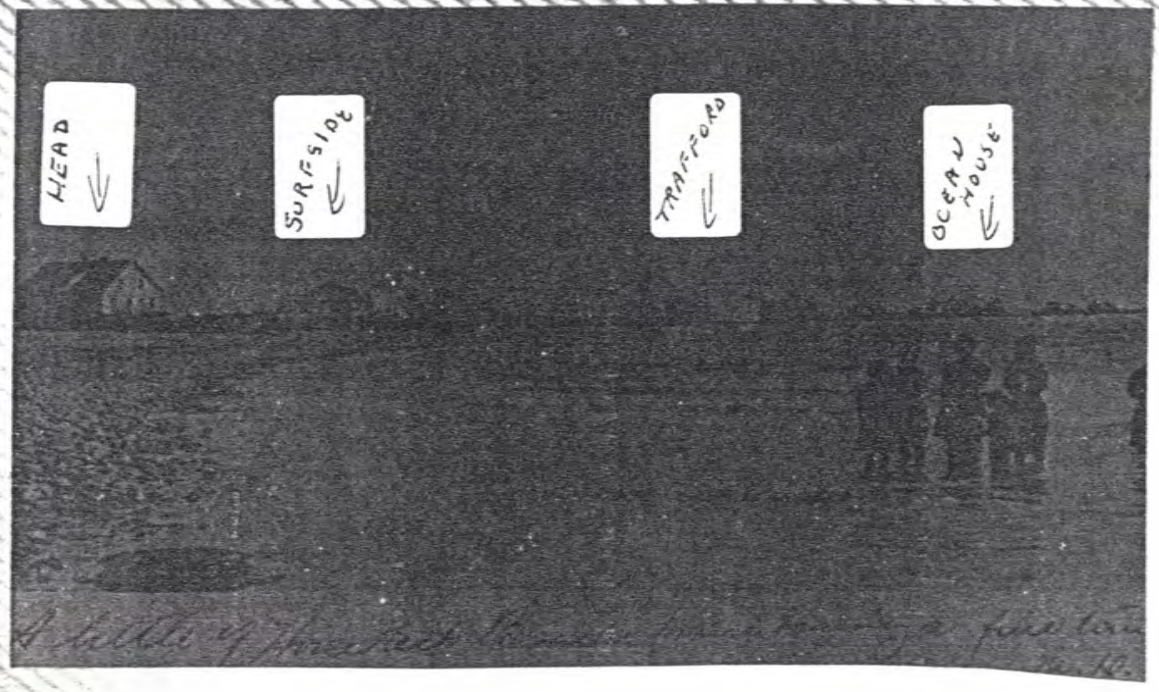
"He took him in his skiff and brought him back to Westport Point," said Mr. DeNadal.

Mrs. DeNadal recalled a couple who ran a little variety store in the summer colony. When the water came in, the couple had tried to escape in a car parked out in front of their store. Their bodies were found in the car. A flashlight still shone inside.

Mrs. DeNadal's own car was found about 50 feet from where it had been parked before the storm.



FREDERICK B HEAD HOUSE



This postcard was postmarked 1906. I strongly suspect picture was taken before the turn of the century.



ZIMMERMANN HEAD SURFSIDE

← Two doors down from Burton Head was the Zimmermann house. Helen Zimmermann was born in 1900 & she tells me her father built their house on beach in 1902.

She told me many stories of the early days on beach & spoke very fondly of her neighbors Mr. Head. and the Giffords (Surfside).

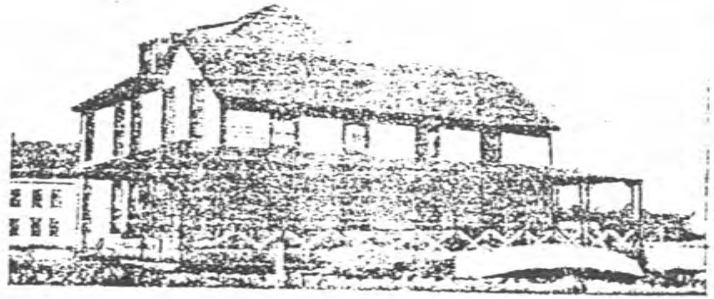
J. L. 18

SURFSIDE HOTEL
L. L. Gifford, Proprietress
Horse Neck Beach
South Westport, Mass.



LYDIA + JOHN GIFFORD

Surfside Cottage..... L. L. Gifford, Proprietress



Board
$8 to $10
per Week

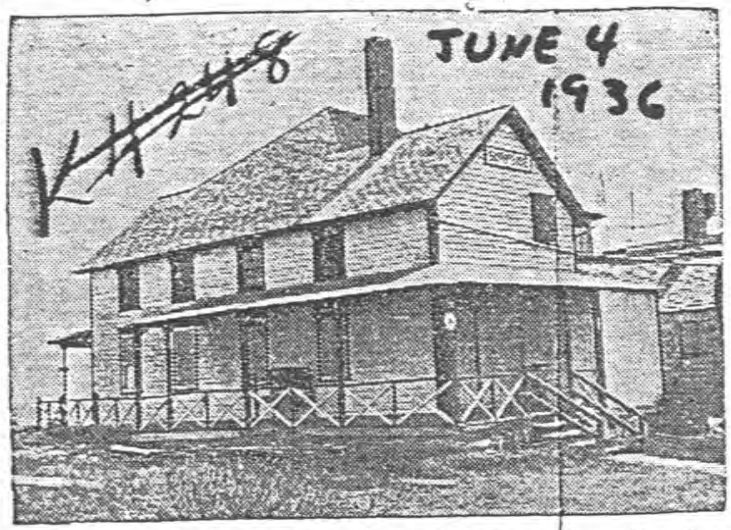
Horseneck Beach, So. Westport, Mass. 190



JUN 4 1936

STANDARD-TIMES, NEW BEDFORD,

'Surfside' at Horseneck Beach In Final Chapter as Hostelry



The Surfside Hotel at Horseneck Beach has been through a change in popularity which ties up indirectly with the machine age.

In Horse and Buggy Days the Structure Was Widely Known to Vacationists

Surfside Hotel at Horseneck Beach, once the rendezvous of prominent New Bedford and Fall River residents and known to Summer visitors from all parts of the country, will soon be nothing but a memory. Furnishings of the hotel, a landmark on the east beach, will be sold at auction soon to settle the estate of the hotel owner, Mrs. Lydia L. (Besse) Gifford, who died five weeks ago. The building is to be sold later.

Stocks and fixtures of the grocery store behind the hotel, owned and managed by Mrs. Gifford's husband, John I. Gifford, until his death Dec. 2, 1935, have been sold.

Summer residents at Horseneck will miss Mr. Gifford and his store this Summer. The establishment, with a record of 22 years of service, had become an institution at the resort. Like the hotel, it saw the growth of the beach from a Sunday picnic ground to the present cottage resort.

Some will remember Summers about 50 years ago when, on the site where Surfside Hotel stands today, Mrs. Gifford served lunches, chowder and refreshments from a tent to New Bedford and Fall River residents who drove to the beach in horse-drawn vehicles. Her home at that time was on the Horseneck Road, Westport.

Mrs. Gifford was ambitious and she was a fine cook. She soon abandoned her tent for a one-room wooden building on the east beach. Additions were built until the structure reached its present proportions, a 16-room building, exclusive of kitchens.

Mrs. Joseph E. Carrier of Horseneck Road, Westport, a niece of Mrs. Gifford, remembers when more than 100 transients ate at the hotel, and some Summers when all the hotel rooms were occupied and persons were turned away. Horses were kept in a nearby shed.

At Peak 12 Years Ago

Business was at its best at the hotel 12 years ago. Since then it declined, and there has been little activity at the place during the last year. Persons who go to Horseneck Beach now have their own cottages or tents and provisions.

Duck hunters made the hotel their meeting place for many years. Mr. Gifford was well known as a hunter and was host to the nimrods who sought the wary birds at the beach and on Gooseberry Neck.

Refreshments were at one time sold in the office of the hotel. In 1914 Mr. Gifford built his store and business was transferred there. That store was his charge until his death.



Mrs. Gifford spent several Winters in Florida where she bought 20 acres of land, half of it occupied by orange and grapefruit orchards.

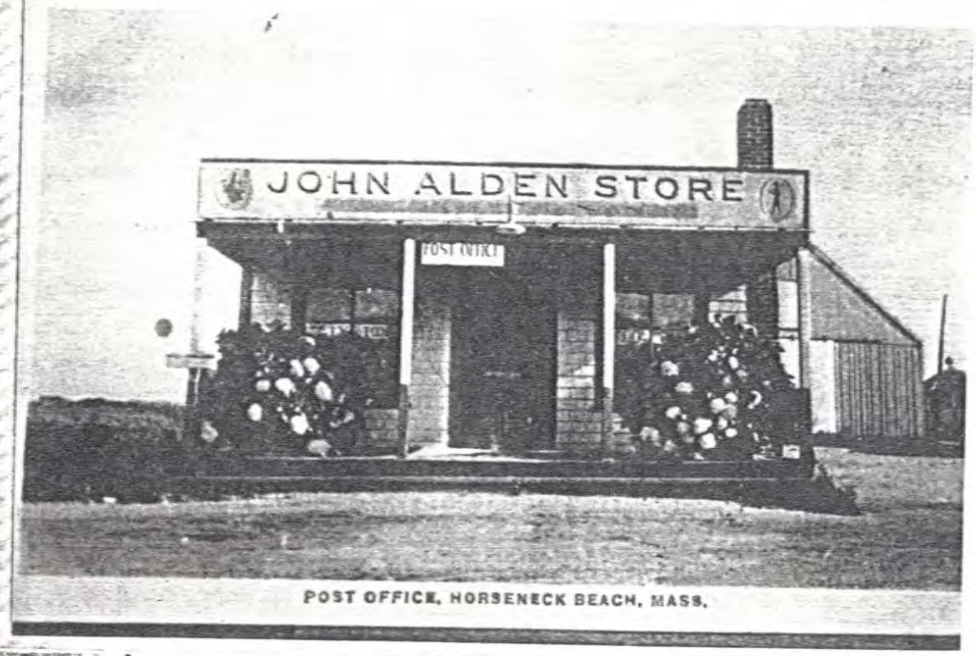
The hotel contains many valuable antiques collected by Mrs. Gifford. One large platter of Wedgewood ware she willed to Mrs. Carrier. This piece, Mrs. Carrier says, came from St. Helena, the island where Napoleon Bonaparte lived in exile. The dish had belonged to Mrs. Gifford's mother.

Mrs. Gifford had a hobby of collecting baskets and there are more than 50 in the hotel. She also left a collection of old powder horns.

I cant help but wonder if Mrs. Gifford is serving refreshments in this scene ?? J.L.



20



POST OFFICE, HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.

John I Gifford was Postmaster at Horseneck Beach from June 9, 1914 - April 15, 1930



Horseneck Beach

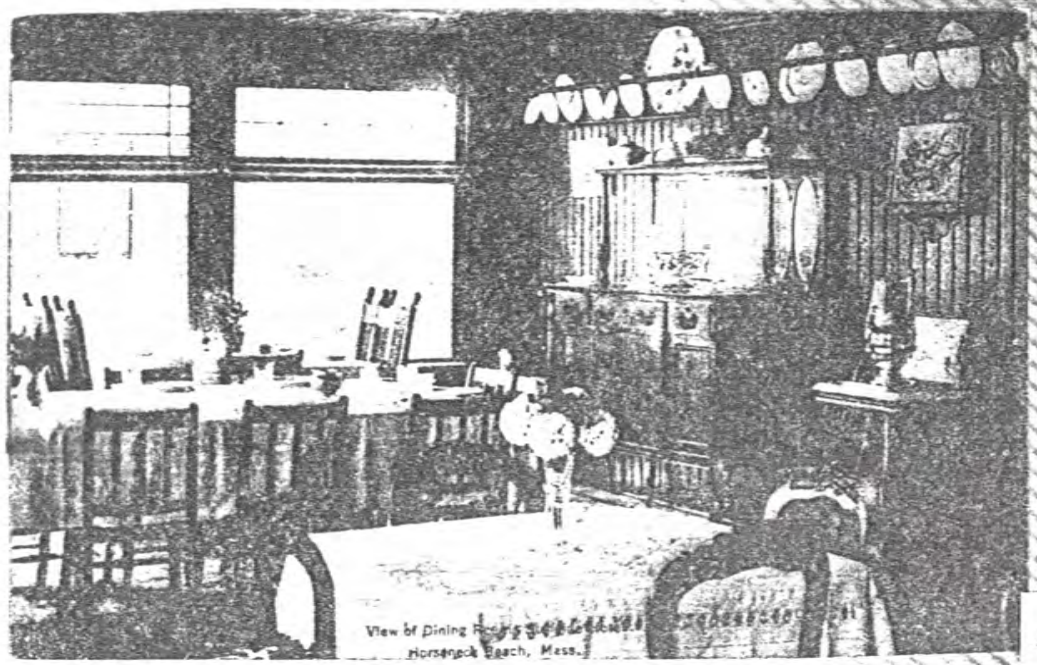
Copy of Postcard Lydia L. Gifford mailed in 1906.

East Beach Rd looking east.

Dec 6 - 06 much pleased some again Dear Mrs L. L. Gifford

You can see portion of F.B Read house right door to the Surfside location is across from where John Reed Rd. comes onto East Bch Rd.





Dining Room of Surfside where Lydia displayed her antiques.

23

East and West Beaches at Horseneck

Catholic Church Among Storm-Razed Buildings

St. ose of Lima Chapel in Path of Hurricane; Five Bodies Recovered; Nineteen Believed to Have Perished When Tidal Wave Passed Over Area

Five bodies of an estimated total of 19 persons, who perished during the gale and tidal wave that spread ruin and desolation at Horseneck Beach Wednesday, were recovered from the nearby waters yesterday.

One is a resident of this city, another from Westport, one from Providence and two are unidentified.

The victims are:

Mrs. Florence H. Burgess of 373 President Avenue, this city; George W. Petrie of Providence; Harriet Hicks of Westport, an unidentified man and an unidentified woman.

Horseneck, once the mecca for thousands of local residents, has been reduced to a mud flat.

Of the hundreds of homes once located on the East, West and Little Beaches, only two are standing, the residences of Mrs. Ella N. Allen of Allen's Pavilion, and Dr. Andrew Hall of New Bedford nearby. Both are damaged.

Trapped on Island

Four unknown women, who were forced to spend the night on Gooseberry Neck Island without shelter when the storm leveled houses, tents and trailers, were rescued the following morning.

All vehicular traffic to Horseneck is by way of Horseneck Road and the East Beach Road, because both the Point and Hicks Bridges have been washed away.

A National Guard unit of 65 men from Newton reported for duty at the beaches at six o'clock last night.

On the East Beach, between Horseneck Road and Allen's Pavilion, not a house or foundation remains.

The tidal wave that struck during the height of the storm, swept every building inland for a quarter of a mile where, today, they are a mass of wreckage.

Hundreds visited the scenes yesterday and sought their Summer homes.

Both the West Beach and Little Beach suffered similar fates.

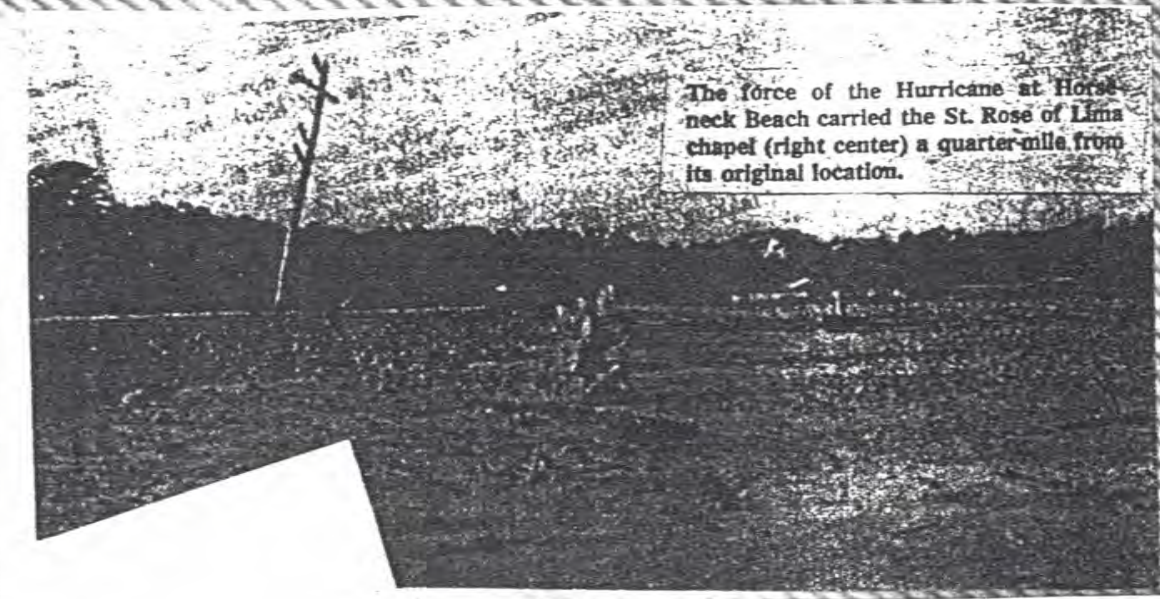
Charges of Looting Made

Hurricane Wrecks Church at Horseneck



Little if anything remains today to designate the place where the St. Rose of Lima Chapel on the East Beach at Horseneck formerly stood. Constructed for the convenience of vacationists at the popular Westport beach a few years ago, the chapel was levelled during the hurricane which left devastation in this area.

Church was built some time in the 1930's
East side of Surfside Hotel



The force of the Hurricane at Horseneck Beach carried the St. Rose of Lima chapel (right center) a quarter-mile from its original location.

Charges of Looting Made

Westport Police, in their search for other victims, were handicapped by complaints that the wrecked properties were being looted.

Patrolman Thomas H. Ryan of the local Police Department, who, with members of his family, was visiting the scene yesterday, rescued five valuable young dogs from an overturned house where they have been deserted by their owner. The dogs, thirsty and hungry, were cared for by Westport Police.

Several of yesterday's visitors were dredging in inland waters west of the beach where they recovered considerable liquor. A woman resident of that area remarked their efforts would be more appreciated if they assisted in the search for missing persons.

A party of 19 men and women escaped death in the tidal waters when assisted from the vicinity of Allen's Pavilion by Mr. Chace and Stanley Allen.

Men Tell Experience

In relating their experiences today the men said:

"The storm seemed to approach rather slowly and we figured that there would have to be a rise of about two feet before there was any danger.

"Without a warning, however, the tidal wave struck, swept over the roofs of the East Beach houses and the destruction started.

"We started along the West Beach Road in automobiles, headed for Westport Point, but had traveled but a few hundred yards when we had to abandon the cars.

"Waist deep in water we continued our journey and arrived at the Point seven hours later, a trip that would normally take a person about a half an hour to walk.

"Robert Mitchell, who, with his wife, was in our party, could not continue the trip because of illness and we managed to assist him to the top of a sand dune where he and his wife were later rescued by Westport Police.

and his wife were later rescued by Westport Police.

"Miss Harriet Smith, former teacher in the B. M. C. Durfee High School, was a member of our party.

"A Mrs. Sullivan, who lived nearby, attempted to cross the West Beach Road, but was unable because of the rising water. She held on to a policeman while waist deep in water, for an hour, before she could be rescued."

Several Reported Missing

The proprietor of an ice cream stand across from the Allen Pavilion is reported among the missing as is a man and wife, proprietors of the Pioneer Store that was located on the East Beach Road near St. Rose of Lime Catholic Church.

The church, with other buildings, is a quarter of a mile inland from its former location.

Others reported missing include:

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Sole, residents of Horseneck; Mrs. Fred Tuell and her six-year-old grandson, Alden Tuell, of Providence; Burton Head of Westport, his housekeeper, Mrs. Sherman, and Charles B. Wyllys of 573 President Avenue, this city, a relative of Mrs. Burgess.

Included in the debris a quarter of a mile from their former location are the homes of the following.

East Beach:

Paul V. McDonough of 319 Belmont Street, Al Davis of 1505 Robeson Street, N. P. Tessier of 1051 Highland Avenue and former Mayor James H. Kay of 47 Kay Street.

Mr. Kay, his wife, Mary, and their daughter, Althea P. Kay, are under treatment at the Union Hospital for exposure suffered at the beach during the storm.

East Beach Damage

Homes of other local residents of the East Beach include:

George K. Brown
James Sinclair
E. H. Small
L. McFarland
H C. Padelford
James H. Blakney
Mrs. D. J. Burgess
Arthur Potter
Horace Hathaway
George K. Brown
Elmer Whipp
Cecila Doran
Charles Sole of Brockton
Mr. Presby of Tiverton
Mr. Trafford of Westport
T. J. Moriarty of New Bedford
D. J. Sullivan of New Bedford
Mrs. DeWolf of Warren
Mr. Wilcox of Merridan, Conn.

West Beach Toll

On the West Beach:

Former Mayor W. Harry Monks
George Willison
Daniel Coogan
Charles Nelson
Mr. Blossom
Dr. Poole
Harold Sanford
Thomas J. Logan
Harold Reed.

Others on the West Beach included:

Dr. Andrew Hall of Arlington
John Messier of New Bedford
Ross Gordon of Worcester
Dr. Sibley of Boston
Mrs. Mark Sullivan of New Bedford
Ross Gordon of Worcester
Mr. Wilbur of Attleboro
Norman Gifford of Westport
Roy Hawes of New Bedford
Charles Connell of North Dartmouth
Mr. McCloud of Providence
Mr. Hicks of Dartmouth
Raymond Hayes of Worcester.

Saw Pavilion Disappear

Plante's and the two Midway Pavilions on the West Beach were also destroyed by the wind and mountainous seas leveling the huge sand dunes completely changing the whole appearance of the beach.

Elzear Plante of this city, proprietor of Plante's Pavilion, saw his establishment demolished at a loss estimated at $25,000.

"My son Henry and my wife were in the building as I was trying to keep the windows and doors closed as the waves smashed them open. Water was knee high inside and furniture, fixtures and stock were floating about.

"My son and wife went out in the swirling waters up to their waists and made for the Westport Point Road. About five minutes later I saw it was useless to stay and reluctantly I struggled in the waters to join them. From a distance, I saw the pavilion roof and cement blocks crash. Houses along the West Beach were carried 1,000 feet from their foundations."

Grant's and Hutchinson's Pavillons have completely disappeared and the highways are covered with sand six feet deep.

24

Westport News 1976

Mystery Bell At St. John's

Jan 6, 1976

Last June, a bell was found in the pump house behind the rectory of St. John the Baptist Church on Main Rd. in Central Village, Westport. Today, that bell is standing in front of the church.

The problem with the bell is no one is exactly sure where the bell comes from.

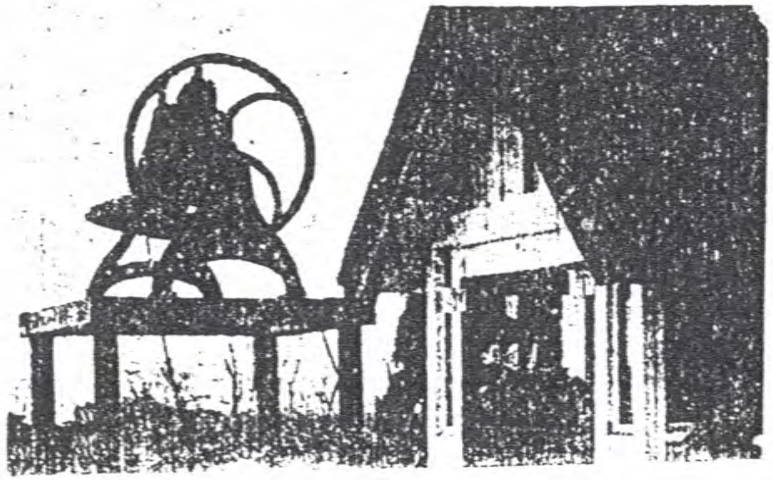
Selectman Charles Costa says he thinks the bell comes from a mission church that stood on Horseneck Beach until it was destroyed by the 1938 hurricane. Costa was an altar boy there and he said he thinks it is the same bell.

An unidentified women claims the bell was donated to St. John's by her family when the church was first opened. She says the bell was purchased from the Sears-Robuck Co.

According to Rev. Edward Sharpe, administrator of St. John's, no matter where the bell comes from, it will now be used at St. John's. He said the bell was refinished by Alstrom Potter and Sons and placed on a stand constructed by Dick Trecida made from loly columns. The stand will later be made to look like a wishing well.

Rev. Sharpe also said the bell will be blessed at a ceremony sometime in January. The bell will be rung 20 times before and after each Mass.

If anyone has information as to the origin of the bell it is asked they contact the Westport News.



I never saw any follow up on this bell. Does anyone know where it came from?

J.L.

Even as early as 1939 the State had their eyes on us. J. L.

STATE IS URGED TO TAKE BEACH AT HORSENECK

APR 1 ? 1939

Conservation Committee Is Told Project Could Pay for Itself

Special to Standard-Times

BOSTON, April 13—Acquisition of Horseneck Beach, Westport, would provide beach facilities for a population of 350,000, including the cities of New Bedford and Fall River, and could be made self-sustaining, L. B. Fletcher, secretary of the Trustees of Public Reservations, told the Conservation Committee yesterday.

Fletcher, who is also secretary of the Governor's Committee on Open Spaces, spoke in favor of the recommendation of the special commission on conservation that the State take over the beach, which he estimated would cost $100,000 to buy and put in condition.

He reminded the committee that Jones Beach in New York cost $9,000,000 but last year returned a net of $700,000 to the state. He asked that Horseneck Beach be bought as a "demonstrating beach."

Representative G. Ward Stetson of Middleboro, a member of the special commission, said that $200,000,000 was brought into the State last year by tourists and "recreation may be our biggest industry, and certainly has hardly been touched. People in Providence and Connecticut would use the beach."

"Damage caused by the hurricane reduced valuations at Horseneck Beach by $100,000," explained Frank L. Haynes of the Conservation Department," and the State can buy the land for $60,000." He suggested a parking lot for not fewer than 4,000 cars. The purchase was also advocated by Arthur W. Dean, chief engineer of the State Planning Board.

Representative Harland Burke of Ipswich, also a member of the special commission, said his group had traveled the shoreline of the State and found that private owners have taken most of the desirable property. The State should act now or prices will be prohibitive in the future, he asserted in favoring the Horseneck Beach buy.

"There is danger that unless something is done the general public will be excluded," said Burke, pointing out that the State owns only one beach. No opposition was expressed.

APR 24 1947

Pro and Con Is Scheduled On Horseneck

Arguments for and against State acquisition of a large section of Horseneck Beach in Westport will be heard at a public hearing at 7:30 tomorrow night at Westport High School Auditorium by the Legislative Committee on Harbors and Public Lands.

Three bills now in the hands of the Harbors and Public Lands Committee propose that the State take over approximately 250 acres of West Beach at Horseneck from the Midway to the Westport River for development as a public reservation.

Tomorrow night's hearing will be the fourth held in Westport on the State beach plan. Three times the people of Westport voted against State acquisition, and the bills were defeated as legislators did not want to force the State beach on Westport townspeople. What happens tonight may well decide the future of West Beach at Horseneck.

Standard Times

96 Acres Bought

The West Horseneck Beach Development Company has bought from the estate of Joseph P. Cory 96 acres from the Midway to Plante's Pavilion and from low water mark to the John Reed Road, all located on the proposed State reservation site. The company has leveled land for parking lots and cottage sites.

Feeling that State acquisition of the area is needed if the natural beauties of Horseneck Beach are to be retained, proponents are determined to make a strong effort to push some measure through before the private company erects buildings on the land.

Proponents also feel solution of the traffic problem at Westport Point will be more probable with State ownership of the beach than if the area is privately-owned.

Revenue Not in Balance

Furthermore, the argument that the Town of Westport would lose tax revenue if the State takes the beach no longer exists, as a new law requires the State to pay the towns an appropriate sum annually in lieu of taxes for property under the State Department of Conservation.

Senator Charles W. Olson of Ashland is chairman of the Committee on Harbors and Public Lands, and Representative John Gallant of Weymouth is clerk. Other members include Representatives G. Leo Bessette and Samuel D. McLeod of this city.

Attorney Richard Paull, a Westport Point resident, will urge State acquisition of Horseneck Beach at the hearing tomorrow night. He will speak for himself and for a number of prpponents of the proposal.

STANDARD TIMES.

Ocean House, Beach Landmark, Destroyed; Bowling Alleys Saved

mar 1933

Picture on Page 3

The Ocean House, a landmark at Horseneck Beach, Westport, for a half century, was destroyed by fire early this morning. Firemen were able to prevent flames from spreading to the adjoining beach cottages. The total damage is estimated at $5,000. Insurance was carried on the building.

Charles T. Gifford, who lives on Horseneck Road, about a mile from the hotel, was awakened by a pasing car at 1:30 o'clock this morning and looked out to see flames breaking through the roof of the building. He called the Westport telephone operator, who gave the alarm.

Save Nearby Cottage

The flames had gained such headway that little could be done and firemen concentrated their efforts on saving the cottage to the west, owned by Daniel Sullivan of New Bedford. Streams of water were directed on the outer wall and they were able to check the fire from jumping to adjoining roofs. The cottage to the east of the hotel, owned by a Mr. Davis of Fall River, was not damaged.

A bowling alley which was separate from the main building, was also saved, but the flames swept through a dance hall and dining room addition.

Firemen were recalled to the scene at 8 this morning when fire broke out afresh in the ruins, but it was checked without difficulty.

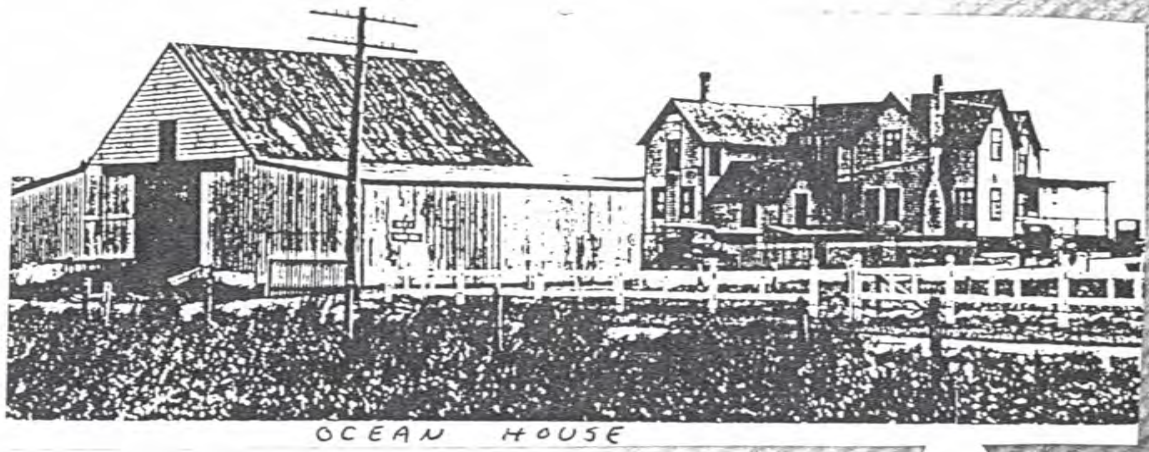
Fire Chief Irving C. Hammond said the cause of the fire has not been determined.

Built 50 years Ago

The hotel property was sold to Chester Wilkie of Westport last year but it has been unoccupied through the Winter months.

The hotel was built 50 years ago by Josiah Wood and was the first hostelry at Horseneck Beach. It had changed hands many times since. Charles A. Farley had been one of the more recent owners. It was purchased by Mr. Wilkie from Mrs. George Lewis of New Bedford. Her son, Don Lewis, operated the bowling alleys for a time. The dance hall addition had been built about seven years ago.

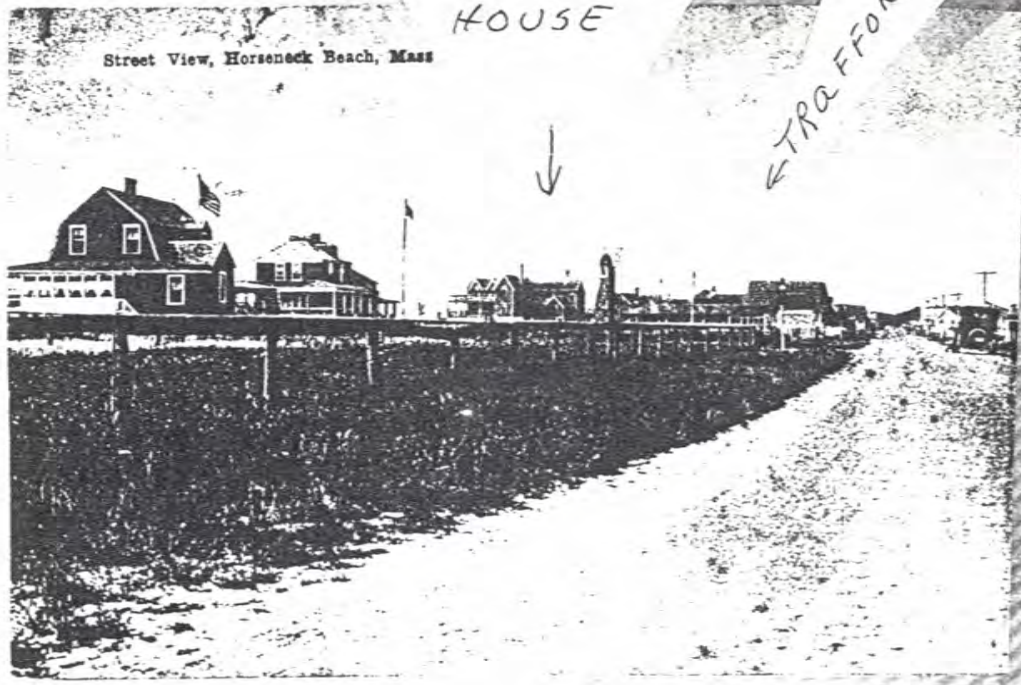
SEE BELOW ↓



OCEAN HOUSE

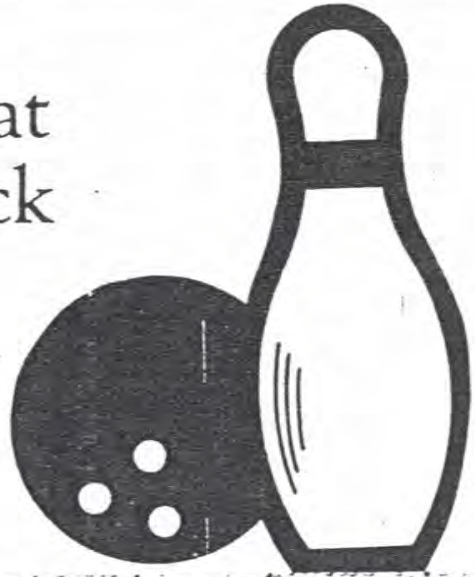
OCEAN HOUSE

TRAFFORDS



EAST BEACH RD LOOKING WEST

Bowling at Horseneck Beach



Bowling was a great form of recreation during the middle and late 1920's at Horseneck Beach. Don Lewis' three alleys located at East Beach had "elite" leagues during the summer months. After Labor Day the ordinary folk were welcomed with open arms.

"B" and Jim bowled there and managed to get brother, Carlton, a job setting pins on the week-end. At two cents a string the grand sum of 50 to 75 cents could be made per night. According to Mr. M some bowlers were impatient when it came to removing dead wood. No protection was provided for the setters. The pins were set on the spots, then the setter jumped up on the back-stop and hoped for the best.

One man (Al Lees) fired the ball like it was released from a cannon. Pins flew, sometimes cracking the novelty paneling and the pin boys prayed...

Another bowler, George Perry, a big strong man--rolled the ball so slowly you could "catch some shut-eye" waiting for it to travel down the alley (usually resulting in a strike).

Some of the bowlers Mr. Manchester could recall were: Dave Wing, George Hancock, Sam Tripp, Manny Cabral, Bert Wood and Henry Palmer. Along with others there were about six leagues.

The bowlers were quick to come to the aid of the pin setters, especially when they realized the boys weren't getting paid for all the strings they had set up. George convinced the proprietor that they were "good boys" and it would be best if he paid up. He did! When the pin-setters were once again short-changed, they quit. Pin setters were at a premium--automatic machines were not even thought of--especially at Horseneck Beach.

The alleys were removed from the building and it became a summer home, rented until the '38 Hurricane demolished it in one minute or less.

by Susan R. Sisson
(notes from Carlton Manchester Sr.)

Hurricane Book 1938 Fall River Herald

29



1910

DR. HALLS ALLENS SOME HOW THESE HOUSES SURVIVED →

BEACH SIDE



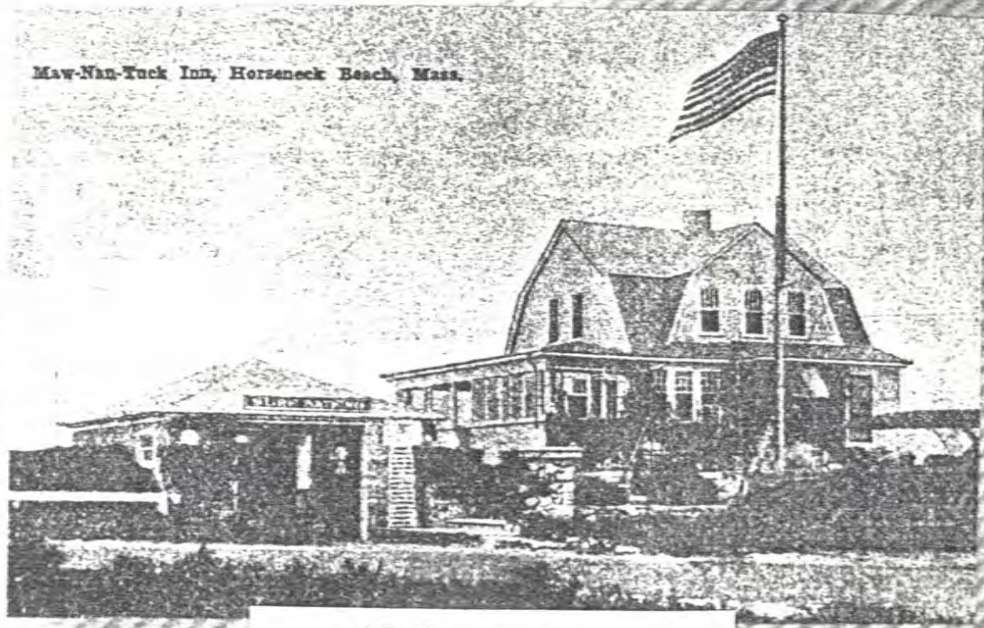
These three homes were the only ones at Horseneck Beach to withstand the storm's fury. THE occupants watched the storm sweep buildings into the sea and the swamps.

Horseneck Point, Horseneck Beach, Mass.



allens is now Chandys by The Sea

Maw-Nan-Tuck Inn, Horseneck Beach, Mass.



DR Halls
read article below

50 YEARS AGO TODAY ANNIVERSARY ISSUE
STANDARD TIMES SEPT. 21, 1988

A row of houses washing up 'looked like they were marching'

By Jack Stewardson
Standard-Times staff writer

"Horseneck Beach in Westport is desolate, impassable by auto and unrecognizable, men searching for bodies along the shore and in ruins discovered today. Not a house or even wreckage remains on East Beach, where at least five were found dead, and the buildings on West Beach are toppled crazily about in hollows among the sand dunes east of what was the West Beach Road."

— The Standard-Times, Sept. 23, 1938

John and Rose DeNadal had rented a summer cottage near the intersection of East and West Beaches in Westport for the summer of 1938. On the morning of Sept. 21, John left for work in Fall River and Mrs. DeNadal, who had recently learned she was pregnant, remained at the cottage taking care of her 5-month-old daughter, Sheila.

Early in the afternoon a Cozy Cab, a mini-bus which served the beach area, swung by to advise Mrs. DeNadal of a coming storm and suggested she take the opportunity to run to Fall River, but Mrs. DeNadal decided to remain at the cottage. It was the last run the cab would make that day.

A neighbor, Mrs. Mark Sullivan, came across to visit as the wind began to pick up. Mrs. Sullivan rented out a few rooms at her place and Mrs. DeNadal recalled the "For rent" sign flapping in the wind. "We were laughing about it at first, but we weren't laughing for too long."

Later in the afternoon, as the storm began to intensify, Mrs. DeNadal went to her kitchen, which had been built as an addition. "The kitchen started to drop off and I grabbed the baby and I went over to Mrs. Sullivan's house," she said.

Before long, however, the Sullivan home began to disintegrate.

"Before Mrs. Sullivan and I left, this man had come by and asked, 'Are you the woman with the baby? You'd better come with us to the Trafford house.' I said, 'I'm not going. I'm going to stay with Mrs Sullivan.' "

(The Trafford house was a substantial cottage with a brick foundation. It was washed away in the storm. Everyone who sought refuge there was lost, Mrs. DeNadal remembered).

As the water rose about the Sullivan cottage, Dr. Andrew Hall of New Bedford enlisted the help of Ali Aberdeen, owner of the Point Breeze Restaurant, to establish a lifeline between the Sullivan and the Hall cottages. It soon broke away from the Sullivan cottage, but remained secure to the Hall home.

"Between the Sullivan and the Hall house was a row of garages that started to come apart," Mrs. DeNadal recounted. "I got hit in the back with a piece of concrete but managed to get across with the rope.

"I lost Sheila three times in the water," Mrs. DeNadal added. Her daughter swallowed a lot of water but was not seriously injured.

Mrs. Sullivan was stranded clinging to a telephone pole. From the Hall cottage the others watched Mrs. Sullivan dodge debris and disappear from sight as the pole went up and down with the wind. Somehow, she managed to make her way to a wall on the north side of the Hall property and was pulled to safety.

Meanwhile, John DeNadal was becoming increasingly worried about his wife and daughter and decided to drive down to Westport Point.

"I got down as far as Laura's Restaurant at Westport Point and, after seeing the damage, went up to Hix Bridge and then down Horseneck Road," he said. When he reached a point near the present location of the Bayside Restaurant he witnessed "a row of houses being washed up. It looked like they were marching."

He said the spray of the tidal wave at Westport Point appeared to reach as high as 10 feet over the tops of the telephone poles.

Mr. DeNadal could only hope that his wife, who had her own car, had escaped in time.

"It was the worst experience," he said. "I had to assume she had gotten out of there. I was very concerned."

Mr. DeNedal began retracing his steps, working his way back up Horseneck Road, dodging downed wires, gazing at barns that had been moved, and every so often going off the road to avoid obstructions. When he got back to Fall River he contacted his brother-in-law, John Brislan, and other relatives, but they had heard nothing of Mrs. DeNadal.

He and his brother-in-law headed

(Continued to next page)

back to Westport Point. They stopped by one of the houses where police had established a command post, then crossed the bridge from Westport Point and made their way to the oceanside. It was now dark and all they had was a flashlight.

There were several washouts. Mr. DeNadal remembers falling into several water-filled gaps. When they stumbled upon one of the few homes that hadn't been washed away, the occupants at first thought they were looters.

They finally made their way to the end of John Reed Road and walked across the property where the cottage of Frederick Head had stood. Near the corner, they discovered a huge piece of concrete — it must have weighed several tons, he thought — which had washed up on the roadway.

"There was desolation," he said. "We got a glimpse of the Hen and Chickens Lightship and took our bearings, but it had been moved in the storm."

They moved up the beach and made their way toward the Point Breeze Resataurant.

Finally they saw the light of a candle in a window.

"I thought, if my wife is there, this is really a salvation," Mr. DeNadal recallled.

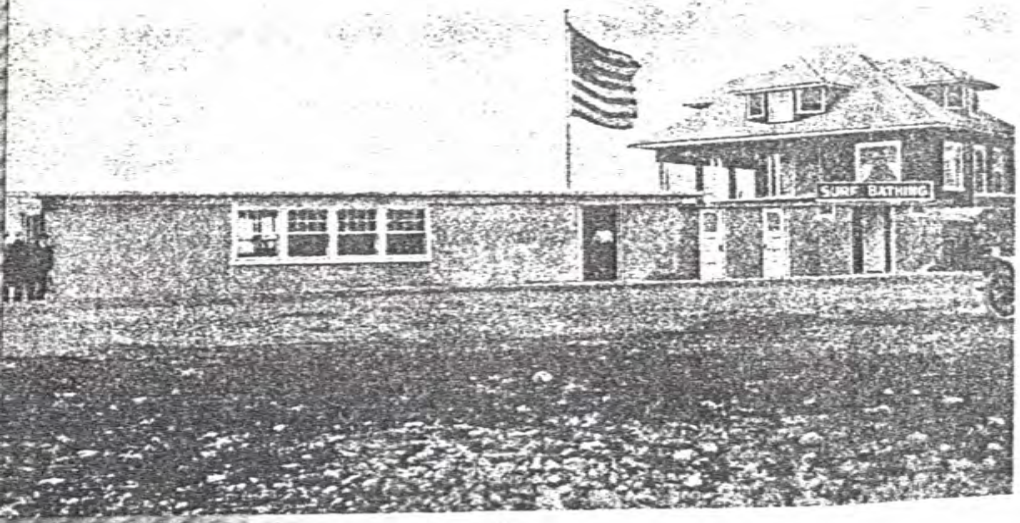
Mrs. DeNadal had lit the candle.

"She was sort of a guiding light to get me back there."

□

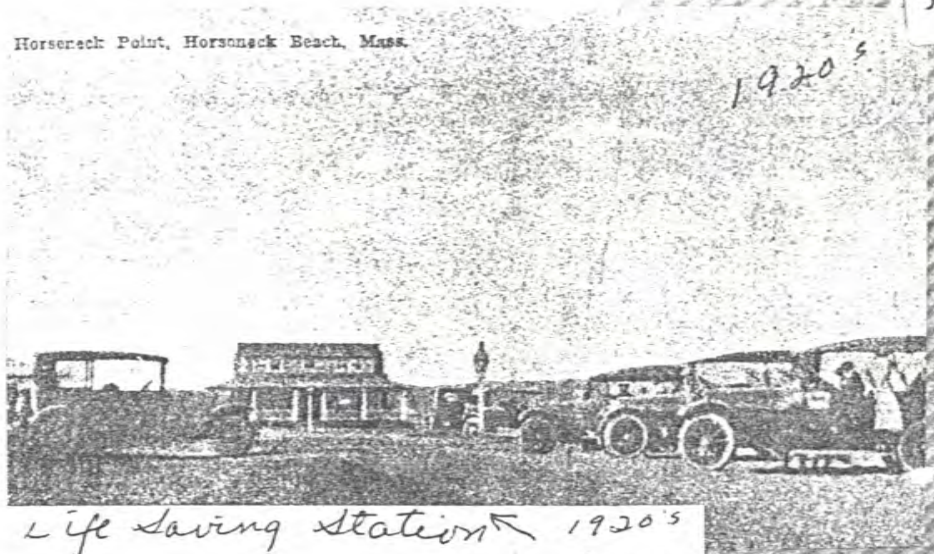
Allen's Bathing Pavilion, Horseneck Beach, Mass.

1920's



Horseneck Point, Horseneck Beach, Mass.

1920's



Life Saving Station ↖ 1920's
also shown below with Ali
aberdin's built in front
↓ 1940's

Allen's Bathing Pavilion, Horseneck Beach, Mass.

1920's

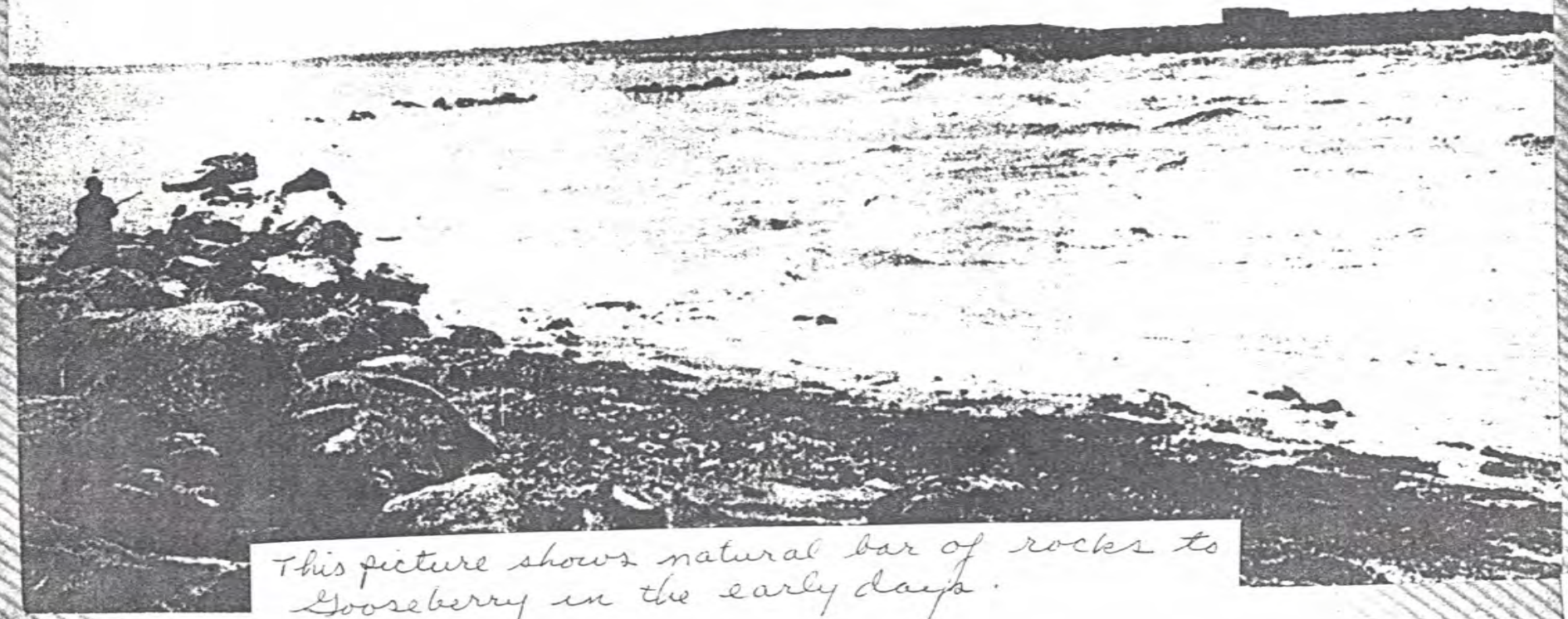


Sometime later Allens ↑
built two bath houses
then store on end ↓



New Causeway
to Gooseberry
↓

The Bar, Horseneck Beach, Mass.



This picture shows natural bar of rocks to Gooseberry in the early days.

Gooseberry



Horseneck Beach
Postmark 1923


THE BAR, HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.

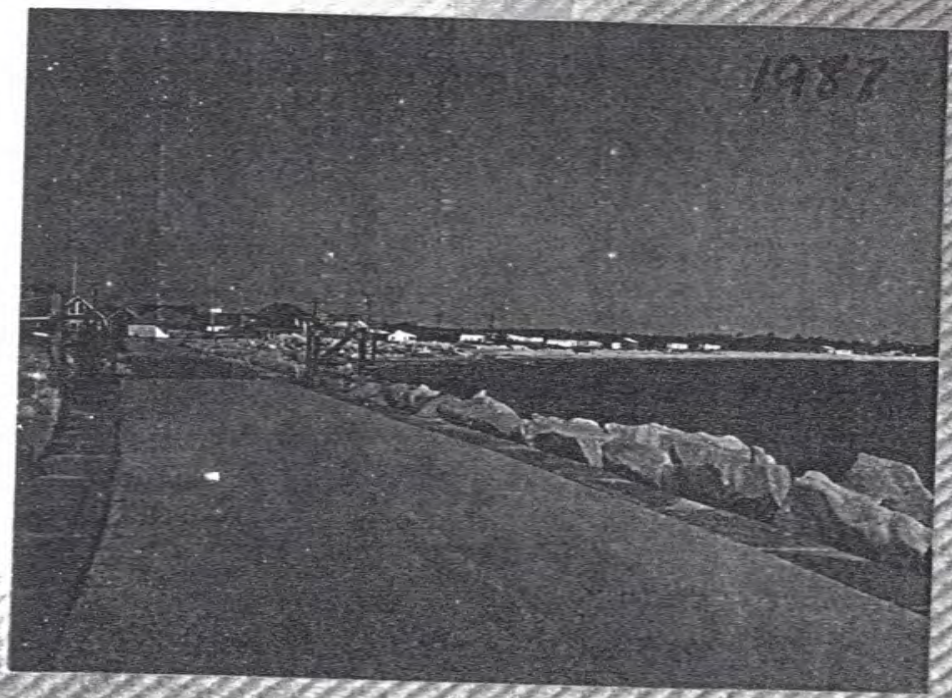
mar 2, 1976

Backward Glances

(The Evening Standard, October 11, 1861)

Yesterday, Mr. Thomas Allen in Westport, with his team, consisting of a yoke of oxen and a horse, attempted to cross from the main land to Gooseberry Neck, when he was overtaken by the waves and tide, and placed in a most perilous situation.

The oxen by some manoeuvre turned their yoke and got rid of the wagon or car, and finally got ashore. Mr. Allen who was unable to swim, managed to get hold of the horse's head and held on until he was rescued in a completely exhausted condition, and some time elapsed before he could be resuscitated. The horse was drowned by having his head held under water by Mr. Allen. The cart went to sea.



Jean —
Thought you might be interested in these pictures this week in the Chronicle.
mary Broga
P.S. notice houses in the 1910 photo

by Ann Kennison

A photograph from 1903 of East Beach looking towards Gooseberry shows a sheep barn on that island; during Westport's early history, sheep were often taken there to graze.

However, more interesting than the sheep barn in the distance is the scene in the foreground of people bathing in the surf; behind them can be seen a wider and less rocky beach than the East Beach of today. Other pictures taken in 1910 show more clearly the wide sandy beach bordered with large houses.

What caused the changes between the sandy beaches of the early 20th century and the narrow rocky shore of today? A study done in 1967 indicates the reason — the construction of the causeway from Horseneck to Gooseberry and the effect that roadway has had on the tides and drift of sands.

The report, submitted by the Conservation Commission in 1967 to state officials including then Governor John Volpe, used the pictures to demonstrate the dramatic differences before and after the causeway construction.

First, the report suggested, the original access to Gooseberry — a sandbar which appeared at low tide — was formed "by the action of the wind and tide over the years and acted as a natural regulator of the shape and condition of East Beach and West Beach."

The report went on to say the water naturally carried rocks, seaweed and excess sand from West Beach to East Beach but this action was halted when the causeway was built. In turn, the report continued, many stones began piling up at the west end of East Beach. "Not only has a large portion of the town landing on East Beach adjacent to the Causeway been eroded," but East Beach became "a much narrower strip of sand below the rocks at the high water mark."

In their letter to Gov. Volpe, the Commission urged the causeway be removed, letting Gooseberry return "to its uniquely beautiful natural state with rich marine, land and bird life." Also, the Commission suggested with the causeway gone, West Beach would probably cease to accumulate the number of rocks, and a better area for surfing would open up. Finally, the Commission suggested the island be protected as a conservation area to be used for oceanographic and underwater life study.

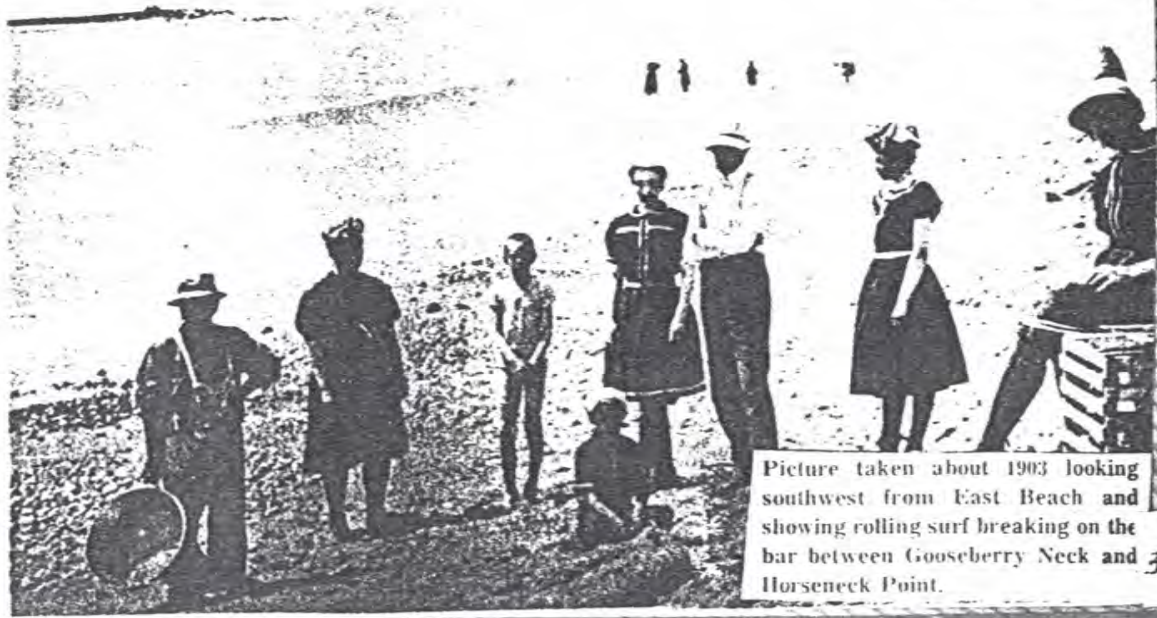
At the time of the 1967 letter the state's Department of Natural Resources was studying Gooseberry for recreational possibilities.

The Conservation Commission's suggestion was not accepted in 1967 and in a recent interview, Chief of Recreation for the state, Gilbert Bliss, said he does not fully agree with the report. However, he admitted changes had occurred in the beaches over the past seventy years and that the only significant difference in the area was the causeway.

Cont. next page ↓



FROM EAST BEACH, 1903



Picture taken about 1903 looking southwest from East Beach and showing rolling surf breaking on the bar between Gooseberry Neck and Horseneck Point.

Before the causeway was built, the only way over to Gooseberry with a team of horses was via the sandbar which was exposed at low tide. The trick, evidently, was to plan your trip to coincide with a low tide and to return with another low tide. Newspapers reported people getting caught by incoming tides and in an old history of New Bedford there is a small article on Joseph Russel, 3rd, (1719-1804) who once owned the island.

One time, when returning from Gooseberry, the tide "had come in so much that he was obliged to swim his horse." After a ways the horse refused to continue with Russell on his back. Russell remembered reading of another person in a similar situation and following that person's example, he slipped off the horse and held onto the tail and was "safely carried over."

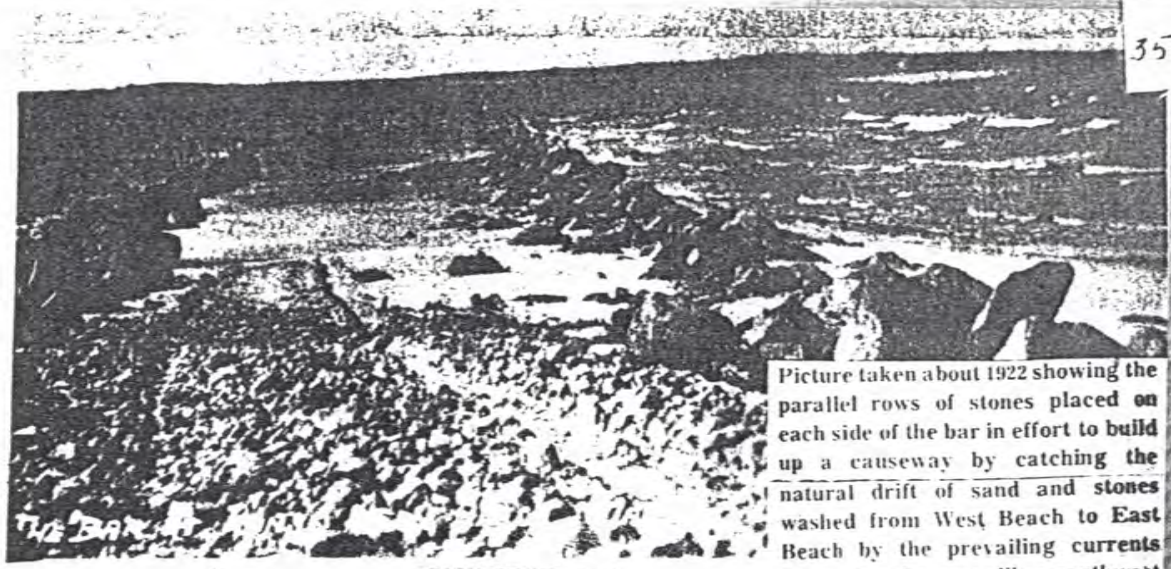
Plans to improve access to Gooseberry date back to 1913. A plan on record with the town describes a way to naturally build up a roadway by placing two parallel rows of boulders, about 40 inches apart, along the sand bar. The hope was that the rocks would trap small stones and gravel to form a road. A picture taken in 1922 shows that plan was implemented.

Ten years after the boulder plan, a bolder plan was introduced for Gooseberry's development. Developers wanted to change the name to Rest Isle and divide the island into 630 50-foot lots. These lots would be laid out on streets with such names as Beach Road or Ocean Avenue. Soon after, in the mid 1920's, the first causeway to accommodate cars was built.

However, Rest Isle never appeared and the 1938 hurricane severely damaged the causeway. When the U. S. Army took over Gooseberry during World War II, the Army Engineers rebuilt the causeway, doubling its size to accommodate more traffic. That roadway is the basis of the current access to the Island now owned by the state.

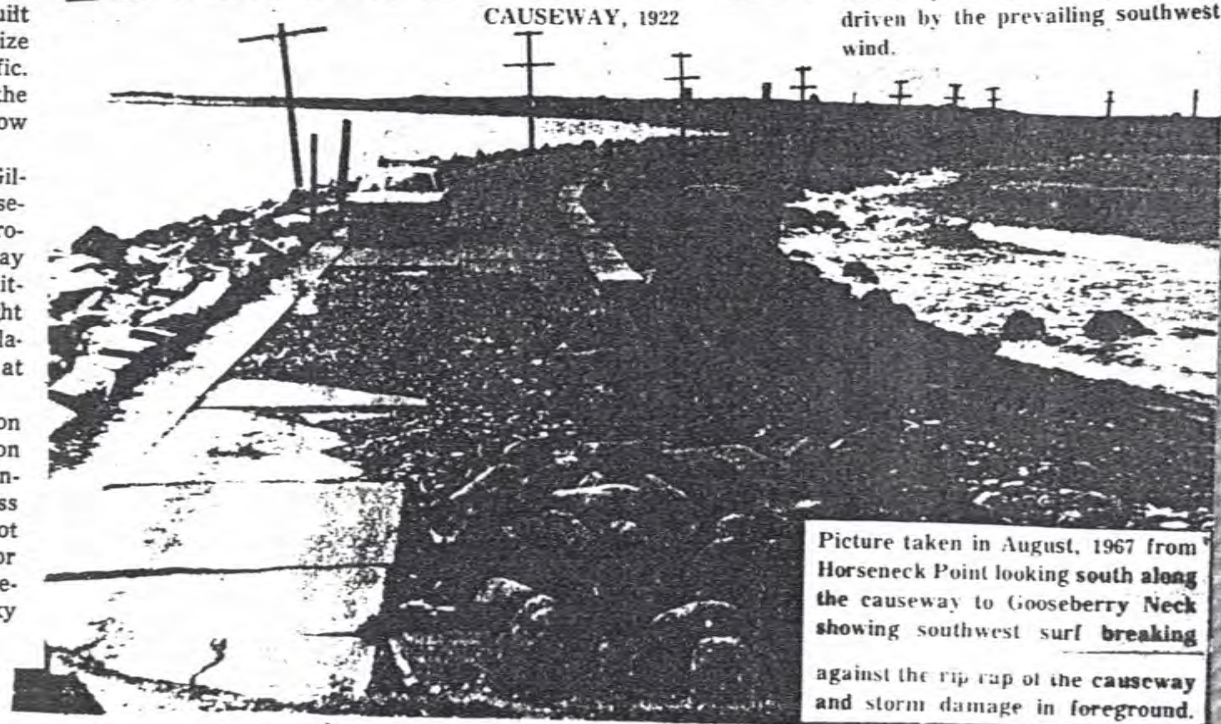
State plans, according to Gilbert Bliss, are to leave Gooseberry as it is. There is no proposal to remove the causeway and no plans to improve facilities to accommodate overnight campers; under present regulations, the island is closed at night.

The only possible state action might be to make an observation tower out of one of the remaining army buildings, but Bliss notes action on that idea will not be taken for a long time. For the present, Gooseberry will remain as it is — an open, rocky island.



CAUSEWAY, 1922

Picture taken about 1922 showing the parallel rows of stones placed on each side of the bar in effort to build up a causeway by catching the natural drift of sand and stones washed from West Beach to East Beach by the prevailing currents driven by the prevailing southwest wind.



Picture taken in August, 1967 from Horseneck Point looking south along the causeway to Gooseberry Neck showing southwest surf breaking against the rip rap of the causeway and storm damage in foreground.

AUGUST, 1967

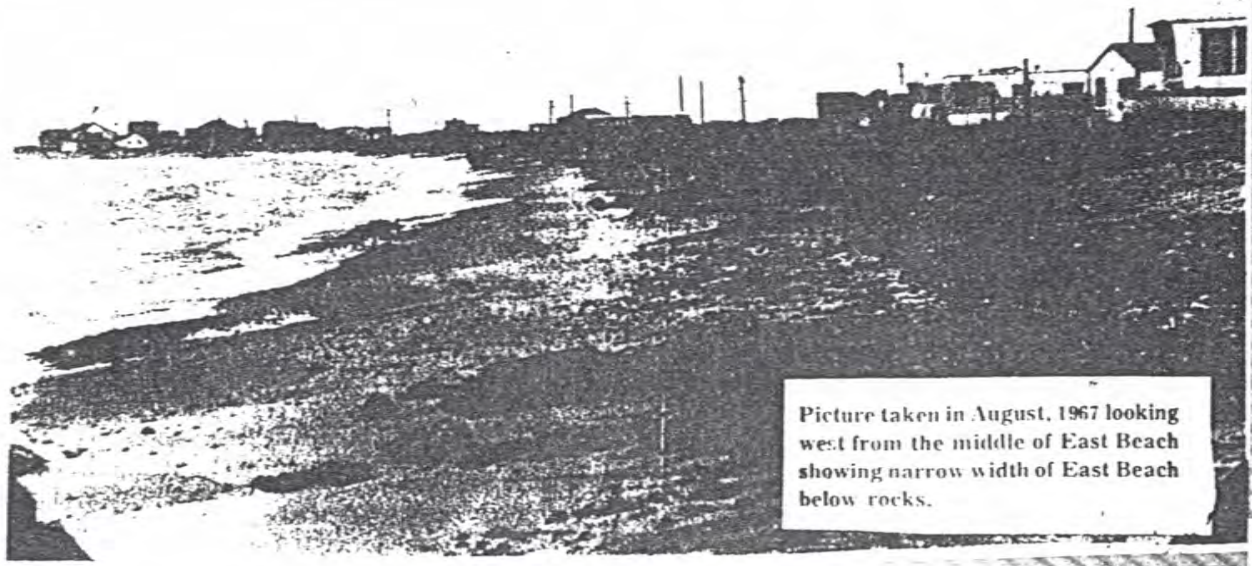
Source unknown
J. L.

October 21, 1861)

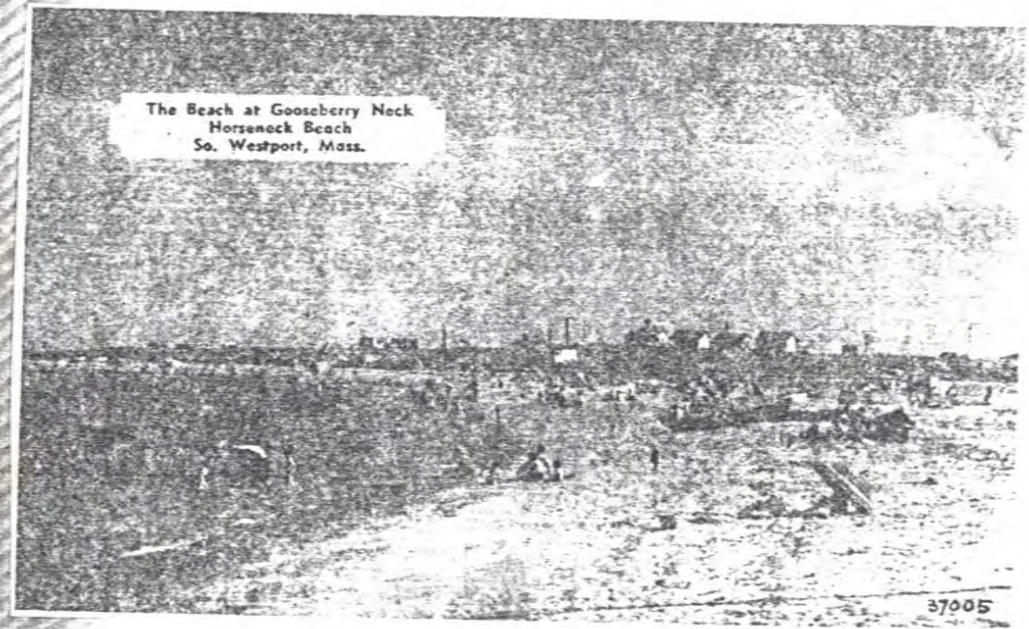
One day last week, a farmer belonging in the northerly part of Westport, attempted to cross from the main land to Gooseberry Neck, with his horse and wagon, for the purpose of obtaining seaweed. Being unacquainted he got off the "bar" into deep water, when his wagon was unhung and he saved his life by getting upon the forward axle and the horse swam to the shore with him. The other part of the wagon was afterwards secured by means of a boat. It was but a few days befor that Mr. Allen so nearly lost his life at the same place.



Picture taken about 1910 looking west from the middle of East Beach showing the wide expanse of the East Beach with Gooseberry Neck and Horseneck Point in the background.



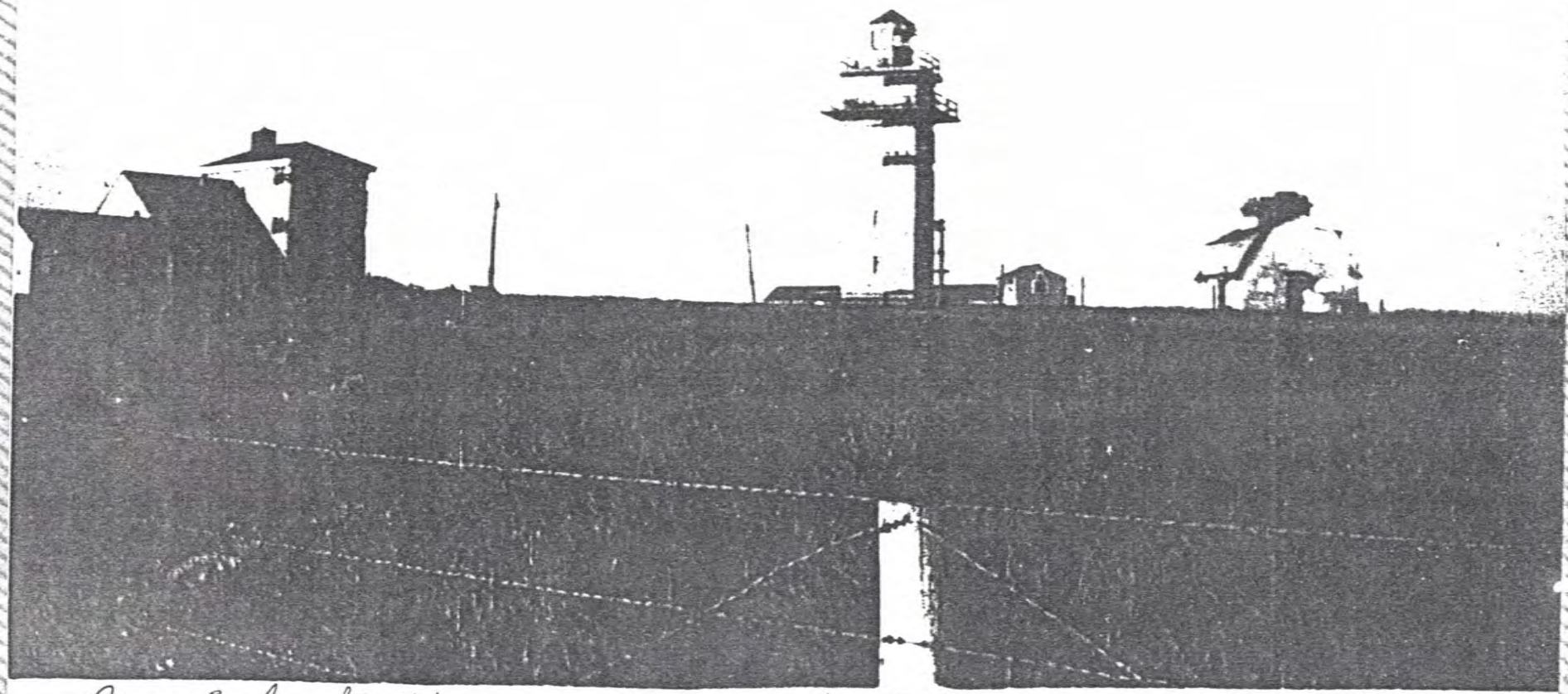
Picture taken in August, 1967 looking west from the middle of East Beach showing narrow width of East Beach below rocks.



Sometime in the
1940's
Gooseberry is
now a state road



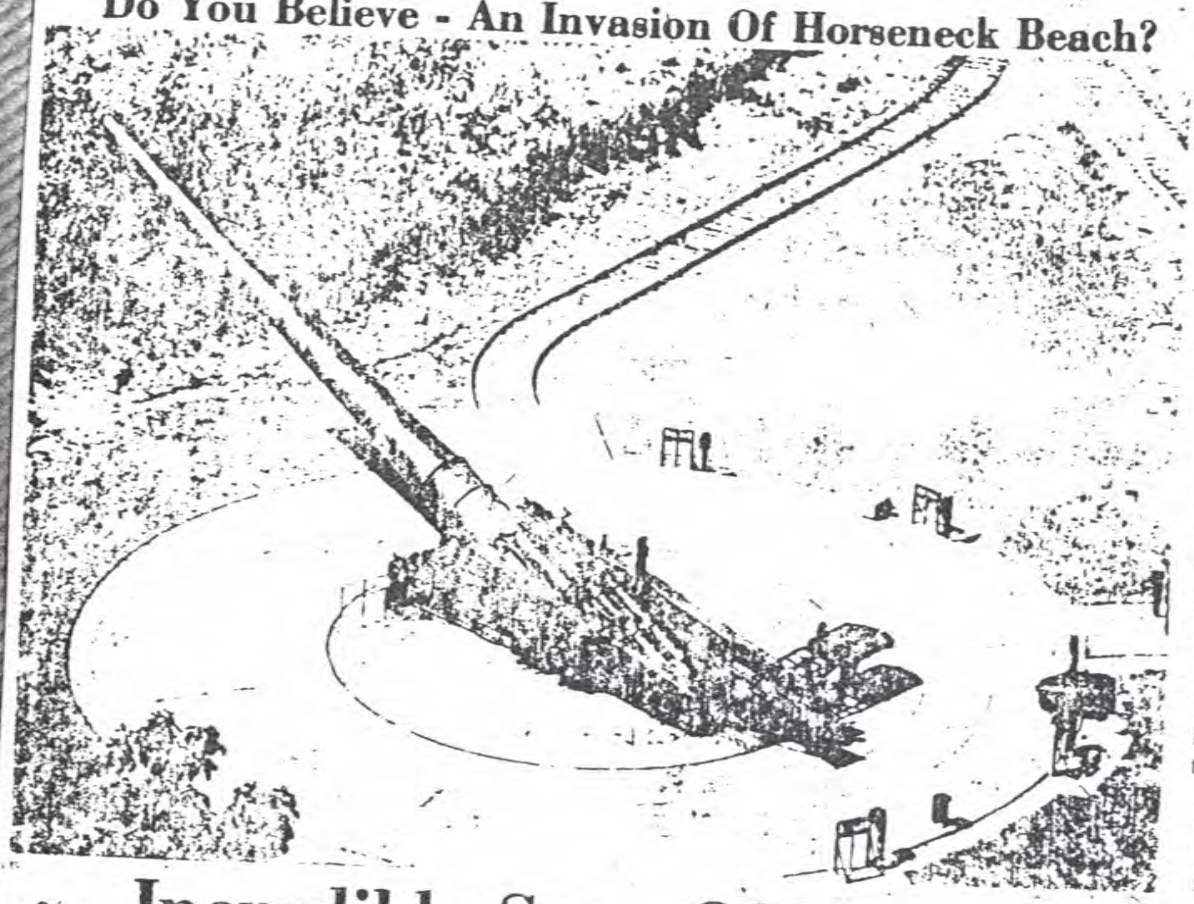
I don't know
when the Yankee
went aground,
but post card
was post marked
1908



Base End Station Gooseberry Neck Sal D 1946

This is what those towers looked like when the Army occupied Gooseberry during World War II.

Do You Believe - An Invasion Of Horseneck Beach?



Incredible Saga Of Towers At End Of Gooseberry Neck

by George Akerson

Dec 13, 1977 C

Westport News

What started as an interesting and excellent feature picture in the Westport News has mushroomed into a fantastic unfolding of history.

The picture, taken by our staff photographer, Garry Wolfe, showed the "watchtowers" at the end of Gooseberry Neck silhouetted against evening sun and clouds.

But they were not "watchtowers." They were scientifically designed fire control structures to help protect Buzzards Bay and particularly - get this - to assist in repelling an invasion of Horseneck Beach.

There have been many theories as to their origin and purpose. Most common has been the supposition they were started in World War I and also used in World War II to watch for enemy submarines.

Little could be found in Westport itself on their history. It remained for a local man, David Nicolau, to discover and document the real story after painstaking research into Army files and miles of travel to talk

(turn to page three)

(2)

(continued from page one)

to people at other fire control base sites.

Old timers here knew, of course, that something was going on out there. But few knew the real story because of tight security.

Gooseberry Neck was the center of an Army designed system that covered the coastline from Point Judith to old Fort Tabor in Marion.

The towers were built in the thirties and one thing that

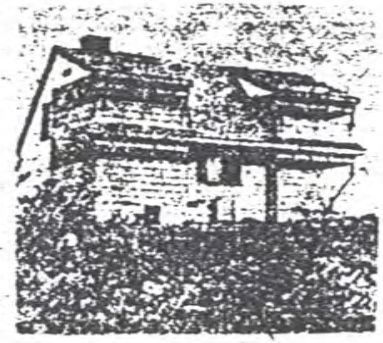
helped their security was they were disguised as beachfront homes with false woodwork and even shingle roofs. This is not imagination. It is supported by Army documents which the Westport News has examined. The fake beach homes were either dismantled or blown away by the rash of hurricanes in the forties and fifties..

Now - what fire did they control? The armament was the easiest part of it. Earlier, Congress had suspended construction of twelve battleships, all of which were to have carried 16 inch guns. But before the suspension the new model guns had already been manufactured. These were turned over to the Army and then slightly modified for coastal artillery use. They had tremendous range. For instance, the 16 inch monsters at Fort Church, Sakonnet Point, where the Haffenreffer estate is now located, could easily cover Gooseberry Neck and Horseneck Beach. (again, we have examined the Army records on all this and a faded picture of the gun types is shown).

All the fire bases were in constant communication by telephone and by signal lights. And before the mass introduction of radar they were supplied with the latest Swasey depression position finder, which, when they triangulated their sightings, gave a nearly 100% location of the target.

Why an invasion at our Horseneck Beach? The theory forty or more years ago was since Fall River and New Bedford were then thriving industrial centers an amphibious landing could be made at Horseneck with its sand, shelving beach and few rocks and a two pronged attack launched against the "factory cities."

The Army records also show there were four fire control structures, a barracks, a well and pump house and smaller homes for officers' quarters.



This is not a beachfront home but one of the few (perhaps the last) remaining of the fire base stations which were camouflaged to help security. This faded photo was taken at Pt. Judith, R.I., in 1968 by Col. Riley McGarraugh.

1932

THE NEW BEDFORD SUNDAY STANDARD-TIMES AUGUST [illegible] 1932

41

Causeway Road of Ruin, Say Horseneck Beach Folk

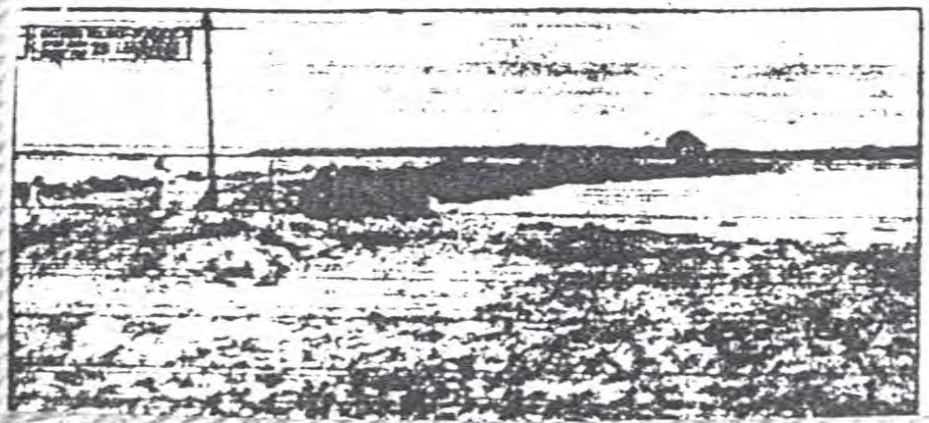
Camera Eyes Devastation to Beach and Seawall by Pent-Up Tides

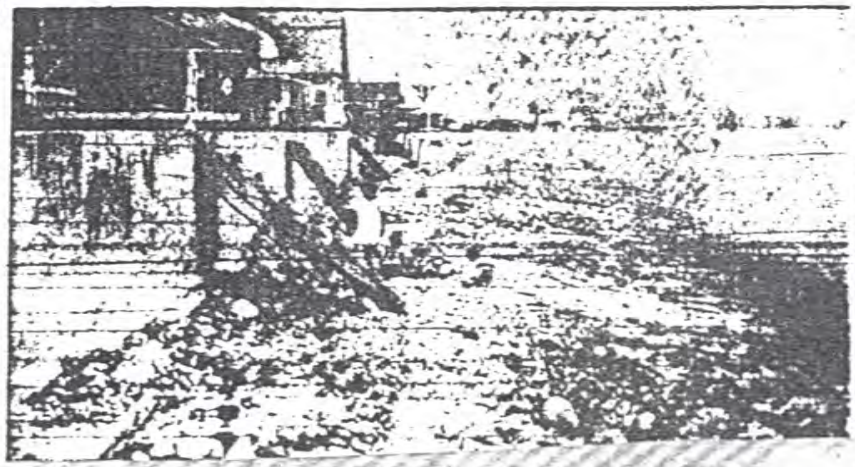


West Beach, littered with cobblestones and seaweed, which disrupting sands bury and causes to rot, producing a bad odor. Note how the sand is making up, in some places 100 feet a season.

East Beach, showing the sea wall in front of the Kenneth H. Brightman cottage. This was built level with the beach four years ago. Note that the foundations are now exposed, while the disappearing sands are replaced by rock.

The villain in the Horseneck Beach trouble is the causeway running out to Goosberry Neck Island. It dams up the tides that are made sand. The sluiceway would allow a 30-foot passage for [illegible]





[illegible] 1932

GROUP WULD CUT PASAGE AS TIDE)RAIN

Odor of Decad Seaweed Said tOrive Many from Ctages

WESTPORT ASED TO APPROPRIAT $2,500

State Gives Assunce of $7,500 Pund to'omplete Wor

By J. H. NEWT[illegible]

The fate of Horsenck Beach hangs in the balance. For ars the lucky owners of cottages on that ocean beauty spot spent a Winter talking about it and Summer living it. But Horsenck is not the same. A causeway [illegible] the Gooseberry Neck Island is blamed for the tragedy. As a [illegible]sident points out, formerly tides swept through the gap, carrying sand to the east beach and keep the seaweed on the west beach fresh. Now the east beach has [illegible] instead of sand, and the west beach a stench from rotting mud and weed. Beach folk want the town of Westport to put up $2,500 towards putting in a sluiceway that will permit the tides to run between the island and the point again. This, they say, will save Horseneck—otherwise, who knows but that Westport may suffer serious loss in its Summer colony."

As the fate of Horseneck hangs in the balance, the purse strings of the town hang light. At the present writing, an announcement of a special meeting is eagerly awaited. Will Westport put up $2,500? Will everyone on the beach take kindly to a higher tax rate next year to pay for the sluiceway? Assessors' estimates place the surtax at between 35 and 40 cents on $1,000.

Would Require $7,500.

Naturally, a 30 foot sluiceway, decided on, will cost a great deal more than $2,500, as tons of rock foundation must be cut through. But the people's friend, the state of Massachusetts, is coming forward with $7,500. This makes $10,000, and Frank E. Lyman, public works commissioner, says the job can be done for that. He is also quoted as saying the sluiceway will undoubtedly relieve the seaweed nuisance, and should help restore the sand to the east beach. But Westport must act this year, as the appropriation is a 1932 allowance.

The east beach has been cut away some 40 feet by the eroding tides, according to Stanley D. Allen, year around resident. Kenneth H. Brightman, New Bedford, a Summer resident for the past 22 years, is beginning to worry about the sea wall he built four years ago to save his house. He had the wall built flush with the beach, but sunk it some four feet more than was considered necessary in order to be on the safe side. This Summer the foundations of the wall six feet below the beach level of four years ago are above the beach level of today.

"The time is rapidly approaching," said Mr. Brightman, "when I am going to have to throw in rip rap to save the wall and house. When the rip rap goes in, the last [illegible] of the beach will be covered up and no one can use it for pleasure. Even now it is little more than a [illegible]."

Tides Knaw Sea Wall

How things east of the point are changing from a bathing paradise to a rocky reef can be seen at the juncture of the beach with the causeway. Here formerly autos could take off for a spin over the sands, but now it would take a stoneboat to do it. After the causeway was completed in 1924 the town observed that a wall must be built along the east flank if the road was to be saved from the gnawing tides. The sea wall was built, but the beach continued to vanish. Finally huge rocks were thrown in as a bulwark, and how [illegible] a play spot it is may be judged by Mr. Allen's recalling that last year a workman fell on the rocks and fractured his skull.

Fearful lest their sandy beach front turn to rock, the first four cottagers beyond the town wall [illegible] built a wall under the leadership of Mr. Brightman. As he has pointed out, they face the danger of a rip rap front.

As one goes down the east beach it is apparent that the narrow margin of sand is filling in with cobblestones while the embankments [illegible] the sandy front yards are steep [illegible] piles. The beach improves [illegible] on the eastward, but the [illegible] cut of the tides and the vanishing of the sands continue.

Beach Built Up 100 Feet.

The west beach has plenty of [illegible] too much in the estimation of cottagers, who find themselves at greater and greater distance from the water each year.

[illegible] Andrew Hall set a mark before his cottage and found the beach had built up 100 feet. When it was, the sands fill in with muck and seaweed, and the odor is far from delightful. Mr. Allen and others had it analyzed and the state chemist verified the fact that the odor was hydrogen sulphide. This is [illegible]-provoking [illegible] known to high school students in the chemistry laboratory, as H2S. When mixed up and let loose in the school sometimes results in [illegible] classes.

The west beach folk tried to get used to the stench, but when they saw the white paint on their cottages turning a dingy yellow, they began to wonder. Some said it was merely the iodine released by rotting seaweed. J. W. Searles, chemist for the Plymouth Cordage Company, was consulted and made tests to satisfy himself the odor was not iodine but hydrogen sulphide, and had it confirmed by the state chemist.

Mr. Allen, who conducts a bathhouse west on the point, speaks feelingly about the seaweed stench. "Today you might not notice it much. When the wind is right it is blown away. But last Sunday it was tough. It drove away the cars that had driven down to park here and enjoy the sea breezes. Some days you can scarcely stand it. Luckily the gas is not cumulative so that it has no poisonous effects.

Old Resident Driven Away.

"There was a Fall River man who came down here every year until this. He liked a swim before breakfast, and a swim before supper after he got home from [illegible]. He put up with the stench until it affected him so that he couldn't sleep, and he went away a few weeks ago."

There are, of course, two sides to the question. John I. Gifford, storekeeper and longtime resident of Horseneck, wonders if the sluiceway will make much difference. Northwest winds, after storms, he believes, cast the seaweed up, as they have done for years, and farmers used to come [illegible] to harvest it. Southeast storms cut away the beach as they have done for years out of mind, and favoring winds bring the sand in in certain years.

Other beach residents shy at the added tax to cover the cost to the town of building the sluiceway. The rebuttal is that the expense will be between 35 and 40 cents on $1,000.

"We pay about $30 on $1,000 now," said Mr. Allen. "If the town won't help us to keep the beach, then it should reduce our taxes. It gets a high revenue from the beach, and has little to pay out except in lights, and street maintenance. It has no schools to keep up for the beach colony."

This question arises, how will the owners of the island and causeway like the change? They are believed to be in favor, for the causeway, a virtual dam between the tides, gets such a buffeting in the Winter that yearly repairs must be made. A sluiceway is believed to relieve the pressure.

Work Begun in 1915.

Gooseberry Neck Island first entered the picture in 1912, when [illegible] White of Salters Point and others sought to make a road out there for beach developments.

Old residents of the beach [illegible] because the tides ebbed and flowed from Salters Point to Gooseberry in a great sweep along the [illegible], building up the beaches [illegible] and keeping the seaweed [illegible].

"[illegible] Westport [illegible]," said Mr. [illegible], "the project appeared [illegible] increasing tax values [illegible]. [illegible], however, but the [illegible] [illegible] to reflect [illegible] [illegible] we could see what [illegible] happen. Then in 1922 Mahoney [illegible] of Providence gave J. M. [illegible] Providence contractor, the job of building the causeway. A number of us, including Dr. [illegible], Dr. Packford of Fall River and Mr. Brightman protested. The Federal government refused to pass judgment because the waters concerned were not navigable, and from the state we learned that we would have to show damage done before we could stop the causeway.

"The Providence promoters failed and Mr. McCormick took over the development when he had completed it in 1924.

"Last year we were sure we could show definite damage of the causeway. We sent to the state house, had three hearings before the harbor and lands commission and the ways and means committee of house and senate. Deputations from the legislature and the Department of Public Works made several visits here, and this year a bill was put through, allowing $7,500 from the state and $2,500 to be raised in Westport for the job. We convinced the state authorities. We hope the town can be convinced of our necessity."

Opinion Is Divided.

On the island now are George Kallas and Nick Sallveros who have a bathing and refreshment concession. They don't see any harm to Gooseberry in a sluiceway. Instead, they say, it would improve the causeway.

Mr. Sallveros, however, [illegible] his 14 years [illegible] experience as a Horseneck resident, to point [illegible] [illegible] the sluiceway would make little difference.

"The seaweed is red moss from the Jersey coast," said Mr. Sallveros. "After a northwest storm, [illegible] hours on the next high [illegible]

[illegible] west beach gets that [illegible] [illegible] of the fertilizer [illegible] the east beach [illegible] southeast [illegible]

[illegible] says that before the [illegible] was between [illegible] and the [illegible] was [illegible] damage from Winter [illegible] was repaired by the sweep of the tides that carried in sand. As for the seaweed stench, he declares it is unnatural.

"You can't show me another beach anywhere that has such a stench as we have. I knew the beach as it was in its natural state.

"The only good that has come out of present conditions as I see it is the Horseneck Beach Improvement and Social Community, a society which formed last year to [illegible] [illegible] matter. We are now [illegible] and hope to have permanent [illegible] for social gathering[illegible]."

42

THE MORNING MERCURY NEW BEDFORD MASS MONDAY SEPTEMBER

HORSE NECK BEACH FIRE RUINS Sept. 17, 1928 43

HORSE NECK BEACH SUFFERS WORST FIRE IN ITS HISTORY

Sept 17, 1928

Blaze that Starts in "The Breakers" Destroys Three Buildings and Damages a Fourth Before Being Subdued --- Firemen Are Handicapped by Sand Clogging Pumps.

Damage [illegible] was done at Horseneck Beach early yesterday morning as the result of a fire which started in the [illegible] Beach. Before being [illegible] by firemen who responded from Westport, South Dartmouth and Russells Mills the flames had destroyed the building known as The Breakers containing a bowling alley and skating rink, the Horseneck hotel adjoining it at the north and a garage owned by K H Brightman and Stephen D Howland, next to the hotel.

The south side of the Atlantic & Pacific store next north was burned off and the roof so badly damaged that it will have to be replaced.

The origin of the fire which started in The Breakers is not definitely known. One report in the vicinity of the beach yesterday was that it started from a stove in The Breakers building. Mark F Sullivan said the impression was that it started in the living quarters on the second floor of the building which are used by the bowling alley pinboys during the week.

It was about 2 o'clock yesterday morning that the fire was noticed by Stephen D Howland who was awakened because of illness. Mr Howland gave the alarm and he and Mr Brightman who lives on the opposite side of the road hastened to get the three cars out of their garage as well as the two hound dogs owned by Mr Brightman which were quartered there.

There is no fire station within a considerable distance of the beach and it was probably half an hour before any fire apparatus arrived by which time the hotel and garage were ablaze as well as The Breakers and the flames fanned by a southerly breeze were shooting 100 feet into the air making a most thrilling spectacle. Fortunately the wind was bearing the sparks from the burning buildings away from the cottages on the east side of the road or that portion of the settlement would have been wiped out. Even as it was the heat on that side of the road was so intense that the paint on the side of Mr Brightman's house was blistered.

The Breakers was owned by the Horseneck Amusement Co.

The firemen had difficulties in combatting the blaze. They attempted to draw water from the bay in the vicinity of the bridge leading to Cherrystone Neck but the tide was low and so much sand was drawn into the pumps that they clogged. After awhile it became necessary for the firemen to take their apparatus up to Allen's pond and clean out the sand with fresh water before they could resume operations on the fire.

The blaze was confined to the four buildings previously mentioned, but it was 4.30 yesterday morning before the fire was completely extinguished and the ruins were still smoking yesterday afternoon. A large number of motorists visited the beach during the afternoon to view the damage done by the fire.

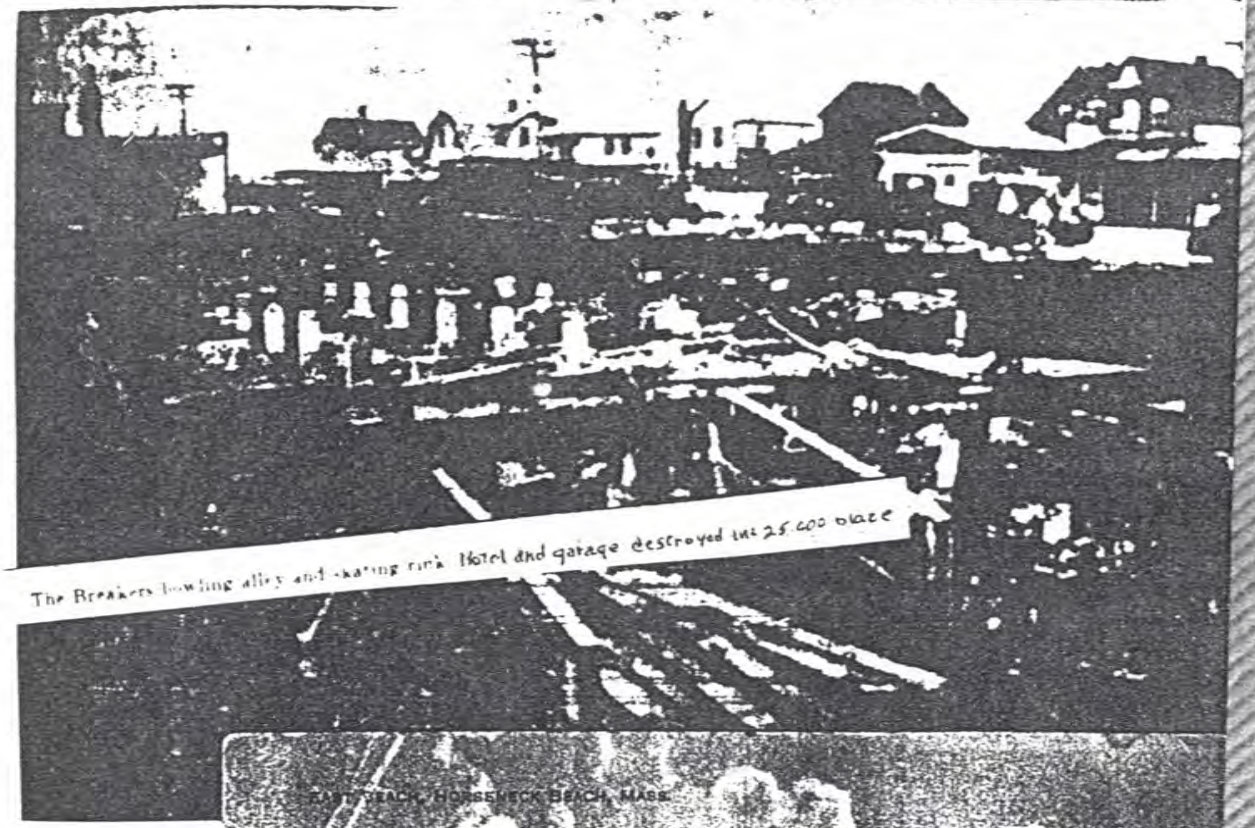
The heaviest loss occasioned by the blaze was in the destruction of The Breakers which is owned by the Horseneck Beach Amusement company, Mark F Sullivan treasurer and has been conducted by Joseph A Burke sports promoter of this city. It was in operation up to midnight Saturday. The building which was of substantial construction was valued at about $X,XXX. Mr Sullivan said yesterday that the loss was partly covered by insurance.

The hotel a two story structure with a large dining room on the first floor and sleeping rooms on the second floor was built four years ago by

The main Pavilion of the Beach [illegible] was saved but the [illegible] a large part of the [illegible] was seen removed. The [illegible] equipment as well as [illegible] Pavilion between [illegible] can not be said [illegible] suitable for the purpose.

Mr Brightman [illegible] the garage and [illegible] between $400 and $500. [illegible] some insurance [illegible] cover the damage.

The store building [illegible] Beach is owned by Paul Rose of Fall River. Mr Rose stated Monday that he had not yet been able to estimate the amount of the damage. He is protected by insurance. One piece of property that was removed during the blaze [illegible] the other equipment of the [illegible] and skating rink was the [illegible] by an [illegible] of coal [illegible] gas which had been stored [illegible] the beach and employed to operate the [illegible] of the new skating rink with the exception of the [illegible]



The Breakers bowling alley and skating rink. Hotel and garage destroyed in $25,000 blaze



THE BREAKERS →

A & P →

ROW OF HOUSES IN ABOVE PICTURE →

NEW BEDFORD, MASS., SATURDAY, JANUARY 31, 1903—SIXTEEN PAGES. TWO C

Jan 31, 1903

HORSE NECK ELECTRICS.

Promoters of Adamsville Route Petition for a Charter.

Hope the Line Will Be Extended Through to This City.

Comprehensive Short Line for Both Cities Suggested.

The long debated proposition of a railroad to Horse Neck Beach has of late assumed added timeliness by reason of the filing in the legislatures of both Massachusetts and Rhode Island of petitions for the incorporation of a new company. There are also understood to be other electric line promoters at work on plans for connecting Horse Neck Beach with the rest of the world, which tend to indicate something like rivalry between two companies. In fact, of late the query has been not so much as to whether or not there shall be a Horse Neck line as when it will come. The fact seems to be generally accepted that there will be a line and at no very distant date.

The latest move on the part of those who have asked to be incorporated as the South Shore Street Railway company is entirely independent of the other move which has been proposed for some time to build a line from this city to the beach. The latter plan is in the hands of Boston promoters, the chief of whom is A. S. Pattrick of Boston, whose local representative is understood to be Henry H. Dennis. The petitioners already before the legislatures of the two states are Abraham Manchester, A. S. Phillips, Judson C. Macomber, Nathaniel B. Church, Edwin A. Cornell, Fenton C. Brownell, Godfrey Cornell, Warren S. Barker, George B. Dubois and Nathan B. Everett, who are Fall River or Westport or Adamsville people. Till recently they have not been regarded as likely to take any such definite part in the railroad business, and some surprise has been expressed at their movement in seeking a charter. It is hinted that they took definite steps because they feared that the New Bedford end of the proposition might step in and cut out the Adamsville route. However, up to this noon nothing had been heard from Mr. Pennock in the form of any petition at the state house, and if such a measure is to come up this year, it must be filed by 3 o'clock today.

The plan of the South Shore company is to obtain a franchise in Tiverton, Adamsville, Westport and Dartmouth, to construct and operate a line of road from the terminus of the Old Colony lines on Stafford road, Fall River, through to Adamsville, thence to Westport Point, thence to Horse Neck Beach, and thence through to New Bedford.

The promoters of this line declare that they mean to proceed in a definite way at once if granted a franchise, and build that portion from Fall River to the beach as speedily as the layouts and contracts can be fixed up. They hope that New Bedford parties will take up the New Bedford end of the proposition and meet them at the beach, making a thorough line. So far as a Standard reporter could ascertain in this city, this morning, however, there is little disposition here to push out for the beach at present unless Mr. Pennock acts on that half of his original scheme.

Arthur S. Phillips, counsel for the petitioners, and one of them himself, said to the reporter: "We mean business, and if granted a charter will push ahead at once. I am not at liberty to state who are back of us or whether or not we are connected with any other existing line of electric road. I can say that we are not in the least acting with the Dartmouth & Westport or any other New Bedford line, though we would be glad for the New Bedford railroad company to push down from the east and join us at Horse Neck. However, so far as we are now working, we shall go ahead. Our plan contemplates generally following the main road to Adamsville, buying private land for our location and leaving the line of the highway in places where a shorter cut can be made. From Adamsville we would cut across to Westport Harbor and there probably bridge the river to reach Horse Neck. We think Horse Neck is one of the finest beaches in New England, and have no doubt that a road from this city there would prove a great line for travel in the summer, so profitable that we could run it, though less frequently, all winter. We have no doubt of this end of it, and shall act accordingly. The New Bedford end will come later."

The local street railway men do not look as cheerfully on the proposition as Mr. Phillips does. They agree that in the summer time the Horse Neck line would pay large money, but they also believe that in the winter it will be operated at a loss or not at all.

"I wish some one would build a line to Horse Neck connecting with us on the Padanaram end of our line," said Superintendent F. E. Porter of the Union street railway to the Standard reporter this morning. "I am sure we could afford to run all the cars possible in the way of a traffic arrangement for coming into town on our lines. But I don't think we could be a mining by to build down there, as Mr. Phillips proposes. We have all we can attend to here and in developing and straightening out to the greatest profitable the lines we already have, and are not yet ready to expand. The Onset line is still comparatively new, and the line is perfect we don't want any more new lines, at least, don't want to build them ourselves. I cannot say what our future policy may be, but I am sure we would not oppose any one who wanted to come in from Horse Neck."

Thomas B. Tripp, vice president of the local street car lines and a prominent capitalist, agrees in general terms with Mr. Porter as to the likelihood of the local system extending its lines to Horse Neck. His views have added interest because he is a prominent property owner and summer resident of Horse Neck Beach.

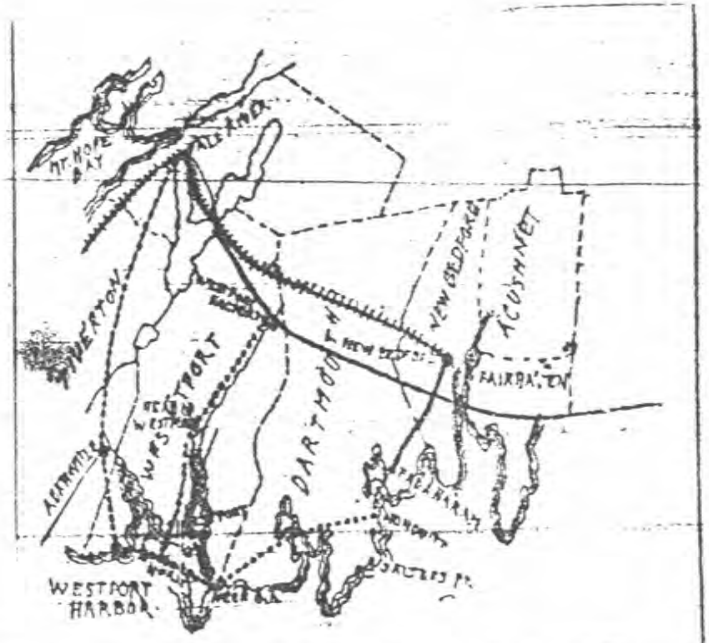
"I should be very glad to see a road there," said Mr. Tripp, "but I haven't any great amount of money to invest in it. I suppose most of the cottagers at the beach would object to the road, but I would be glad to see it there. In my opinion, if it is built there should be a general pavilion erected at which the traffic would centre, so as not to dump people all along the beach and be a nuisance to the cottagers. I think such a road would pay well in the summer, but when one considers the whole year around, I don't believe there is any money in it whatever. If some one thinks otherwise enough to build the road and come up through Dartmouth to join us, I would be glad to welcome them and let them in over our lines on any reasonable traffic basis."

Benjamin Cummings is also a Horse Neck Beach property owner, and says he hopes the road will be built. "It would be the biggest thing that ever happened for Horse Neck, and for eight months in the year would pay big. I've got a lot of land down there, and I know something about the beauty of the place. If a railroad would run down there within a mile of the shore somewhere, I believe it could be made a good line most of the year. There are thousands of acres of the best property on the coast waiting development just because people can't get there. Perhaps a line from this city would be better than one from Fall River. I can't see why the best one would not be to run down from Westport Factory. Then, by using the D. & W., both cities would be able to use the same route. Just say for me that I'd be mighty glad to see any road built."

On the general merits of a line to Horse Neck, there is considerable to support Mr. Cummings' suggestion of the Westport Factory plan. The road from Fall River, through Adamsville, would not accommodate the New Bedford travelers in the least. On the other hand, if the Pennock road was built from here it would not accommodate Fall River travel. A road from either city would be longer and would have more engineering difficulties than a central line down from Westport Factory, bridging rivers and ponds and swamps, though the whole coast would thus be served. The line from Westport Factory would be equally accessible from New Bedford and Fall River by arrangement with the D. & W. to the Factory and the run to Horse Neck by way of Head of Westport, Central Village and Westport Point would be not much above ten miles altogether, whereas a service from both cities along the shore would involve a route at least three times as long. This as well as the roads from each city, has been contemplated as a possible way to Horse Neck.

But just now the Adamsville people seem to have the call, at least it is the only one which is seeking legislation. The Factory route would not come within four miles of Adamsville, and if Adamsville promoters have any influence, it is not likely that they would look with favor on such a route. On the other hand, they will have a lot of timely opposition in their scheme to run a line to Westport Harbor. A swell summer colony from Fall River has its abode at the harbor and any attempt to dump the great Sunday crowds on its sandy lawns would meet with a red-hot howl of protest.

also - see pg 59



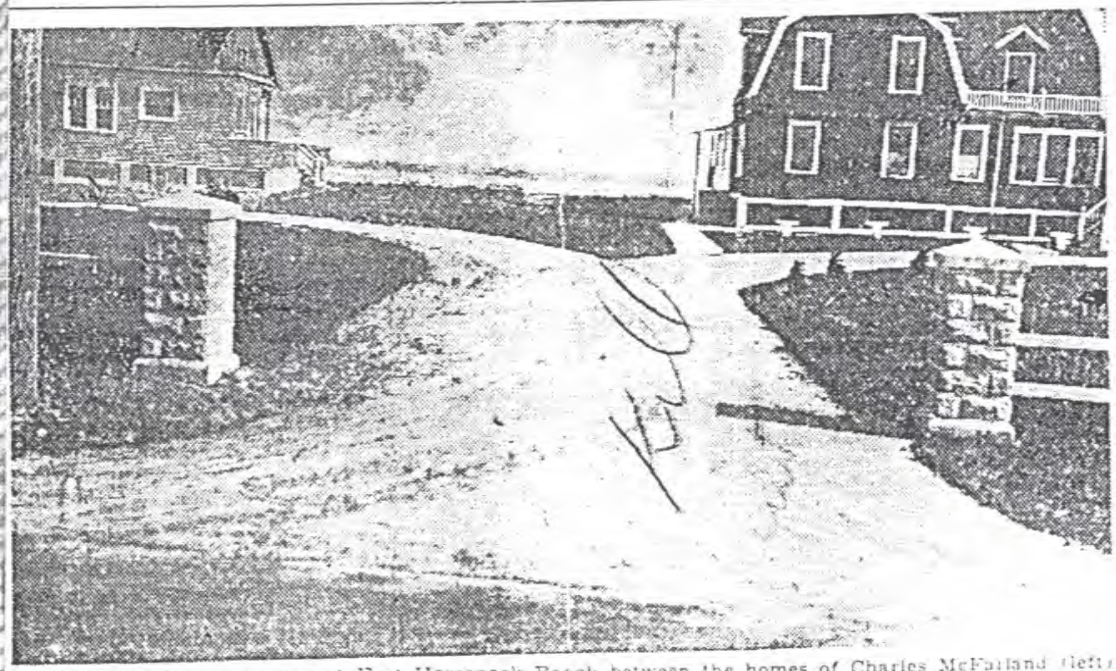
THREE PROPOSED ELECTRIC ROUTES TO HORSE NECK.
(Dotted lines show proposed routes; dark lines are existing electric roads; crossed lines are steam roads.)

SMALL

June 4, 1933

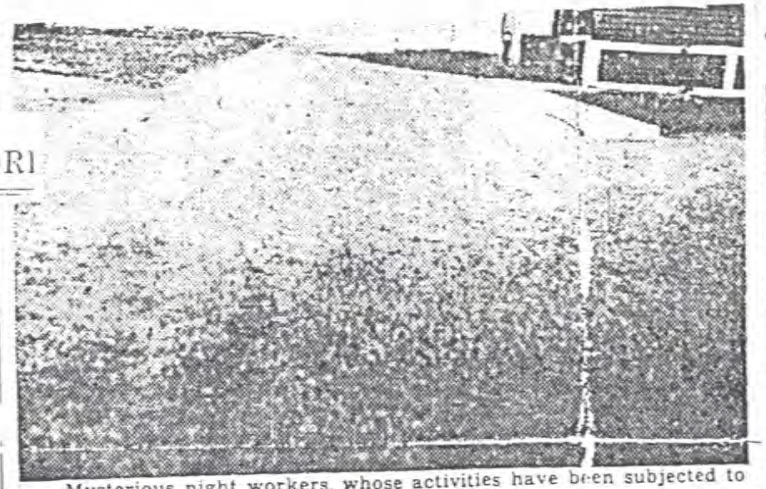
JUNE 8, 1933

Gravel Changes Lines of Horseneck Road

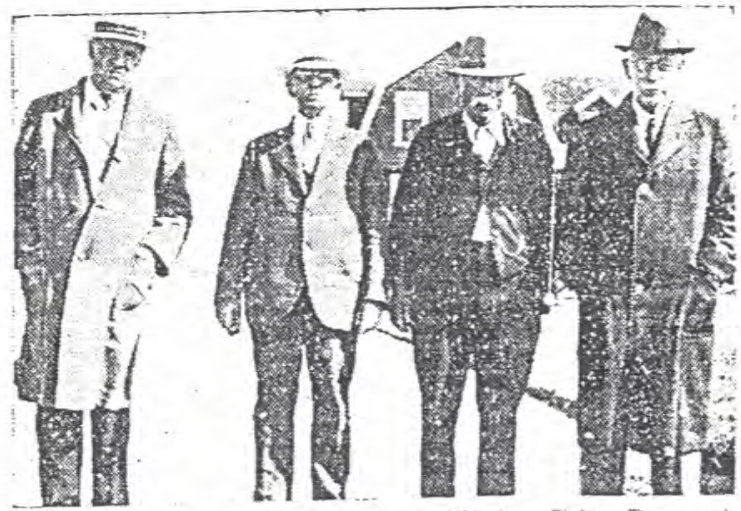


This view shows property at East Horseneck Beach between the homes of Charles McFarland (left) and Elisha Small (right) over which dispute is being waged. The stone posts mark a 20-foot right-of-way deeded to the Town of Westport, which petitioners want maintained as a public way to the beach. The grass plot to the left of the concrete walk has been replaced with crushed stone.

also see Small house
1947



Mysterious night workers, whose activities have been subjected to investigation by State Detective Clemmey, plowed up grass planted next to his house by Elisha Small, and substituted a layer of gravel to make the strip conform to their ideas of what a public way should be. This picture shows the strip after the substitution of crushed stone.



Left to right, Edward Lawton, James Winslow, Clifton Tripp and Timothy J. Moriarty, signers, with more than 50 other East Beach property owners, of a petition asking the Town of Westport to designate and maintain disputed plot as a right of way. These men, with Charles Farley, attended meeting of the selectmen Saturday afternoon and were promised a hearing next Saturday by Chairman Russell.

June 8, 1933

BEACH DISPUTE SOON TO COME BEFORE BOARD

Westport Selectmen Will Air Horseneck Feud Saturday

RECEIVE PETITIONS

Property Owners Ask Town to Designate Public Way

Dispute which has been waged in Westport for the last four weeks or more will involve action by town officials when, at a special meeting of the selectmen Saturday afternoon, Timothy J. Moriarty of this city will present petitions signed by property owners at Horseneck Beach, asking the town plainly to designate rights of way along Horseneck and West Beach Roads.

A roadway between Summer homes of Elsiha Small and Laughlin W. McFarland on East Beach has caused most of the agitation, and recently mysterious night visitors plowed up a strip of grass planted next to Small's house and deposited a layer of crushed stone on the public way.

Accompanying pictures show the strip in question. Work of the "Westport Improvement Association," as one of the petitioners a the board of selectmen' meeting last Saturday quali[illegible]med the night workers, can be seen in a comparison of the two views of the area between the houses.

Promised Hearing

Mr. Moriarty, in company with Charles Farley, Clifton Tripp and Edward Lawton, of Westport, and James Winslow of New Bedford, obtained a promise from Chairman Russell of the Westport Selectmen that the petition for town action in the matter will receive a hearing Saturday afternoon at the Town Hall.

More than 50 East Beach property owners, including Allen E. Wordell, George R. Cherry, the Rev. James E. Cassidy, D. D., apostolic administrator of Fall River Catholic Diocese, Levi F. King, Benjamin Cummings, Geo. H. Young, Rev. Timothy J. Cal[illegible] and George F. Reynolds, in addition to the five present at the Town Hall last week, have signed the petition asking the town to "definitely identify the public way between Small's and McFarland's homes and to post signs indicating the public right to use the road.

A similar petition referring to several rights of way on the West Beach has been signed by property owners of that section, and will be presented to the selectmen Saturday with the other document.

The feeling which the dispute has aroused in Westport may be judged by the fact that State Detective Clemmey, acting on orders from District Attorney Crossley, is investigating the night activity which resulted in plowing the grass plot and surfacing with gravel.

It has been established by Detective Clemmey that laborers from Rhode Island were imported to spread the stone, but no statement has been made indicating those responsible.

Plowed at Night

The grass plot was plowed up after attempts on the part of East Beach property owners to have the town order the way opened up. When this action failed, the matter was brought to the attention of the Bristol County Commissioners with a petition that they define boundaries and layout of the roadway. This body rejected the petition, ruling the town right-of way already existed.

At the hearing before the commissioners, it was brought out that Mr. Small had the grass planted in the roadway next to his house. This act was objected to by other East Beach residents who opined the way should be kept clear so strangers would recognize the strip as a path to the beach.

Petitioners hope to convince the selectmen of the justice of their request and to obtain orders for maintenance of the way as a public road, thus putting an end to the agitation.

Standard-Times, Nov. 1933

Nov. 1933

ROAD STONING CASE SETTLED

Westport Resident Pays $25 Fine for Digging Up Lawn

Judge Hayes imposed a fine of $25 in Second Session of Superior Court yesterday on Charles A. Farley, 72, of Westport who entered a guilty plea to an indictment that charged he willfully dug up and carried away two inches of soil, the property of Elisha H. Small. Charles Johnson, a codefendant, will be arraigned at a later date.

The aged man's conviction is a climax to an investigation by Westport and State authorities to learn who dug up the loam on the Small property and filled in crushed stone. When local police were unable to make headway, State Officer Clemmey was assigned.

There is a right of way through Mr. Small's land, the Court heard, and the tract is secured. Mr. Farley, engaged in a real estate development at Horseneck Beach made several unsuccessful attempts to have the lawn [illegible]d and carried his fight unsuccessfully before the selectmen and County Commissioners. During the night of May 18, the grass was torn up and a road constructed.

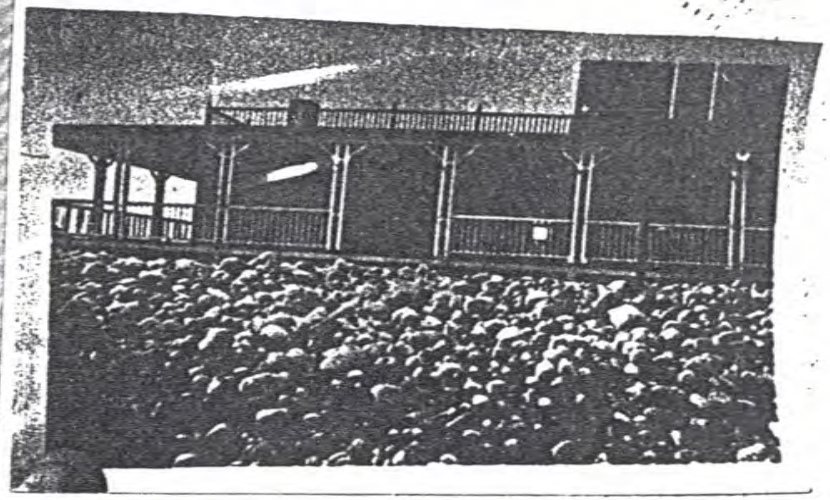
Attorney George H. Young, appearing for Mr. Farley, explained to the judge the numerous attempts made by his client to get recognition.

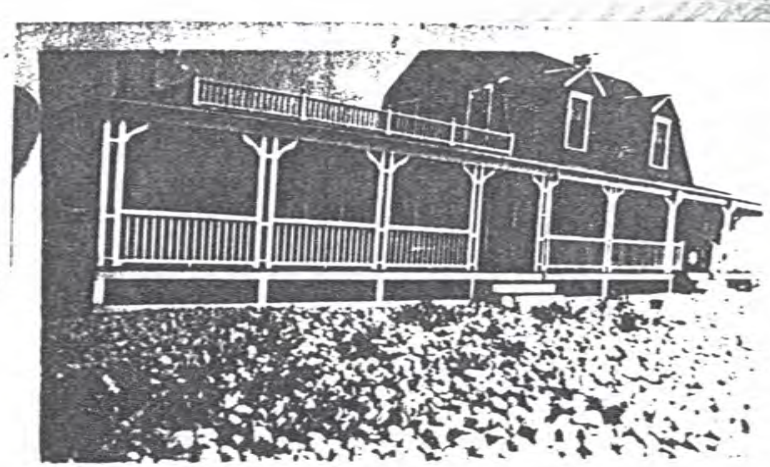
Fine Is Paid

"We'll charge it up to advertising," Mr. Young said as his client willingly paid the fine. "Mr. Farley went to the selectmen and asked to have them do something and their reply was that they weren't going to annoy property holders by any visitors from New Bedford and Fall River."

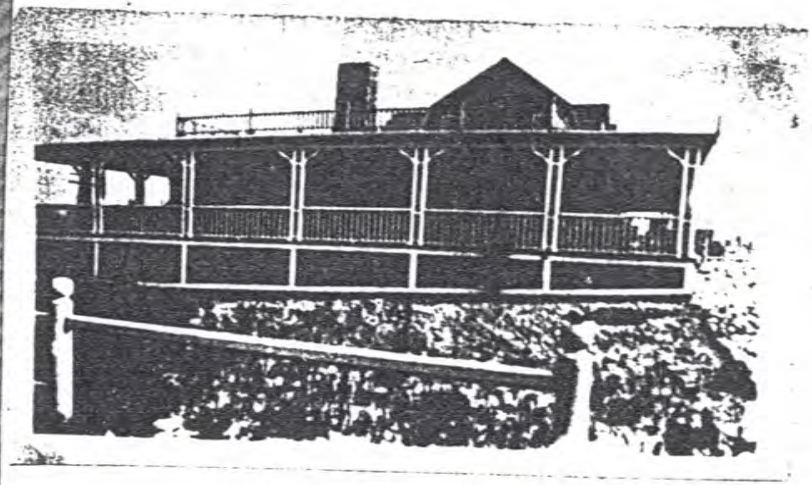
Judge Hayes expressed a question why the work was carried out during the night, Mr. Young explained that was the only time his client could find capable workmen.

46





SMALL HOUSE



F. E. Herald Sept 23/1938

Losses Heavy At Horseneck

Elisha H. Small Believes Summer Homes Will Not Be Reconstructed.

Doubt that the East Beach at Horseneck will ever be rebuilt was expressed today by Elisha H. Small of 978 Rock Street, owner of one of the show places on that beach. Mr. Small's Summer hame was for several years the popular meeting place for social activities of members of the Social and Improvement Association.

Today, there is not a single one of the nearly 100 homes left on the beach as a result of the severity of the hurricane which visited New England Tuesday. There were last week over 190 homes on both beaches.

Mr. Small estimated that the valuation of the homes destroyed by the hurricane would approximate $300,000.

"This will be a heavy burden," he declared.

"Loss of such a large amount of taxable property will be a heavy burden on the residents of Westport as the owners of the property at the East and West Beaches at Horseneck and Westport Harbor have for some time paid approximately 70 per cent of the town's taxes," Mr. Small stated.

"Because of the heavy damage of the storm and the fact that the strip of land between the roadway and the beach was narrowed considerably by the ferocity of the storm, I doubt that the owners of property will ever rebuild.

"The strip of land remaining is too narrow for erection of cottages. And the land to the north of the road is unsuitable for buildings. In the few instances where it was filled in, the filling was washed away by the storm.

"This situation is a deplorable one because the Beach was one of the nicest and cleanest along the Atlantic Coast, according to travelers from every State along the coast, from Maine to Florida. There was absolutely no pollution at the beach," he said.

1915

ADVERTISEMENT — Westport Directory



KINGFISHER HOUSE

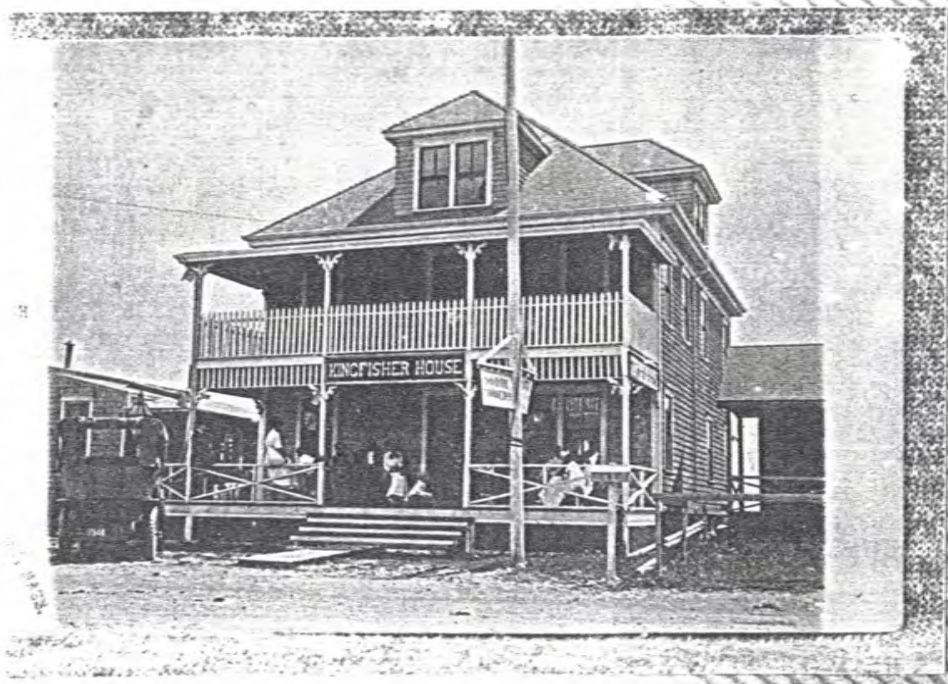
Horse Neck Beach

SOUTH WESTPORT, MASS.

SUMMER BOARDERS
TRANSIENTS ACCOMMODATED
FISH AND LOBSTER
DINNERS A SPECIALTY

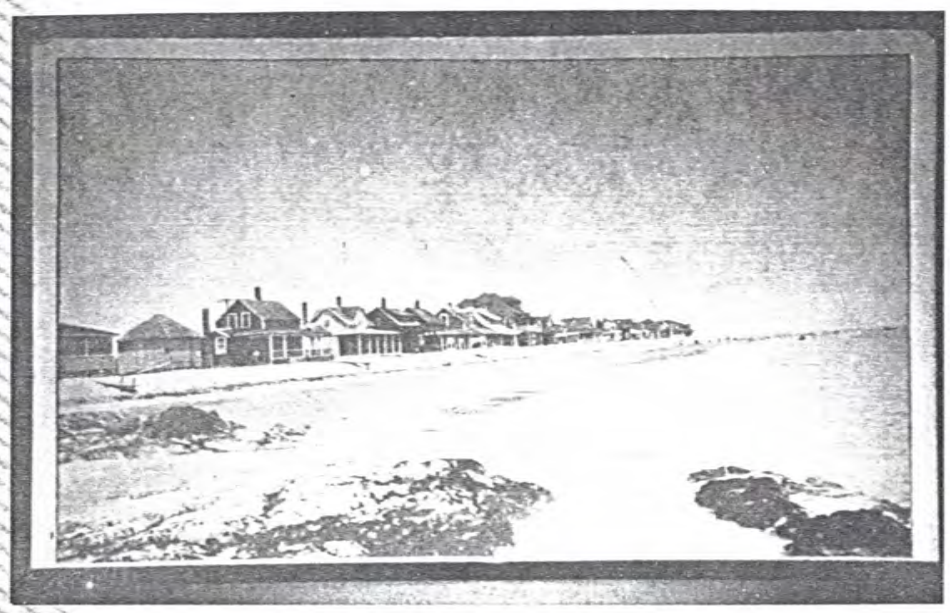
PRICES REASONABLE

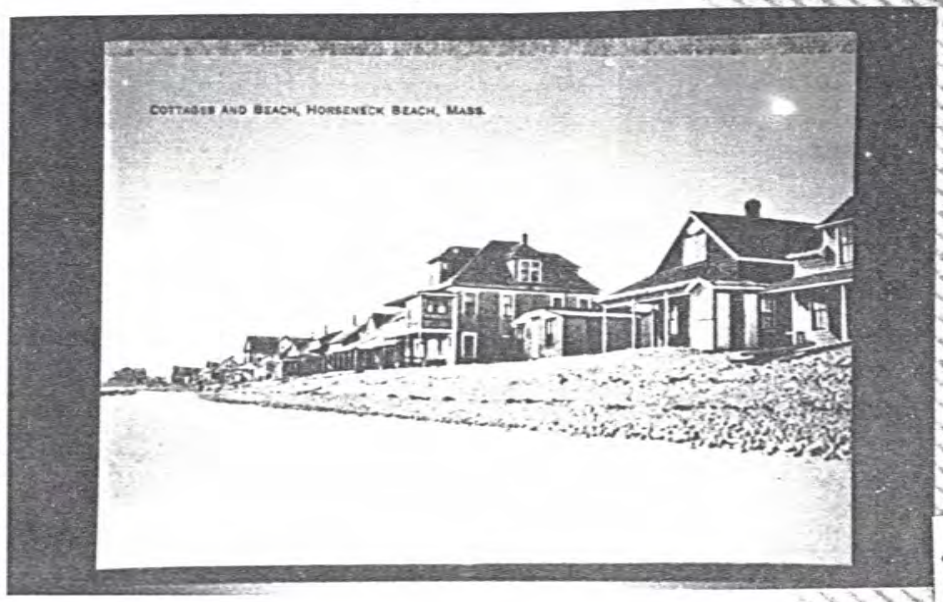
J. T. KING, Prop.



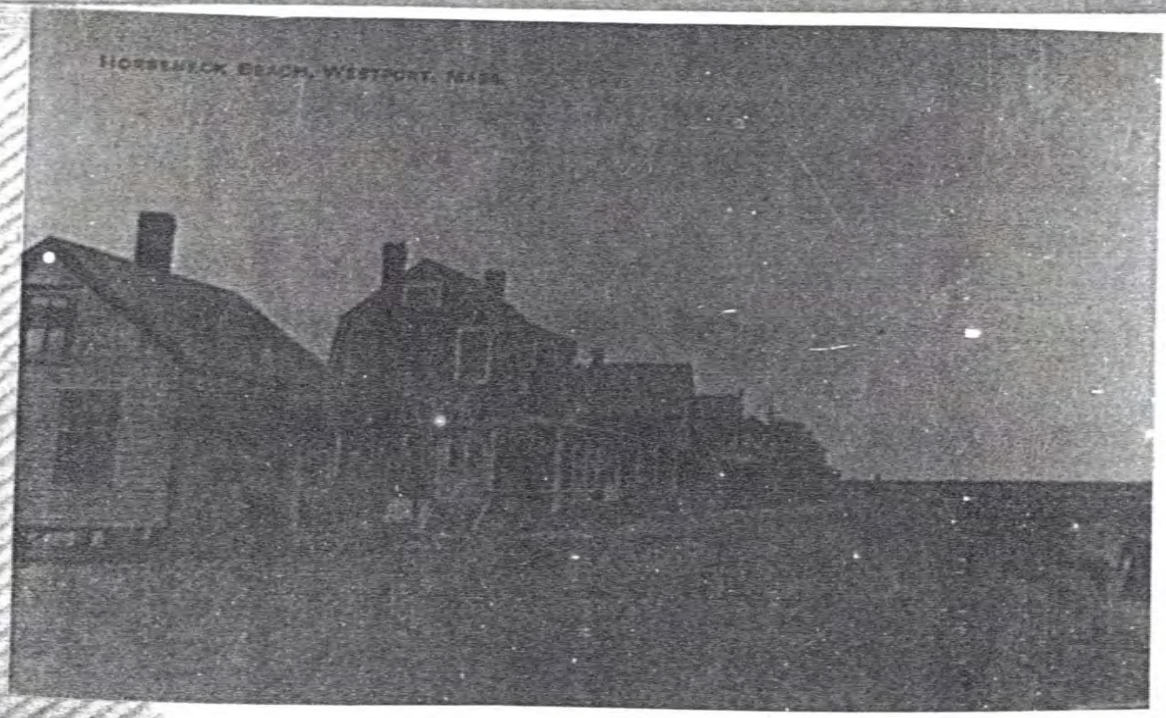
TOWN BEACH
EAST BEACH RD.

KINGFISHER
↓





48



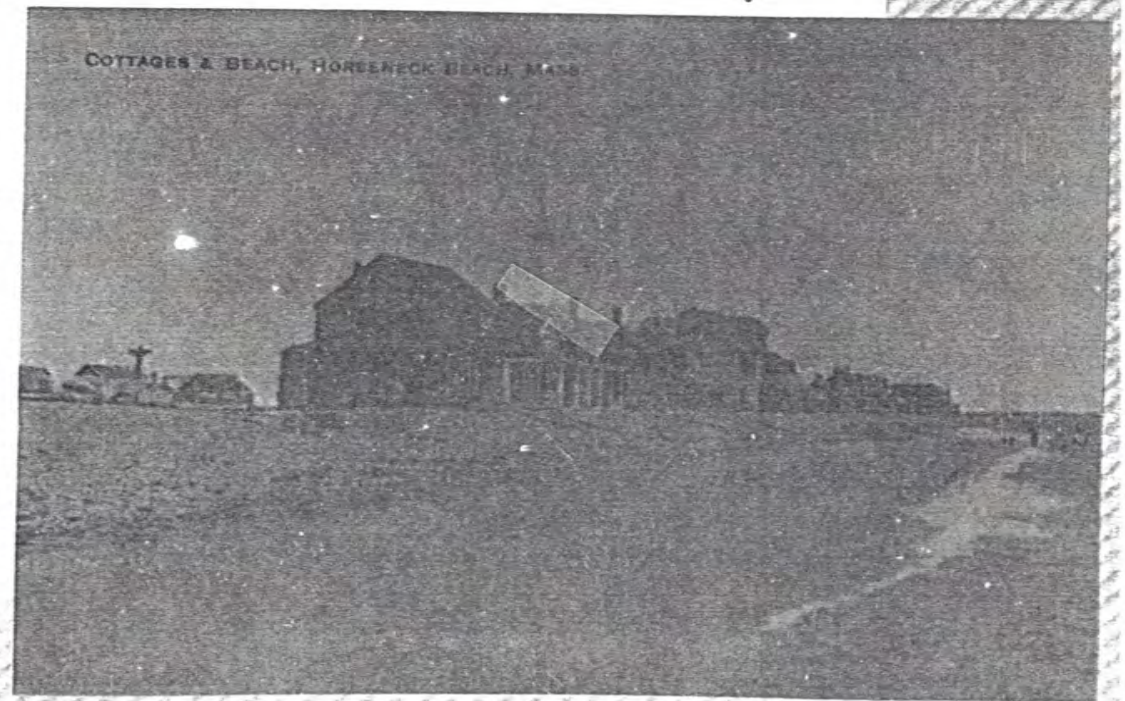
KINGFISHER
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TOWN BEACH

I was told Sowles package store was on north side of road

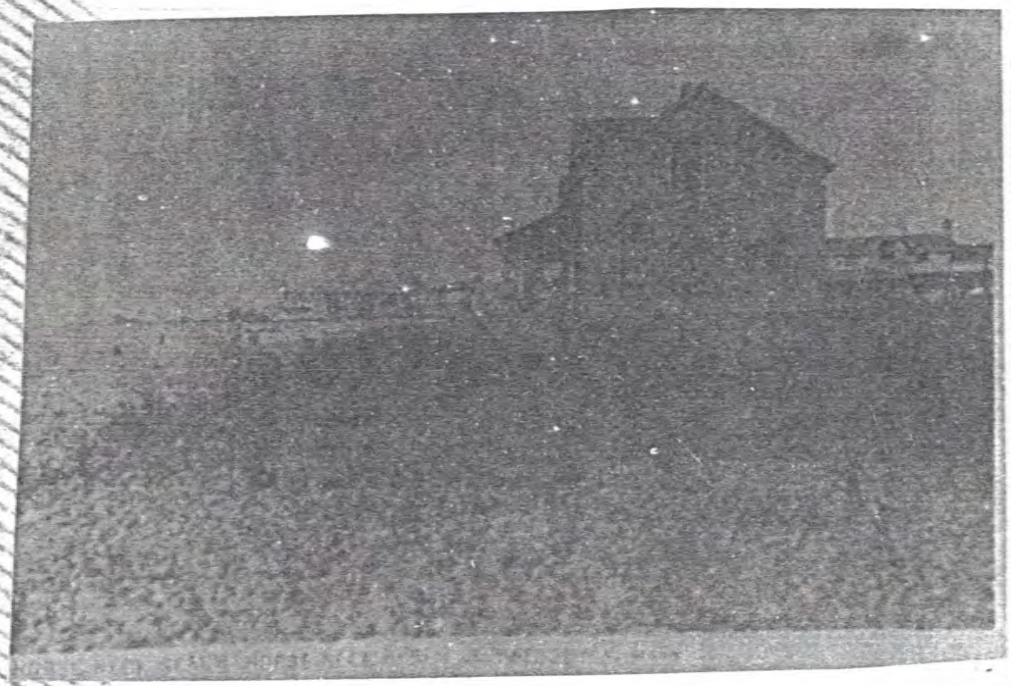
Maybe one of these ⇒ buildings ??

F.L.



Looking west away from Town Beach.

OCEAN HOUSE

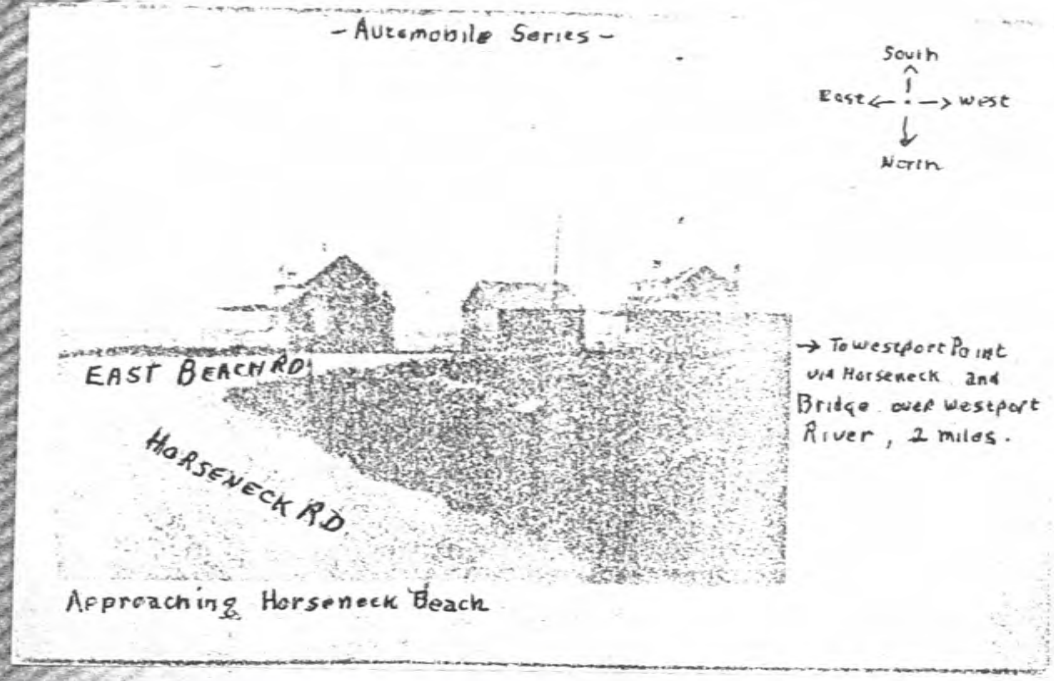


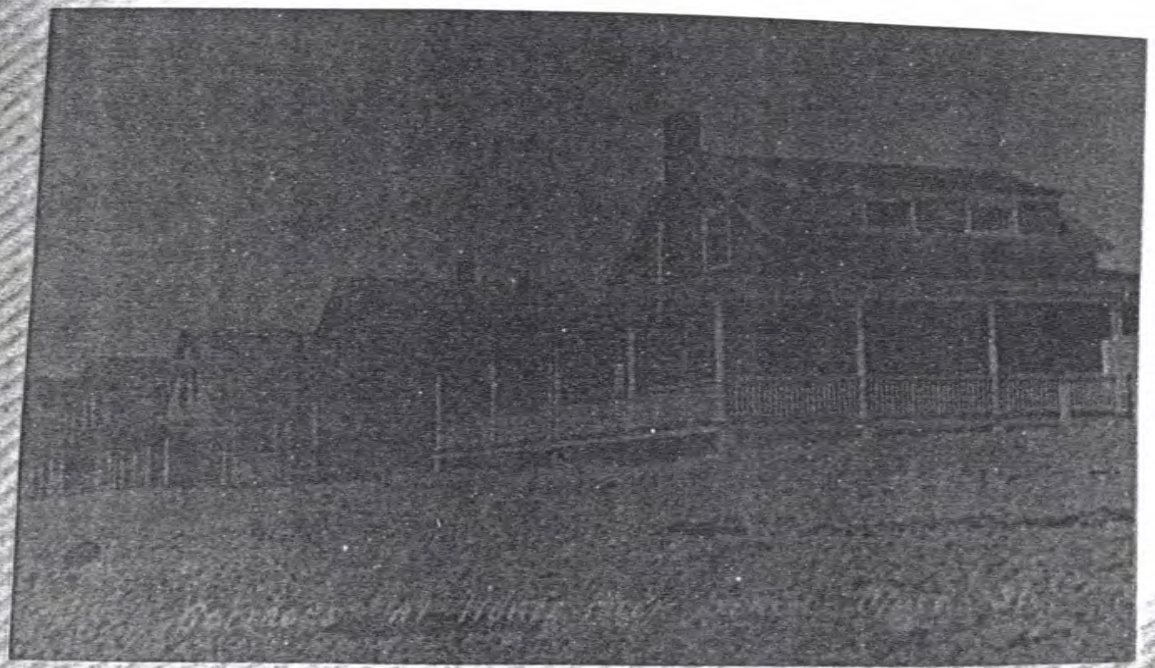
Looking east towards Town Beach.

KING FISHER

PETTYS HOTEL





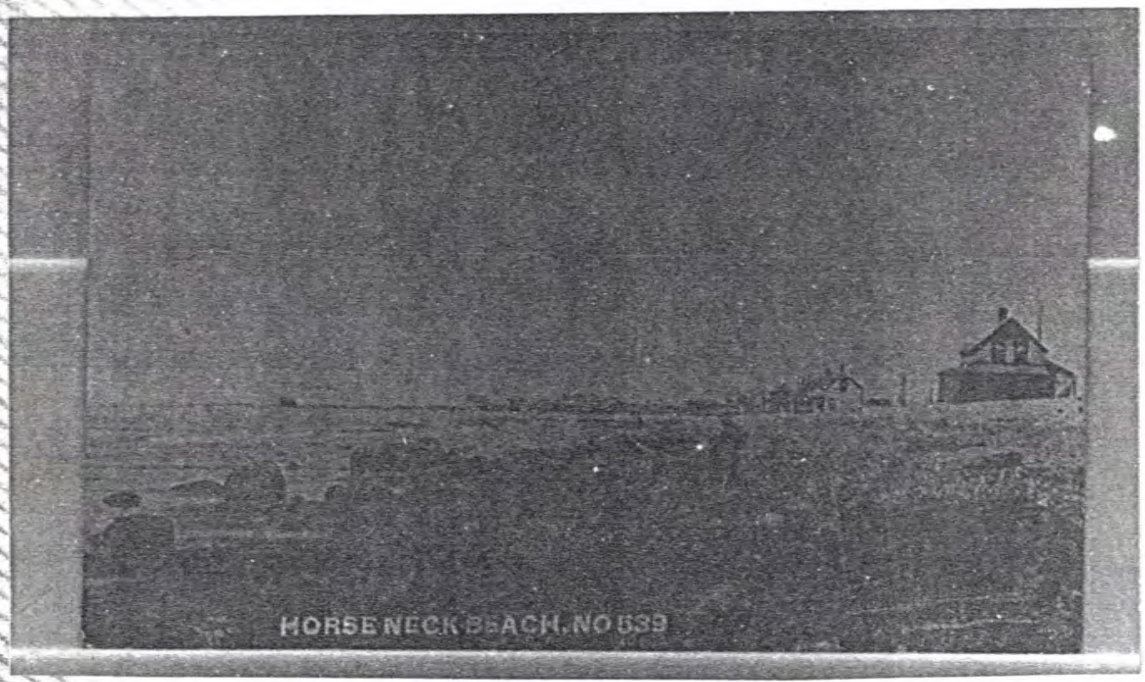


Horseneck Rd. is dividing line between Dartmouth and Westport.
← This card shows where Horseneck Rd. curves around to East Bch. Rd. (Town Beach) Westport.
↖ The houses you see are shown in a clearer picture below

J. L.



East Beach Rd
looking East
(Town Beach would
be beyond.)



Looking
West

53

James Blakney tells dramatic story of being swept away

Eyewitness to Horseneck Horror Saved Wife and Self

"During the height of the hurricane Wednesday, waves on the East Beach at Horseneck were 30 feet or more high, crashing over the embankment of rocks and sweeping everything, including the many homes, along to destruction," according to James A. Blakney, formerly of this city, who with his wife were fortunate in escaping alive from the storm after spending three of the most tortuous hours of their lives.

Though badly bruised, they suffered no broken bones during the seemingly endles period that they struggled against the murderous elements. Today they are cheerful and smiling and looking forward to a pleasant Winter in Florida despite the fact that they have lost everything they possess in the North, including their home and other real estate, their clothing and their personal belongings.

Mr. Blakney was formerly engaged in the millwright business in this city for a quarter of a century and worked in every textile plant in the city during that period. In watching their own and other cottages being wrecked Wednesday at Horseneck, they witnessed the most dreadful sight during their lifetime, they said.

The former local man, who for severl years has been spending the Winter in Florida and the Summer at Horseneck, recalls only one other storm of threatening nature, occuring 14 years ago when many trees were uprooted in New Bedford.

That storm, however, did not prove bad for Horseneck as the wind shifted around into the north at the psychological moment, sparing the beach. This time, however, the wind of hurricane velocity, did not change and continued to blow with such force that the mountainous waves broke way over in "The Let" at times.

Church is Destroyed

The storm was so bad that huge quantities of rock, both large and small were tossed onto the roadway. And there is not a single home left standing along the beach on either side of the raod from Allen's to the Almy Farm. At Allen's however, part of the big house remains standing on top of a few of the bathhouses. The Catholic Church, St. Rose of Lima, was also destroyed. Summer homes to the east of the East Beach were also destroyed.

Among the residences lost in the storm in additon to the cottages are the home of N.P. Tessier, Elisha H. Small, Laughlin W. McFarland and Dr. C. L. Padelford, all of this city; Clerk Walter R. Mitchell of the New Bedford District Court and Dr. Raymond Holt of Paterson, N. J., and the socalled Stone House, formerly owned by C.A. Trafford and more recently the Summer home of James Sinclair, Fall River millman.

Drifted on Rooftops

On the night of the storm, Mr. and Mrs. James Aldrich of this city were at the East Beach working frantically until 1 a.m., aiding nearly 30 persons in reaching higher land, and thus saving themselves. Even today Mr. Blakney and his wife do not know how they escaped alive except that it might be due to the fact they did not "lose their heads." They spent three hours drifting around in houses and on roofs, in water most of the time.

They were in the Harold Horton home, for about three quarters of an hour, floating around on the angry waves. They drifted to a point about a mile north of the beach and finally landed in a cove called "The Let," where the water was about 15 feet deep.

They started on the perilous journey about 4:15 p.m. and did not escape until after dark. They then spent the night at Mr. and Mrs. John Barton's home. The building debris from the many wrecked homes is now piled high on the dry land about half a mile from the beach on the Cummings Farm. Other debris is along the Westport River shore for a distance of two miles.

Cottage Escapes Damage

One of the cottages owned by Alfred W. McQuillan, local contractor, made the "hazardous" trip to "The Let" without being damaged and when inspected yesterday had the vases and clock in proper place on the mantlepiece and the pictures on the walls as though it had just floated over leisurely.

During their 20 summers at Horseneck, Mr. and Mrs. Blakney had never seen any storm which they thought might prove dangerous, with the possible exception of the one 14 years ago, which wrecked the causeway to the island at Allens.

They thought that everything would be all right Tuesday nd they decided to stay in their cottage. Mr. Blakney put his car in the Elisha H. Small garage. The Garage was wrecked. The car is in a ditch at the beach where investigation disclosed yesterday that it is now worthless.

He decided to attempt to cross the road to a larger cottage with stone foundation when we thought that the storm might prove dangerous. He had been trying to dig away the debris from around his small cottage so that the water could flow beneath it instead of sweeping through it.

Tells Graphic Story

In recounting his experiences, Mr. Blakney states; "I was asked by a Providence man to assist him in getting his mother and his son across the road from his car to the stronger cottage. The water was sweeping along with such force that it almost tore the woman away from us a d in trying to keep hold of her, the man's son was torn from my grasp. I tried to hang onto the woman and to a nearby post, but was unable to and I never saw any of the three persons again

Fall River Herald 50th anniversary of 1938 Hurricane Sept. 1988

Fall River Herald 50th anniversary of 1938 hurricane. Sept 1988

Horseneck Residents Narrowly Escape Death

"Although we lost everything we owned at Horseneck in last Wednesday's hurricane disaster, none of us as much as shed a tear for we are happy and consider ourselves lucky to be alive today."

Mrs. James McLeod of 495 South Beach Street, made the above statement this morning when she told how she and her two daughters, Mrs. Caroline Borden and Miss Euncie C. McLeod and a friend Eleanor Mullins, also of the South Beach Street address, narrowly escaped death in the recent catastrophe.

The McLeod family owned two cottages and a two-stall garage on East Beach, Horseneck, where they have been spending their Summers for the past 28 years. Mrs. McLeod estimates the loss at more than $5,000.

Mrs. McLeod, her two daughters and Miss Mullins motored over to the cottage Wednesday morning and planned to stay for the day and watch the surf during high tide which was due about 6:30.

"About 2:30 in the afternoon the wind was blowing strongly and the group boarded the windows from the inside to prepare for the blow, believing it was just an ordinary storm similar to those which they experienced in previous years.

Yellow Surf

"When I noticed the surf was yellow in color instead the ususal foamy white, which I enjoyed to watch, and heard the increasing noise made by insects and crickets above the howling of the wind and crashing of the waves, I realized that it was more than just an ordinary storm," Mrs. McLeod said.

"Although my daughter wished to stay in the cottage I insisted that we all leave for the city immediately. I went out to the garage to get the car out and found the doors had been jammed by the strong wind. With a crow bar I borrowed from a neighbor I managed to force open the doors and get the car out.

Cars on Beach

"While passing by Allen Beach," Mrs. McLeod said, "we noticed about six cars on the beach with their occupants watching the surf. It was about 15 minutes after we left our cottage that the tidal wave struck, destroying and carrying everything in its path. We were among the last cars over the Wetport Point Bridge before it was struck by the tidal wave." Mrs. McLeod stated.

The following morning when Mrs. McLeod visited Horseneck nothing was left of her property. A section of roof from her cottage, found three miles up the river, was the only piece she recognized of her belongings.

The Herald News
Sept. 30, 1938

"I then attempted to get Mrs. Blakney across to the house. After a hard struggle I finally got her across and thought that I could pry open a rear door. I had a screw driver in my pocket and opened the door. The house was soon knocked off its foundation and we got down into about three feet of water in the lee of another cottage.

"I noticed that the chimney was beginning to buckle and sought to get up the stairs of a nearby cottage. The heavy tide came along but I finally got up the stairs of the cottage just in time to see the cottage of Dr. Holt being swept away.

"The cottage we were in was swept along for a distance of about a mile and swing around. I grabbed a three by four 12 foot post and used it for a pole, hanging onto it until the house started to break up after going some distance.

"I looked around and saw the roof of my own cottage coming toward us. We crossed it and the roof of another house. I then picked up a board six by eight inches and used it to cross a thrid roof. At that time the cottages were in about 10 feet of water. We finally got to higher ground where the water was about three feet deep.

Own Cottage Swept Away

"We got off and were forced to push our way through the worst patch of bramble and bushes I ever saw, before we reached dry land. From there we went to an old road where we found an old house we had seen. I pried a window open. As there wasn't a thing in the house, we continued on for about a mile and a half to the Horseneck Road. We then walked another mile to the Barton cottage.

"All the time we would see cottages being swept by us, including our own, Dr. Holt's and Mr. Small's. We noticed one couple making a raft of beds inside their home piling one on top of another until they nearly touched the ceiling."

The Herald News
Sept. 23, 1938

We have been left on the beach with out boys. Pity us

POST MARKED 1915

A VIEW OF THE RIVER, HARBOR AND BRIDGE, ALPENA, MICH.

POST MARKED 1906

Western end of East Beach

Head ↓ surfside ↓

Harbor Beach, Mich.



East Beach Rd.
looking east.

↑ T Raffords ↗



ocean House ↑ East Beach Rd looking west. Farley Lane →

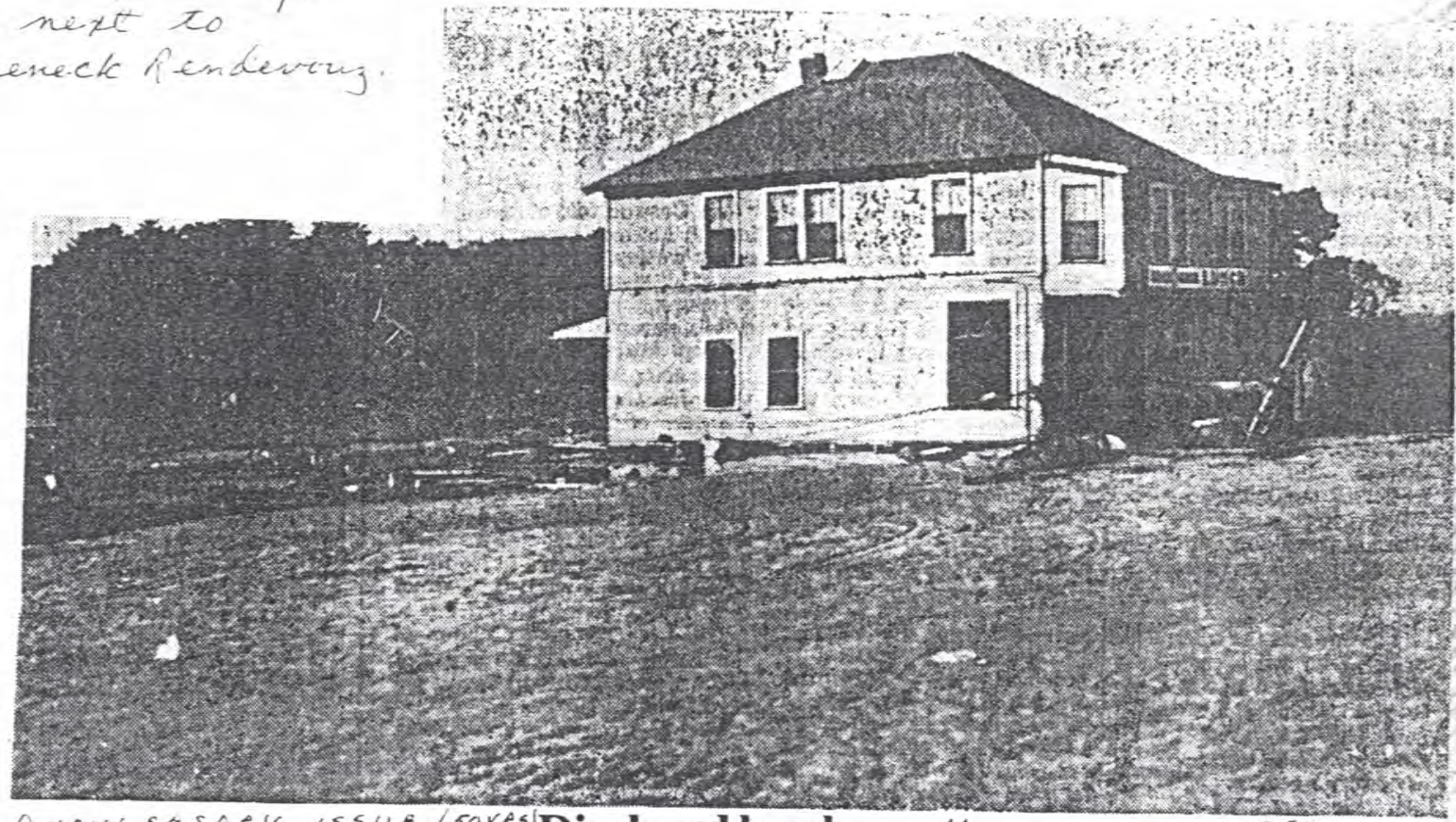


Surfside ↑
Looking east



Looking west X marks Surfside Chas Trafford Peter Trafford W^C Trafford

This building today, 1991, is next to the Horseneck Rendevous.



ANNIVERSARY ISSUE OF 1938 STORM (50 YRS AGO)

Displaced luncheonette

Herald News Sept. 1988

Many buildings were lifted by the strength of the wind and deposited, almost intact, in new locations. This frame structure, housing the State-O-Maine Lunch, was displaced from its original site at John Reed Road and East Beach Road, Horseneck Beach. At the height of the storm, a telephone pole fell through it.

New Homes, Restaurant Arise from Horseneck Wreckage

Sunday Standard Times April 2 1939

WEST BEACH AT HORSENECK SEES ACTIVITY

Damaged and Destroyed Houses Will Be Rebuilt

[illegible] at Horseneck Beach [illegible] Many of the [illegible] destroyed on the [illegible] along East Beach will be replaced, for the ground on which they stood [illegible] is almost even with the high tide [illegible]

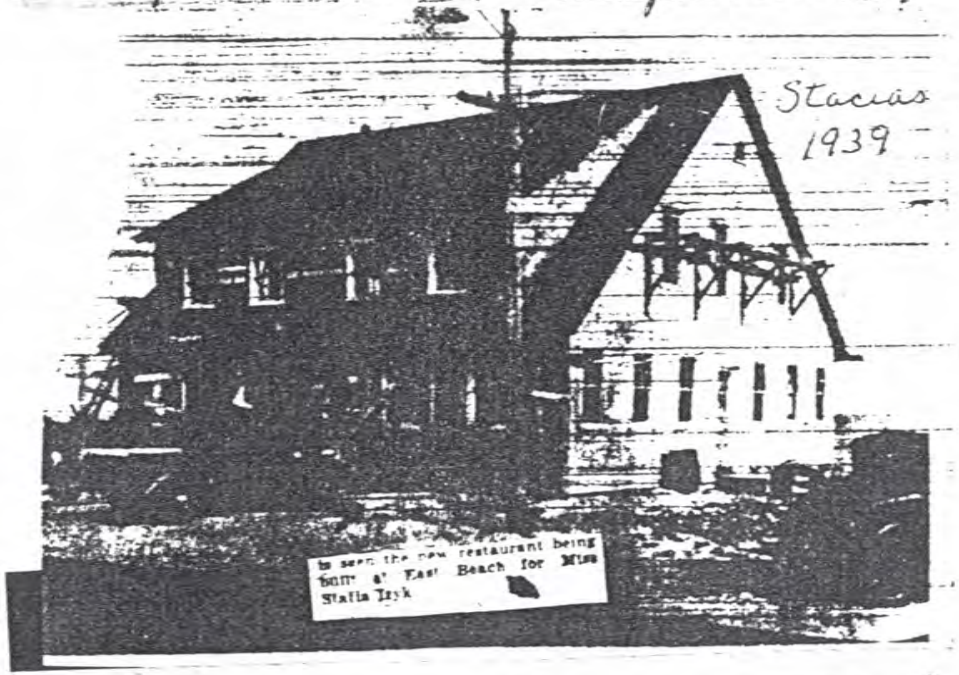
[illegible] at East Beach and at East Beach where it meets West Beach. It is [illegible] that many of the scores of [illegible] homes destroyed [illegible] along East Beach will be replaced, for the ground on which they stood [illegible] is almost even with the high tide [illegible]

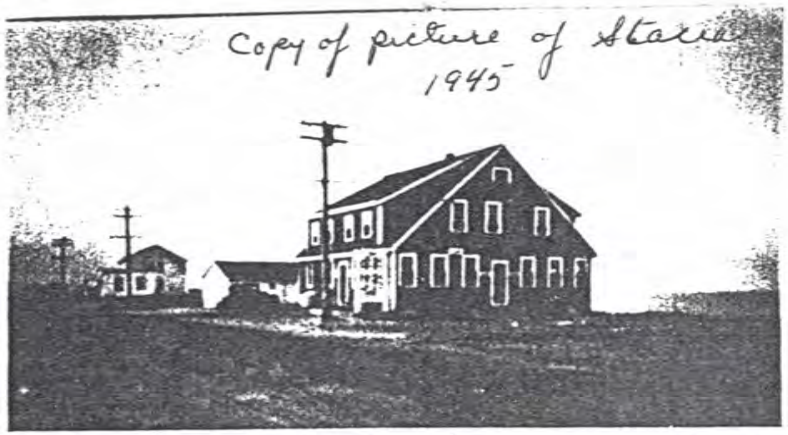
[illegible] at East Beach, [illegible] the ocean on one side and the Westport River on the other. Not a dwelling [illegible] on Gooseberry Neck [illegible] far up the river. Many [illegible] be required to be the land along the beach for remaining here very [illegible] would have to be [illegible]

Restaurant Being Built

One of the new buildings being [illegible] at Horseneck is a dining [illegible] for Miss Stella Izyk. It will [illegible] her restaurant and [illegible] in the quarters for her. The building being constructed by [illegible] and Henry Shurtleff of West [illegible] rapidly nearing completion.

Miss Izyk's former establishment, a small [illegible] was destroyed by the hurricane. It was a one and a half story [illegible] while the new building [illegible] and a half stories, measuring 40 feet square. There will be a lunch and dance hall downstairs. A garage also will be built.





Copy of picture of Stacias 1945

Later became Jacks then Pankys Reef
It burned down sometime in the 1970's
ACROSS FROM THE HORSENECK RENDEVOUZ

Frank Pease of [illegible] has one house at [illegible] near West Beach and on their house in the opposite side of the street [illegible] journey during a [illegible] He has had the [illegible] of the first [illegible] and repairs will be made [illegible]

The [illegible] stand [illegible] A [illegible] at the [illegible] East and West Beach [illegible] and Mr. Allen [illegible] business there. The [illegible] owned [illegible] F. Hall whose home is across the street at West Beach.

Allen's Pavilion Repaired

Repairs [illegible] to the remaining [illegible] Allen Jewett of Allen's [illegible] established here a [illegible] Summer for business [illegible] to be made to the [illegible]

Nothing [illegible] the pavilion [illegible] to the [illegible] by the [illegible] has moved [illegible] the [illegible] at East Beach opposite the new restaurant of Miss Izyk.

With repair [illegible] salvaged from his wrecked pavilion, Eleazar Hoyle of Fall River is rebuilding his establishment at West Beach. The reconstructed building will be one story high instead of two.

Ross Gordon of Worcester has had his West Beach cottage returned [illegible] and repaired [illegible] West Beach [illegible]

Mann Building Replaced

[illegible] Mann [illegible] has been [illegible] and [illegible] parts made [illegible] be ready for the [illegible] Summer season. [illegible] Shirley house [illegible] used to its original [illegible]

Some [illegible] are making [illegible] a [illegible] going [illegible] section of West [illegible] ing and [illegible] rebuilding. Several [illegible] of the section of [illegible] Beach from the Main [illegible] to West Beach Pond [illegible] pending in the State Legislature. It is proposed that the state [illegible] the beach as a State Reservation.

STANDARD TIMES Nov 15, 1935

59

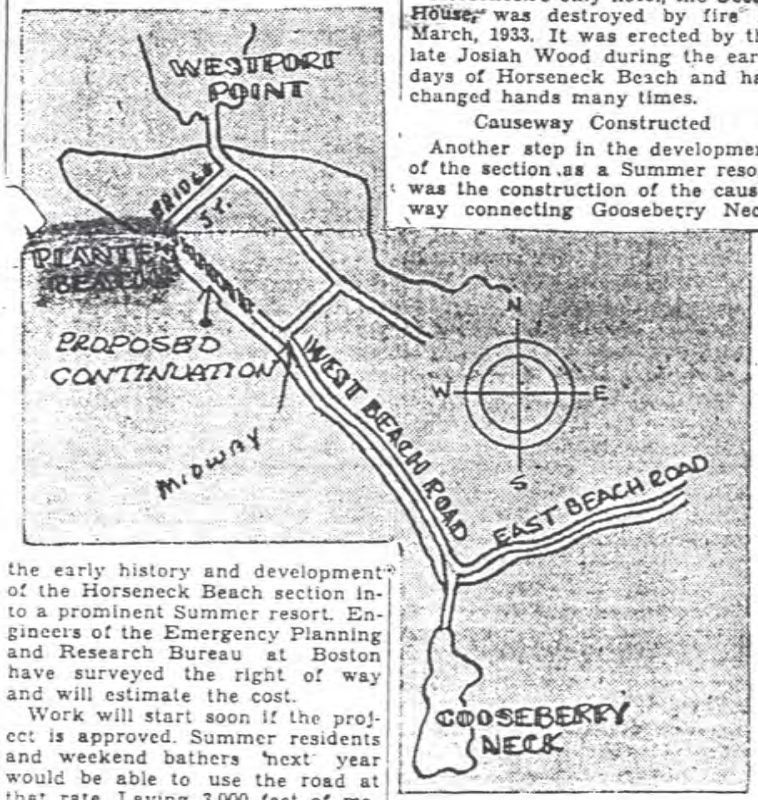
Proposed Horseneck Road Would Facilitate Car Travel

Early History, Development of Summer Resort Recalled by Plan

Announcement of the submission of a WPA project to extend the West Beach Road to Plante's Beach at Horseneck in Westport recalls the early history and development of the Horseneck Beach section into a prominent Summer resort. Engineers of the Emergency Planning and Research Bureau at Boston have surveyed the right of way and will estimate the cost.

Work will start soon if the project is approved. Summer residents and weekend bathers next year would be able to use the road at that rate. Laying 3,000 feet of macadam road 50 feet wide over sand dunes is the work involved.

Benjamin Cummings of 411 County Street, retired grocer, who owned the first cottage which still stands at East Beach, spent his Summers there. Visitors 35 years ago, as now, were enchanted by the booming surf, the fresh air and the splendid view.



Cottage Colony Developed

During the ensuing years East Beach was bordered with Summer cottages. Permanent dwellings were built later. Residents rumbled over dirt roads in horse-drawn vehicles.

The present macadam road at East Beach was built 20 years ago by Westport. Ten years later the West Beach Road was laid.

Horseneck's only hotel, the Ocean House, was destroyed by fire in March, 1933. It was erected by the late Josiah Wood during the early days of Horseneck Beach and had changed hands many times.

Causeway Constructed

Another step in the development of the section as a Summer resort was the construction of the causeway connecting Gooseberry Neck Island with Horseneck Beach. Sheep grazed on the grassy slopes of the island 50 years ago, when the mainland could be reached at low tide by walking on a sand bar. Work on the causeway began in 1913 and was not completed until 1924.

Alvin Waite of Salters Point, who owned Gooseberry Neck Island in 1913, started the project. In 1922 Mahoney and Tusker of Providence took up the task, awarding the contract to J. McCormick of East Providence. Mr. McCormick took over the development of the island in 1923 after he had completed the causeway and the Providence promoters had failed.

About six years ago the island was sold to Nick Saliveros, who formed a corporation with several small stockholders. He has built on the island a seven-room house which he occupies, and more than a dozen beach houses. He intends to build as many more soon, and to improve the island as a Summer resort.

Sluiceway Planned

In 1932 Westport appropriated $2,500 for the construction of a sluiceway through the causeway after beach residents protested that the causeway was responsible for the accumulation of red sea moss on the West Beach and washing away sand from East Beach. The state promised $7,500 to help build the sluiceway but the project was never carried through.

An attempt was made by a private promoter to establish an electric car line from Horseneck Beach to Padanaram about 30 years ago but the project failed. Tracks were laid for a short distance toward Horseneck, beginning at Westport Point and continuing into the woods, but they were never used and were removed many years ago.

Among the old time residents at Horseneck Beach is John I. Gifford, who conducts a general store there. He has lived at the beach 'round for 40 years and has been active in its development.

See
Plantes
pg 63-66
Ocean House
pg 27
Railway
pg 44
John I Gifford
pg 19-22

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGE

HUTCHINSON'S MIDWAY PA[illegible]N
HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.

POST CARD

THIS SPACE FOR ADDRESS ONLY

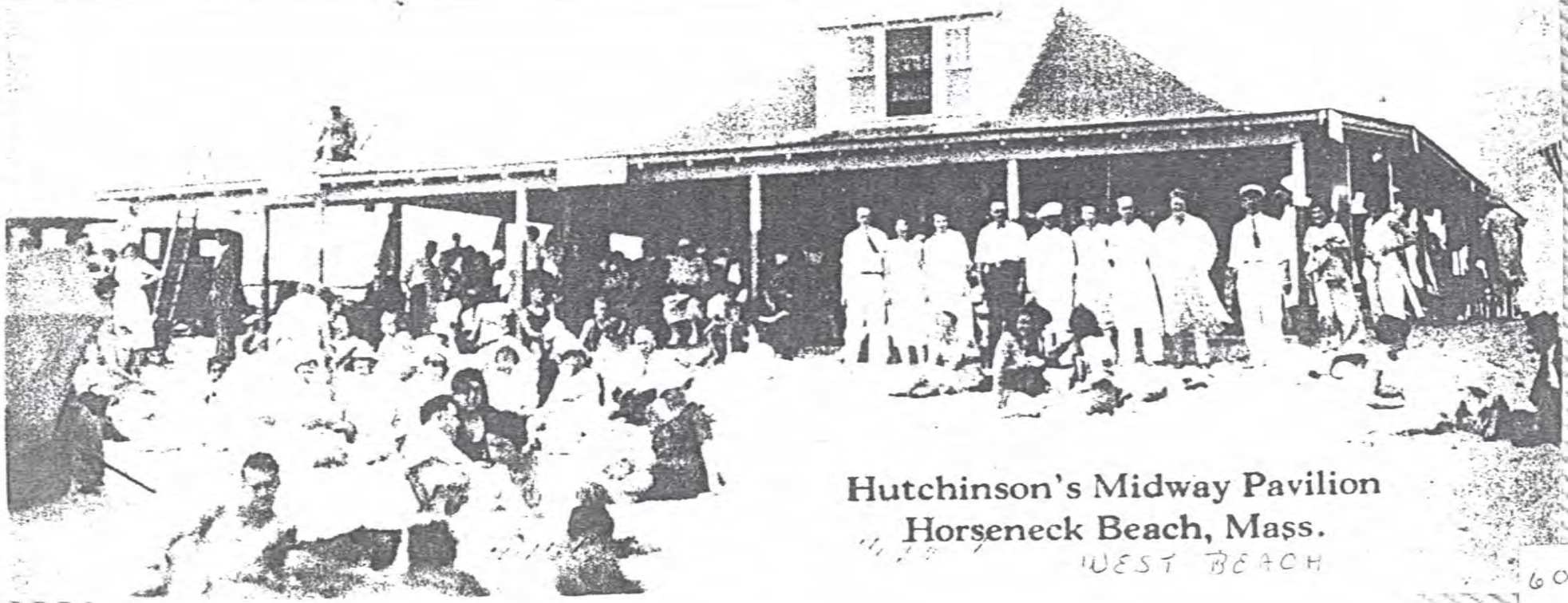
MADE IN U.S.A. BY CURT TEICH & CO., INC., CHICAGO, U.S.A.

JUL
10
A.M.
1936

Miss Terry Buckner

[illegible]

N.Y.



Hutchinson's Midway Pavilion
Horseneck Beach, Mass.

WEST BEACH

60

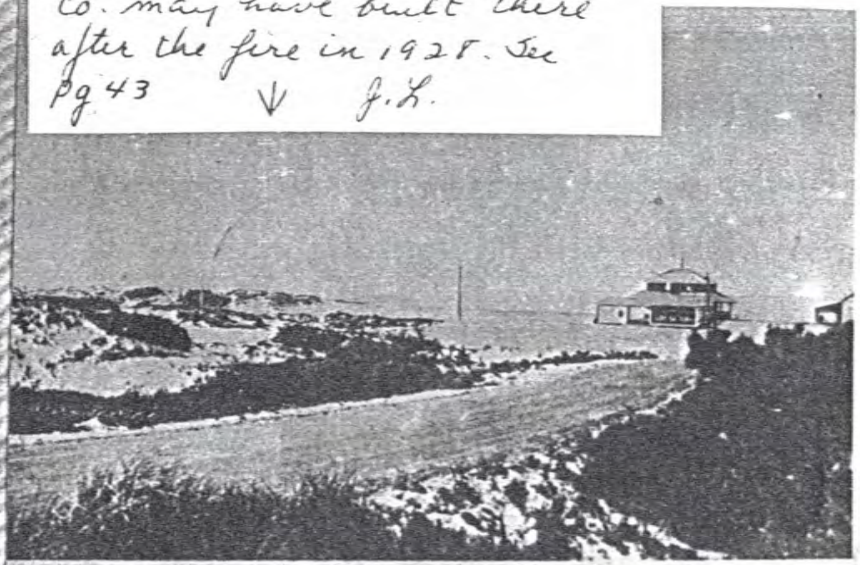
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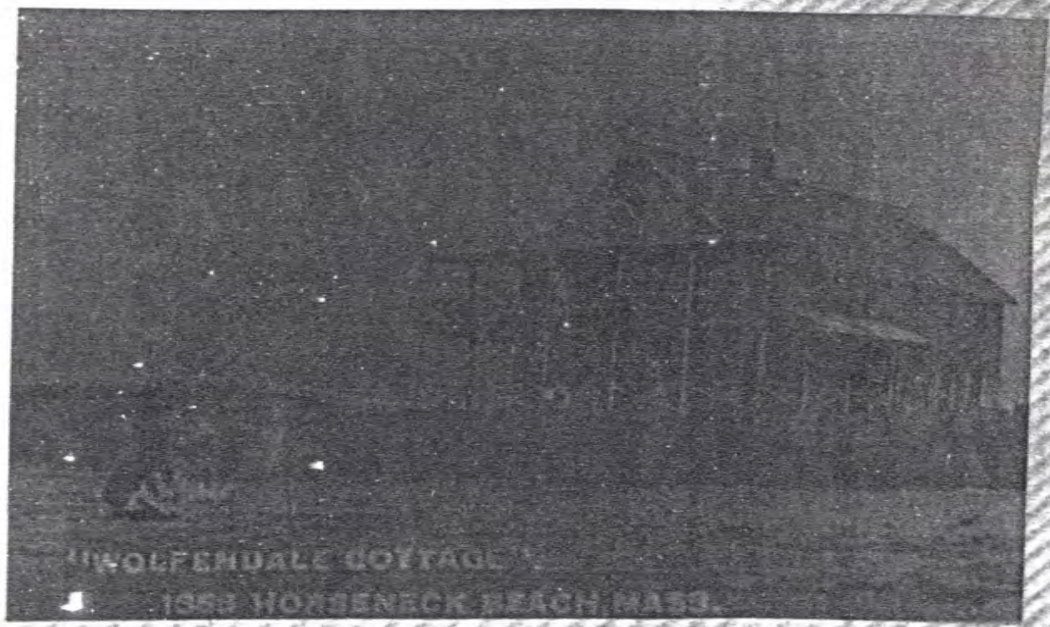


This looks like the Midway Road on West Bch. The Horseneck Amusement Co. may have built there after the fire in 1928. See Pg 43 ↓ J.L.

WEST BEACH

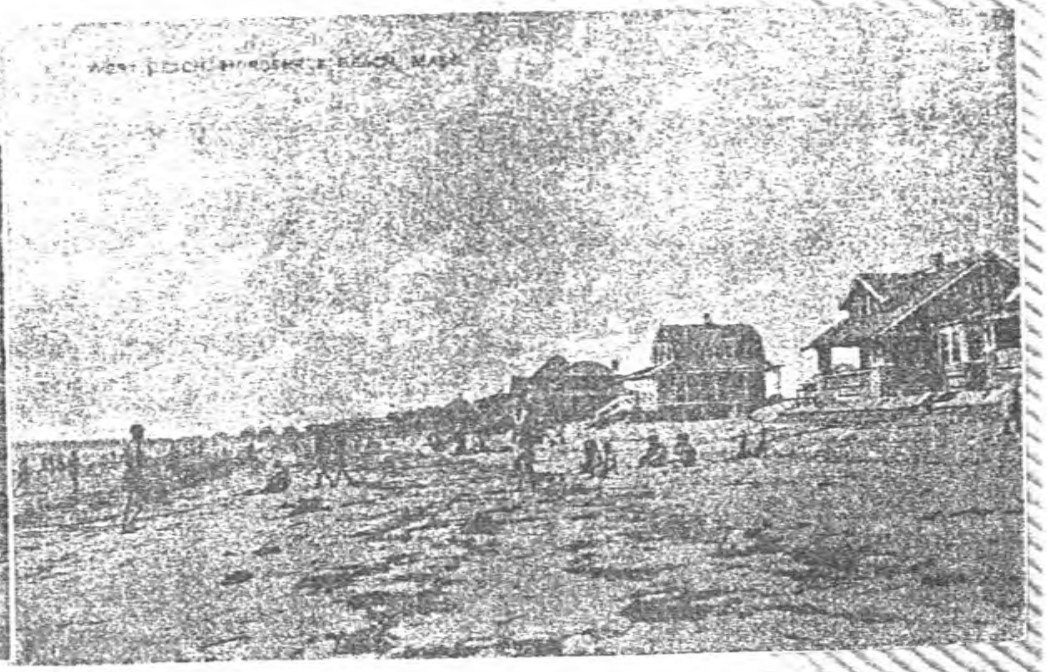


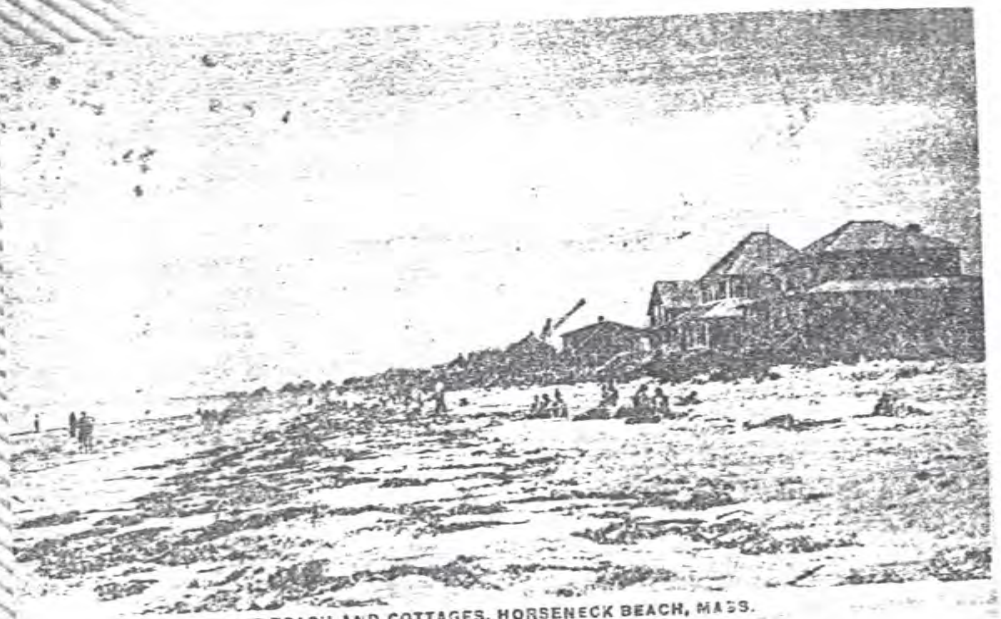
Roadway approaching The Horseneck Amusement Co., Horseneck Beach, Mass.



Cottages at West Beach, Horseneck Beach, Mass.







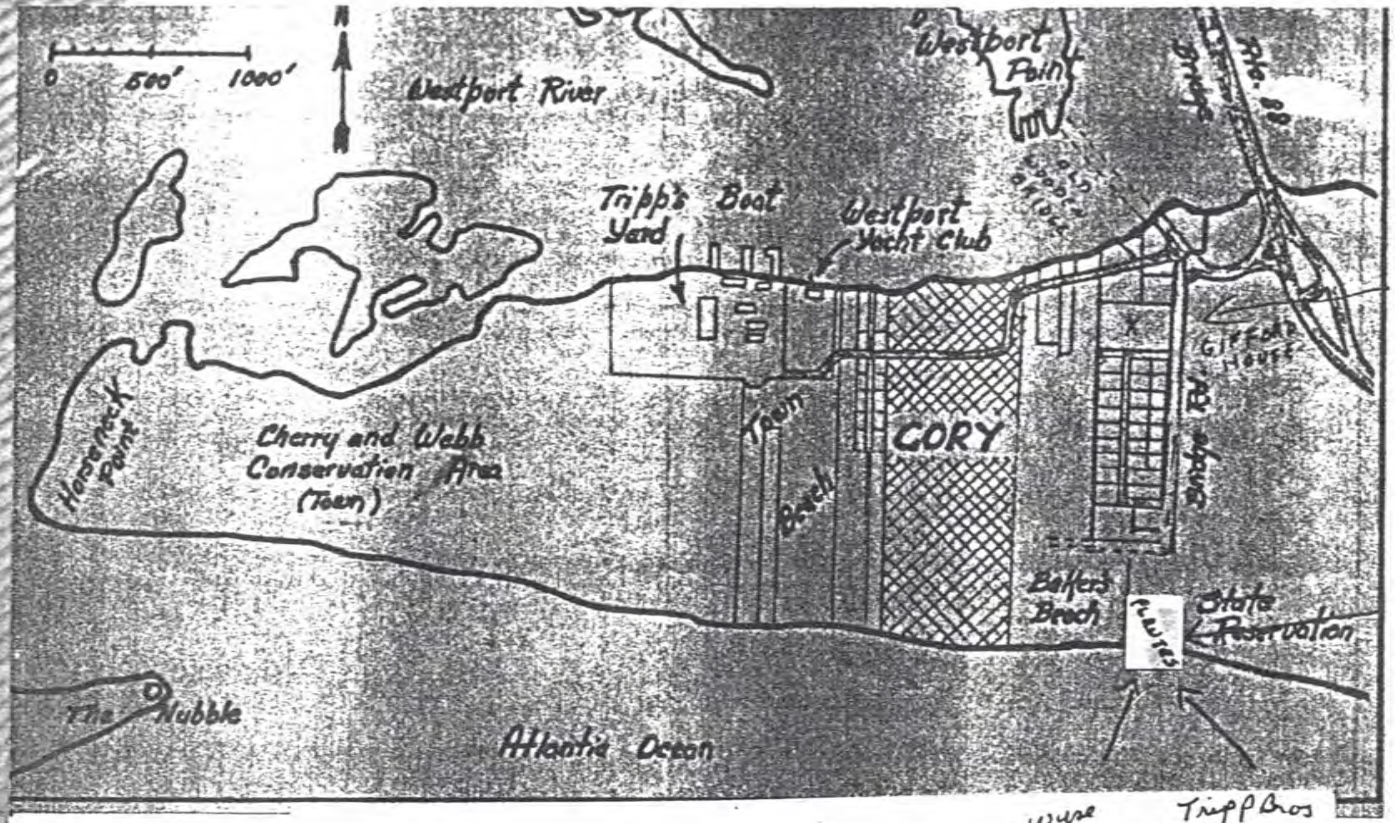
THE BEACH AND COTTAGES, HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.

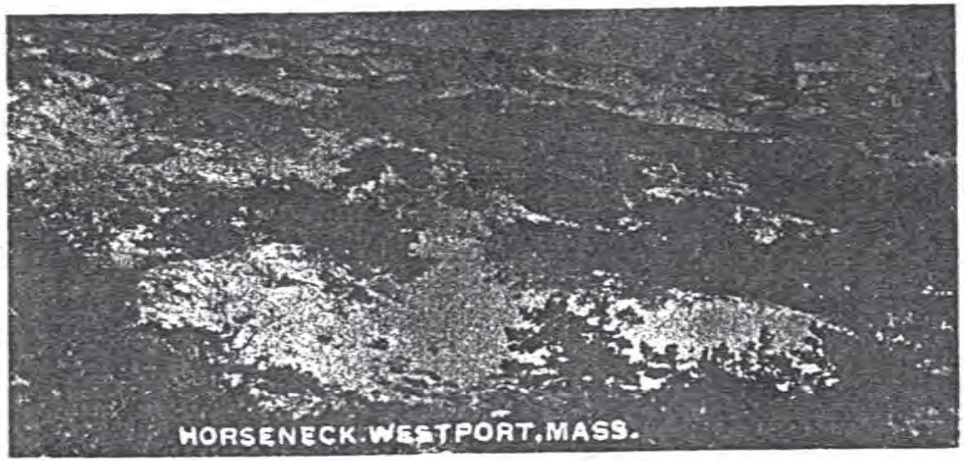


COTTAGES AT WEST BEACH, HORSENECK BEACH, MASS.

62

PLANTES





The Tripp Bros. Albert & Alfred also owned the Point Market see pg 69.

I have done alot of research & have a whole album on Plantes.

--- Briefly -- Chas. A. Gifford acquired from his father Geo Gifford 30 acres of land" over on the Horseneck" in 1864 where he lived.

By 1894 A. Wyse & the Tripp Bros. each owned 100 sq. ft. of Gifford land on the beach. Sometime after, they built their homes. (shown Below)

By 1921 my grandparents Elzear & Delvina Plante owned both houses & built up their business know as Plantes Pavilion

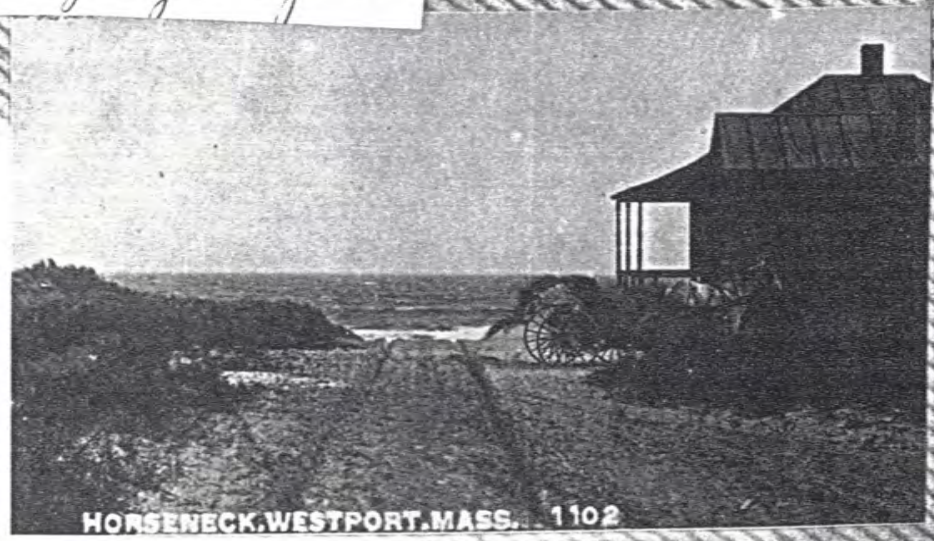
In 1944 my father & stepmother Henry and Gladys Plante took over the business & renamed it the "Spendrift."

Joan Plante Lowther

WEST BEACH at the foot of Bridge St.



Tripp Bros Agnes Wyse
see 1895 map Pg 8 and article Pg 69



End of Bridge St. - Wyse House →

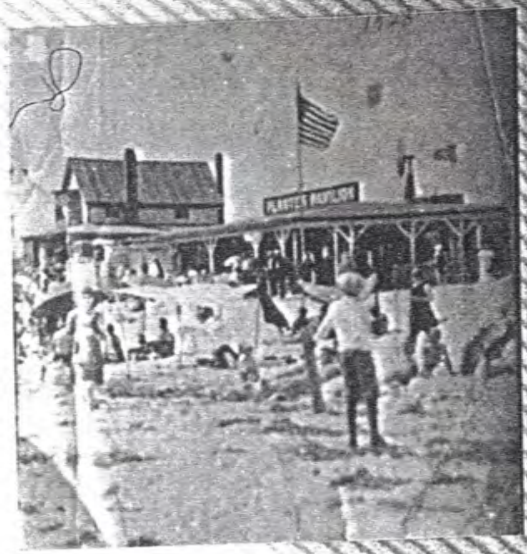


Family Picture
1921

1921 the Planks raised the Wyse house & built business below ←

A year later it burned down & they built Pavilion shown at right. →

Sometime later 1928? Tripp house burned down.





After 2nd fire this ↑ large pavilion dominated the Wyse & Tripp lots. It was later destroyed in the 1938 hurricane. ⇒
Once more the Plantes rebuilt, a smaller building, shown below, and was back in business again by summer of 1939.
↓

Joan Lowther, who today lives in a small cottage near where once-majestic summer homes once lined the shore, remembers mostly how the beach was before the hurricane.

Mrs. Lowther's grandfather, Elzear Plante, operated Plante's Pavilion, a popular social spot at the summer colony. The building dated back to 1916, when her grandfather started the business.

"There was a dance hall, living quarters and a restaurant and bar below," she said. All were demolished in the hurricane.

"Right under my own eyes my whole business was swept down last night," Mr. Plante told The Standard-Times at the time. "I was in the building trying to keep windows and doors closed as the waves smashed them open. Water was knee-high inside and the furniture, fixtures and stock were floating about."

Mrs. Lowther's grandfather, his son, Henry, his wife and baby waded out through waist-deep water toward the bridge to Westport Point. Her grandfather later recalled watching the roof of the pavilion collapse and the cement walls buckle behind them.

Mrs. Lowther recalled that her grandfather's dog Prince was often panicky during storms, so the family had locked him in one of the upstairs bedrooms.

He was forgotten when the family evacuated, she said, but when they returned after the hurricane had passed, "Prince was sitting on top of the wreckage.

"My grandfather always talked about that," she said.

Standard Times anniversary issue of 1938 hurricane.

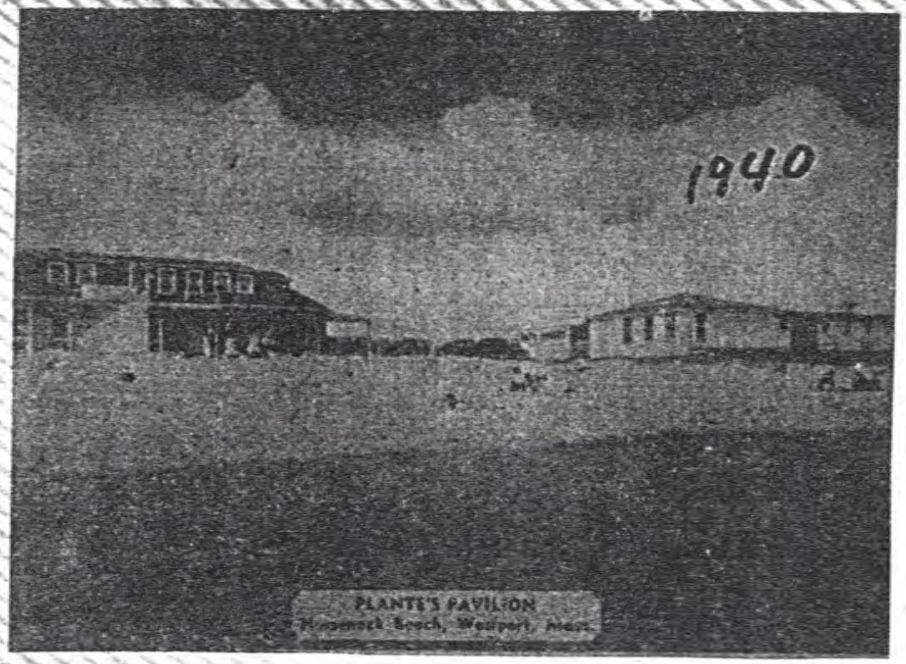
Sept 1988

65



Photo courtesy Joan Lowthe

Delvina Plante at Plante's Pavilion.





Bath houses on right ↑ were destroyed in 1944 hurricane. -- Shortly after Henry took over Pavilion & renamed it The Spindrift → Elzear continued to run newly built bath houses. They were again destroyed in still another hurricane in 1954. The Pavilion badly damaged. --- But the Plantes were back in business again in 1955 & continued until they had to finally close their doors & turn the keys over to the State in 1958. -- The State owned Spindrift burned down in 1966. A gate closes off the end of Bridge St. Nature has taken over where Plantes once stood. Today in 1991 Plantes is but a memory

J.L.



New Bedford Hurricane book 1938



Ruins of the Louis McHenry Howe cottage at West Beach.

I rode with Gramp Taber a few times in his express wagon or tip-cart as he transported FDR and Louis McHenry Howe to Mr. Howe's home on West Beach - from Plante's Pavillion. At the time I never realized what a powerful, important man he was and was going to be. He always shook our hand, was a good friend.

So many wonderful Memories — "Memory is the Treasure of all Things and their Guardian".

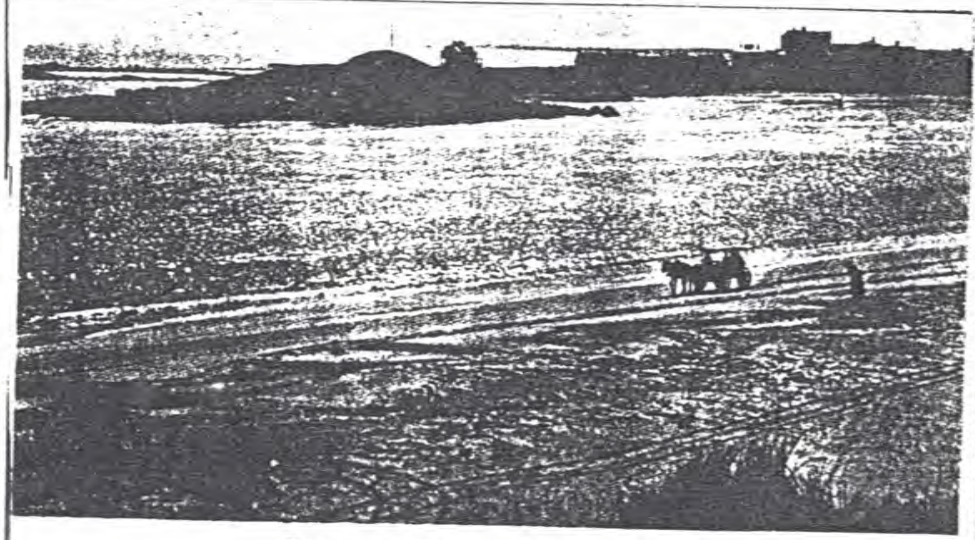
TAKEN FROM CARLTON MANCHESTERS MEMOIRS OF EARLY DAYS IN WESTPORT.
PRINTED IN AL'S ALMANACK

A Convalescent Advantage At Horseneck

By Irene Wilbur

Many years ago at Horseneck Beach, there were disputes as to whether the area should remain for cattle grazing or become a recreational playground, so when the announcement that Col. Louis McHenry Howe, who was a very important national political figure in the Roosevelt administration was about to spend some of his convalescent period at Horseneck, the people in favor of the recreational movement scored this as a BIG plus in their favor.

In a 1939 March issue of the Herald News the following article appeared: CONT.



Horseneck, Westport Point, Mass.

HENRY PLANTE (MY FATHER) TOLD ME MANY TIMES ABOUT ROOSEVELT VISITING THE HOWE COTTAGE AND HOW HE AT TIMES CARRIED F.D.R TO HIS OLD FORD TO DRIVE HIM TO THE HOWES.
J.P.

The announcement that Co. Louis McHenry Howe plans to spend some of his convalescent period at Horseneck Beach is a great "break" for those persons who would go forth and make public the recreational advantages of the town. For their information, the following story is related:

Mrs. Howe expects the Colonel, who is one of the most important figures in national politics, due to his intimate friendship with the President, to demand he be permitted to spend his convalescence period at Horseneck Beach.

She also anticipates some of the medical experts will put up their hands in horror and say it shouldn't be done.

But she will insist and so will the Colonel.

And there's a reason, the Westport town fathers might well note.

When Col. Howe suffered a serious attack of illness a score of years ago, doctors despaired of his life even as they did last week. Mrs. Howe saw him through the critical stages of the illness, then decided he should go to the seashore to convalesce. There was a loud protest about bringing him to what someone called "the end of the earth."

Mrs. Howe remained firm. She called Horseneck Beach "real country, peaceful and quiet and the place for healthful recreation."

They went there and Howe recovered to become one of the most important men in the Roosevelt administration.

That's our idea of a first class bit of advertising for the Town of Westport.

And, while it may not be strictly political, it strikes us as being well worth the consideration of the town fathers when they seek means of attracting the public to their fine beaches and summer homes. (by Thomas K. Brindly)

Two questions now come to mind. Would the Howes in 1987 still consider Horseneck as the "quiet, peaceful" escape to recover? And, would the Town Fathers be advertising, and seeking more population at this seaside recreational facility? How times change. Maybe a grazing pasture, had its merits, after all.

Some Interesting Notations

Tucked away between some papers were found the following handwritten notations.- .describing some events, advertisements, and characters of earlier years.

I do not know of the original author(s), so cannot authenticate the writings. However, I did feel they were of interest and probably were factual. Here they are, for your pleasure.

1864—July 2-4th of July Clam Bake. There will be a Clam and Quahauog Bake and Fish Chowder at Horseneck Beach on the 4th of July. Tickets including dancing in the afternoon, may be obtained at the Horseneck House. (Chas. Dana).

July 5 (No year date) The Horseneck House burned. About 8 o'clock last evening the Horse Neck House near W. Point, owned and kept by Chas. Dana was discovered to be on fire in the attic, and in two hours it was burned to the ground. All the furniture except bedsteads was safely removed. The cause of the fire is unknown. There was insurance of $2400 on the house in Peoples Office, Worcester, and the furniture in the Conway Office through Mr. Van Camben's Agcy.

Notation: The largest gathering ever assembled at Horse Neck was present at the Clam Bake yesterday.

ANDREW H. SOWLE — Born in Westport Point, August 31st 1843. Received his education in the public schools. Mr. Sowle went to California in 1861 and engaged in mining until 1865, when he returned to Westport Point and engaged in the rubber business, in Bristol, R.I. until about 1889.

Mr. Sowle was superintendent of construction of the road from Terminus of Westport Point bridge, to the beach, during 1893. Was

Horseneck House
see below pg 70
← —
Tripp Bros. →
see picture of house on beach pg. 64

elected Selectman March 1894, for three years; also Road Commissioner, and a member of the Board of Health.

Albert E and Alfred C. Tripp, Westport Point — They do business under the firm name of Tripp Bros. and carry on a general store, — groceries, feed, etc. They organized in 1879 and continue successfully to carry on the above business. They also keep a livery, feed and sale stable, and are prepared at all times, to carry passengers to all points on short notice. They were both born at Westport Point, where they also received their education, in the public schools. Albert E. for several years, followed lobster fishing and Alfred C. taught school for several years in his earlier life, and also represented as a salesman for 6 years, the firm of Fairbanks Co. of Buffalo. N.Y. Has filled the office of Postmaster for 4 years, his brother Albert as assistant. Albert E. is now a Justice of the Peace.

H.H. Brownell, Westport Point... Is a native of Little Compton, R.I. He was engaged in the grocery business from the age of 16 until the year 1852. He then sold out and went to California, where he remained for 5 years. Returning in 1857. He again engaged in the grocery business, continuing for some time. He then sold out and moved to Westport Point, where he purchased a farm, and has since devoted his time to agricultural pursuits. He has been a member of the Board of Assessors for three years.

Sept. 22, 1883 - Massachuseets and Rhode Island are the only States which now elect all State officers and Legislature every year, and only 6 states have sessions of the Legislature every year.

By Irene Wilbur



my tracing of map on page 7.

J.L

I have always wondered where the ~~Horseneck House~~ was until I spotted C. Dana's name on the 1871 map pg. 7.

The broken lines must be East Bch Rd. & Old John Reed Rd.

There was no year date when the fire occurred, but it must have been after 1871.

In later years the State O'Maine was on that corner. See Pg 57. J. L.



Poor Bills Almanack Vol. 1 No. 16
ON THE COVER SEPT. 27 1971



April 3, 1860 (Correspondence of the Standard) Westport Point April 2, 1860
Cranberry Culture - Fire - I thought it would not be amiss to say something in relation to the culture of the Cranberry in our vicinity, on Horesneck. Two of our enterprising citizens, Leander Brightman and Joseph Bassett, have this Spring pruchased some 16 acres of land near the **Horseneck House**, and contemplate converting all into a cranberry bog. They have commenced operations by building a turf embankment and removing the sand hills into the hollows. For this purpose they have a railroad some 300 feet long, with all the appliances necessary for moving the sand. A portion of the land is completed, and they have commenced setting the vines. I understand that it will be three or four years before they expect much of a crop. They have built a lodge where they have cooking utensils, library and other things to render it not only profitable to themselves, but a pleasant place of resort for those who visit the **Horseneck House**, and others. The building stands at the head of Crooked creek. They have a large boat of easy draft, and can approach within a few feet of their houses on the bank surrounded with woods.

Capt. John Baker, the gentlemen who raised and sold last year over $900 worth of cranberries, has met with an accident by fire. In the act of burning some grass near his bogs the fire got the better of him, and being anxious to save his house he could not prevent the fire from running over a portion of his bogs, one fine bog from which he expected to get from 50 to 70 bushels the next crop was burned over, putting it back two or three years, probably damaging the whole some $100 to $150. T.W.M.

See J Bakers name on
1871 map 89.7

1860 July 28th Horseneck

Seventy acres of the upper Horseneck have been sold at from $5 to $20 an acre. This land comparatively valueless for any other purpose than raising cranberries. The second railroad has been constructed about 200 feet. The other railroad will be in operation before winter. Some 50 acres more in the locality are in the market. These land have most of them vines sufficient to set on the whole.

Messrs. Bassett and Brightman's cranberries root well, and will no doubt prove a good speculation.

Nathaniel Gifford has a good lot for sale of 18 or 20 acres for $250. There is we are told, about two acres of vines on this lot, and no doubt will find purchasers. Quite a number of hands find employment on these lots. The proprietors are sanguine of success, and it looks like becoming a profitable business eventually.

Oct. 26, 1866

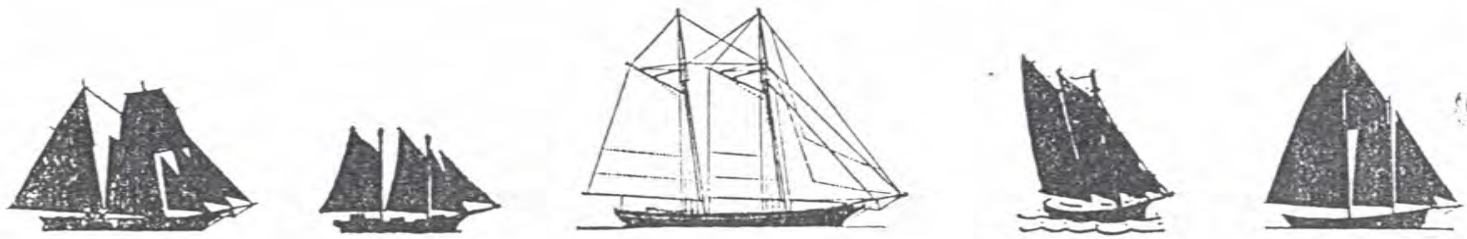
Horseneck Cranberries. Mr. Leander Brightman yesterday exhibited in our office a specimen of the cranberries raised on Horseneck, which are said to be much better than those raised inland. The Horseneck crop will reach 1500 bushels this season, commanding $5 per bushel.

1869 Cranberries

The cranberry crop - very fair. In one lot, in Harwhich 1½ to 2 cents a quart for picking., 200 hands engaged. Last year 8,000 picked this year probably 12,00 last year sold for $16 to $19 per barrel, and some as high as $30 this year $10 per barrel.

Baker and Sears 100 barrels cranberries raised at Horseneck $10 per barrel shipped to New York in the schooner Geo. W. Rogers, Capt. Cornell.

Capt. John Baker gathered his crop of cranberries 230 bu.



The Standard-Times, New Bedford, MA

OBITUARIES More obituaries on PageA 8

Monday, September 22, 2003 Page A

JOAN C. LOWTHER

CENTER CONWAY, N.H. — Joan C. (Plante) Lowther, 77, of Davenport, Fla., died Thursday, Sept. 18, 2003, at the home of her daughter after a brief illness. She was the widow of William H. Lowther Jr.

Born in Fall River, Mass., she was the daughter of the late Henry and Mae (O'Grady) Plante. She spend many a summer day at her family's restaurant, Plante's Pavilion on Horseneck Beach in Westport, Mass.

After raising their four children in New Bedford, Mass., Mr. and Mrs. Lowther lived at the "whale shack" on East Beach Road in Westport until 1992, when they moved to Davenport.

Mrs. Lowther loved clambakes on the beach, making seashell crafts, gardening and traveling the country with her family. She was best known for her video, "Footprints in the Sand," which airs on Westport cable television periodically.

Survivors include two daughters, Carol A. Curley of Orlando, Fla., and Debbie A. Savary of Center Conway; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

She was the mother of the late twin sons, William H. Lowther III and David M. Lowther.

Her funeral service will be at 11 a.m. Wednesday at Potter Funeral Home, 81 Reed Road, Westport.

Arrangements are by the Cremation Society of New Hampshire.