

## Beachcombing Provincetown Harbor

By V. P. Glover

What a collection of treasures can be found along the harbor shore at low tide! I started picking up bits and pieces eight years ago and now have a small bookcase filled with interesting oddities. There are nearly a hundred bottles, ranging in size from one to seven inches. Some seem to have absorbed the pale turquoise of the sea while others are lavender. Most are ground smooth by the sand and the waves. Many have barnacles on them. There are ink-wells and salt cellars, medicine jars and perfume bottles. I have also found a dozen glass stoppers. The most fascinating bottle I ever found I broke intentionally. A tiny crab had crawled inside and made his home there, but in time he had grown larger and the home had become a prison. So I broke the bottle and watched him skitter away in the damp sand.

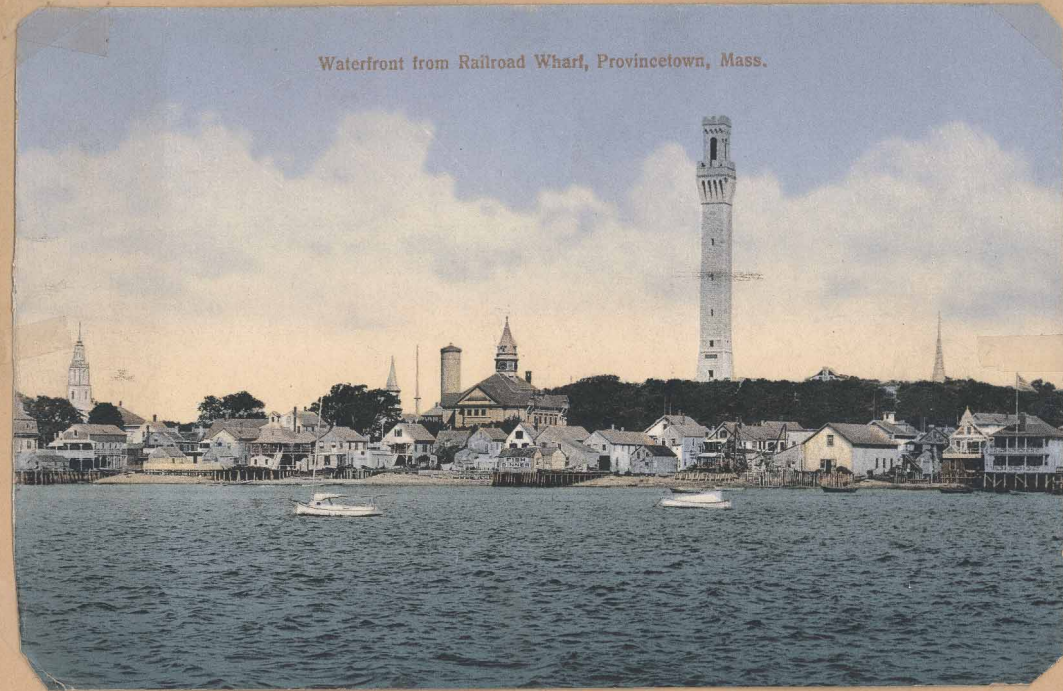
I have also picked up hundreds of pieces of clay pipe stems and several unbroken bowls marked "Scotland". These appear to have been in the sea for many years and I hope some day to learn where they come from. I have heard that the fishermen used to smoke them and toss them overboard and also that a ship carrying such a cargo sank in nearby waters, but neither of these stories has yet been confirmed.

The collection contains quite an assortment of bisque doll parts and china doll dishes. I know these to be very old but again: how did they come to be along the beach?

One summer I specialized in finding beads and buttons. The string of beads, each one different, is twelve inches long. The buttons are less glamorous. In fact,

most of them appear to have popped off of old fashioned underwear.

Beachcombing along Provincetown Harbor is a curious hobby. The greatest store of treasure lies along what we call the rising line, that point where the beach shapes up from the flats. Each tide turns over a seemingly endless variety of new debris. Beyond, the sea gulls circle and cry and you return home at last with all your little treasures and a new sense of peace.



Waterfront from Railroad Wharf, Provincetown, Mass.

To the West of Wharf - 1912



Pilgrim Memorial Monument, Provincetown, Mass.

Pilgrim Church, left; Town Hall & Monument - 1910