



From the Center Methodist Church Tower, facing East ----- About 1910
 Johnson Street, left foreground and opposite the Provincetown
 Cold Storage. Si Young's, 2nd house from Storage.
 The Conwell Wharf, right (with boat along-
 side). The Kibbe Cook Wharf, next
 and then The Consolidated
 Cold Storage Wharf.

The Sand Dunes, center background, are out at the end of Snail Road.
 Mount Gilboa and Mount Ararat to the right of the dunes. Also
 note Grand View cottage to left of the last cottage.
 (Taken by John R. Smith)

1921

When we find through history that the early Christian Church sang in their worship and were accompanied by instruments selected as appropriate in tone to the sentiment of their worship we are led to conclude that old-time music in Provincetown partook somewhat of the musical nature of still earlier days, for the early churches of our town gave music a leading place in their devotions.

It is a matter of local history that the first house of worship organized here—The Pilgrim Church—had for its accompaniment to worship an instrument which might perhaps be included in the "percussion class," and which is now treasured by grandchildren of a famous player in that church.

The instrument is mahogany, having two octaves, and while it is played with the fingers of one hand, is struck with the elbow or arm of the other.

For years this instrument, now prized as an heirloom, contributed its melody every Sabbath to that congregation.

In the first M. E. Church which was built at the foot of Town Hill, quite a miniature orchestra helped to dispense the music on Sundays. A bass viol, cello, violin and flageolet or flute leading the choir and congregation in sacred song.

In 1846 or '47 Mr. Obadiah Snow, a young man who had been a member of that choir, became its chorister and when the present edifice was built continued in that position and held it for nearly sixty years resigning it in 1905 when eighty years of age. He was also a music writer, his "World of Light" and other hymns placing him in the front rank of popular hymn writers.

But music had a secular place in the doings of our forebears as well. Singing Schools (so called) were organized, the principles of music taught, notation and sight-reading emphasized, so that the love of music was strengthened by the ability to read it readily.

Mr. Caleb Cook taught a Singing School for years, and a concert was given at the close of each term of study. He wrote music also and in 1855 composed and wrote a song entitled "Wellfleet" which was sung at a Sunday School Convention in that town.

Later Prot. Penniman of Quincy came to our town, and gave lessons in vocal culture in the vestry of the Universalist Church, and taught a Juvenile Singing Class, giving as a closing concert, a Cantata called "Flora's Festival" which consisted of solos, duets and choruses adapted to young voices, and in which the performers were dressed to represent

flowers.

This festival was given in Ocean Hall on the site now occupied by the New Central House.

The first Universalist Church was located at the corner of Central and Commercial streets and orchestral instruments helped to furnish the music there. The bass viol was played by Mr. Sabine Smith, the violin by Mr. Elijah Smith, both musicians of much ability. There was also a clarinet player. When the "Church of the Redeemer" was built in 1846 or 47, Mr. Sabine Smith was chorister, and two years later trained thirty-six young girls of that society to sing a musical composition, "Altars of Nature", at their S. S. Exhibition. Miss Sarah Chapman was one of the number, and is the only known living representative of that group.

When the Universalist society removed to their new church, it was purchased by some members of the M. E. Church, who wished to organize a house of worship at the West End, and was re-named Wesley Chapel. The musical leader there was Mr. B. O. Gross. Coming from a family of much musical ability, he inherited the make-up of a born leader, and music flourished for many years under his leadership.

THE MINISTER ARRIVES

The minister, young in years and experience, and intent upon making an impressionable arrival, boarded the stage on late afternoon and arrived in Provincetown much after dark. All arrangements had been made and his quarters were provided at the Kibby Cook House. However, thinking it best to alight at the most thickly populated part of the town and thence proceed to the Cook home afoot, his solemn presence to be noted by the townspeople, he asked the driver of the stage to set him down there. The driver stopped the stage and the minister alighted, but found to his amazement in the increasing darkness, no houses, nothing but grave-stones. "My brother," said the parson, "this is the cemetery." Whereupon the driver about to proceed, replied, "Most populated part of town, Capt'n."