

1823

BEACHCOMBERS FIND THEIR "ILE" IN CASKS ALONG BACK SHORE

**Bert Perry, Sherman Valentine And Thomas O'Donnell
Bring In 330 Gallons Of Oily Substance—Awaiting
Now Analysis Of Find**

Bert Perry of Perry's Market is awaiting today the return from the laboratories of the Atlantic Coast Fisheries in New York City of the analysis of samples of oil sent there yesterday from six 55-gallon casks of some variety of oil found along the backshore when he with Sherman Valentine and Thomas O'Donnell were beachcombing along the beach Monday. Notice of the find was also forwarded to the deputy collector of customs and his arrival is expected here today.

In the mean time they're gessing in town what the casks really contain. The substance has the consistency and color of light engine oil and is not particularly pleasant smelling. Some think it may be blackfish oil, at one time highly prized as a watch oil and still valuable as a high grade lubricant. This should be worth fifty cents a gallon. But if the casks contain cod liver or halibut liver oil the price ought to be better.

Others think that the find may be 330 gallons of tung oil, a valuable wood oil imported from China, which is mixed in small quantities with high grade paints and varnishes. Added foundation is given to this guess by the fact that two of the six casks are stamped with the name of Sherwin-Williams, Halifax, N. S.

In any event the find should net the three beachcombers a good return. The casks were found Monday partially buried in the sand at high-water mark between Race Point Light and Peaked Hill Bars. At first it was thought that they contained molasses but the odor soon dispelled that theory. It was no easy task to get the 600-pound casks aboard the Perry beach wagon, over the sands and into town. It is believed that they were washed off the deck of a freighter or thrown overboard to lighten the vessel during the recent blizzard.

Mr. Perry frequently makes trips around the Great Beach and over on the ocean side and has collected quantities of lobster pots, wood, lumber, and after a recent storm, had a mess of fine sea clams and three lobsters practically handed to him by the surf. A flock of ravenous gulls, however, made the taking almost as tough as digging them, for a time.

A beach wagon equipped with extra large balloon tires makes trips along the shore and over the dunes possible.

Sea Rolls Out the Barrels Onto Cape



Three Provincetown men are shown above with part of the cache of unidentified oil they found this week on the back shore of the lower Cape.

Left to right the men are Thomas O'Donnell, Marion Perry and Sherman Valentine.

Barrel Goes Ghosting

Those gathering hurricane driftwood should keep a sharp watch for eerie dangers such as one old-time Provincetown beachcomber met on the back shore long ago.

On a cold, star-lit night after a gale, old John, the Mooncusser roamed the frozen beach in search of treasures he could sell in the village. Up to midnight he found nothing worth while, and as the northwest wind was numbing his marrow, he turned homeward. He had stopped in the lee of a dune to light his pipe when a bloodcurdling groan, followed by the appearance of a huge black object silhouetted on the dune's top, put smoking far out of his mind. The unknown enemy lurched toward him, howling.

John, the Mooncusser, struck out for home and mother. The object pursued him, barely visible in the darkness. The old fellow realized he was doomed in a footrace, so he halted shakily, whipped out his pocket knife shut his eyes and prepared to die like a man. There was a swish as the object passed him, and peering into the darkness he saw it had come to rest in a bush. Curiosity lent John bravery, and he went forward in a fighting crouch. His enemy proved to be an empty barrel! The wind that set it rolling soured through the bunghole making the dismal, groaning sound that had terrified the beachcomber.

But John was a practical man. He shouldered the barrel and brought it home as booty.

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Beachcombers Net Good Sum From Oil

Beachcombers Bert Perry, Thomas O'Donnell and Sherman Valentine will share in a check for \$120 as a result of their finding six drums of oil along the shore. Analysis showed that the drums contained a commercial grade of cod oil which is used in tanning leather and the William F. Nye Company, manufacturers of machine oil in New Bedford agreed to take over the entire lot and pay at the rate of forty cents a gallon.