

ONCE UPON A TIME ON CAPE COD

CAPE COD WRECKS IN 1850

By Gustavus Swift Paine

Most of the cargo, corn and flour, of the schooner T. O. Thompson, ashore near Provincetown, was saved in a damaged condition, and sold at auction January 6th on the beach. The flour sold at from \$3.25 to \$4.50 a barrel, and the corn at about twenty cents a bushel. The schooner received but trifling damage and was got off at the next course of high tides.

On January 21st the schooner Cla-

ra of Provincetown, bound from Boston for North Carolina, with a cargo of salt, potatoes, herring, etc. was discovered to be on fire about 11 A. M. alongside the Union Wharf at Provincetown. The vessel was filled with water, causing about \$600 damage to the cargo, which belonged to the Union Wharf Co. The schooner itself received but trifling damage.

March 27th the schooner Palo Alto of Wellfleet, Captain Holbrook, from Tangier, Virginia, for Boston, with a cargo of oysters, went ashore on Chatham bar. May 1st, the sloop Pilot, Captain Kelly, of and for South Boston with sand from Provincetown, sprang a leak fifteen miles N. W. of Race Point, and sank in fifteen minutes. The crew took to their boat, and were afterward fallen in with by the schooner Rowena from Provincetown which took them to Boston. "They saved nothing but what they stood in." June 7th the fishing schooner Convoy, Captain Eldridge, of Barnstable, ran on "Schooner Bar" south of Chatham in the night, and bilged. The fish and sails were saved.

"Wreck, Wreck" Was Back Shore Cry Often Heard One Hundred Years Ago

by Donald G. Trayser, Clerk of the Courts Barnstable County May 1852

Cape Cod yesterdays, being notes on happenings one hundred years ago this month:

Provincetown — Wrecks, wrecks, is the startling cry. Such a week (the mid-April gale) has ever been known for disaster and death back of this part of the Cape. First, the ship Inez, of Newburyport, a new vessel loaded with cotton, came on shore, crew saved. Next came the British bark Queen, loaded with sugar. The same night an English schooner leaded with wood was ashore. A topsail schooner anchored the next day and was supplied with sails which she had lost. The wind however shifted, blew on shore and soon raised a sea; she was driven into the breakers during the night—and men on shore could render persons on board no aid. The crew were in momentary expectation that the vessel would go to pieces. The son of the Captain became much chilled. Discovering that they must soon perish if they remained by the wreck, the Captain divested himself of his clothing, attached a line to his person, and threw himself into the surf with the desperate hope of reaching shore. He was successful; by means of the

line to his person the whole crew were released from their perilous condition and all saved. A few moments after they were landed the wreck was in pieces and floating about the shore.

Last evening the bark Josepha was discovered on the outer bar, near the head of the meadow in North Truro. The stern of the bark had broken up. The crew, whose cries for help were heard above the roar of the winds, were seen upon the foremast. But no boat could live to reach them. Nothing can equal the agony of those who beheld them from the shore. Men upon the shore were as frantic to help them as the crew were for help. Two men, Jonathan Collins and Daniel Cassidy, having got down a dory and taking a line, pulled through the surf, and succeeded in reaching the wreck, but having been compelled to cast off the line, the force of the current swung them about as a feather and they were seen to pull desperately for their own lives. It was but an instant, and the dory capsized, and the brave fellows who struggled so hard for the lives of others, were struggling for their own.

Men who had watched with

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breathless anxiety on the shore, shut their eyes and raised their hands to heaven. It was now nearly dark—the gun from the life boat house, for throwing a line to the sufferers, was burst in firing, into a thousand pieces. A fire was kindled on the beach and watch was kept to rescue any that might possibly float from the wreck, which was fast breaking up. A great crash and the disappearance of the bark induced the watchers to go along the shore, hoping possibly to save someone in the surf. None were found; but on coming back to the fire, one man was seated there, and another was found quite exhausted near by. Two out of 18 saved, and two more lost in attempting to save them!

Oct. 13 Vessel Ashore 1875

During the fog and east wind of Tuesday night last the British schr. Daniel W. Clark of St. Johns, N. B., laden with coal, from New York for St. Johns, went ashore on Peaked Hill Bars, Truro. Crew saved. She was condemned and sold to Provincetown parties on the 6th inst. The coal comprising her cargo was sold the following day. The vessel will be torn up, and the cargo, what remains, carted over the Beach to Provincetown.

Yarmouth Register November 22, 1890

NEW ENGLAND FISHING LOSSES. 1890.

The annual recapitulation of the loss of life and property for the year ending Nov. 1, at our fishing ports, are chronicled below:

DENNISPORT.

Schr. Susie wrecked in the harbor, August 27.

CHATHAM.

Schr. A. S. & R. Hammond went ashore on Whalen's Shoal, June 28, and became a total loss.

PROVINCETOWN.

Albert Frazier, one of the crew of schr. Alice, drowned at the Cape of Good Hope.

George Brown, a Portuguese, 18 years old, was drowned by the capsizing of a fishing boat off Nauset, May 31.

Abraham White lost overboard from schr. Charles Hodgdon, Oct. 19.

RECAPITULATION.

| VESSELS       | TONS    | VALUE     | INS.   | LIVES |
|---------------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Gloucester 18 | 1388.87 | \$125,900 | 97,523 | 86    |
| Marblehead    |         |           |        | 1     |
| Swampscott 1  | 5.76    |           |        | 1     |
| Boston 1      | 90.58   |           |        | 2     |
| Dennisport 1  |         |           |        |       |
| Chatham 1     | 66.45   |           |        |       |
| Provincetown  |         |           |        |       |
| Portsmouth 1  | 77.74   |           |        |       |
| Maine 2       | 52.71   |           |        | 8     |

August 7, 1902

Wreckers are engaged with a steam lighter in taking out the cargo of coal of the Jennie C. May, the three master which went ashore at Peaked Hill last spring.



GOING OFF TO A WRECK.