

006-167

The Widening of Ryder St. May 1948

Much of the new sidewalk along the Town Hall side of Ryder Street has also been poured and the local gentry can now appreciate what a big improvement has been made in this little thoroughfare between our two main streets. The new curbing is rounded to the surface of the sidewalk in the surface of which, near the curbing, holes have been left for the insertion of the parking meter posts. A meter company engineer was here to see that these holes were properly spotted to diagonal parking which now will be possible on the widened street. Incidentally all of the trees which were moved from the lane between the street and the old sidewalk to Town Hall lawn will live, the contractor said. There is danger, however, that our beautiful spruce Christmas tree may have been too badly damaged in the storm to live. That, however, is covered by a guarantee. Ryder Street is to be entirely resurfaced.

Work of taking down the buildings in the vicinity of Town hall, Provincetown, where is to be made an approach to the Pilgrim monument, began last week and the structures, seven in number, will soon be removed.

September - 1921

July 10, 1952
Cape End Town Hall "Good"

Provincetown's venerable Town Hall, now some sixty years old, has been given a rating of "good" by the Department of Public Safety after an inspection of its facilities to insure the safety of those using it. Close proximity to other wooden buildings was the only factor which gave the Hall only a "fair" rating.

April 24, 1872

Why can't we have a name for the street running from Dill's bakery to Commercial street? It, used, before it was made a street, to be known as "Methodist Alley"—the old Methodist church standing at its head, but that structure having disappeared and the alley become a street, the old name seems quite inappropriate. Cannot somebody christen it with a suitable appellation? It is of sufficient size and use to deserve it we think.

(See preceding picture, under the old Town Hall. This is now Ryder Street)



1853 - 1877

October 1947
THE "GLASPELL ELM"
At the suggestion of Editor Paul George Lambert of the Provincetown Advocate, a Siberian elm will be planted on Town Hall lawn in Provincetown and dedicated the "Glaspell Elm", in honor of Susan Glaspell, the distinguished Provincetown author. The Provincetown Civic Association has voted the expenditure of \$10 for purchase and planting of the tree.

September 1921 -
Buildings Corner Ryder Street
being razed for widening the
Street.



January 4, 1951
Where Is The Ryder Homestead Now?
Cape Historian Gustavus Paine Asks

By Gustavus Swift Paine.

"My friend Don Trayser," writes Gustavus Swift Paine, "has just sent me the December 21 issue of your good paper with three of my little articles in it. I have so much material, which I write up quickly, that I am enclosing a brief piece about Provincetown. We spend many pleasant hours in Provincetown every year. Last year I tried in vain to find out something about marriages between Portugese and the older Cape Cod stock. There must be many 'Portugese' of Mayflower descent."

Provincetown Landmark

The Ryder house was built on Commercial Street, on the ground where the Town Hall now stands. It was moved to Winslow Street. Does it still exist? If so, who lives there now?

And there were the old, old faces on the walls, in frames as dim as the fading features, but not to be discarded, though a bright and suggestive picture hung here and there among them."

Family Noted

Annie H. Ryder has described it: "It was one of those houses full of histories; not tragedies, but records of such experiences as come in the lives of families neither rich nor poor,—people who have had means enough and love enough to preserve their homesteads from generation to generation. It was a house with a broad front, a square room of considerable dimensions being on each side of the front door. In the left-hand room all the marriages had been celebrated, and in the right-hand room the last services to the dead had been solemnized. In the front room above the apartment where the festivities were held, all the children had been born, and opposite was the chamber where all the guests had lodged. In the long dining-room that extended nearly the width of the house, all the Thanksgiving dinners had been eaten, all the family councils held, while in the tiny bed-rooms at either end of the room the aged grandparents had slept so many years—too feeble to go upstairs.

This was the house of Captain Godfrey Ryder, and, perhaps, of his father, David Ryder. I do not know when it was built. There was born, July 13, 1822, William Henry, son of Captain Godfrey Ryder and Ruth Collins, who were married March 29, 1821, when Captain Godfrey Ryder was twenty-one—he was born the last day of 1799. William Henry Ryder became the richest Universalist minister of his time, and one of the most notable. His chief pastorate was in Chicago. How he made his money, I do not know. His salary was always relatively small. When he died, he was worth about a quarter million. He left five thousand to the Provincetown Universalist church, and about thirty-five thousand to Tufts College. A grand-daughter of his had the curious given name Rydereia, probably rhyming with diphtheria. Captain Godfrey Ryder was long Justice of the Peace in Provincetown.

"The dining-room teemed with suggestions that brought back vivid memories of the family's past. There was the tall wooden clock, with the vessel on its face forever pitching and plunging with the movement of the clock. The sundial was on the window seat with its mysterious line of shadow, accommodating enough on a bright day but sullen and unresponsive whenever the sun hid his face.

In "Margaret Regis and Some Other Girls" Annie H. Ryder has also described the Ryder garden in Provincetown. I have not seen this volume, though there is a copy in the Boston Public Library. It probably has much about Provincetown and the life there. If there is a copy in the Provincetown library, perhaps someone will copy and send in the description of the garden. Annie H. Ryder seems to have been an unmarried grand-daughter of Captain Godfrey Ryder.