

and the time for driving the stakes had arrived. On the west corner of Bangs and Commercial Streets was the property of Mrs. Rebecca Bush, and on the east corner was the Captain's. Now should he, in widening the street, take Mrs. Bush's or his own? After an inward conflict he decided to take his neighbor's and drove the stake in Mrs. Bush's yard.

Mrs. Bush, a widow who worked at sewing to support and educate her four daughters, was Aunt Rosilla's neighbor and staunch friend, so it was to Aunt Rosilla she went to tell what had been done, knowing that she would iron out the difficulty. Not waiting for the home-coming of her husband, Aunt Rosilla went down to the corner and soundly berated him. "Shame on you, Solomon Bangs, trying to cheat a poor widow out of her land!" Needless to say, the stake was removed and Uncle Solomon asked forgiveness, seeding his own corner for the laying out of Bangs Street, which bears his name.

Another land dispute necessitated a court decision, Aunt Rosilla claiming that Mr. Kibby Cook was infringing on her property rights. When Mr. Cook was called to the stand and asked his name, his mind became a blank. He couldn't even remember his name, whereupon the lawyer shouted, "Don't you know your name? Haven't forgotten your name, have you?" Still no reply, so the Judge settled the dispute in Aunt Rosilla's favor, scoring for her another moral victory.

Her strong religious convictions invited many heated arguments. However, she generously modified one in favor of my father with whom she could find but one fault, "Russell was a fine man but he was a Universal."

#### Adventure In Adversity

As the years passed Uncle Solomon's eyesight began to fail until he became totally blind. To a less courageous person such a misfortune would have brought worries as to the future, perhaps dependency on relatives. But to Aunt Rosilla it spelled adventure, for didn't they own some hills at the East End and didn't they enjoy going there on picnics! Why, yes, it was one of the thrills of the summer to spend a day under the pine trees on the hills, eating their lunch after a refreshing swim in the Bay, and then the ride back to town—a glorious day to be remembered. And so was born Aunt Rosilla's brain-child. She called on the company in Boston from which Uncle Solomon had purchased sails, and told them her story.

es, they would trust her for

tents, in fact for anything she desired. At seventy years of age she became the pioneer of the "Over-Night Camps" and it also marked the humble beginning of Bangs-ville.

Bangs-ville, built on ground abutting the old King's Highway, and later called the old road to Truro, was part of a strip of land owned by the ancestors of Captain Bangs. Being ambitious pioneers, they took a strip of land from coast to coast, and settled without permission of the Government, staking their claim. Later, however, the Government took the northern part of the strip, as it had not been improved.

The location of Bangs-ville was ideal for a summer colony, overlooking the harbor on the South, and the broad Atlantic on the East and North, also seen easily from the highway and the train which passed four times daily.

Clearings were made on the hills and the underbrush was levelled, finally tents were seen dotting the hills, silhouetted against the blue sky.

Curiosity became piqued as to the meaning of those tents but, upon inquiring, the townspeople learned that for fifty cents a day one could hire a tent and enjoy a day's outing, the bathing was excellent and, as a further attraction, as many as cared could occupy the tent without extra charge. No further inducement was needed. The family horse was hitched to the carry-all, friends and neighbors were invited to pack a lunch and bring their bathing suits for a day's outing at Bangs-ville. On many a holiday the gay young blades of the town would hitch up faithful "Draco," the horse that Mrs. De-Wager's father had raised from a colt, and invite their best girls for a day's lark at Bangs-ville.

"Bangs-ville, Bangs-ville," the conductor would call out as the train slowed down to a flag stop to allow tired city dwellers to alight. For now Bangs-ville had become more than a village of tents. Cottages had been built, also a general store, and, as a final gesture, a dancing pavilion had been added bearing the name of "Peregrine White," in honor of the first white child to be born aboard the Mayflower while it was in Provincetown harbor.

#### Memorable Event

With all the showmanship of a P. T. Barnum, Aunt Rosilla hired the town band for the official opening of Bangs-ville. Flags and banners heralded the event. Free band concert, free lemonade (as long as it lasted) and fireworks were advertised. Excitement ran high, neighbors were asking each other,

"Going to the grand opening of Bangs-ville tonight?" "Of course I am," would be the reply, "if I have to walk!" which proved more truth than poetry, unless you were fortunate enough to get a ride on the only public conveyance the town offered. It was a buckboard seating six people including the driver—congenial Sy Young, and drawn by one horse named "Fanny", who after trekking from town to Bangs-ville continuously until midnight died peacefully in her stall that night—a martyr to the evening's festivities.

One may ask, "When did all this happen?" and the answer would be, "In the gay nineties," before the automobile made its debut.

Success had crowned Aunt Rosilla's hopes beyond belief and she felt that now she could retire and lead a less hectic life, so she sold Bangs-ville to a syndicate.

Mayflower Heights now stands as a monument to the dream of a seventy-year-old—or should I say young—Pioneer.

Did I say that Aunt Rosilla was going to retire to the proverbial chimney-corner? I am sorry to have misled you, for the greatest moment was just around the corner.

A monument was to be erected at Provincetown commemorating the first landing place of the Pilgrims in 1620 and President Theodore Roosevelt was to lay the cornerstone. Aunt Rosilla had never been in Washington to shake hands with a President, so here was her opportunity. The Mountain had come to Mohammed!

With all the dignity of her 86 years she approached the President at the close of the ceremonies and with outstretched hand told him that she was the oldest citizen in Provincetown and would like to have the honor of shaking hands with him. He graciously replied with his famous, "Deelighted!"

Aunt Rosilla's friends were legion. She spent her days walking from one home to another, leaving a cheery word or a small token, and so it was that she took her final walk to her Eternal Home.

One hot August morning in 1908 Aunt Rosilla was on her usual round of calls when an electrical storm overtook her. In passing Monument Hill a granite laden car descended with lightening speed when a lightening bolt had struck and snapped the cable. Aunt Rosilla's mortal life was snuffed out when the car struck her. Her prayers that she would never become a burden to anyone had been answered.

We salute you, Rosilla Bangs,

Provincetown's noble citizen! You fought a good fight and kept the faith, and have justly earned the blessing of a life well lived.



Scene to the West from behind Burch's (or Bryant's) Market in 1907. Note the old spire of the Centenary Church, left background. Center Methodist, right.