

1245
PORT OF PROVINCETOWN

April 1859 . . .

From Mr. Snow's Quarterly Return of Vessels which have passed by or in the Vicinity of the Light-house—Long Point, during the three months ending March 31st, we find that there were in January - 8 ships, 10 barks, 34 brigs, 1274 schooners, 2 sloops, 18 steamers—in all 1346 . . .

February — 3 ships, 3 barks, 3 brigs, 477 schooners, 9 steamers — 495 . . .

March — 11 brigs, 1005 schooners, 4 sloops, 11 steamers — 1031.

Total . . . 3372



Long Point Light in 1979 by National Park Service

July 8, 1909

The gasoline seineboat Commodore, insured for \$600, was totally

wrecked on Long Point shore last Saturday morning, following partial wrecking ten miles from land. The Commodore was owned by Joseph Lucas and Joseph Cabral. Lucas alone went out in the boat to drag for mackerel Friday. He stuck out twenty nets and hung them until 3 o'clock Saturday A.M., when, the wind and sea having increased to half gale power, he pulled up his dory preparatory to going to the windward end of his string. When he hauled his dory alongside, that small craft became caught beneath the Commodore's guard and was split in two a moment later by a blow from the Commodore as she fell into the trough of the sea. The blow which shattered the dory also smashed the propeller and opened the seams of the Commodore, into which craft sea water began to rush at an alarming rate.

The sea was very choppy and wind blowing hard, but, fortunately, toward this harbor, when Lucas, finding his boat machinery disabled, his dory useless and his big boat in a sinking condition, cut loose from his nets and started for the shore, under the very small bit of canvas used as a riding sail at the nets.

Lucas hoped at first to be able to get his motor craft around Long Point end and beach her in still water on the inner side of the Point, but soon found that he would be fortunate if he could keep her afloat long enough to reach the Wood End shore.

At 6:15 A.M. he put her ashore midway between Wood End and Long Point light, the water under the deck being then above the engine.

During the three-hour run before wind and sea Lucas bailed for dear life, barely succeeding in keeping the craft afloat by hardest labor until she reached the beach. "If the dory had been all right, I would have taken to her long before I reached the shore," he said. Quite a heavy sea was running and the Commodore became a full wreck soon after the stranding. The nets were reported found yesterday.

- October 19, 1961 -

MR. AND MRS. KENNETH H. DUNHAM of Portland, Conn., and Provincetown, while on a vacation last March threw a bottle overboard from a United Fruit freighter aboard which they were sailing for Panama. The bottle turned up on a beach in southeast Texas, September 20, found by a woman who had gone to the shore to see what damage hurricane Esther had done. Mrs. Mary Kormier of Donna, Texas, wrote the Dunhams that she had found the bottle there, about 20 miles north of the Mexican border. The Dunhams say that it was found about 1,000 miles from where they dropped it into the sea and that it took six months and a week to cover the distance. The note in the bottle read: "SS Comayagua (AM), 1300 EST. Lat. 14-23 N — Long. 77-23 W. Thrown overboard by Kenneth H. Dunham, 370 Main St., Portland, Conn., and Alice P. Dunham. Please notify when and where found." Mr. Dunham is the grandson of Capt. John Dunham, who lived at 3 Dyer Street here and who sailed every year to the West Indies. He is also the great-grandson of Capt. John Thomas Dunham, former whaler and keeper of Long Point Light House in 1850-1862. He became keeper of the light after a shark took his leg while he was on a whaling voyage. Mr. Dunham, who has had 12 years of government service, is a candidate for the position of superintendent of the Cape Cod National Seashore Park.

THE LONG ROW HOME

May 1898:—The schooner Joseph E. Johnson, of Provincetown arrived with sad news. Sixteen of her crew, fishing on the Grand Banks, had got caught out in their dories in a dense fog. Days of cruising by the schooner had been fruitless and the Johnson had found not a single dory. She arrived, all decked in mourning, on May 23rd. For three days sixteen Provincetown homes knew the awfulness of sudden death, and all of Provincetown was filled with sadness.

On May 26th, around Long Point Light came a small fleet of dories. Into the harbor came the fleet. In it were everyone of the sixteen missing fishermen. It seemed like a fairy tale to the watchers on the shore who knew before the first dory reached shore the Johnson's men were at the oars. It was almost incredible. Had the fishermen landed in Nova Scotia, 200 miles from the Grand Banks, it might have made sense, and news would have come by the "magnetic telegraph" which would have put at rest all fears.

But here, many hundreds of miles south

of the Grand Banks, came the fishermen. They told this story.

Lost in the fog, unable to find the schooner, blowing their fog horns until hope seemed lost, the men finally rounded up their eight dories and strung them together. Thus they remained for two days. Then the fog lifted. Abandoning two of the dories and distributing the men among others of the small fleet, they started the long pull to LeHarve, Nova Scotia, about 200 miles away. For food they had a small quantity of hard-tack. This was soon exhausted, and they started on a diet of raw fish. Then by great good luck along came the Norwegian bark China, Captain Anderson, on a trip from Hamburg, Germany, for New York. He took the dories and men and proceeded on his journey. Soon the bark fell in with the Boston schooner I. B. Merritt, homeward bound. The fishermen and dories were transferred to the Boston vessel. Nine miles off Race Point Light the Merritt transferred the fishermen to their dories again and the men triumphantly rowed into Provincetown Harbor. A wonderful sensation and a sensational wonder of the sea.