

SCENE ALONG THE BEACH AND NEW STATE ROAD, PROVINCETOWN, CAPE COD, MASS.



Facing back toward Town ----- About 1930

NEW STATE ROAD ALONG THE BEACH, PROVINCETOWN, CAPE COD, MASS.



Race Point Lighthouse
isn't quite so prominent as this!

On a clear day the Plymouth shore is visible from here. The way lies through the Province Lands, from which the town gets her name. In 1691, the Commonwealth was named owner of the Province Lands, which then included the whole town. The town was made a precinct of Truro. In 1727, when the precinct was granted incorporation as a town and was named Provincetown, the title to all lands still rested in the Commonwealth. But Provincetown bought and sold the lots in the village, and became very much aware of the right of private property—save at such times as a ship ran aground on the back shore with a full cargo.

Many of the old deeds read, "from sea to sea", (see the sign on Uncle Ak's Road, several pages ahead), as if the State's title did not exist. And anyone "trespassing" against such rights was apprised of his mistake quickly enough. In 1893, the State surrendered its ownership of land occupied by the village proper, retaining only the Province Lands. The duneland which the State retained was worthless commercially, and in "Owning" it, the State was obliged to spend many thousands of dollars to anchor the blowing sandhills. But, within recent years, summer people have been building houses farther and farther back on the Province Lands.

... From "Cape Cod Pilot" by Jeremiah Digges ...