



The Old Peaked Hill Station --- About 1903



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Surf Boat Drill.

Invented By Woman

The Coston signal flare which is part of the equipment of every Coast Guard who day and night walks the beach along the Back Shore on Cape Cod and elsewhere along the coasts of the United States was invented by a woman—Mrs. Martha J. Coston.

“March 19, 1884:—Shortly before 8 o'clock in the evening the south patrol (going towards Highland Light) of the Peaked Hill Bar Station, Cape Cod, Second District, discovered a three-masted schooner dangerously close to the bar. He at once burned a Coston light to warn her, when she immediately changed her course off shore.

“March 20, 1884:—The south patrol of the Peaked Hill Bar Station just before 8 o'clock in the evening sighted a steamer running too near the bar for her safety. He warned her of her danger by flashing a Coston signal, when she immediately sheered off.

“March 20, 1884:—Shortly before 8 o'clock at night, during a thick northeasterly snow squall, the east patrol of the High Head Station sighted a vessel heading for the beach, apparently unaware that she was so close in. He at once burned a Coston Signal to warn her, when her course was changed off shore and she went clear.”

From the U. S. Lifesaving Records of 1884. March 30th—During the severe northwest gale which prevailed on this date in the vicinity of Lewes, Delaware, the crew of the Lewes Station (Fifth District) were sorely tried in attending to four wrecks and were on constant duty from 3 a. m. to 10 o'clock p. m. At 6 o'clock in the evening the schooner **Charles H. Hodgdon of Provincetown**, with a crew of five men, was seen dragging her anchors. She was flying a distress signal. Although the station crew had been working constantly since 3 a. m. the surf-boat at once put out to her assistance and arrived alongside about the time the vessel grounded. The steam-tug **Ivanhoe** also came in from the breakwater to her assistance. They ran a hawser to the steamer and manned the windlass to get the anchors up. While the schooner's crew manned the pumps and after a hard hour's work the schooner was hauled off the bar and towed under the shelter of the breakwater. The Hodgdon was loaded with corn and was bound from New Castle, Delaware to New Bedford, Mass.

Thus in reading over old maritime records another Provincetown vessel is located. The schooner Hodgdon was a fresh fisherman and also engaged in the coasting trade during off seasons.