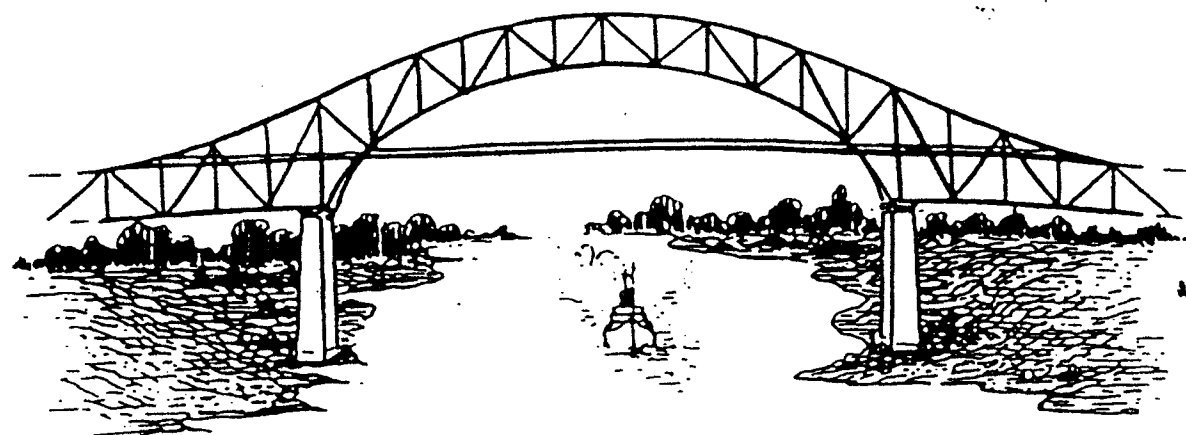


Welcome TO BOURNE

THE FIRST AND LAST TOWN ON CAPE COD



"People have asked us why we call Bourne 'The First and Last Town on Cape Cod.' There are a couple of good reasons that perhaps we ought to explain. To begin with . . . Bourne is the first town on the Cape through which any traveler must pass to get to the lower part of Cape Cod . . . unless he comes by boat. Secondly . . . Bourne is the last town he must pass through when he leaves. But thirdly . . . Bourne was the last of the Cape's 15 towns to be incorporated. That was back in 1884. Originally, Bourne was part of Sandwich which was the first town on the Cape to be incorporated. So, there are your reasons . . . take your pick."

Sumner A. Towne Jr. 1977

The Villages

by Gertrude Tracy

MANY VILLAGES — ONE TOWN

The map of the Town of Bourne resembles a crazy quilt of quaint little villages—and villages within villages. None could be more appropriate for a town created in 1884. (The crest for "Crazy Quilts" was at its height that year.) Bourne villages, adorned with the hallmarks of Cape Cod—from cranberries and pine woods to beach plums and catboats—are as irregular in shape and as colorful as an heirloom quilt.

In the beginning, we were eight quaint little villages, today, we are eleven:

- South Pocasset has become Catamnet;
- Pocasset remains Pocasset;
- Monument Beach remains Monument Beach;
- Monument is now Bourne;
- North Sandwich has become Bournedale;
- Buzzards Bay and Head of the Bay have become Buzzards Bay, and;
- Mashnee and Gray Gables have been established since 1884.

A PROFILE OF THE VILLAGES

South Pocasset had a tavern, Dimmick's, now the home of Mrs. Henry Dimmick. There were cranberry bogs, a wind-powered grist mill, and a herring run at Red Brook—a feature more prized in those days than today. Pocasset shipped much cordwood. It had the town's only light house at Wing's Neck (now the home of Frank Flanagan). Edward D. Lawrence was the keeper. Leonard Wood, who later became Surgeon General of the U.S. and then Governor of the Philippines, attended grammar school in Pocasset and always maintained his home in Pocasset.

Monument Beach had more summer places in 1884 than any of the other villages. It was also a fishing and shellfishing village. Monument was chosen as the location of the town's official business. The old Blackington House near the river (now the Canal) was here for the Town Office and was so used until the Jonathan Bourne Public Library was built in 1897. In those days Monument was the metropolis among the villages. Main Street then meant Main Street (now Sandwich Road) in Monument (Bourne) Village. Monument had the largest population (375) and the greatest number of dwellings (75).

North Sandwich was the home of Thomas Burgess, whose 1652 grant extended along the south bank of the Manomet (Monument) River to Manomet (Monument) Neck and included the land at Apuruck where the Pilgrims had built their Trading Beach Company. . . . In addition to the "cottages" which were soon built along the bluff, two vacation homes, Sagamore Lodge and Bedford Arms, with a boardwalk between, were built. Both have since been destroyed by fire.

According to historian Donald Clark, "Sagamore Beach, as a summer colony, started in 1904 with the formation of the Sagamore Beach Company. . . . In addition to the 'cottages' which were soon built along the bluff, two vacation homes, Sagamore Lodge and Bedford Arms, with a boardwalk between, were built. Both have since been destroyed by fire." This section of present-day Buzzards Bay where Head of the Bay Road winds its way along the head of Butternick Bay, in 1884, an important village in its own right. In stagecoach days it was the only road to accommodate the to-and-fro traffic of Cape Cod. . . . Here was located the old tavern, Crystal Springs Inn, now the Christopher Garland home. It was built by a member of the Gibbs family and is sometimes referred to as the Old Gibbs House.

Last of the eight original villages is Buzzards Bay. In 1914, when the Town Hall was built, the Town Offices were moved across the river which was to become the Cape Cod Canal that same year. Buzzards Bay was the center of communication for the eight villages. The telegraph was essential to railroad operation, and Buzzards Bay's telegraph was William Gidley, father of Sarah Gidley Byles. He was railroad telegrapher, Western Union operator, and press man for President Cleveland.

That section of present-day Buzzards Bay where Head of the Bay Road winds its way along the head of Butternick Bay, in 1884, an important village in its own right. In stagecoach days it was the only road to accommodate the to-and-fro traffic of Cape Cod. . . . Here was located the old tavern, Crystal Springs Inn, now the Christopher Garland home. It was built by a member of the Gibbs family and is sometimes referred to as the Old Gibbs House.

Sand from Head of the Bay had been tested by the Sandwich Glass Company in 1824 but, although superior to other local sand, it was not of the proper quality to produce fine glass. Today the "fining village" is a quiet rural road of private residences bordered by bogs and Gray's Field Farm.

MORE RECENT VILLAGES

Two new villages have sprung up in the Town of Bourne, both within the confines of Old Monument. The first is Mashnee, originally an island. Many of the first settlers on Monument Neck had rights of access to the island for grazing and harvesting salt hay. There was a solar evaporation salt works on the island until a hurricane carried the remains of it to Wareham in 1815. Between 1923 and 1938 the island was occupied by a popular sailing camp for boys, directed by M.W. Murray of Newtonville. The camp was forced out of business during the first year of World War II because of blackouts and regulations and because Buzzards Bay had become a rendezvous for convoys bound for the North Atlantic.

In the sailing camp days, the course of the Cape Cod Canal passed between Mashnee Island and Monument Neck. In 1938 the channel was changed to a point directly west of the State Pier and north of Mashnee. The dredged material was used to build a dike which made Mashnee a peninsula. In 1953 the "island" was purchased by Stephen Days who, with permission of the Corps of Engineers, built a road across the dike. It is now a thriving community of private homes and a cottage colony owned by Stephen Days, Jr.

Gray Gables is the second village that did not exist in 1884. It was for thirteen happy years, the summer home of Grover Cleveland. For four years the summer White House was here. Two of the President's children were born here. When his first child died in 1904, Cleveland could not bear to return. The house became an inn and finally burned on December 13, 1974.

Gray Gables began to be developed by Stockpole and Brown more than fifty years ago and today is a thriving "village" where every year more people make year-round homes.

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