



### THE WHALE IS A BEAUTIFUL CREATURE

Mr. Winslow Weeks and Capt. Josiah Black combined to enlist our support and sympathy for the gigantic, gentle and certainly threatened creature we call the whale, at our March program. A fine audience found their way to our substitute meeting place, and it was a very enlightening and entertaining program. We hope to hear from Mr. Weeks again.

### NEXT TIME - IT'S GRAVESTONES

We had a whale of a program in March, but April's program is a grave subject. (Sorry!) Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bliven will bring us a slide and talk program on Cape Cod gravestones - and this is sure to be a much livelier program than it might appear. The epitaphs and decorations on old gravestones make our burying grounds a sociological, artistic and religious museum. Mr. and Mrs. Bliven have made a study of the various aspects of gravestones, and will share their expertise with us. You will learn a lot. For example, do you know what a cenotaph is? You should, we're surrounded by them! Come to our April meeting, at Carleton Hall, Dennis, at 3 P.M. on Sunday, April 13th.

### WHERE IN THE WORLD WAS BAKER'S HALL?

You know, I was afraid no one would ask, but the very day the newsletter came in the mail I got the question. Baker's Hall stood on Main Street in South Dennis, just a bit south of the Congregational Meeting House. The site was approximately the north-east corner of Main Street and Lockwood Drive. It was built about 1836 as a Universalist Meeting House, and had a steeple and a weather vane. The Universalists were served for the most part by itinerant preachers, with the exception of Rev. Rugg, who lived here for a year or two, and was a founder of Benjamin Franklin Lodge of Masons. The parish provided but little competition for the established Congregational church, and was used less and less for church services. The land was the property of Capt. John Baker, and when religious services ceased, he rented the building for social purposes, and it was known as 'Baker's Hall'. It was sold to Dr. Ginn in 1886, removed to Dennis Port, and subsequently burned.

### THE AUDIO-VISUAL COMMITTEE IS AT IT AGAIN

Our original slide show on the history of Dennis is three years old and has been shown to groups around the Cape and as far away as Taunton, over 50 times. It is still enjoyed and will be shown to the general public as part of the Register's 150th anniversary celebration in the next few months. If you haven't seen it at all, make it a must. And if you have, you will enjoy it even more the second time.

Now we are at work on two new productions. The first is a short one, telling the complete story of the Shiverick Shipyard, and the second a 30-minute maritime history of the town, including fishing, merchant vessels, lightship service and all. We need your help in assembling the three hundred or more slides which we need to tell the story. Especially helpful - old pictures of Sesuit Harbor, of any Dennis shoreline (without wires and television antennas, please), the Shiverick houses, Shiverick artifacts, fish flakes, weirs, any of the lightship, mariners and their families, and vessels of all types. If you will loan us any of these pictures, please call Bill Scofield at 385-3901 or Nancy Reid 398-8842.

### A TALE OF A CHILD WHO WENT TO SEA

I'm sure you remember the story of young John Milton Hedge and his calmness in the face of the fury met while rounding Cape Horn? Surely, as an old man, John repeated this story again and again, to children, grandchildren, and whoever would listen. John's brother Joseph was also taken for a voyage aboard the ship Webfoot, of which their father, Capt. Milton P. Hedge, was Master for all of its career as a locally owned vessel (1856-1864). For this second venture, Mrs. Hedge was better prepared to cope with the problems of a long sea voyage with young children aboard a sailing ship. No doubt she spent as much time in planning ways to entertain, educate and keep her youngsters well and happy as Capt. Milton did in planning to provision his vessel. The children also knew more about going to sea, from John's earlier trip and from their neighbor, Louisa Sears, whose experience gave the boys ideas. It seems that her father, Capt. Joshua Sears, who had a reputation as a "hard driver" among his crew, was a bit of a pushover as far as his only daughter was concerned. On a voyage aboard the Webfoot's sister ship, Wild Hunter, Lulu and Mrs. Sears had accompanied Capt. Joshua, and had been allowed to take along Lulu's pony. Joseph Hedge had a pet goat, and how could Capt. Milton refuse to let him take his goat along? And so the goat, whose name I do not know, began a circumnavigation of the globe. But alas, the goat never returned to East Dennis to tell its stories to its descendants. As the Webfoot was nearing one of its ports of call, Capt. Hedge had the mate call all hands on deck to make the vessel ship shape. A little painting was required to repair the wear of months at sea. The goat thought that the paint looked tasty, and ate some, which caused his demise. I thought goats could eat anything. So did that goat, I guess. So endeth the journey of Joseph's goat.

## CALENDAR

April 3	10 A.M.	Chapel in the Pines, Eastham. Meeting of the Cape and Islands Association.
April 13	3 P.M.	Carleton Hall. Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bliven - "Gravestones".
April 22	7:30 P.M.	Executive Board. Phyllis' house.
May 18	3 P.M.	Senior Center. Don Sparrow - "Growing Up on Cape Cod".
June 22		Birthday Luncheon. Lighthouse Inn. 12:30 social hour. 1:30 luncheon.
June 2-6		Ezra H. Baker field trips to the Historic Centers. Volunteers needed.

### THE ALEWIVES ARE RUNNING

It's a little early, but the annual run of alewives, sometimes called herring, has begun. We shall watch with interest the efforts of the Conservation Commission to revitalize ancient runs in our town. The Brewster Mill is the most spectacular place to see this annual phenomena. Years ago, spring heralded another run of a cousin of the alewife. Early colonists found that the shad migrated to the south shore, and I would guess that either Herring River ponds or the now vanished Pound Pond was their destination. They were eagerly anticipated, for the shad is an extremely tasty fish, and has excellent roe. Then, sometime in the early 1800's, the shad stopped coming to Dennis Port. Shad do this from time to time; it's a mystery why. There was great excitement in 1888, when the shad just as abruptly returned. But in a few years they had vanished again, and today it is only the humble alewife which struggles up our streams. You can locate the spot where fishermen netted this spring bonanza in by-gone days by following Shad Hole Road in Dennis Port, a reminder of the succulent treat we can no longer enjoy from local waters.

### WHO OR WHAT IS THE UPPER TEN?

You thought I wouldn't find out, didn't you? Well, I went over and asked my brother Ben. Anything I don't know, he knows. This is what I learned. The phrase is a popular shortening of a phrase coined by a journalist named Nathaniel Parker Willis who, in an article entitled "The Necessity for a Promenade Drive", published in 1860, wrote these immortal words: "At present there is no distinction among the upper ten thousand of the city." I presume he was speaking of New York, not Dennis. He seems to have picked up on that number from an argument between J. Fennimore Cooper and Thomas C. Haliburton, who tried to decide the difference between "Upper Ten Thousand" and "Upper Crust". Other social observers began to whittle that figure in a rather undemocratic way. Ward McAllister, you may remember, made it four hundred, and James Payn got it down to "Upper Ten".

N. P. Willis is also responsible for coining such forgettable quotes as "Press on! For in the Grave there is no work" and "Mad ambition trumpeteth to all."

If you wish to increase your vocabulary and literary education, be sure to read your D.H.S. newsletter regularly.

### THE MAILING LIST IS BEING REVISED

....And a few of you who have forgotten to pay your dues will have your names removed, so get those dues to Isabel Flynn, P.O. Box 607, South Dennis, 02660. Also, and we quote from a mid-western church bulletin: "If you have died or otherwise changed your address, please inform the membership chairman, so we can correct our list."

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