



### POSTCARD PROGRAM A DELIGHT

We had a wonderful time looking at picture postcards of the town in years gone by. Thanks to Jean Dunham and Helen Crowell who helped to organize this fun evening. We sincerely thank everyone who shared their postcards with us, and lots of you did. Additional bouquets to Richard Colby and Carolyn Kelley for finding us the proper projector and to Kendall Foster who assisted Nancy in running the projector. It has been suggested that we repeat this kind of a program, in the same format as we held Memory Days. An afternoon or early evening program would be scheduled in each village, and pictures of that village would be shown. Does that strike anyone as a good idea? If so, we'll try.

### 'AN AWFUL AND SURPRISING PROVIDENCE'

In a month of newsworthy happenings, such as a football strike, the First Lady's surgery, and the stock market's 'melt-down,' nothing that happened reached the hearts of the American public as did the plight of tiny Jessica McClure. In the wink of an eye, this happy 18 month old became trapped in a narrow well shaft, nearly 30 feet below ground level. We all listened intently, from Cape Cod to California, as the media covered this potential tragedy, all hoping - some praying - that a miracle would occur and little Jessica would be returned to her parents' arms, alive and well. And it happened. Through the super-human efforts of engineers, neighbors, and medical personnel, this little child was rescued from her entombment and will live to become a legend of hope and human effort. Her story calls to mind another miraculous tale from early Colonial days. Ebenezer Taylor was born in Old Yarmouth in 1682. The Taylor's neighborhood was near the Brays, at Hockonom, so technically this story is Yarmouth's history, but we were all one town at that time, and you can bet this event excited those living in the east part of town as much as those living in the west. On a day in August of 1726, Ebenezer and his hired man set out to clear his well. The man descended into the well and found a breach in the stone wall. He felt it was dangerous to work in the well and climbed back up and said so to Ebenezer. Ebenezer would see for himself, so he let himself down by the rope to inspect the area. In so doing, his foot kicked against the wall and the stones tumbled down around him, dislocating his hip. The weakening of the lower wall of the well caused the upper wall to collapse also, and Ebenezer found himself suspended between a precarious arch of large stones above, and a jagged heap of loose stone below. He was supported only by the well rope, to which he clung with both of his hands. The hired man feared greatly that Mr. Taylor was crushed to death. Nevertheless, he sent out an alarm to gather a rescue crew, to try to see if Ebenezer had survived. Now of course in 1987, the news of Jessica's predicament was flashed across wires and known around the world in seconds. In a few minutes time, mine experts, heavy equipment and paramedics stood by to plan the effort to save the little girl. In 1726, that hired man had to run from farm to farm, along the King's Highway, to round up enough men to attempt a rescue. In the meantime, Ebenezer hung, not knowing what was happening or even if an attempt would be made to free him. It was late on Saturday afternoon before enough strong men had congregated and digging could commence. Some felt that Ebenezer had surely perished, and they should wait until first light on Monday to remove the remains of their late friend. But others felt that, although chances were slim, they should make an effort as long as light lasted, in the dim hope that he was still alive. Inside his tomb, Ebenezer called to his rescuers, but his voice could not be heard. One of the rescuers tugged at the rope, making Ebenezer fearful that it would slip from his hands. At one point one of the men began to untie the rope, but another suggested they might want to lower someone down. After several hours of work, they came to within 3-4 feet of the buried man and - miracle of miracles - they began to hear his cries. Pressing on with renewed vigor, they carefully removed the large stones above his head. Mr. Taylor, after ten hours of imprisonment, was still alert and able to direct the men as to the safest way to remove the stones. "With care and industry they soon obtained his deliverance," says the broadside printed in Boston describing his accident. Ebenezer's disjointed bones were set, his scrapes and bruises healed, and he lived to be 88 years old, to see his family grow and prosper. We wish as many and more happy, fruitful years to Jessica.

### TRIVIAL QUOTES

"A little rebellion now and then is a good thing and as necessary in a political world as storms in the physical." Thomas Jefferson.

"There's a sucker born every minute." Phineas T. Barnum.  
How did you do?

### THE CONSTITUTION'S BICENTENNIAL IS BEING OBSERVED IN DENNIS

In addition to the public ceremony and bell ringing which took place on Sept. 17, various exhibits at our public libraries and school activities are continuing to celebrate the great document of our freedom. We would like to congratulate the winners of the trivia contest at Wixon School - Josh Eldred, Susan Colby and Robert Brogan. More about these contests next time.

CALENDAR

Nov. 17 7:30 P.M. At Sarah's. Board will meet.  
Nov. 29 3:30 P.M. Carleton Hall. Mr. Clive Driver, slides and talk, 'The Building of the Pilgrim Monument.'  
Dec. 13 3 - 5 Christmas Open House - Jericho House

THE BUILDING OF THE PROVINCETOWN MONUMENT

While most of the nation's attention turns to Plymouth during the Thanksgiving month, true Cape Codders always bear in mind that the Pilgrims first placed their feet on American soil at the tip of Cape Cod. Mr. Clive Driver, Director of the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum, has assembled a talk and slide presentation concerning facts about the construction of that town's monument to our Mayflower ancestors. He will be our guest at the November meeting at Carleton Hall at 3:30 P.M. on Sunday, November 29th. I'm sure you will find his talk most interesting, informative and entertaining. Bring a friend.

A GIFT FROM HISTORY

While you are spending an entertaining afternoon with fellow members, you will also have an opportunity to do some Christmas shopping at the November meeting on the 29th. We will offer for your examination the books, pamphlets, and other historical items which D.H.S. has in the hopes that some of you will have friends on your list for whom they will be appropriate. Please look at them and help the Society if you can.

THE PORTLAND GALE - NOVEMBER 25-26, 1898

The moon was full over Boston on the 24th of November, 1898 - the hunter's moon - and an ominous circle glowed around it. No long-range weather forecast was available in those days, but old-timers pronounced it likely that a storm was on the way. The captain of the steamship Portland which carried freight and passengers to that Maine port from the hub, may have felt some uneasiness as he gazed at that moon, but as Saturday broke clear, he decided to steam out of Boston as scheduled. Most likely he could be safe in Portland before the weather changed. But as everyone knows, he was not. The approaching weather system was no ordinary storm. By Saturday night, it was a full-blown blizzard with winds of 60-70 m.p.h. The storm continued unabated into Sunday, and it was not until Monday morning that the full extent of damage and isolation could be assessed. The telegraph wires were down, so only by observation was the state of affairs to be learned. In East Dennis, the mill had been blown down, and several chimneys toppled. In Dennis, New Boston was an island. Roads were heaped with drifts of snow. Railroad bridges were washed away. Along the shore, several wrecked vessels could be seen, and the villagers did their best to rescue their crews. The S.S. Portland, however, was not among them. Only once during the storm did life savers on the beach believe they sighted her, as she battled to make a safe port somewhere on the Cape, at Plymouth, or back at Boston. But the debris from the fine ship would confirm what all feared. She was lost with all hands. As the acute emergency subsided, concern was expressed for vessels belonging to this town. Reports of sailings on or about the 24th or 25th were coming over the repaired telegraph wires. The bad news that the schooner M.E. Eldridge had been dismasted in port, that the schooner Calvin F. Baker was a wreck near Boston, and the James Ames also lay damaged was accompanied by the good news that, except for one casualty, the crews of these vessels were safe. No word had been received from the West Dennis schooner James B. Pace, however. She was owned by Capt. William Garfield, and his son John was her Master. As weeks went on, hope faded and grieving friends and family consoled each other at the loss. Next time I will tell you of her ironic fate.

AMONG OUR NEW MEMBERS.....

.... we are happy to welcome Burton Doherty, Olive Crowell, Mrs. Charles A. Black, Mrs. Mary B. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Perry, Janet S. Dumas, and Linda Mele. Greet them at the November meeting.

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