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MV Historical Notes and Excerpts III

One of many documents containing miscellaneous notes from readings on the history of the Vineyard.
These were compiled over a six-year period beginning in 2011.

Tracks of a Traveler, Part III Rev BF Tefft, pp. 281-283

The Ladies' repository: a monthly periodical, devoted to literature, arts, and religion.

Cincinnati: Methodist Episcopal Church Volume 10, Issue: 9, Sept 1850

MARTHA'S VINEYARD.

At Holmes' Hole—I eschew the name—it became my duty to leave the boat, and proceed to the village of Edgartown, on the opposite side of the island of Martha's Vineyard, by a sort of wigwam on two pairs of wheels. The island is every-where, so far as I had opportunity of seeing, a perfect desert, excepting the garden-plots in its several towns. For aught I know, it might have been a "vineyard" when the veritable Martha was alive; but in these degenerate days, the whole island is not worth one acre of ordinary Indiana land. It is astonishing how these Yankees can talk about their "farms," as if a wide sand-barren, incumbered with dwarfy, miserable, moss-covered, shrub-oak bushes, with scarcely a square yard of natural soil, where the lichen of the dumpy trees has hard work to live, can be called a *farm* in the American sense of that Eng-

old and familiar friends. Of Edgartown itself I can not say a great deal in the way of praise. It is a rambling little city, if it be a city, of four churches, two wind-mills, and about two or three thousand souls. The people, however, like all the people of Massachusetts, are not only industrious, but intelligent, good-natured, and of a very social turn. They are well supplied with schools and churches. The Methodist Church is the largest, wealthiest, and most influential on the island. The church edifice is very large; the congregation very nearly fills it; and the religious services, now conducted by the Rev. Charles H. Titus, are distinguished by first-rate music. The whole is supported mainly by its whale-ships and herring-fisheries. There was a ship in the harbor at the time of my visit, from which a cargo of sperm and right-whale oil, valued at sixty-eight thousand dollars, had just been rolled out upon the wharf. The herring are caught in scoops during the months of March, April, and May, as the fish run up the small fresh-water brooks in their annual visitations inland. It

A Summer in New England. Second Paper. D.H. Strother. 1860. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 21 (124): 44-461

Naushon, Nonamesset,
Onkatonka, and Wepecket,
Nashawena, Pesquinese,
Cuttyhunk, and Penikese.

SUCH are the uncouth and barbarian names that first salute the ears of the seaward-bound traveler, who having beheld the most Christian city of New Bedford fade out between sky and water, turns from his retrospections to consider that line of islands lying across the entrance to Buzzard's Bay, seeming to bar the outward passage. Collectively, they are called the "Elizabeth Islands," in honor of the Virgin Queen who reigned in England at the time of their discovery. Their individual titles were doubtless received from the aboriginal heathen, and woven into euphonious verse by some inspired Longfellow of the whale-ship's fore-castle.

our pains a most charming view of the Sound and the opposite shores. Turning landward, we pursued our walk along grassy lanes and through the stunted forests that partially clothed the hills, coming frequently upon pretty fresh painted cottages seated amidst shrubbery and flowers, and tenanted by a quiet-mannered wife and a flock of rosy, bright-eyed children. Doubtless the nests of those eagle-hearted fishers of the deep, who, sailing in antipodal seas, may be at this moment dreaming of their Vineyard homes.

West Tisbury is a quiet rural village near the centre of the Vineyard, located on a high plain, in the midst of what appears to be the best agricultural portion of the island. Our sojourn here, although rendered memorable by the most charming and polished hospitality, was not marked by any of those notable adventures or exciting novelties so indispensable to the tourist's note-book. Yet to the lover of nature the views from the breezy hill-tops which rise to the westward of Tisbury offer varied and uncommon attractions. Around and beneath him he may see, looking eastward, the extensive plain that lies toward Edgartown, like a sea of green sward, with islands of stunted forest and white farm-houses dotted over its surface, like sails on the ocean. To the west is a tumult of hills, grass covered, specked with flocks of sheep, and broken with numerous detached and massive granite rocks, which seem to have no kindred with the earth where they are found, but are said by geologists to have been brought there by icebergs in former times. Perhaps they were; but who knows? Among the trees that flourish in the valleys one may see the occasional glitter of a lake, half hidden, like a coy maiden peeping from an embowered window. To the south, a long, straight line of yellow sand beach is visible, where the surf flashes and thunders eternally. Then above and around all the unbroken circle of blue, upon whose edge the dome of heaven fits as accurately as the cover of a soup-tureen, the magnificent panorama of ocean, sights and sounds sublimely impressive to the landsman, and which, like the snow-capped mountains to the Switzer, the wild prairie bloom to the Western Indian, the heather to the Scot—like all natural beauties and sublimities—become essential to the life of those born and nurtured within their influence.

Martha's Vineyard is the largest of the group of islands lying off the southern coast of Massachusetts, and, with the Elizabeth Islands, forms Duke's County of that Commonwealth. Its length from east to west is about twenty miles. It is ten miles wide at one point, although its mean breadth does not exceed five. On the north and west its surface is undulating, rising in ridges and hills to the height of two hundred feet or more. Toward the south and east it is a plain, chiefly covered with a growth of stunted shrubbery, and reminding one, in its general features, of the high levels of the Alleghanies. There is a fair proportion of woodland, the growth chiefly of post oaks, which seldom attain a greater height than twenty-five or thirty feet; and the only tree or shrub which seems to attain its full size under the influence of the salt winds is the lilac, which grows here in great beauty and profusion. The land produces good grass; and under a proper system of cultivation the crop of cereals is found profitable. Notwithstanding the efforts of several public-spirited gentlemen, who have established an agricultural society and cultivate model farms, the tillage of the soil is not a favorite occupation with the Vineyarders. The hand which has wielded the harpoon can not

From Tisbury we visited the Indian reservation at Gay Head, so called from a remarkable headland that forms the western extremity of the island. Here, on a dreary point, nearly cut off from the main body of the island by a couple of fresh-water ponds, dwells the scanty remnant of the aboriginal inhabitants of the land. The moment we enter the reservation the appearance of every thing indicates a thriftless and inferior people. The hills are treeless and shrubless; a number of ordinary cattle may be seen browsing upon the luxuriant grass; but no signs of cultivation or improvement are visible except a few lonely, unpainted, and unornamented wooden houses, and several sorry patches of corn or kitchen vegetables, weed-grown, neglected, and forlorn.

Having thus far given our attention exclusively to the light-house and its surroundings, we resolved to see something of the Indians; and on the third day of our sojourn started out on a tour of observation. The only roads in the reservation (except the main road to the lighthouse) are narrow foot-paths through the grass, leading from house to house; and taking one of these, by the keeper's direction, we went to visit Hetty Ames, the recognized great-grandmother of the community. We easily found her hut, situated in a thicket of bushes or scrubby trees; but there was

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The population of the Gay Head reservation numbers about three hundred, great and small. Very few of them are of pure Indian blood, as they have intermarried with negroes and mulattoes of every grade, who, in pursuit of that life of equality and lazy independence which they have sought in vain among the whites, readily associate themselves with these remnants of the aboriginal tribes. Notwithstanding these casual additions to the community its numbers diminish from year to year, and in a few more decades nothing will remain of them but the name.

All recollection of their former life had been obliterated.

assured that I parted with a truly pious and estimable man. Making our way to the main road and crossing the water by a bridge and causeway, we strolled leisurely over the hills toward Tisbury.

This part of the island is entirely destitute of trees and shrubs (except where they have been cultivated about the farm-houses), and to eyes accustomed to the verdure of forests it looks desolate and dreary; yet the grass is fine, and from the amount of tillage visible, one may infer that it is fairly profitable.

County of Dukes County [www http://www.dukescounty.org/pages/dukescountyma_administration/about](http://www.dukescounty.org/pages/dukescountyma_administration/about)
VINEYARD HAVEN is the most active year-round community, partly because it is the only year-round ferry port on Martha's Vineyard. Most Vineyard Haven shops and restaurants remain open in the winter, unlike those in Oak Bluffs and Edgartown which rely more heavily on summer tourist trade.

The vibrant business community supplies the island's extensive building trade, and the time-honored boatbuilding industry thrives.

A town by definition, geographically GOSNOLD consists of the nine Elizabeth Islands stretching from Woods Hole, Mass., in a southerly direction, roughly parallel to the western side of Martha's Vineyard Island. Gosnold separates Vineyard Sound from Buzzards Bay.

Miles of free public beaches and other recreational opportunities, coupled with exciting night life and exquisite natural beauty, give the Island its world-class reputation. The many celebrity homeowners and visitors are evidence that the "rich and famous" consider Martha's Vineyard a premier playground.

The Gale Huntington Library functions as both a research library and archive for the Martha's Vineyard Museum. The research library holds approximately 5,000 books. It also possesses the largest collection of genealogical resources and records on the Island. The archive holds 550 linear feet of manuscripts, whaling logbooks, rare postcards, census records, Island newspapers, town and state records, and maritime business records and account books. The archive contains several special collections such as Revolutionary War documents, Native American collections, and approximately 500 maps and 400 nautical charts. The archive also houses the recordings and transcripts of the MVM's oral history collection. Finally, the Huntington's Library's photo archive contains approximately 50,000 images, 600 stereographs, and 400 daguerreotypes.

History of Whaling and Estimated Kill of Right Whales, *Balaena glacialis*, in the Northeastern United States, 1620-1924

Reeves, RR | Breiwick, JM | Mitchell, ED

Marine Fisheries Review [Mar. Fish. Rev.]. Vol. 61, no. 3, pp. 1-36. 1999.

This study, part of a broader investigation of the history of exploitation of right whales, *Balaena glacialis*, in the western North Atlantic, emphasizes U.S. shore whaling from Maine to Delaware (from lat. 45 degree N to 38 degree 30'N) in the period 1620-1924. Our broader study of the entire catch history is intended to provide an empirical basis for assessing past distribution and abundance of this whale population. Shore whaling may have begun at Cape Cod, Mass., in the 1620's or 1630's; it was certainly underway there by 1668. Right whale catches in New England waters peaked before 1725, and shore whaling at Cape Cod, Martha's Vineyard, and Nantucket continued to decline through the rest of the 18th century. Right whales continued to be taken opportunistically in Massachusetts, however, until the early

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20th century. They were hunted in Narragansett Bay, R.I., as early as 1662, and desultory whaling continued in Rhode Island until at least 1828. Shore whaling in Connecticut may have begun in the middle 1600's, continuing there until at least 1718. Long Island shore whaling spanned the period 1650-1924. From its Dutch origins in the 1630's, a persistent shore whaling enterprise developed in Delaware Bay and along the New Jersey shore. Although this activity was most profitable in New Jersey in the early 1700's, it continued there until at least the 1820's. Whaling in all areas of the northeastern United States was seasonal, with most catches in the winter and spring. Historically, right whales appear to have been essentially absent from coastal waters south of Maine during the summer and autumn. Based on documented references to specific whale kills, about 750-950 right whales were taken between Maine and Delaware, from 1620 to 1924. Using production statistics in British customs records, the estimated total secured catch of right whales in New England, New York, and Pennsylvania between 1696 and 1734 was 3,839 whales based on oil and 2,049 based on baleen. After adjusting these totals for hunting loss (loss-rate correction factor = 1.2), we estimate that 4,607 (oil) or 2,459 (baleen) right whales were removed from the stock in this region during the 38-year period 1696-1734.

Historical influences on the vegetation and soils of the Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts coastal sandplain: Implications for conservation and restoration.

Christopher Neill, Betsy Von Holle, Katherine Kleese, Kristin D. Ivy, Alexandra R. Collins, Claire Treat, Mary Dean

Geomorphology of a sand ridge

JD Smith - The Journal of Geology, 1969 – JSTOR

Tisbury - MHC Reconnaissance 1984

1890s Shingle Style estates on W Chop remain relatively intact.

Surviving Indian names all coastal or wetland.

1663-4 WChop or HH Neck sold to whites.

Chickemoo area E of L Tashmoo

Population figures inseparable from WT until 1892. Long disagreement over ministerial taxation – separate parishes in 1792.

5 of island's 8 salt works in HH – 76% of capacity.

Slower maritime development than Edgartown. 1830 – first deep-water wharves. Then important for wool and ag goods. First telegraph 1856. 1845 – peak of Tisbury whaling.

Ashappaquonsett herring run – 1865 100 men employed.

1865 - >80% of firewood cut in county.

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Great fire of 1883 destroyed much of downtown. Impetus for first public water supply on island – West Chop Land & Water Company – pumping station at Tashmoo Springs 1887.

Dunwiddie 1992. Changing Landscapes. A Pictorial Field Guide to a Century of Change on Nantucket. Nantucket Conservation Foundation, Nantucket.

HDT 1854 “this island must look exactly like a prairie, except that the view in clear weather is bounded by the sea...there is not a tree to be seen, except such as are set out about houses”.

1801 observer “The almost total want of trees, houses, and fences, in the interior part of the island, makes the road very uninteresting to the traveler”.

Early forests – stunted and windswept.

Obed Macy 1835 “peat...was found to be excellent firing. Some dug up the shrub oaks with their roots, which answered a very good purpose; some, in the winter season cut brush in the swamps, which burned well but did not make a durable fire....All the swamps to the westward of the town were laid out for the purpose of digging peat”.

Coskata – stunted forest with multiple stems from repeated cutting

Great Fire 1846 – set back whaling when facing competition from New Bedford.

Very slow forest recovery. Few surviving trees took decades to grow, reproduce and spread. Pitch pines brought in 1847 and 1850s. As more plants in and established invasion spread exponentially. Seed availability increased; birds etc. attracted and spread; shaded soils kept moist; canopy blocked wind and salt spray; succession increased at ever expanding rate. Trees established under protective cover.

Growing tourist industry that would eventually dwarf the whaling industry’s economic impact and the sheep grazing’s visual impact. RR to surfside and then Siasconset.

“Moors” appeared around 1900. Previously just pasture. Nostalgic images of Scotland.

Before European settlement – heathlands only in restricted areas close to shore. Widespread with clearance and pasture.

Botanists in 1800s – few flowering specimens due to grazing.

South shore eroding 11-13 feet per year.

Japanese black pine – very salt tolerant, fast-growing; Japanese honeysuckle, autumn olive; Scotch Broom; no skunks or raccoons yet;

“Even when they have been saved from the developer, these areas are still threatened by the succession of pine, scrub oak, and other taller woody plants...” Brush cutting, mowing, grazing.

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“A final factor threatening the heathlands is the natural succession of taller woody plants.”

“Why not let nature ‘take its course’ and allow those areas to return by themselves to forest?...In the case of coastal areas of New England, the “natural” vegetation that occurred may have been substantially modified for thousands of years by fires either accidentally or deliberately set by Indians. Thus, the recreation of the “natural” landscape probably should incorporate those elements, including fire that sustained it.”

Anonymous. 1976. Brewster. A Cape Cod Town Remembered. Brewster Historical Society. Brewster, MA

Windmills pumped water into vats to dry for salt. Roofs later added to vats. 1806 60-70,000 feet of salt works in Bewster.

Also – grist mills, saw mills and cider press from wind.

Tidal mills operated periodically through day.

Cranberry industry started in 1816 on Cape.

Ogden 1961. Forest History of MV

Hollick 1984 – Postulated land connection between NJ Coastal Plain and CC and islands based on flora.

Fernald 1911 – accepted hypothesis and applied to flora in Nfld and Labrador.ogg 1930 – Elizabeth Islands. No comprehensive flora of MV. Bcknell and Fogg – MV more boreal.

Bicknell 1919 – ACK – 1108 vascular species – 31% introduced; 50% of the 69% have S affinities; 20% of 69% were N.

Fogg 1930 – 558 native species, 128 introduced. Natives – 20% Southern, 9 % Northern.

Pete Ogden made flora around his sites – 27% Southern, 33% Northern. Agrees qualitatively with Fogg and Bicknell – MV more northern.

“None of the woodlands of the Vineyard can be called forests. Some of the better woodlands will probably develop into stratified communities barring further disturbance. These “good woodlands” are restricted to protected valleys and slopes of the moraine that forms the northwest coast of MV. The most prominent trees in these stands are white oak, Qa; beech, Fg,; and sassafras, Sa.”

“The Vineyard today, therefore, is somewhat bedraggled in a vegetational sense. The dependence of the early colonists on the forests for timber and fuel is evidenced by the depauperate woodlands”

WO, B, S - >60% of trees on better sites.

Others – BG, BO, RO, Hop Horn, Pignut, RM, Holly, GB, WB (introduced), BC, dogwood, and aspen.

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Old field succession – PP, Red Cedar, Black Locust; cedar gets established and then PP (after cedars 15-40 yrs), rapidly form nearly pure stand with few seedlings of oak (over 50-100 years); BO and RO more abundant in succession; form a tangle understory in which W) develops; dense BO, RO force WO into straight-stemmed habit; only as BO, RO die that mesic spp appear – sassafras, hickory, beech and black gum. Stag-headed BO and RO are 125 to 250 yrs old when nice straight-stemmed WO present and mesic spp establishing [chronology doesn't make sense given the actual history – only 100 years since peak of deforestation when he writes this]

“There are few large trees on the Vineyard and all of the original woodland was cut for firewood or lumber during the early colonial period of the island”

Priester's Woods – only with a developed understory – WO 43.5” and 35””; Be 49” and 38””, RM 32””; BC 18.5””; Locust 17””. W) stumps – 285 and 330 years old [335 -380 years today!]

Bulk of woodland – PP and oak – scrubby and with extensive multi-stemmed oak 4-6 inches dbh; characteristic of intensive and repeated burning. A few old trees with fire scars.

[DRF – no discussion of primary vs secondary forests; repeated cutting for woodlot – mentions colonial axmen; no discussion of re-establishment of WO – how did this occur, what is the successional pathway? Is it successional or primary?

Brereton “This island...is full of high-timbered Oaks, their leaves thrice so broad as ours; cedars straight and tall; Beech, Elme, Hollie, Walnut trees in abundance...”

“...the woods of this island were full of high timbered Oaks...(and) in the thickest part of these woods, you may see a furlong or more round about...” PO: “These two statements would seem to indicate that some parts, if not most of the island was covered with a high canopy forest, a condition not approximated by any of the modern woodlands of these islands.”

[Where are Lloyd Raleigh's notes and data sheets?]

Whaling ship 135 feet long, 65 tons, constructed of Vineyard timber before 1850; spliced keel;

“It is impossible to walk anywhere on the island today without seeing stone walls criss-crossing through the woods” [sic – not true, vast areas without any walls and PO knew this, so this is metaphorical]

Farmers – woodlots – firewood, fence posts, gate timbers; one family got wood for 100 years from one 40-acre woodlot.

Pollen comparison – modern vs pre-colonial: little hemlock, hickory, ash, walnut, cottonwood, basswood or elm in either; no chestnut. Beech and gum reciprocal to RM. Decrease in Beech and Gum in modern forests – indicates much greater abundance previously. Hickories more abundant in pre-colonial forest.

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“...the pre-colonial forests of Martha’s Vineyard did not contain any different trees than are now found on the island, but rather, that the present “better woodlands” now found in only in restricted sites in a small part of the island, were once more widespread”.

“At least some portions, if not all, of the Vineyard were covered with a high canopied mature forest when the colonists arrived”.

Brereton “...walnut trees in abundance...” Not common. Oak survives drying of soil and repeated cutting better than gum and beech.

Open woods – expose to toxic salt-blast. Limits reforestation.

Reduced seed source.

Randall Reeves et al. History of Right Whaling in the Northeastern U.S. 1620-1924.

Shore whaling may date from 1620-30s around Cape Cod; certainly from 1668. Right whale catches peaked 1725 with shore whaling declining on MV and ACK through rest of 1700s. Taken opportunistically into early 20th C.

All seasonal in this region – most in winter and spring as right whales absent for S of Maine in summer and autumn. Maine-Delaware 1620-1924: 750-950 whales from specific documented references; total for NE, NY, PA 1696-1734 total of 3839 based on oil and 2049 based on British baleen records.

If adjust for hunting loss: 4607 (oil) and 2459 (baleen) during this 38 year period. 1724 estimate that stock was 1100-1200. Much larger in 1600s and 1700s than today. Hunting ended in US early 900s and E US banned 1900s. Slow recovery: small population of founders, decline in environmental carrying capacity; and mortality from ship strikes and net entanglement.

Use minimum estimate to define possible recovery targets.

Allen 1916 – right whales already scarce by 1725 due to overhunting. Some alternative hypotheses.

Conversion: 44 barrels of oil (1386 US gallons) or 647 lbs of baleen per whale.

Data by state.

Photo of barrels of oil on dock 1884-1887.

MA – some of Plymouth settlers equipped for whaling; one British ship in 1624 came “to take whales”; master and mate of Mayflower intent on hunting whales in 1620-21; not sure if did.

Winthrop – 3-4 whales cast ashore on Cape Cod in 1635 – not unusual; not clear whether drift whales or harpooned first. First private US whaling company – Southampton, LI.

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Allen 1908 claimed “a few whales, in addition to stranded or drift whales, were taken in Massachusetts Bay as early as 1631”. Shore whaling well established in MA by 1670.

One day in Winter 1699-1700: 29 whales taken in Cape Cod Bay.

John Butler and Thomas Lothrop, first recorded MV whalers – killed 3 in February 1702. Butler already engaged for a considerable time in whaling.

1715 – six sloops from ACK – 600 barrels of oil and 11,000 lbs baleen.

Sperm whales known from MA coast early. Not so commonly taken.

Coastal Indians of Rhode Island – tradition of using products of drift whales.

CT – probably taken as early as 1701. Some in LI sound in 19th C

Drift whales – ownership contentious. Would be both dead and alive and late include those hurt in whaling.

Lost whales – usually found if hunted within a bay. In general expect 1/6 is lost.

Little 1981 – her estimates of starting dates for shore whaling are too late for CC and LI as well before 1688. Allen – 1631 Massachusetts Bay; 1652 – MV; 1672 – ACK.

Agree roughly with Little that peak of shore whaling was around 1726 – ACK, 1714-24 – LI. Her estimate of 84 as a maximum one-year amount is higher than theirs of 71. She is incorrect that LI shore whaling terminated in 1717 – continued into early 1900s.

Overall right whaling most intensive 1685-1730.

Whaling season in NE area Oct-Nov to April

Basques – some years in 16th C – shipped 14000-18000 barrels from camps in Strait of Belle Isle. Assume 56 US gallons and average yield was 1386 US gallons (44 standard barrels) and assume half from right whales – 283-364 right whales. [DRF – 560-730 total?]

Aquilar 1986 – Basques 300-500 per year right whales plus uncertain bow whales 1530-1610. Stock in Straits depleted by 1610. Thus population observed by Pilgrims and soon thereafter hunted along E coast – already substantially reduced by the Basques as distribution was continuous along the E Coast. Several times more abundant in mid-late 1600s than today. Still rare in places once abundant.

Veva Kathern Dean. 1939. The Economic Geography of Martha's Vineyard. MS Thesis. Clark University. Worcester, MA.

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Three topographic regions: W area of boulder strewn ridges; E area of slightly rolling hills; great triangular central plain. Moraine lies on folded Tertiary clays.

Streams: Tiasquam R, Tisbury R, Chilmark Cr, Blackwater Br, Howlands Branch (or Howlands Brook, now Paint Mill Br), Roaring Brook, Bass Cr (Tisbury) . Most cut down to clay layer. Mills – New Mill R, Roaring Br, Fulling Mill Br. Mill River Brook. Grist mills all with undershot wheels as not sufficient fall of water for others. M

1938 – Population of 5700; 40,000 in summer
Brick kiln – 1700 at Chickemoo. Chimney there in 1659.

Roaring R brick plant – 600,000 annually; now – old water wheel, wooden flume, smoke stack, broken down walls. Makonikey brick plant – described by Hough as to have been fired by lignite that turned out to be peat-like so not hot enough. Now – small office, smoke stack, tumbled-down kiln, brick pile. (photo looks a lot like Roaring Brook area)

“Today the pastures are overgrown with brush and small trees, owned and protected by the wealthy summer visitors who love the wild vegetation and permit it to spread over hills and valleys”.

Tan pits – slope of Peaked Hill by 1726.

Cape and Vineyard Electric Co – Hyannis – has modern Diesel power plant at VHaven – serves 1500 homes in T, WT, OB, E. Photo looks like location of Packer oil – near big tanks.

Ground trawl – cod, herring: baited hooks on short lines attached to 3000 foot line; tied to buoy.

Photos of old cedars at West Chop – “survivors of the ‘tall and straight’ cedars seen by Brereton in 1602”.

Opening from Cape Poge Pond into ocean – has greatly improved the shell fisheries in that large body of water (??) CP Bay? Second opening in Sengekontacket opened in 1936.

EGP – 150 acres – second largest fresh-water pond in state.

Nathaniel Hawthorne – 1830. Daniel Webster ~ 1850. Wrote three letters describing MV. Quoted widely by hotels, newspapers, real estate agents for a century.

DW on Vineyard Sound “It is the greatest and busiest sea-lane in the world with the possible exception of the English Channel”. J.C. Allen. Tales and Trail of MV

Hunting: 17 sites stocked with quail; 13 with pheasants.

1880 – 323 horses; 557 dairy cows; 700 neat cattle; 9225 sheep; 265 swine
1930 – 58 horses; 661 dairy cows; 700 neat cattle; 1941 sheep; 49 swine

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1938 – 65 horses; 312 dairy cows; 233 neat cattle; 611 sheep; 129 swine

1880 – 4.9% dairy cattle 1938 – 22.5%

Katama Ranch – SE corner between EGP and KB. “It is natural sheep country: flat and sandy, and ideal for grazing.” F.A. Paris has 328 sheep from MT, PA, ONT, WY. Plans to feed all with grains from farm.

1870 – 39 Barley; 9 Buckwheat; 2552 corn; 263 oats; 252 rye; 45 wheat

1930 – 41 acres corn; 14 oats.

Frost-free season – 200 days. Average killing frost – October 25 and April 18.

Photos of Pine Crest Farm – open expanse on plains somewhere – looks like E. Sells many vegetables.

“The resort industry of the Vineyard appears to have a firm foothold” !! 40-60,000 people
Island boasts a 50-year club that admits members only having spent 50 summers

“Motion picture actors have just recently discovered MV and one can only speculate as to the future if the movie colony begins a trek from its haunts on the west coast to new ones in the east. It prophesies prosperity for the Vineyard.”

“A definite effort can and should be made to increase the use of native grown vegetables instead of those imported”.

“A campaign to impress adults with the value of milk as a food in an effort to increase the consumption of milk and decrease the use of beer, tonics, coffee, tea and other beverages should be made.”

Attributes high standard of living in part to character and composition of people – old sturdy English stock. Azoreans and Portuguese “thrift and energy”, a few Indians still live on western end but have intermarried, inflow of Irish 1840-60; “a few negroes have drifted in from the southern states”

“The writer knows that the following invitation, if answered, will assure the Vineyard of a means of Livelihood. ‘By land or sea or air...we hope you will make the Vineyard your summer homeport. We wish you a good voyage. We offer you the old whaling captains greeting....’Come aboard’”.

Not sure where this comes from - Hitchcock??

But after passing Duxbury, the region of sand and gravel commences; and to Provincetown, the extremity of Cape Cod, no genuine ledge of rocks appears; although boulders of every size, over the greater part of the distance, are common.

The dunes or sand hills, which are often nearly or quite barren of vegetation, and of snowy whiteness, forcibly attract the attention on account of their peculiarity: while the numerous windmills and vats along the shore, for the manufacture of salt, are scarcely less interesting to one not familiar with such processes. As we approach the extremity of the Cape, the sand and the barrenness increase; and in not a few places, it would need only a party of Bedouins to cross the traveler's path to make him feel that he was in the depths of an Arabian or Lybian desert. Very different from Bedouins, however, will he find the inhabitants of Cape Cod. In the midst of the sands he will meet many an oasis, where comfortable and not unfrequently pleasant villages have sprung up, inhabited by a people of mild and obliging disposition, and not deficient in intelligence. A large proportion of the houses on the Cape are, indeed, but one story high. Yet they are for the most part convenient and comfortable; exhibiting the marks of a thrift and independence which one would not expect, when he considers the gen-

In crossing the sands of the Cape, I noticed a singular mirage or deception, which was also observed by my traveling companions. In Orleans, for instance, where the ocean is within a short distance on either hand, we seemed to be ascending at an angle of three or four degrees; nor was I convinced that such was not the case, until turning about I perceived that a similar ascent appeared in the road just passed over. I shall not attempt to explain this optical deception: but merely remark, that it is probably of the same kind, as that observed by Humboldt, on the Pampas of Venezuela; "all around us," says he, "the plains seemed to ascend towards the sky."

In crossing the island of Nantucket, in company with Dr. Swift of that place, I noticed the same phenomenon, though there less striking. Afterwards, I saw it for miles on the plain in the southeastern part of Martha's Vineyard. In the latter case, the plain was covered with low shrub oaks.

Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard.

If the traveler wishes to enjoy more of the peculiar scenery of Cape Cod, with some interesting variations, let him pass over to Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. The former island he will find to be an extended plain, 15 miles in its longest direction, and but slightly elevated above the ocean; containing scarcely a tree, or a shrub of much size, except in the immediate

vicinity of the village. Scarcely a dwelling will meet his eye, out of the town, except a few uninhabited huts, scattered along the desolate shore, as a refuge to the shipwrecked sailor. Yet from 12000 to 14000 sheep, and 500 cows find nourishment on this island; and in not a few places, especially in the immediate vicinity of the town, may be seen tracts of land of superior fertility. It will strike the traveler at once, as an interesting monument of industry, that nearly every part of the dwellings, stores, &c., for the accommodation of more than 7000 inhabitants, must have been transported from the Continent. And on acquaintance, he will find that they still retain the characteristics of industry and hospitality, for which they have long been known; and that the usual concomitants of these virtues, general intelligence and strong local attachments, are not wanting.

The most interesting spot on Martha's Vineyard is Gay Head; which constitutes the western extremity of this island, and consists of clays and sands of various colors. Its height cannot be more than 150 feet; yet its variegated aspect, and the richness of its colors, render it a striking and even splendid object, when seen from the ocean. The clays are red, blue and white; the sands, white and yellow; and the lignite, black; and each of these substances is abundant enough to be seen several miles distant, arranged in general in inclined strata; though from being unequally worn away, apparently mixed without much order. The top of the cliff is crowned by a light house, which commands an extensive prospect. Scarcely a tree is to be seen on this part of the island. It is owned and inhabited by the descendants of the Indian tribes, that once possessed the whole island. It will be seen in the subsequent part of my Report, that this spot possesses peculiar attractions for the geologist and mineralogist.