The Old Island Trolley

By Gene Baer

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DCHS News

May 1977
Vol. 18, No. 1
The Old Island Trolley

BY GENE BAER

Many people now think of Martha's Vineyard as the homeplace of "Jaws"... but around the turn of the century, many islanders believed that the future would ride on the success of the open-air trolley!

Stanton Lair's model of the trolley bound for Oak Bluffs.

By today's standards an open-air trolley is as quaint as a rose-covered gazebo. Open on all four sides, covered with a
pretentious-looking roof, and balanced on a short wheel base, these colorful conveyances look less like a serious means of transportation than a creation designed for Disneyland. Yet — in yesteryear these open-air street cars were horseless wonders, a popular means of summer transportation, and as such a familiar part of the everyday scene. Although not rating much more than a brief mention in today’s history books, there are still a great many people who recall with nostalgic affection the comings and goings, the clanging and rocking, of these old open-air trolley cars.

Many people on the Island of Martha’s Vineyard remember vividly when the trolley was King, when a large part of the island’s population firmly believed that their economic future and that of the electric railway were entwined in parallel destinies.

Stan Lair, who is now in his seventies, became interested in the old island trolley line when he realized that a great deal of this history would soon be lost if someone did not make an effort to retain it. Much of what has been written here grew out of Stan’s tireless efforts to recapture on tape, film, and diorama this fascinating chapter of yesterday’s history.

The open-air trolleys that clanged along the Island shoreline were not much different from any of the open-air trolleys anywhere. Made by J. G. Brill Company, these single truck (four-wheel) vehicles looked like what they were — electrified horsecars — and in many cases they continued to travel along the very same rails and routes that Dobbin had established for an earlier decade.

Going over the old bridge. Vineyard Haven one way, Eastville and Oak Bluffs the other.

The first wave of trolley fever swept the Island in 1892 with the announcement that the Dukes County Railway Company intended to establish an electric railway line from the summer resort of Cottage City (now Oak Bluffs) to the Indian township of Gay Head, a distance covering twenty-five sparsely populated miles! Although this grandiose scheme never became more than ballyhoo, it accurately reflected the spirit of the times, for three years later the Cottage City Electric Company was offering a scenic three-mile electrified ride for a nickel.

Not to be outdone by the success of the Cottage City line, the neighboring town of Tisbury (Vineyard Haven) granted a street franchise to the Martha’s Vineyard Street Railway Company. By most realistic standards this was hardly a railway line at all, for it
only went from the town wharf to the town line, a distance of about a mile and a half! But it was enough to establish a rivalry.

Interestingly enough, the track of this new trolley line came to an abrupt stop at the opening to the Lagoon, a saltwater pond that served as a town line separating Tisbury from Cottage City. Passengers were then required to disembark, cross the Lagoon Bridge, and to wait on the opposite shore for the arrival of the Cottage City car.

Near the wharf at Vineyard Haven. Walter Besse, left, Frank Corey, right.

A few years later when this bridge was made safe enough to support a trolley, the double fare continued to exist. “Half fare to the bridge, full fare beyond!!” Taking advantage of this price change, an enterprising businessman opened the Eagleston Tea House. Perched close to the sea on the Tisbury side of the bridge, this picturesque stop became for many an outing in itself.

By 1901 the two rival transit companies were deeply committed to monumental bickering. By the time that the Tisbury group gained ownership of their rival’s (Eastville) power station, the stage was set for a memorable scene -- that inevitable day when the owners of the new power station would flaunt their muscle by cutting off their competitor’s power supply! It is not recorded as to what the suitcase-laden visitors had to say when they found themselves forced to make the remainder of their journey on foot.

The hostilities on each side began to dissipate, however, when each of these companies found that in their growing deficits they had more in common than they had originally supposed. In 1908, these two proud companies merged. Although this merger hustled with new life, time was overtaking the old open-air trolley. Already the first automobiles were arriving by boat from the mainland, and for those who could see the future, the trolley as a means of transportation was destined to become as dated as the creaking schooners that were still plying Vineyard Sound.

Cars at the Highland Wharf perhaps. One for Vineyard Haven, the other for Lagoon Heights - out Barnes Road way.

The stories surrounding these trolley years were many, for in the twenty-two years that this line was in operation, thousands of people had ridden these seven miles of rails.

Henry Beetle Hough, author and former editor-owner of the Vineyard Gazette, writes of the occasions when a slipped belt at the power station would cause these cars to roll to an unscheduled stop. At times like these the passengers had little choice but to continue on foot or to sit in the hot sun while the conductor trudged ahead to the station to report the power failure. Sometimes, of course, the power failure would be discovered
before the conductor had reached his destination; in which case
the motorman would release the brake with his right hand, ease
the controller forward with his left hand and set the bell a-clanging
as the carload of grinning passengers would race to overtake the
footweary conductor!

To understand the spirit of the old island trolley system is to
understand that during the years in which the Martha's Vineyard
Street Railway was in operation was also the time in which
Cottage City was renowned as a center of summertime "camp
meetings."

The most famous of these campgrounds was Wesleyan Grove, a
Methodist stronghold that grew from a simple tent village into a
great cluster of small, thinly-built houses gaily decorated in the
gingerbread style that was popularized by the advent of the jigsaw.

But by the middle of the nineteenth century, Martha's Vineyard
with its miles of beautiful bathing beaches, began to attract more
than those seeking a good prayer meeting. The officers of the
Wesleyan Grove Camp Meeting Association began to become
concerned about the multitude of visitors who were pouring onto
the island and were understandably worried as to the influence
that these secular groups might have upon the religious nature of
their community.

To build a fence between their campground and the worldly
doings of Circuit Avenue was one way to throw up a bulwark
against the rising tide but by far the most elaborate separational
gesture was the creation of the Highland Wharf. Built in the years
1869-70 by a group of Methodist fathers calling themselves the
Vineyard Grove Company, this wharf was no small undertaking
for it was built to accommodate the paddlewheel steamers from
the mainland. Being but a quarter mile from the Cottage City
wharf, its sole purpose was symbolic, to allow those destined for
the campgrounds to disembark with dignity via a route especially
designed to circumvent the more worldly parts of this growing
resort community.

In the early years it was the horse cars that serviced this route;
in later years, the electric cars rode the same rails. Midway
between the wharf and the campground the tracks crossed a
narrow causeway between the two ponds and this part of the trip
became known as the "crossing over Jordan," an expression that
continues to this day.

But it is not the Methodists or even the sinners that Frank
Corey remembers best. As a former conductor, now living in Oak
Bluffs (formerly Cottage City), he remembers best the men he
worked with. Although most of the employees on the Martha's
Vineyard Street Railway were college boys, many were
year-around residents. Frank explains that with the exception of
their caps, each conductor and motorman was required to supply his own uniform. This account quickly explains the mystery as to the wild disparity in costume that appears in many of the old photographs!

As Frank would be the first to point out, a conductor on an open-air trolley had to be part change-maker and part daredevil, for fares were collected by edging along the outside running board of the moving trolley. While not the world's most dangerous occupation, it was hardly a job for the squeamish. It should come as no surprise to learn that, in those days, to become a conductor of an open-air trolley was one of boyhood’s loftiest ambitions.

The conductor had other duties as well. In the event of a sudden rainstorm it was his job to drop the canvas awning to keep out the rain. In the event of a thunderstorm, he had the additional duty of lowering the trolley pole so as to minimize the risk of electrocuting a whole carload of passengers!

I have yet to speak to anyone who remembers these trolleys who did not use kind words to add to their memory. Perhaps the warmest memory of all is reserved for Mrs. Ida Fiebich Karl of Martha’s Vineyard. Ida remembers the time that she and her mother took the trolley for the day. Ida, who had been knitting, dropped her ball of yarn which bounced out of the sideless carriage to be left far behind the moving car. The conductor, who hadn’t seen the incident but who responded to the distress written on the young girl’s face, worked his way back along the running board to offer his assistance. Hearing that her consternation was caused by nothing more than a dropped ball of yarn, he signalled the motorman to stop the trolley. As the trolley creaked to a stop, the conductor nimbly stepped to the ground and ran ahead to talk to the motorman. The motorman smiled, nodded his head, and then stepped to the ground taking his controller (operating handle) with him. The conductor then quickly reversed the trolley pole and jumped back on board as the motorman took the helm at the opposite end of the car. With that -- the whole trolley and all its passengers retraced their route in search of a little girl’s ball of yarn!

But with the arrival of the motorcar, the end of the electric railway was in sight. The final drama was played between the open-air trolleys and the jitneys, cranked-up passenger cars making the same run for half the price and in half the time. By the end of the summer of 1918 the Martha’s Vineyard Street Railway could no longer afford the luxury of its existence. And although many mourned its passing, the day of the open-air trolley had passed.

It was left to Captain Zeb Tilton, his nephew Tom, and the Alice S. Wentworth to carry the rails off to a foundry in Chester, Pennsylvania, where they were to be used as scrap. It is befitting that the rails of this old open-air trolley line should be carried away in a colorful old schooner which was in itself a proud relic of another age. But whereas the Alice Wentworth spent its declining years berthed beside Boston’s Pier 4 as a floating cocktail lounge (where it finally sank one too many times and was scrapped), the island trolleys were to suffer a variety of conclusions. One of the cars ended its life first as a house and later as a pig pen. Another became a diner in Tisbury that was owned by Ornam Slocum, the brother of the famous Captain Joshua Slocum (Joshua had been the first person to single-handedly sail around the world.) The fate of the other trolleys is now long forgotten.

Stanton Lair’s model of the trolley posed where the tracks ran in front of the Camp Meeting Association Building.
Mutinous But Not Mutiny

BY DOROTHY COTTLE POOLE

Less than a century and a half ago, Martha’s Vineyard was a thriving whaling community. Nearly every home had at least one whaler, many of whom were master mariners. But the great whaling days are a thing of the past and today only one whaler lives on the island. He is Antone Fortes, native of Sao Nicolau, Cape Verde Islands, who lives in Vineyard Haven. Mr. Fortes was a crewman aboard the Pedro Varela when the most unusual mutiny in maritime history occurred.

The Pedro Varela, an eighty-nine ton schooner, was more than fifty years old and had once been a U. S. Revenue Cutter. She was small for a whaleship, but she looked spruce with her fresh paint and new masts as she lay at anchor outside New Bedford harbor in April, 1910.

The officers and boatsteers of the Pedro Varela were all Portuguese, as were the cook and four crewmen. The rest were a motley gang of Americans, small-time criminals, a self-confessed murderer, a drug addict and peddler, and a burglar. All were greenhorns. Whaling was no longer a thriving business and no longer attracted stalwart young New Englanders, eager to work their way aft to a master’s berth.

Early in the morning of April twenty-eighth, the Pedro Varela weighed anchor, headed for the Hatteras Grounds. When anchor chains were stowed, halyards coiled and decks scrubbed, all hands were ordered aft. Captain Corvelho studied his crew as he pointed out to them the need for cooperation and consideration of others in the close quarters of shipboard life, the necessity for explicit obedience and the punishment which would inevitably follow any disobedience or any slackness in the execution of orders. Then the three mates chose their boat crews, selecting the most experienced men first. Fortes was in the third mate’s crew.

Life aboard the whaleship settled into routine. The greenhorns had to learn the terms used to designate various parts of the ship, as well as the names of all the whalecraft. They had to be taught to handle whaleboats, to row, to paddle and to pull the boat close
to a fast whale. Whenever the *Pedro Varela* was becalmed, theoats were lowered to give the men practice in these arts. There
was no spare time while the men were "getting their sealugs and
learning the ropes."

By nightfall, the men were so tired that they crawled into their
narrow bunks and fell asleep at once, even though many of them
slept on pallets of straw. Their meals were monotonous and
unappetizing, but working all day in the salt air discouraged
finicky appetites. Breakfast was always hurried: a mug of coffee
sweetened with molasses, a piece of hardtack and, possibly, a little
hash. Dinner was a slab of salt beef, (often called "salt horse"),
pieces of hardtack soaked in boiling water and coffee. Supper
was a cup of very strong tea, a slab of bread and "scouse," salt
horse and soaked hardtack, mixed and baked. The monotony was
seldom broken and became more and more unbearable as the
drinking water got worse and worse.

Drinking water aboard whaleships was never very good. Before
sailing, the ground tier of casks was filled to provide water for
several months, and to act as ballast. If the casks were new, the
water tasted of the wood; if they had been used, the whale oil
which had been in them lent its disagreeable flavor to the water.
Moreover, most of the men knew that when the vessel lay
alongside the wharf in New Bedford, it was overrun with rats.
While in port, the rats found water ashore, but when the vessel put
to sea, the rats discovered the loose bungs on the water casks and
scurried in to drown, not improving the quality of the water.
Even tea and coffee could not disguise this putrid water and
grumblings among the crew were constant.

In the dogwatches, the Portuguese crewmen stayed by
themselves, but every evening they heard the same complaints
from the rest of the crew: no whales, monotonous deck duty, bad
food and worse water. Some of the men declared they would
desert ship at the first port. (Maritime Law required whaleships to
land at least once every six months, and the *Pedro Varela* had been
out nearly that long.) Meantime, the food and water got worse.

The men decided to approach the captain. Hammond agreed to
be the spokesman, so he went to the poop deck to ask the mate to
tell the captain that he wanted to speak to him. The crew had
trailed along and stood in a group amidships, awaiting the
outcome. The mate took one look at them and dashed for the
captain's quarters. In seconds, the captain, the three mates and the
boatsteerers, all armed, appeared on deck. The captain ordered the
men forward. They obeyed, but Hammond stood his ground and
delivered his complaint:

"We can't eat the food. The salt horse is rotten, the bread is full
of kerosene and the water stinks."

"Oh, it does, does it?" the captain replied. "Then you'll not get
as much to holler about," and he put them on short rations: one
cake of hardtack and one cup of water daily, for three days.
Hammond was ordered to stand an additional watch at the
masthead and the rest were kept so busy that they had no time to
plan their next move until that night. Fortes lay in his bunk and
feigned sleep. He had no intention of being drawn into the
discussion of the disgruntled crew members, though he could not
fail to hear it. The ringleaders urged revenge.

"Let's get the harpoons and lances and kill off the Old Man and
his stooges."
“Then what? I think we’d better jump ship.”

“But we can’t do that until we reach port. If we keep getting whales, the Old Man won’t head for port, law or no law.”

“We could refuse to work.”

“What good—hey—maybe that’s it.”

Dissatisfied, bitter and potentially dangerous, the crew grew more rebellious. The Pedro Varela ran into the doldrums and for days and days there was no breeze at all. The Fourth of July dawned, hot and breathless. The men recalled past celebrations, bands playing and flags flying.

“We ought to ask Captain Corvelho to set the American flag. It’s the Fourth of July.” The request was made, but the captain not only refused to grant it, but had the Portuguese flag set instead.

That night was dark and starless, but dead calm, so the boatswain in charge of the “graveyard watch” had turned in and was sound asleep in the larboard boat. The black shadows, which crept out of the forecastle, spread over the starboard side of the deck. Now and then, there was a splash close to the whaleship, but on deck there were only indistinct shuffleings. Suddenly, just at daylight, there was a tremendous clatter. The “shadows” had not been content with throwing overboard the harpoons, lances, baiers, skimmers, spades and all the other whaling craft, but had smashed the windlass and shattered the try works, throwing overboard all the pieces they could move. They were making sure that no more whaling could be done aboard the Pedro Varela until she put into port for refitting.

The commotion brought the captain and his officers on deck. A swift glance across the deck showed the havoc that had been wrought and its perpetrators. Captain Corvelho ordered the men in irons. He felt sure that “Doc” Hammond was the instigator of the uprising, but he was not confined to the hold because he had a great gash on one leg, cut by a flailing ax during the night. The rest of the culprits were manacled and confined to the hold. Only Fortes and the other three Portuguese crewmen were left to carry on the ship’s duty so the Pedro Varela immediately headed for Fayal.

When Hammond’s leg began to heal, he joined the others below decks. Limited to one cake of hardtack and one cup of water daily, even with one meal every third day, the men in their cramped quarters below decks were always hungry and thirsty. They searched until they found a water thief to draw the water from the casks. Then with their knives they dug at the thick head of the huge cask which held the hardtack until, hours later, they had made a jagged hole large enough to reach in and help themselves to hardtack. For several days, they ate and drank at will.

Each day, one by one, the prisoners were taken before the captain who tried to get them to name their ringleader. Haddock gained his release by becoming a witness against the others and Mitchell told about getting into the stores to gain his freedom. But, daily, when the prisoners were brought on deck and chained to the rigging, Hammond threatened Mitchell with such dire consequences that the latter asked to have Hammond released and himself returned to irons. The captain still suspected Hammond, but had no shred of evidence against him, so he was returned to duty. The Pedro Varela was short-handed. She was nearly becalmed through alternate days of brilliant sun and drizzling rain. A few whales were raised and two were captured, but there was no way of hoisting the blubber aboard, so the spermeceti was bailed from the heads and the whales were abandoned to the sharks. This was most unprofitable, so Captain Corvelho made all possible sail to speed their journey to Fayal.

The Pedro Varela ran head-on into a three-day storm and was driven hundreds of miles off-course so that it was six weeks before they sighted Fayal. As it approached the harbor, the ship got too close to the headlands and started drifting toward the rocks. Because of the useless windlass, the anchor could not be used to hold the vessel from the rocks, so two whaleboats were lowered and spent the afternoon towing the ship into a safe position where she could pick up the wind and sail into Fayal Harbor.

Here the mutineers were supplied with water for the first bath they had had in months and were outfitted with clean clothes. They were then sent ashore to be locked in the local prison until American battleships, due in from a Mediterranean cruise of duty, arrived in Fayal. Then they were transferred to the brig of one of those vessels and taken to the United States for trial.

They were tried in the Federal Court in Baltimore on charges of mutiny on the high seas. But this uprising was not like any mutiny
September 1832
3rd. Wind SW. Writing school closes.
8th. Wind NE to SW. Engaged at the Custom House.
12th. Wind S. Ship Vineyard hauls off into the stream. (Joseph)
17th. Wind N to NE and SW. Light. Pleasant. Went after ballast and scrubbed the Revenue Boat's bottom.
20th. Wind SSW. Engaged in surveying land for Dr. Daniel Fisher. Reformation in these days. Joseph: Coffin, Darrow and Co. store is raised.
23rd. Wind SSW. Showery. Joseph: The wife of Mr. Samuel Cleaveland of Chappaquiddick dies.
27th. Wind SSW. Bent the new sails to the Revenue Boat. Scrubbed her bottom.
28th. Wind SSW to SSE. Pleasant. Went to Pohoganet. Went to Chapaquidick to meeting at Samuel Huxford’s.

(1) Reformation as Jeremiah uses the word means a religious revival.
October 1832


3rd. Wind SW. Engaged in surveying land at West Chop - Tisbury - for Mr. Abraham Chase, Jr. of Ohio and the heirs of Capt. Alexander Newcomb. Joseph: Br. Bliss goes to New Bedford to a four days meeting.

4th. Wind SSW. Engaged as above. Received payment for 1 ¾ days, $3.50 of Mr. Chase.

6th. Wind SSW. P.M. ESE. Went to Cape Poge after U. S. buoy. Sloop Thomas, A. D. Pease, master arrives from Boston.

8th. Wind ESE. Light breeze. Engaged in the Custom House.


10th. Wind S. Fresh breeze. Boarded Ship Orion of Nantucket arrives from Cape Horn with 2,600 bbls. Cutter Vigilant arrives.

13th. Wind SSW. Engaged in digging potatoes.

14th. Wind NNW. Cool. When to Chilmark to a meeting. Br. Jansen preached. Reformation in that place. Returned at night. Joseph: Rev'd Hebron Vincent (1) and Mrs. Lydia R. Coffin are married in the Methodist Church this evening by Rev'd J. J. Bliss.


21st. Wind N to NNW. Went to Chilmark. Attended meeting in the Methodist Meeting House in the afternoon. Br. Charles Rich preaches from Judges, 3rd chapter, 1st part of the 20th verse - I have a message from God unto thee.

In the evening we had a meeting at Br. Moses Adams. Returned at night.

24th. Wind N to E. Cold. Joseph: Four days meeting commences in the Congregational Church. (1)


26th. Wind N to NNE. A little ice makes at night. The summer oil becomes a little thick, what we call sard (?) Blew a fresh breeze today. Engaged in plowing and harrowing rye.

27th. Wind SW. Cool. Finished sowing rye.

31st. Wind SW. Pleasant. 4 days meetings commences at Holmes Hole. Went there this evening. Returned at night.

November 1832


4th. Wind SSW. Fresh breeze. Baptism by Br. Bliss by emersion (3) and sprinkling being Sabbath. Br. Rich preaches this evening.

12th. Wind SW. Very pleasant. Joseph: Town Meeting for the choice of Electors of President and Vice President and Senator Barker Bushnell. Leavitt Thaxter of Edgartown chosen (as representative of Edgartown in the General Court.) The last time for voting for President according to the prophecy of Thomas Cooke. (4)

14th. Wind NW. Colder. Joseph: Court Sessions sits today.

15th. Wind SW. Very pleasant. Boarded a number of vessels. Court rises. (Joseph)


29th. Wind NW. Thanksgiving Day.

(1) As will be seen from all these references to evangelistic meetings the great religious revival which had been taking place on the Vineyard for ten years or so was now reaching a peak. To keep any of its members, the Congregational Church was forced to adopt many of the methods of the Baptists and Methodists.

(2) The reason a boat's bottom had to be scrubbed so often in Jeremiah's day was that copper paint to stop the marine growth had not yet been invented.

(3) Perhaps Methodist emersion was to compete with the Baptists.

(4) Thomas Cooke (Jr.) must have been looking for the end of the world. Such was the religious excitement.
December 1832


30th. Wind NNW. Pleasant for the season. Went to Chilmark and Tisbury. In the evening attended meetings with Brs. T. Stewart and F. Huxford. Returned at night.

31st. Wind SW. A Wat'h Meeting is held in the Vestry of the Methodist Church. So ends 1832.

January 1833


10th. Wind N. Cloudy and rainy. Joseph: Boarded a West Indies brig and a schooner.


15th. Wind W to E and SE. At night gale and rain. Boat stove by something drifting against her in the night. Having launched her that day.

16th. Wind SE to SSW. Gale and rain A.M. P.M. clears off. Hauled up the sail boat. Found all the strakes on one side stove and some on the other.

20th. Wind SE to SSW. Went to Chilmark and Tisbury. Attended meetings. Returned at night.

21st. Wind SW. Foggy. Went eeling. Hauled the Revenue boat ashore and scrubbed her.


23rd. Wind NE. Foggy. Repairing yawl boat.


February 1833

2nd. Wind N to NNW. Cold. Miss Lydia Claghorn dies of a consumption. Joseph: Mrs. Lydia Claghorn dies of the dropsy.


8th. Wind SE to ESE. Coldest night of this winter. Ice makes across from saltworks mill to Capoje gut.


22nd. Wind WSW. Gail. Ship *Fame* arrives from the Brazil Banks.


26th. Wind NW to SW. Went to Holmes Hole with Dr. Samuel Whelden who was called by the Temperance Society to deliver an address upon the subject. He compiled it, and delivered it at the Meeting house to the satisfaction of the Society and others. Returned same day with the
March 1833.

2nd. Wind N to NW. Very cold. Hauled the Revenue Boat to the shore on account of the ice. Kept a fire in the lantern all night.

5th. Wind NNW. Moderates at noon. Thaws a little in the sun. Harbour all frozen over from the Light House to Cape Poge and above the Point.

6th. Wind E. N at 12. WNW at night and very cold. Bought some hay of Mr. Martin Norton.

7th. Wind S. Ice begins to break up.

9th. Wind NNW to E and SSW. Light and calm. Harbour remains closed by ice.

10th. Wind W to S and NE. Light. Flattening. Harbour still closed by ice. The packet for New Bedford got out but no other vessel does. At night the ice crowds into the harbour. Snows a little at night.


12th. Wind SSE. Light. The harbour is open and vessels come in. But one vessel passed out since the 5th. inst. It has been the most severe March so far that I have seen for a number of years past. Joseph: Boarded a brig from Matanzas. Several vessels sail having been frozen in since the 2nd.

13th. Wind NE to E. Light. Dr. Daniel Fisher cuts a wen out of my right leg just above the knee. Joseph: Capt. Benjamin Worth and Miss Louisa P. Coffin are married by Rev'd J. J. Bliss.


16th. Wind NE to SW. Pleasant. This day a brig sails without being boarded by me, being the first vessel from a foreign port that has sailed from here when I was at home since my appointment to the Inspector's office.


23rd. Wind NE to SW. Ship Fabius of Nantucket, Charles Coffin master arrives from the Pacific Ocean. Mr. Worth being in town and my leg being lame he boarded her and certified her papers.

25th. Wind N. Rainy. Joseph: The news arrives that Andrew Jackson was dead.

26th. Wind NW. Joseph: The above proves to be false.

28th. Wind WNW. Pleasant. Cool and cold weather. I am still confined to the house much of the time my leg not being healed.

31st. Wind SW to WSW. Attended prayer meeting at Holmes Hole with Br. Joseph Huxford. Returned at 6 P.M. my leg not being healed and my throat being very soar we did not stay to the evening meeting.

April 1833.

1st. Wind SW. Pleasant. Attended the adjournment of the annual Town meeting.

4th. Wind ESE. A little rain. The weather having been very warm and dry for the season the rain is much needed.

7th. Wind S to SSE. This day Br. Bliss preaches a funeral sermon on account of the loss of the crew of the Sloop Thomas which brother A.D. Pease commanded. Joseph: Which sailed from Tarpaulin Cove on the 19th of October for Charleston, South Carolina.

8th. Wind SE. Gale. Rains. Moderates at night. On this day another year of my short life ends. Joseph: Gail with heavy rain it being much needed.

11th. Wind WSW. Attended a meeting at Tisbury for the purpose of forming a County Temperance Society. The Society was formed and officers chosen.
14th. Wind SW. Fresh breeze. Rev'd Mr. Porter preached in the Methodist Meetinghouse, Rev'd J. J. Bliss being at Nantucket on a visit.

21st. Wind S to SSW and SW. Went to Chilmark. Attended meeting. Returned at night. Joseph: Mr. Dennis Courtney and Miss Amanda Fisher were married. Rev'd Lewis Jansen preaches here.

22nd. Wind SSE. Commenced plowing.

24th. Wind NNE. Cold. Planted Potatoes.


27th. Wind SW. Pleasant. Quarterly Meeting. Conference held this day.


May 1833.


5th. Wind SW. Joseph: Funeral of Mrs. Lucy Coffin at the Congregational Meetinghouse. Service by Rev'ds Poor, Ewer and Marchant.

7th. Wind SW. Engaged making fence.


12th. Wind NE to SSW. Revenue Cutter arrived yesterday. Went to Holmes Hole with Br. Samuel Daggett. Attended prayer meeting. Returned at night.

13th. Wind SW. Went to Christianstown. Surveyed land for Johnson Simpson. Daniel Fellows, Esq. guardian of the Indians at Christianstown went with me. We set off his (Simpson's) share being 29th parts of the land improved by George Peters. Returned at night.

16th. Wind ESE to E. Rains. Very refreshing to the grass.

18th. Wind SW. Engaged planting potatoes.


20th. Wind SSE to S. Rainy. Went to Chilmark with Capt. Pitman after officers for his ship.\(^1\) Rains quite plentifully.

21st. Wind SW. Finished planting potatoes.\(^2\)


28th. Wind E. Cutter *McLean* remains here. Engaged in cleaning and preparing to point the Light House.

29th. Wind E. to ENE. Cutter *McLean* sails this morning. Foggy and very thick. Engaged painting the Light House.

June 1833.

4th. Wind SW. Engaged in surveying land for James Roberts.

5th. Wind SW. Went to Holmes Hole. Returned at P.M. with Sister M. C. West.

6th. Wind SW to WSW. Engaged in painting the lantern of the Light House.

9th. Wind WSW. Went to Chilmark. Attended a prayer meeting there and at 5 o'clock at Tisbury. Returned at night.

11th. Wind NE. Squally. Grafton Norton and Benjamin Worth commence building their wharf.

20th. Wind SSE. Fresh breeze. Brother John E. Risley arrives with his family or part of them being appointed by the New Bedford Conference to preach here this year. May the Lord bless his labours. Joseph: Joseph Athearn's child dies. An infant.

\(^1\) That must have been Capt. Charles Pitman of the bark *Benezet* of New Bedford. At this time officers and boatsteers from the Vineyard were very much in demand both in New Bedford and on Nantucket.

\(^2\) It looks as though Jeremiah was planting a lot more potatoes than he would need even for his large family. Potatoes must have been a valuable money crop because of the large number of whaling vessels fitting out in Edgartown.

22nd. Wind S to NW. Rev’d J. E. Risley goes to Connecticut after his furniture.

23rd. Wind ENE. Br. Bliss preaches his last sermon today. Br. Bliss and his wife goes to Sandwich being appointed to that station this year. Joseph: Boarded a West Indies brig.

27th. Wind SW. Joseph: Mr. Dennis Ripley’s child dies aged 2 years. His death was occasioned by falling down the garet stairs which caused his death in about an hour.


July 1833.


3rd. Wind SSW. Commenced mowing the meadow the NW side of the house. Seth Marchant mows it. Rains in the afternoon.

DCHS News

The best news of spring is that the Council of the Historical Society has decided to use the bequest from the Francis Foster estate to build an addition to the library. Despite our need for more operating capital, it has become increasingly clear that the need for additional space is the society’s most serious problem. Every building on the grounds is overcrowded, and we are in danger of becoming a stagnant organization due to a lack of room for new accessions. Ideally we need the space that would be provided by another house in the vicinity, but the new addition will give us considerable breathing room. It will be a doubling of the present library and will extend out toward the carriage shed. The main floor will provide exhibit space with an attic and basement for storage. Having worked on the plans throughout the winter, we are now ready to break ground, and the addition should be completed by next fall. With our new exhibit space, the society will be a very enjoyable place to visit during the months when the Thomas Cooke House is closed. Extra space in the library will allow us to operate more efficiently, and Mrs. Crossman is now making plans to reorganize.

As reported in the last issue, Mrs. Poole’s book A New Vineyard came out at the end of the year, and sales have been brisk. Since this is a limited edition, everyone with a Vineyard bookshelf should obtain a copy before our supply runs out. A New Vineyard can be purchased directly from us for $12.95 plus 65 cents postage.

If any of you are in New Bedford this summer, be sure to see the exhibit on the western Arctic at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, which includes two of our paintings of the Steam Whaler Belvedere.

In addition to paying their dues promptly, members of the society have been very generous this year in making donations to the Preservation Fund. Approximately $3,800 has been raised since the beginning of the year, and we would like to thank the following members who have made contributions (through April 10):

(1) Considering the steepness of many Vineyard attic stairs and the narrowness of the treads it is remarkable that they didn’t cause more deaths.
(2) And with this entry, and with an account of the 4th of July celebration on the following day which adds nothing to Jeremiah’s, Joseph’s diary comes to an end. From now on the entries are all Jeremiah’s.
Mrs. Henry R. Anderson  
Mr. Edmund D. Ashley  
Mr. Leonard B. Attearn  
Mr. and Mrs. C. Stuart Avery  
Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Beetle  
Mrs. Louis Bissell  
Mr. and Mrs. E. Jared Bliss  
Mrs. Karl Borders  
Mrs. Barbara Bradley  
Mrs. Thomas C. Brainard  
Miss Mabel V. Brooks  
Mr. John A. Brough  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert P. Brown  
Mr. B. D. Burchoe  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard L. Burt  
Mr. Donald F. Carpenter  
Mr. John G. Chantiny  
Mr. and Mrs. Melville Chapin  
Mr. and Mrs. W. P. Conklin  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Convery  
Mrs. Thomas Cooper  
Mr. and Mrs. Edward D. Cox  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert D. Cronk  
Mrs. William R. Deeble  
Mrs. Barbara Deutsch  
Mrs. Catherine Manter Doehring  
Mr. and Mrs. Morris Drogin  
Rev. Norman Eddy  
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Ferris  
Mrs. Margaret Galley  
Mrs. Thomas R. Goethals  
Mrs. LeRoy Goff, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Standish Gotham  
Miss Hope Gray  
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Halperin  
Miss Esther Hancock  
Mrs. Hariph C. Hancock  
Mr. Charles B. Harding  
Mrs. Allan W. Harrison  
Mrs. Helen Hart  
Miss Frances M. Hayes  
Mr. and Mrs. William W. Hickie  
Miss Olive Hillman  
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence B. Hillyer  
Mr. and Mrs. George F. Hodder  
Miss Dorris Hough  
Dr. and Mrs. J. Logan Irvin  
Mrs. Harriet M. Isacs  
Miss Rebecca Jones  
Miss Garson Kanin  
Mrs. Kivie Kaplan  
Mrs. Louis Kayhart  
Mr. Robert W. Kelley  
Mr. Robert I. Leach  
Mr. and Mrs. John M. Leavens  
Miss Priscilla Lewis  
Mrs. Arthur Littleton  
Mr. and Mrs. Dewitt Livingston  
Miss Doris L. Low  
Mrs. Sanford Low  
Mr. and Mrs. Lane Lovell  
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Lunghino  
Mrs. Frances B. Macy  
Mr. H. Kane MacVickar  
Mrs. Dorothy Madden  
Mr. George Magnuson  
Dr. and Mrs. Frank T. Mansure  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert B. Marshall  
Miss Gladys Mason  
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas C. Mendenhall  
Mrs. Dorothy G. Mill  
Rev. and Mrs. Elden H. Mills  
Mr. Kevin Monaghan  
Mr. Robert Nordenswan  
Miss Mary L. Norton  
Mrs. Richard H. Norton  
Mr. John W. Osborn  
Mr. Henry C. Ottewell  
Mr. and Mrs. John R. Painter  
Mr. Everett Pease  
Mrs. William C. Pierson  
Capt. and Mrs. Donald L. Poole  
Mr. Henry J. Potter  
Mrs. John J. Radley  

Mrs. William C. Reed  
Mr. William O. Richards  
Mr. and Mrs. George R. Robinson  
Dr. and Mrs. Edmund Rothschild  
Prof. E. Dwight Salmon  
Mrs. Gladys R. Savoie  
Mrs. Walter M. Schwarz  
Mr. William J. Secor, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Antony R. Silva  
Mrs. Arthur T. Silva  
Mrs. Walter Slocum  
Mr. Hollis A. Smith  
Mr. Mark Snider  
Mrs. Kenneth Stoddard  
Mrs. Roger Surprenant  
Mrs. A. Neale Swanson  
Miss Olive Swanson  

Miss Elizabeth Mayhew Yerrinton

We would also like to thank our sustaining members, who pay higher dues to augment our operating funds:

Mrs. Aarne J. Anderson  
Mr. Clarence A. Barnes, Jr.  
Mrs. William Murray Black  
Ms. Emily Bramhall  
Mr. John M. Coward  
Mrs. Thomas Coffin Crosby  
Mr. Hollis B. Engley  
Mrs. William H. English, Jr.  
Mr. Laurrey Fisher  
Dr. Ruth Fox  
Rev. John T. Golding  
Miss Nancy Hamilton  
Mr. Sinclair Hamilton  
Mrs. Gilbert A. Harrison  
Mr. Jonathan P. Hitesman  
Miss Dorris Hough  
Mrs. Ralph Hornblower  
Mrs. R. Anthony Hubbard  

Mr. Thomas Thatcher  
Mrs. Benjamin Thoron  
Mrs. Laurence Thompson  
Mr. Lynn B. Tipson  
Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Tobin  
Miss Ruth Todd  
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel G. Van Clief  
Mrs. Chester B. Van Tassel  
Mr. Peter Van Tassel  
Mr. and Mrs. Alexander O. Vietor  
Mrs. Bernard Wagenaar  
Mrs. Seth Wakeman  
Mrs. Leslie Webster, Jr.  
Miss Ellen B. Weiss  
Miss Rachael Williams  
Mrs. James C. Wilson  
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wrigley

Mr. Harriet M. Isacs  
Miss Dorothea R. Looney  
Miss Margaret Love  
Miss Doris L. Low  
General Wilmer F. Lucas  
Mrs. Angell McAlpin  
Mr. Harding Mason  
Miss Mary L. Norton  
Miss Helen Ogilvie  
Mrs. Vance Packard  
Mrs. Walter Slocum  
Mrs. Herbert Stewart  
Mr. Lynn B. Tipson  
Mrs. Stephen Trentman  
Mr. John C. Vibberts  
Mrs. Leslie T. Webster, Jr.  
Mrs. Seth Wakeman  
Mrs. Louis W. Young

Thomas Norton, Curator
Some Publications

OF THE DUKES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON SALE AT ISLAND BOOK STORES AND IN THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

*The Mammals of Martha's Vineyard* by Allan R. Keith. Illustrated, paper. 50¢.

*People To Remember* by Dionis Coffin Riggs. Illustrated, paper. $4.95.


*Indian Legends Of Martha's Vineyard* by Dorothy R. Scoville. Paper $2.50.

*An Introduction To Martha's Vineyard* by Gale Huntington. Illustrated, paper. A new edition. $3.95.

*A New Vineyard* by Dorothy Cottle Poole. Illustrated, cloth, $12.95 plus 65¢ postage.