

THE
DEAL
ISLAND

STORY

SKIPJACK RACE



MYRA THOMAS LONG

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THE SETTLERS

Deal Island, once a thriving community with many commercial activities and seafood operations is now a rather quiet section of the Eastern Shore. But its history is genuine Early American and its heritage an important chapter in the story of Chesapeake Bay.

About fourteen miles north of Crisfield and fifteen miles southwest of Princess Anne, its county seat, it is surrounded on three sides by Tangier Sound and on the east by a creek once known as "King's Creek" which connects Lawes Thoroughfare with Lower Thoroughfare. Lawes Thoroughfare is a deep channel which separates the island from the mainland. The island three miles long and one mile wide has two villages - Wenona at the lower end and Deal Island Village at the northern end where a bridge connects it with the mainland.

Years before the white man came to the Island it was known to be Indian country of the Manokin Tribe. Their wigwams lined the shore and their canoes skimmed the waters of Tangier Sound. They loved the creek and the forests, both of which supplied them with food. Many trails were made across the marshes while trapping for muskrats, hunting deer and wild fowl, and searching the forest for sassafras trees. The roots of the sassafras tree were used to brew a tea which they drank as a spring tonic to thin their blood.

Records show that John Westlock was the first white man to trade with the Indians. He made frequent trips to the Island bringing with him cloth, looking glasses, kettles, tobacco and blankets, giving them to the Indians in exchange for their rich furs and pottery.

But the Indians did not keep the Island long as their own. The white men knew of it and soon began to settle there. As more families came, the Indians became restless and in a short time left the Island to go north into Delaware where they joined the Algonquin Tribe.

Many relics have been found on the beaches and in tilling the land. Arrowheads, hatchets, necklaces and bracelets made from tiny shells, broken pieces of pottery, all tell the story of Indian life on the Island. There is mute evidence of an Indian village on land which later became the farm of William White.

The winding road from Wenona to Deal Island village is known as the old Indian trail. It's many curves tell the story of how, on foot, they picked the high spots across the marshlands.

As early as 1607, in the history of Captain John Smith's first voyage of exploration of the Chesapeake Bay, he states that he crossed from the new settlement of Jamestown, Virginia to the Eastern Shore (Somerset County) and after several adventures, discovered many creeks, rivers and islands. Among the larger islands in Tangier Sound we have no difficulty in identifying Tangier, Smith, Deal and Holland's. Captain Smith mentions in his writings that Deal's Island was one of his prominent landmarks as he sailed about the bay.

On Captain Smith's return to England he gave such a glowing report of the heritage he had found on the Virginia Shore and surrounding country that many studied his map and became interested in coming to this land of promise.

However, several years elapsed before three ships were manned and ventured to make the ocean voyage. All went well until they reached the Chesapeake Bay and ran into a hurricane. Two of the ships were fortunate enough to reach Accomack, Virginia, but one was driven off course in Tangier Sound, its sails ripped, mast broken and most of the crew lost. They were left to the mercy of the storm. In the darkness of the night their ship was blown ashore and wrecked. When morning came and the wind and rain had ceased the survivors, looking out across the rough waters of Tangier Sound and turning towards the land to see nothing but marsh and wilderness, cried out in their distress, "This is purgatory, the land of the Devil." It was this same storm which cut a wide channel separating about thirty acres of land from the lower end of the Island which was later to be known as "Little Deal's Island."

Starting out across the marsh, these ill fated survivors were met by Indians who had sighted their ship. At first the Indians were not very friendly, fearing they were pirates who had come to hide out on their Island. However, the white men soon convinced them they meant no harm, only wished to be friends, and so were welcomed to their village.

It is said that for more than a century the Island was known as Devil's Island and used by pirates as their hideout.

We regret we can find no date of the landing of the ship or the names of the survivors. The only proof that we have that this is not a legend but a true story is the record in the County Clerk's office of a deed for Purgatory.

History records that by 1650, the population on the shore was growing rapidly. In 1661, Lord Baltimore (Gov. Philip Calvert) appointed John Elzey and Randall Revel as commissioners, to arrange to accept the new settlers to the shore.

The first Land Patents on Deal Island village, in Somerset County, were to Christopher Oldsfield, Lloyds Grove and Cowley, 1665; Patents to Thomas Roe, North Foreland, 1676; Rent roll, Bradshaw purchase part of Lloyds Grove and Cowley, 1665. Land Patents to Robert King on the lower end of the Island (Wenona) are as follows: Self Preservation, 1745, Support, 1744, Barbodeas, 1725. John Lawes was the first white man to receive a grant in 1676. John Lawes came from Scotland and settled on the Island. He was a lover of the sea and a very energetic man and by the next year, 1677, he bought part of North Foreland from Thomas Roe and in a very short time, also obtained a part of Bradshaw purchase. He divided his land into building lots and sold to the settlers. He envisioned a great future in the seafood business and encouraged the watermen to sell not only their catch of fish, but the oysters and crabs as well. In a short time, small boats were carrying oysters to near by towns and villages. Then larger boats began loading oysters and crabs for Baltimore. This started the seafood industry on the Island and today it stands second in the shipping of seafood, Crisfield being in the lead.

The Channel which separates the Island from the mainland was named Lawes Thoroughfare in honor of John Lawes.

Col. Robert King owned about 300 acres of tillable land and 200 acres of sand and marsh on the lower end of Devil's Island, but we find no record of his having lived there. He deeded his land patents to Robert J. H. King and Nehemiah King.

On October 24, 1795 David Wallace bought from Nehemiah King 70 acres of land called "Support" for 116 pounds, 16 shillings and 3 pence. Several years later he bought the patent "Barbadoes".

Wallace was the first local preacher on the Island and was ordained as Elder. He solemnized most of the marriages in his own home. His old home was the first place opened for religious worship on the Island. The original house burned but Captain William Price, the Custom House officer of the Port, bought the land and built a home there which is still standing and is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Shores. It is said that this was the first Custom House on the Eastern Shore.

Tobacco was the principal export at this time but we learn that later wheat and other grains were shipped to England and the West Indies, the boats returning with household goods.

A few of the names prominent in Island history before the Revolution were William Bradshaw, Thomas Roe, Robert Roe and John Lawes. Others coming during the Revolution were Tyler, Evans, Crockett, Parks and Thomas. These people were of Anglo Saxon origin, self sufficient and self centered, developing their own habits and traditions.

On October 24, 1824, Travis Daniel, a wealthy planter from North Carolina, purchased from Robert J. H. King, part of the tract on lower end of Devil's Island (Wenona) known by the name of Self Preservation for which he paid the sum of one hundred twenty-five dollars in current money.

For several years he farmed his land, later he began selling building lots to the new settlers encouraging them to settle on the lower end of the Island.

Part of this property is now owned by Mr. Henry Edwards of Salisbury. Mr. Edwards also has the deed to Little Purgatory.

Mrs. William Daniel gave the silver communion set to the Deal Island Church.

THE AGE OF JOSHUA THOMAS

The most prominent arrival in the first half of the 19th century came over from Tangier Island. He was the preacher, Joshua Thomas, who had warned the British soldiers that they would be defeated at Baltimore and had been given the title "Parson of the Islands" by their General Ross. With his brother-in-law Aaron Bradshaw, he bought Little Deals Island and named it "Little Eden". After the death of Aaron Bradshaw, Solomon Evans, a wealthy planter from Smith Island, bought his home and lived there many years. There are no homes there now. Around 1908 Dr. Charles H. Conley, Sr. and Robert Carman, a lawyer living in Baltimore and one time teacher in the Deal Island High School, bought "Little Eden" and used it as a sportsman's club. After their clubhouse burned they bought the old Thomas Bradshaw home and moved the club there. They still own the little Island and during open season for duck shooting enjoy hunting there.

Brother Thomas was ordained as Deacon of the Church and on the passing of David Wallace became his successor as local preacher. The people of the Island gave him a canoe and named it the "Methodist". This was constructed out of one log and had a length of more than 20 feet and a beam of about 5 feet. It carried two masts. For more than thirty years he sailed it among the islands preaching to the settlers and conveying visiting ministers. A few of the ministers who were good friends of Brother Thomas and frequent visitors to the Island were Brother Chandler of Philadelphia, Rev. Lawerson McComb, Rev. Solomon Sharp and Rev. Kemp.

Due to the religious teachings of these good men and many others, the people of the Island were concerned about the island being known as Devil's Island and were anxious to have it changed. At a prayer meeting in the home of Captain John Parks, one of the visiting ministers suggested that they change the name to Deil's Island, stating that deil was a Greek word meaning devil. Others say that the v was just dropped from the name and a map issued in 1870 shows it as Deil's Island. The Post Office now lists it as Deal Island.

On July 17, 1828 Joshua Thomas held his first Camp Meeting on Deal Island - a practice that gave the Island prominence all along the Eastern Shore. Thousands came from the shores and islands of Chesapeake Bay to hear his fiery sermons. They came in sailing ships and small boats carrying equipment and food for families to camp for as long as a week.

The site of the first camp meetings was a bluff owned by Denard Evans and called Evans Hill or the "old hill". It was the highest point on the Island and was accessible by land or water. Much of this has been washed away but what remains is now a real estate development called "Soundside" and owned by the estate of the late Harry White. In describing the camp meetings one has written that the camp ground was "hallowed by the most powerful meetings that perhaps have ever been witnessed since the days of Pentecost."

Twenty years later in 1848, Captain Jacob Parks donated the land known as "Parks Grove" and a new tabernacle was built and the camp moved to the Grove. The last camp meeting on Deal Island was held in 1922.

Parks Grove was a beautiful spot in the north-central part of the Island. In 1850 a new church was completed near the camp ground on land donated by Captain John Parks and his brother Charlie. This became known as The Joshua Thomas Chapel. Reverend Thomas attended the dedication but had to be carried in on a chair as he was by then a helpless cripple. In this same year he preached what proved to be his last regular public discourse. His death occurred at the age of 77 on October 8th, 1853. His tomb is by the side of the chapel bearing his name and each year the first Sunday in September is celebrated as Joshua Thomas Day.

In 1879 a large new church was built in front of the Joshua Thomas Chapel. Near the church was built the Deal Island Academy in 1850. This was the first public school on the Island. Prior to this the children attended school at Rock Creek. The people of the Island also attended the Rock Creek Church before their own church was built. Just above the church was a small hall owned by the Sons of Temperance. One of its leading members was Noah Webster, a merchant residing nearby. He was also the first postmaster when the Deal Island post office was opened May 1st, 1856. Clustered here were the elements that made up the cultural life of the community, the church, the school, the Hall, Camp Ground and the Post Office.

Later two other Methodist Churches were built on the Island. One at Wenona and one between the Wenona church and the Deal Island Church, for the colored population. Here camp meetings were held also. The Salisbury Advertiser, in August 1876, reported such a meeting stating "the crowd was immense and the meeting a great success because music resounded like thunder".

THE DAYS OF SAIL.

The population of the Island in 1850 was about 500 but from that time there was a steady increase in the number of new settlers. These families took great pride in developing the Island. New roads were built with oyster shells. New homes appeared along the highways and horses and carriages were now used to supplant the previous method of traveling by horseback.

Until 1878, when the steamboats arrived, practically all transportation away from the island was by boat although there was a very rough road over a circuitous route leading to Princess Anne, the County seat. After leaving Chance it led to the south over a ridge in the marshes toward the Dunworkin Club, then through Oriole, Dames Quarter, St. Stephens and a part of Venton until it met a three mile road coming out of Princess Anne. It was a full days trip with a horse and wagon and a very difficult one. In summer hordes of mosquitoes made it even worse. Early access to the mainland was by ferry but in the 1800's a plank bridge was built and in the early 1900's a more substantial one crossed the Thoroughfare.

Prior to this time there was some farming on the Island but the inaccessibility of good markets limited production. The greater part of the Islanders income was derived from the water and "following the water" was the principal occupation of the male population. Oysters, crabs and fish were harvested with small boats, sloops and schooners. Oyster dredging was generally the most remunerative. Seafood was an important item in the diet and housewives salted away fish for the off season meals.

Larger sailboats were used not only for harvesting seafood but for carrying it to the Baltimore market. In the days of the ealy settlers trips around the Bay were made in dugout log canoes carrying sails, and then came the plank type boats with greater carrying capacity. Ultimately there were three types of sailing boats used by the Deal Island watermen. Our source for this information is Mr. Roland Parks who is reviving interest in those days by turning out model ships. The Bugeye - the earliest known use of the name was in 1868 - two masts, sharp sails with pointed bow and round stern; the Pungies - two masts with square sails; and the locally famous Skipjack with one mast, flat stern and sharp sail. There were, of course variations of the different types. Some skipjacks were made on Deal Island in two boatyards, one on the northern end and one on the lower east side in what is known as the Creek. The skipjack was developed in the 1890's and the largest of its kind the "Robert L. Webster", built in Oriole in 1915 still sails out of Deal Island under command of Capt. Eldon Willing, Sr.

After the dredging season was over for the year the watermen used their boats for other purposes. Captain John Messick, owner of the sloop Nomina; Captain George Windsor, owner of the sloop Oswell Bertie, and Captain John Wilson, owner of the sloop Lizzie Edgerton, did freighting to and from all points on the Chesapeake Bay. My own father, Captain Lybrand Thomas, master of a three mast schooner, Clemie Travis, for many springs sailed from the Island for the West Indies, returning to Baltimore with a cargo of pineapple, bananas and other tropical fruit. A large bunch of bananas at that time sold for one dollar. During the month of June he planted oysters

in the waters around Moorehead City, North Carolina. Returning home he would have his schooner made ready to buy oysters from the dredge boats when the season opened, and in turn sold them to the commission houses in Baltimore. "Captain Lyb" retired in 1904, returning the Clemie Travis to Webster Brothers in Baltimore. In 1908 he was elected a member of the House of Delegates. In 1916 he was appointed as Oyster Inspector for Baltimore. Later he served as a member of the Board of Education of Somerset County, serving with Mr. C. Allen Carlson, Supt. of Somerset County Schools.

Sailmaking was very important to the islanders. Capt. John Stubbs operated a sail loft before the Civil War. Mr. Henry Brown, an Englishman, came to America and joined the Navy. After the war he settled on the Island and worked for Capt. Stubbs, having learned the sailmaking trade in the English Navy. In 1870 he bought the business from Capt. Stubbs and continued to make and repair sails for schooners sailing from Cape Cod and the West Indies to Baltimore. In 1919, his son Albert Brown, took over the business and today Albert's son Henry operates the business. From their sail loft at the southern end of the Island they supply sails for the Bay commercial boats and many of the pleasure craft along the East Coast.

A map of "Deil's Island" issued in the 1870's lists the advertisements of five general stores - James T. Daniel and J. C. S. Vetra & Son at Wenona; J. T. Bennett and Levin Anderson at Deal Island Village and John W. Kelly on the east side. These merchants went in for a complete general line. They list dry goods, groceries, confectionery, hat, boots, shoes, hardware, Queensware, readymade clothing, paints, oils, varnishes, ship chandlery, cutlery, drugs and patent medicines. Several times a year it is said, the merchants would close their stores for a week and sail off to Baltimore and return with supplies for replenishing their stock.

The map states that Samuel J. Wilson was a practical boot and shoe maker from the finest French calf to plow brogans. William Evans was a carpenter and advertises all kinds of undertaking done with a first class hearse. Sewell Evans did all kinds of carpentering and undertaking with "neatness and dispatch".

The map also shows the seafood house of Vetra & Wallace on Little Deal Island. A few years later there were other seafood houses on Little Deal. One was owned by Edgerton Wilson, father of Harry Wilson who now operates a seafood house at Wenona. But these are now all gone.

Capt. Levin Collier at Wenona and Capt. Wm. Webster at Deal Island Village were blacksmiths and their's was an important service. They made and repaired dredges, anchors for boats, shoes for horses and andirons to keep the home fires burning for the wate-man. The Webster blacksmith shop operated for over three quarters of a century until the recent death of Mr. Roland Webster.

This map shows a Masonic Temple at the northern end of the island just before the approach to the bridge. Also pinpointed is "schoolhouse no. 2" in Wenona just after crossing a small bridge over what is known as Middle Creek. Mr. Harry Wilson recalls attending this school.

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of the internal combustion engine many small boats so equipped could greatly increase the tonnage of harvested crabs. Oyster and crab packing houses were set up all over the Island. Soft crabs were shipped in large boxes packed with ice and seaweed, hardshells in barrels and oysters in the shell went out in baskets with shucked oysters being packed in small kegs. Near the old hill was a fishery plant which canned herring and shipped out salted fish in barrels. These shipments were not for Baltimore alone but were transshipped to other markets on the East Coast and even to the middle West.

With a large production of tomatoes two canning plants were built - one owned by Noah Webster between the Old Hill and Hunts Creek and the other at Wenona where Harry Wilson's oyster house is now located. This was owned by Thompson Wallace.

On the pier an ice house was operated by Adolphus and Ralph Brown. Large cakes weighing 100 pounds were brought from Salisbury and packed in sawdust. On the water's edge to the south of the wharf an ice plant was started in 1916 by Thompson Wallace. Near this plant Harry Wilson opened the first garage in the early 1920's, then later built a new garage and Ford salesroom, which is now the Firehouse.

The first auto was owned by Henry Brown, the sailmaker, it had a chain drive and a rod for steering. Noah Webster who had moved to Baltimore but who still maintained a second home on the Island also owned an auto at the same time.

After about a quarter of a century of steamboat service the Islanders began to realize what a great improvement had come over the economic situation on the Island and became enthusiastic about the future. One of these enthusiasts wrote the Princess Anne newspaper in 1895 as follows: "We are still surrounded by water - as we always have been - but we are rising rather than sinking, and Deal Island, once known as Devil's Island, bids fair to be one of the most thriving places on the Shore. Wait and See."

In the same year there was a movement to build a railroad to Princess Anne. The steamboat company offered \$1,000 toward financing it but apparently there were not enough other subscribers.

The Salisbury Advertiser in its issue of Feb. 15, 1876 reports the death of Dr. E. R. Waller of Deal Island but we have no further record of his practicing on the Island. We have more complete records of Dr. Monie Roe who lived in a house which is still standing and is now the home of Mrs. William Hudgins. Upon the death of Dr. Roe in 1899 Dr. Harvey Alexander arrived from Holland Island and lived in Dr. Rie's house. Dr. Henry served the Island many years as their dentist and his home is back of the Joshua Thomas Chapel.

The first bank on the Island was in the store of William Seymore Thomas, grandson of the Rev. Joshua Thomas. Some years later a new bank was built, a branch of the Bank of Somerset with Arthur Andrews as cashier and Edelen Webster as assistant cashier. This bank closed in 1929.

There was a change in family activities with the coming of the steamboats. The women began to travel to Salisbury and Baltimore to do their shopping and the homes of the watermen showed the effects of wider se-

lections for their furnishings. Many fine homes were built during this era. Entire families would go on excursions to Baltimore. Meals, were good and sleeping accommodations fine. Capt. Johnnie Bennett met all the boats, first with horses and carriage and later with his Dayton automobile. He transported passengers and delivered freight. He also owned a stable of race horses which he entered in some of the local events.

There were still the general stores of the sailing days but now more service facilities and amusement enterprises appeared. The Anderson store on the wharf road sold groceries and ships supplies on the first floor and on the second floor Mrs. Anderson had a millinery shop and sold dry goods. Thompson Wallace owned a department store where Melvin White now lives. It was a two story building where anything the family needed could be found. On the main highway, near the ice plant was a large store owned by Fred Webster and his father. There were many other small stores throughout the Island that sold groceries, candy and ice cream. Some were called ice cream parlors. Mrs. Theresa Thomas, affectionately known as Aunt Tess, owned the drug store and operated an ice cream parlor where you could buy a big bowl of homemade ice cream for a nickel. Mr. Chas. Ringgold had a complete haberdashery store where Mrs. Lottie Shores now lives.

In 1914 The Diamond State Telephone Company opened an office and Mrs. Eva Shores was the Exchange operator with the office in her home.

In 1929 Mr. Thomas Price established a bus line that ran from Wenona over the rough marsh roads to Princess Anne and then to Salisbury. A model T. Ford was made into a bus capable of carrying twenty passengers. Mr. Price maintained this service continuously until very recently .

Mrs. Mollie Wallace Lively, for a number of years, taught an art class in oil painting and today in many homes you will find paintings bearing dates in the early 1900's that were done in her classes.

Recreation took different forms on the Island. A skating rink and a pool room were located to the right of the home of the late Mrs. Kate Anderson, owned and operated by W. O. Brown and John Bennett. Wenona had two movie houses, a skating rink and a merry-go-round. A Red Mens' Hall with a large auditorium for social events was situated near the Deal Island School. In the early 1900's an amateur theatrical group gave plays in the sail loft at Wenona. In the early 1930's there was an arena for boxing matches that drew many customers from the mainland. There were ice skating parties and taffy pulls in the winter time and lawn parties in the summer where the lawns were elaborately decorated with Japanese lanterns and homemade ice cream was served for refreshments. Life was pleasant and few young people wanted to leave their Island homes for metropolitan living.

In 1916 the high school was in trouble. Only eleven students had enrolled for the coming year and Mr. William Dashiell, the County Superintendent told the teachers that unless they had forty pupils the school could not open. Miss Elizabeth Anderson (now Mrs. Warren Bozman) realized what it would mean if the high school closed. She talked to Mr. Dashiell, who gave her little encouragement. She explained the need to the State Supervisor in Baltimore, and solicited the help of Mr. Joshua Miles, the leading politician in the county, who had many friends on the Island. Together they spent many hours

with the parents stressing the importance of a high school education for their children. By the last week in August, Miss Lizzie, as her pupils called her, had forty-one students enrolled. The Deal Island High School opened on time.

As we turn the pages of history we find the Island has not lacked for famous native sons. Mr. Samuel Stewart Wallace, born in 1868, graduated from the Deal Island Academy, received his B. A. degree from Dickinson College, Carlisle, Pa., his M. A. from Columbia University, New York, N. Y. and his Ph.D from the University of Chicago. He also received two honorary degrees, from Dickinson and D Litt from the University of Georgia. After leaving the Island, Mr. Wallace was a professor of English for 22 years in the Georgia Institute of Technology.

Mr. Thomas B. Webster, son of Silas T. and Louisa Webster, born in 1853, left the Island with his brothers at an early age and started a business at Canton along the waterfront in Baltimore. They were oyster commissioners, ship chandlers, partners in the canning business operating under the name of Webster Butterfield, owners of a number of dredge boats and three mast schooners. All of their captains were from the Island or Rock Creek. Captain Tom was a bachelor and spent most of his summers on the Island. He was often heard to say, "No matter how long I have been away, no matter where I have roamed, I am always proud to say Deal Island is my home". He requested that he be laid to rest in the Deal Island Cemetery.

Islanders serving in the House of Delegates were Lybrand Thomas, Hosea Webster and more recently Carl Hoffman.

Also serving on the Somerset County Board of Education were Lybrand Thomas and Hosea Webster. Hosea Webster was a member of the Board at the time the present Deal Island High School was built and gave land near the new school for a recreation center for the school. At the present time Horace Webster from Wenona is president of the Board of Education.

THE STORM

The Islanders survived the depression and entered the 30's in a fairly prosperous state. At that time Deal Island had a population of 2500 and the assessed valuation was for more than a quarter of a million dollars. The yearly shipments of seafood were considered to be worth \$300,000 and the returns for farm products were high but depended on market conditions. The economic situation was sound locally and the mainland press called it one of the most important islands of the Chesapeake.

Then arrived the late evening of Tuesday, August 22nd, in the year 1933. Gale winds blew, the rains came, the tides rose and they called it a hurricane but it had no name. The upgrading of hurricanes by giving them a woman's name had not been adopted.

The reports received by those on the mainland were meager at first for telephones were out for three days and only by boat could messages be received. The story finally came in that the bridge to the mainland was washed out - every oyster and crab house either swept away or so badly damaged that salvage was doubtful - the \$300,000 seafood industry was wiped out - the steamboat wharf destroyed - dozens of boats including the huge oyster dredges, crab boat and motor boats wrecked, sunk or driven into the marshes. High waves threatened the Anderson Hotel, the lower floors were flooded and guests were removed by boat. The direct damage was listed as \$50,000 but there was a much heavier indirect loss.

A makeshift ferry was established by the State Roads Commission while a new plank bridge was being built. Mr. Edelen Webster and Mr. Robert L. Webster appearing before the State Relief Administration reported 30 to 40 families as needing relief because of the storm. During the next years the population figure decreased perceptibly because of lack of employment. Strenuous steps were taken to restore the activity of the Island but the results were slow in accruing.

THE OPEN ROAD

During the 30's sections of new roads were being built over the marshes between Deal Island and Princess Anne. By 1935 all sections were completed which resulted in there being a continuous paved road to the County Seat. Thus again came a change in the pattern of life on the Island. Surrounded by water, it was still an island but for all purposes it was now a part of the mainland with all the advantages of any similar community on the Eastern Shore.

As the advent of the automobile had changed the transportation picture over the country, so now with a good road to Princess Anne and connection with the state highways the seafood and farm products could be delivered directly to many new markets. Social activities were no longer confined to the Island. Deal Island had stepped into the modern whirl by way of a fifteen mile road.

The storm of '33 dealt a devastating blow to the local seafood industry and as a revival was attempted it was found that many new factors entered the situation. Today there are fewer oysters in this part of the Bay. Consequently the oyster fleet has dwindled in number and many of the young people are seeking work in industry on the mainland. At present there are only three seafood packing houses. Mr. Richard Webster, son of Capt. Luther Webster, returned to the Island after World War II and now operates the Somerset Seafood Company. Mr. Harry Wilson has an oyster and crab packing plant at Wenona. A third one for the packing of crabs has recently been remodeled and modernized and is operated under the management of Kirwin Abbott. These are well operated and Deal Island seafood is today found in markets as far as the middle west.

Farming continues on a small scale mostly limited to raising strawberries beans and tomatoes. Gone are the general and specialty stores of previous years. Albert Anderson has a marine supply store at Deal Island harbor and Horace Webster supplies the boats in Wenona harbor. A modern supermarket and recreation center near the school is operated under the name of S & W Enterprises. The Deal Island School also serves the children of Chance and Dames Quarter. Here in the one building a child can enter the first grade and come out the door a high school graduate.

The two Methodists churches and the church for the colored people all have faithful support. A Lions Club is active in community affairs and a Volunteer Fire Company protects the area from fires. A Community Hall has been built on the grounds formerly occupied by the tabernacle and the Fire Company has added a recreation room to the back of it's building.

The Island has an active Homemakers Club and the first county wide 4-H camp in Somerset County was held on Deal Island under the sponsorship of the local 4-H Club.

A rather new development has been the building of new homes and the renovating of older houses for couples moving to the Island to spend their re-

tirement years. A book on the subject of retiring, recently published in New York, contains a picture of Deal Island Harbor and refers to the Island as a "Most intriguing haven for those who really want to get off the beaten track."

In 1959 the Lions Club, with the help of Ben Evans, a former Islander, revived the Oyster Fleet Sailboat races which in years past had been a very popular event. Now, on Labor Day, fifteen to twenty boats race along the Sound in view of crowds on the western bank of the Island. Each year sees a larger influx of visitors and increasing publicity in the press is doing much to make cities and towns on the East Coast aware of Deal Island.

Most of the material for this story was gathered from the following sources:

"PARSON OF THE ISLAND" by Wallace

"HISTORY OF THE EASTERN SHORE OF MARYLAND" by Clark Hall of Records — Annapolis, Maryland

An old map of Deal Island, 1870, giving the occupation of the settlers of the Island at that time.

I would like to express my appreciation to Mr. Albert Anderson and Mr. Henry Brown for the picture they contributed, and to Mr. Arthur Rolfe for his interest and help in writing this story, and to Mr. I. Theodore Phoebus, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Somerset County, for securing the copies of the original patents on the Island which assured me that "Purgatory" was not a myth but a tract of land for which a deed is recorded, and to all friends who contributed many interesting facts that have made the writing of this story possible.