

VANISHING ISLAND

A True Story of Hollands Island

By

Irving M. Parks, Sr.

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The life of Hollands Island is a thing of the past. It survives mostly in the memories of those who lived there. Thus my reason for writing this story is as one who did live there.

Hollands Island is located in the Chesapeake Bay and was five miles long, one and half miles wide, with good, rich soil. The farmers of the island grew good crops, such as corn, wheat and all kinds of vegetables. It had four or five large fruit orchards. This island was in Dorchester County. The origin of the name is believed to have been from an empty bottle of Holland Gin which drifted ashore. It had sixty or more homes, seven stores, one confectionery store, one dry goods store, also a very nice church, where services were held three times on each Sunday. Every Wednesday night Prayer Meetings were held. A two-room school house with two teachers, a Community Hall which was known as the "Red Men Hall." This hall was where we held Oyster Suppers and Box Socials. According to the church record it seated at one time 367 people who lived on the island could be seated.

The island had a good sailing fleet, which consisted of eight kungys, thirty-six Bugeyes, 41 Skip-jacks and 2 schooners. One of the schooners, "A. H. Schultz" was one time harbored in Cambridge and owned by the late Capt. Harvey Conway. The Bugeye, "Geo Todd," was considered by many watermen as the fastest sail boat on the Bay. This boat won every championship in the work boat races, which the Sun paper sponsored every year. Most of the boats were tied up in the summer months after oyster season was over. Some of the boats in summer would go crabb-scraping with from two to four scrapes per boat. They caught peelers and soft crabs which were sold to what was called then Shedding Houses. These houses were located on an island east of Holland Island called Rockcoll. It had a total of ten shedding places. The B & C Steamboat Line which came to Deals Island freighted the crabs to the City of Baltimore. This turned out to be a great success with the watermen every spring and summer.

The island was also noted for fishing. Pound nets were used and great numbers of shad caught in these nets. Most of the nets were fished west of the Island in the Chesapeake Bay. There was no motors in the boats; they all used sails. It was a close run to the nets, we could go from harbor in thirty minutes. Our harbor was called the "Back Cove", also the "Creek" which was a real good harbor. We brought our boats in thru a lead. It was a made lead by nature, located between Long Island and Hollands Island. Long Island had three homes on it and good farm land. This Island was the first to start to wash away. Then Hollands Island started to crumble and wash away causing a good many of the people to move away.

Mr. William Bennett was the first to leave the Island. He owned and operated a large grocery store, also had a fleet of boats. He also owned a good many homes, which he tore down and moved them to Cambridge. Some of these homes are located on Willis St. and Glasgow St. The Island was owned by my Grandfather, William A. Parks. He lived on the extreme Upper end of the Island, known as the North End of the Island. He first lived on Spring Island, which was two miles east of Hollands Island. He came across and bought the Island from Tyler Bradshaw. My Grandfather gave land to build the church, school, Red Men Hall. He gave his children lots to build on. The home he lived in was built out of white pine and consisted of sixteen rooms. He gave the home and lot which was the Post Office to his niece who in later years resided in Cambridge, the late Mrs. Peter H. Parks. His fruit orchards went from the east side of the Island to the west side. Grandfather was great for having many people to visit him. Growing crops of corn, wheat, sweet potatoes and white potatoes was what he liked to do. Boarding our ministers and school teachers was another thing he liked to do. Most of all the cooking my Grandmother did was on the fire place. She would not cook anything on Sunday, all the cooking was done on Saturday putting the food in large pails and tying them in the well so the food would keep. Our ministess were some of the best from the Conference. Each year we would have our revival meetings. These meetings drew large crowds of people from Deals Island, Crisfield, Wingates, and all over the county. Around the church there was an iron fence which enclosed the cemetery where a good many of the island people are buried. It was Grandfather's

request to be buried in his most famous place, his fruit orchard. After the storm began to crumble down the high banks and wash away, it was getting very close to his grave and my Grandmother's. About twelve years ago my Brother Willie, cousin Johnnie and I went down to the Island and removed their remains to our lot in Cambridge Greenlawn Cemetery. (On his tomb stone was engraved the following "Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints". On my Grandmother's stone is engraved these words, "When she had so said she went her way saying The Master Has Come and Calleth for Me.")

There was also a cemetery on the Bay Shore Ridge. This land got to washing away and they moved all the graves to the Church Yard Cemetery. This cemetery was on high ground and did not wash away on the tide.

The homes on the Bay Shore Ridge were torn down and moved away. The first home on the South end of the Island was Capt. James Smith Todd, he moved his home to Crisfield, Md. He owned a Bugeye named the "Moonlight". Next to his residence was his Brother, Capt. Major Carroll Todd who operated a store which sold groceries and boat supplies to good many of the boats. Oyster dredgers working close around Hollands Island and the Chesapeake Bay would harbor in Back Cove and buy all of their supplies from Capt. Todd's store. His store was stocked with groceries of all kinds, rope, shovels, and anything a waterman might need. Crumbling and washing of the Bay Shore became worse and Capt. Todd decided to move his home to Crisfield, Md, where today his children reside. He owned a Bugeye named the "Issac Keeler", sister ship to the "George Todd." Out of a family of six there now survives only two, a son George Todd and a daughter, Mrs. Lloyd Parks.

Capt. James Duncan was the next to move. He sold his home and moved to Oxford, Md., where his surviving children now live. Mrs. Saddle Griffin, Mrs. Harry Hubbard, Mrs. Ollie Crockett, one son, James Duncan. Capt. Jim as we all called him owned a Skipjack named the "Boss Girl". Living next to him on the Island was his father, Capt. Thomas G. Duncan, who sold his home and it was moved to James Quarter, Md. He had eight children, Lewis, John, James, Henry, Walter Duncan, two daughters, Mrs. Hattie Fields and Mrs. Rosie Gibson. Capt. Henry Duncan and his sister, Mrs. Rosie Gibson are now living in Oxford, Md., the only survivors. He was the owner of a large fleet of boats, "A. H. Shelty", "Thomas V. Duncan", and the "William Summers."

As we move up the shore to the end of what we called the "Big Road" lived Mr. William Connett who owned and operated a grocery store. The waves worked on crumbling the shore and he had to tear down and move his store. This store now stands in Cambridge and is known as the Candyland on Race Street, better known as Whitey's. He owned Bugeyes, "Banks", "Bush", "Parks" and "Garrett." Out of this family the only surviving member is Mrs. John Matthews, Sr. of Cambridge.

The next home was that of Capt. Ira Todd. He tore his home down and moved it to Crisfield, Md. This home now is located on Maryland Ave. of that town.

Capt. Todd was very active in the church on the Island, he was one of the trustees. He owned and operated a large number of fish traps. He also owned the Bugeye, "Sidney Riggin". While he lived in Crisfield he owned many power boats which he used until his death.

Next to his house was the Methodist Church Parsonage. This parsonage was moved to Bishops Head, Md. The last year that it stood on the Island, my Aunt, Mrs. Dora Hall lived there and kept a

confectionary store. She also boarded the school teachers.

Next to the Parsonage was my father's brother, Capt. John W. Parks. He owned and operated Fish Nets, along with a Bugeye named the "Rebecca White". He also dredged and freighted oysters.

Next to him lived Capt. George Todd who owned a Bugeye named the "George Todd", his wife, Mrs. Jennie Todd owned and operated a dry goods store. She sold anything from wallpaper to all sorts of materials in her store. Their house was moved to Crisfield, Md. and it stands on Maryland Ave. Next to him lived Capt. Nath. Parks who owned and operated a Pungy boat named the "Samuel Weights." He died when a young man and his wife kept the children together and was the postmistress. They had six children. There are three of his children now living, Mrs. Henry Duncan of Oxford, Md., Nathan Parks of Tilghman's, and Rev. McCoy Parks of Wilmington, Del. Their home was moved to Tilghman's and is now where the son Nathan lives. The sons helped their mother, Mrs. Carrie, to make the living. They had two Skipjacks named the "Josephine" and the "Lula Y."

Next home was Capt. Pete Todd, who married my sister Bertha. His mother and father lived with them. He owned and operated fish traps. Together with his father they owned Pungy and Bugeye boats. In his later years he dredged a Skipjack named the "Edith Creighton." His land was washing away so he sold his home to the late Hansel Tyler, who moved it to Hoopers Island.

The next home was Capt. William Price, who married my sister Lucy. He had a grocery store and boat supplies. Also owned and operated fish traps and a Bugeye named the "Valarie Harvey". He moved his family to Cambridge where he operated a small grocery store in his home on Willis Street. His only son, Hargris Price now resides in ~~xxxxxxx~~ the home place. He had two

daughters, Mrs. Clara Price and Mrs. Anna Forrest. Mrs. Clara Price was one of the school teachers on the Island.

The next home was Capt. Thomas S. Price, he was the brother of Capt. Wm. Price. He owned a grocery and confectionary store, fish traps and a schooner named the "Coldoil John". He moved his home to Cambridge and it now stands on Hambrooks Blvd. There are three surviving children, Mrs. Walter Duncan of Oxford, Md., Miss Tomashia Price and William Price who live on West End Ave. in Cambridge.

Next to him on the Island lived his Brother, Capt. Adam Price who sold his home to my Brother, Lloyd Parks who in turn moved it to Crisfield, Md., Capt. Adam moved to Tilghman's. He owned a Skipjack named the "Carrie Price." He has two children now living, Mrs. Grace Ball of Tilghman's and a son living in Baltimore.

Next to him was the home of Capt. Wade Sommers. Capt. Sommers bought his home from his father-in-law, Capt. James Todd. He later moved to Crisfield and his home was moved to Bishops Head. For his livelihood he had fish traps and a Skipjack named the "Mollie E" which he built himself. He was also the builder of good many of the boats.

Next to his home was Capt. Preston Fields who moved to the Island from Fruitland, Md. and married the daughter of Capt. James Duncan. He bought this home from Doc. Vault and it was later moved to Bishops Head. He had a large number of fish nets as well as a Skipjack named the "Carroll Todd." This Skipjack was built by Capt. Carroll Todd. He later moved his family to Cambridge and lived on West End Ave.

The next home was Capt. Wood Sommers. He had a large gear of fish nets and a Skipjack named the "Mollie E". He moved his home to Tilghman's.

The next home was my Great Uncle Jake Bradshaw. He was my

Grandmother's brother. He lived in a large home and his wife had a grocery store. He also did some farming. His boat, a kungy named the "Frances J. Ruth." His home was moved to Bishops Head, but he moved to Cambridge where he lived until his death.

Capt. Charlie Kelly lived in the next home. His father lived with him. He fished traps for a living along with two Skipjacks, the "John L. Thomas" and the "Sy Hannon." His home was moved to Wingate's and he brought his family to Cambridge, where he bought a home on Choptank Ave. He has two surviving children now living in Cambridge, Mrs. Lazie Wroten and Dr. Charles Kelly, one of the owners of Craig's Drug Store. His son, Charles was the last person to be born on Hollands Island.

Capt. West Forrest lived on the Upper End of the Island, the Bay Shore Ridge. His home was moved to Bishops Head. He owned a dredge boat named the "Four Sisters." He moved his family to Cambridge and lived on Glasgow Street.

There was a large creek, which you could enter in through the Chesapeake Bay which was west of the Island. This strip of land Capt. Wesley Forrest lived on. They called it the Point.

Across the creek was Holland Straits, and towards the head of the Island was where my Grandfather lived, William Arthur Parks. He owned two kungys and a Bugeye and also did some farming. He lived at this home until his death. He was the father of Mrs. Angie Evans, Mrs. Dora Hall, Capt. Jacob, Grant, John and Frank Parks. W. Grant Parks was my Father and his land and home was sold to John E. Hurst Bros.

Next place going south toward the south end of the Island was where Capt. Jacob Parks lived. He had farm land and a few boats. A Bugeye named the "Maggie Pearl" and a Schooner named the "Elizabeth

Ann." He used these boats to dredge oysters. He had a family of eight children, Mrs. Pearl Duncan, Mrs. Gernie Haley, Miss Marie Parks, Miss Louise Parks, Johnnie, Naylor, William and Ralph Parks. He sold his home to Hurst Brothers also and moved to Cambridge, Md. where he resided until his death. His survivors are Ralph and Naylor Parks who live on Willis St. Johnnie and his sister, Louise live on West End Ave.

Next to Capt. Jacob Parks, was my home, the home of W. Grant Parks. All of us were borned on the Island in that home. This home is still standing and is used for a Hunting Lodge, having all of the modern day conveniences. In the by gone days when we lived there, it was a very nice home and at times there was never a dull moment. My Mother was a school teacher and she also taught music lessons. My Father had an apple orchard along with fig and damson trees. He was known as a very successful waterman having a lungy named the "Elta" and a Bugeye named the "Hattie Duncan". The "Hattie Duncan" is the boat I dredged oysters on when a young lad. He and my Mother also farmed the land. In 1918 we moved to Cambridge and lived on Willis Street for two years, then my Mother and Father bought the house on West End Ave. This is where they both lived out the balance of their days, and where I now reside. There was eight of us, only four are now living. I have two sisters living in Crisfield, Mrs. Ewell Parks and Mrs. Margaret Todd. My Brother, Willie G. Parks lives on Talbot Ave., Cambridge.

Next to our home on the Island was Mrs. Dora Hall. She sold and moved on Bay Shore Ridge. This house was bought by Capt. Jessie Parks and his wife. They had a grocery store, he also fished traps. In the fall and winter he would dredge the boat named the "Issac Keeler". He moved his home to Crisfield, Md., Somerset Ave. where he and his wife lived the rest of their days. His

daughter, Miss Katherine Parks, who teaches school in Crisfield now resides in the home place.

Living west to Capt. Jessie, was my Uncle Frank Parks, who was my Father's brother. He owned a Bugeye named the "Mary Lizzar" and a Skipjack named the "Lillian F." He also dredged his father's Bugeye the "Maret Dora" for a good many years. He sold his home on the Island and moved to Cambridge. He bought a home on Willis St. where his daughter, Miss Lyra Parks now resides. His family consisted of six children, Russell, Weldon, Sherman, Lyra, Lillian and Emma Todd. Sherman lives on the western shore of Md. Lillian and Emma live in Crisfield, Md. The three daughters and one son are survivors of this family.

Living next to Uncle Frank was Capt. Jessie Parks, Sr. who was my grandfather's brother. He was a farmer and raised good many crops. He had a large asparagus field. In the fall and winter months he dredged oysters. He owned a Pungy named the "Tonie Fost", a Bugeye named the "J. C. Causey." When he died he left his home to his grandson Capt. Ewell Parks. Ewell married my sister Lulu and they resided in this home until they moved to Cambridge. They had a family of four children and some years later moved to Crisfield, Md. Three of his children now live in Crisfield and his son, Nathaniel retired from the navy and lives on Solomons Island. This home was also bought by Hurst Brothers.

Next place to Capt. Ewell Parks was the home of Capt. Hesikiah Parks. He had farm land and owned a Skipjack named the "Page and Donald" after his two sons. He sold his home to Crisfield Thomas who married his daughter, Amanda. His daughter

moved to Seaford, Del. and he moved to Salisbury. George Bailey bought this property and operated a grocery store until 1918, then he moved to Baltimore and sold the property to Capt. James Avery Mills who moved the house to Crockeron, Md. Capt. William Wyle Parks lived in the next home. He was known as a very good waterman. He dredged a Bugeye and owned a Fungy named the "Tonic Post." His home was moved to Bishops Head and he moved his family to Crisfield, Md. where he built a home. He and his wife resided there until their deaths. Capt. John Wilson lived in the home that was known as the Jenkins Cannon property. He and his wife bought this house and land. He did a little farming along with being a boat builder. He also owned a Bugeye named the "Scotch Chief". He fished nets, dredged and freighted oysters in this boat. He was the father of four children, he died on the Island. Capt. Carroll Todd moved into this home and lived there a few years before moving to Crisfield.

Capt. George Evans lived in the next house. Capt. George owned and operated a Skipjack named the "Rough". He had three children. His daughter married Capt. Earn Jenkins and they lived in this home also. Wesley Jenkins of Tilghman's Island is the surviving son of Capt. Earn Jenkins. After they moved from this house it was destroyed by fire.

Next three places, Red Men Hall and Community Building, the church, and the schoolhouse. The church was very nice and after everybody left the Island it was bought by the Holiness Church of Upper Fairmount, Md. and moved there. It still stands there, a few years ago I had the pleasure of attending a service in it. The school house was next. We had two teachers. The first one

I went to was Mrs. Clara Price and Mrs. Lola Brannock. Both were real good teachers and I loved them both. When my mother came to the island from Fairmont to teach school she was the one responsible of having this school built. She was the first one to ring the bell and the last teacher that taught on the Island. My brother, Lloyd, bought the school and had it moved to Crisfield. It was used by him for a warehouse.

Going on down to the extreme south end of the Island to what we called the Eagle Point. The first house was that of Capt. Joe Bennett. He operated a grocery store. He also was a fairly good waterman. He fished traps, dredged oysters in the fall and winter. His Skipjack was named the "Adalade." His home was bought and moved to Crocheron, Md.

Next was Capt. Ed. Walter, he was a waterman with fish nets and did some crabbing. He had a large gun, which was lawful to us at the time and it would carry a pound of shot. He did a lot of hunting, killing as many as 75 to 80 Red Head ducks at one time. His home was moved to Crocheron. Next to him lived his brother Chris. Walter who owned many crab boats. He had three children. Two of his children now survive, Mrs. Carroll Todd who lives in Crocheron and William Walter who lives at Linkwood. His home was moved to Crocheron.

Capt. Henry Jones lived in the next home. He owned two Skipjacks named the "Anna K." and the "Bradshaw." He moved to Onancock, Va.

Just below Capt. Jones was the baseball diamond. This is where we had all our ball games. We had the best team on the Eastern Shore. The team traveled to Hoopers Island, Deals Island, Bivalve, Smith Island, Fairmount, and Chance, Md. They were

known as the Eagles and won the pennant every year.

To the extreme end of Eagle Point lived two colored families, James Rogers and James Jackson. They were the builders of many boats. In the fall and winter they would dredge oysters. In the spring they did a little farming. James Rogers' wife, Mary, was the mid-wife on the Island being present when many of us were born. They moved to Jesterville, Md.

On the West End of Eagle Point was called the old post office. When Capt. Pete Parks moved to Cambridge this was sold to John Griffin and his wife. They lived in this place until they moved to Baltimore in 1918. It was then moved to Bishops Head. He crabbed and was custodian of the church.

Across the big road was a place called the Hammock. The first house on the Hammock was Capt. John Harrison. His place was known as the Old School house. He was a very religious man, knowing the Bible from cover to cover. He did farming for a good many of the families, also owned a Skipjack named the "Victoria." He had a large family of ten children. There are two who survive, Lennie Harrison of Baltimore and Maggie Harrison in West Virginia.

Next family was Capt. George Walter and family. He had two children, Mrs. Rosie Kelly and Roy Walter. Capt. Grant Fisher and Capt. West Fisher lived with this family. He had a good many crab boats and in the winter he trapped ducks, hunted for muskrats and otters. He moved to Jesterville and lived there until his death.

Capt. Charlie Gibson moved to the Island from Deals Island and lived next to Capt. George Walter. His son married Isabelle Walter and they lived there also. He dredged a Skipjack named the "Lule Pound". This home was moved to Crocheron, Md.

Next to them on the extreme end of the hammock was Capt. William Walter. He was a very good waterman. He owned a good many boats; also had fish nets; also good many crabbing boats. He owned a Skipjack named the "Savannah I". He moved his home to Crocheron. They were the parents of two children, Mrs. Isabel Griffin and Matthew Walter, he now resides at Crisfield, Md. He is the only one that remains. He is in the florist business. There was a deep creek between the main part of the island. The road they used had a bridge that went from the Hammock to the road. The bridge came across to the school house, out north west from the Hammock was a island named Long Island. That had farm land. It was owned by Capt. Ephriam Price. That is where they lived until death. His two sons moved to Cambridge, Capt. Wm. H. Price and Capt. Thomas Price. He had two grandchildren, moved to Cambridge and also mother. Her name was Mrs. Lealey Dize. Her children were Edgar Dize, who built a home on West End Ave. The other son was Ephriam Dize, who later on moved to Easton.

This covers all of the Island to the very best I know and can remember. I have been asked by a good many people what did we do on there for sport and recreation. We played ball in the summer. We also had horse shoe pitching. The small boys shot marbles. They made their marbles out of clay, put them in oven at high temperature. Then they took them out, dipped them in shalac and it brought them out and had a nice gloss on them. We also had contests of spinning tops. In the winter we skated on the pond also on the Hollands Straits side. In the winter of 1917 it was a hard winter, it was froze up for about nine weeks and the news went out and it was published in the paper that people

were in suffering condition. We looked out in the Bay. Here came a steamboat. It was Capt. Thomas Howard. He drove her through ice with a ice plow on her. He was in the Gov. Thomas. He brought her up the Holland Straits until he came up opposite of where we lived. We all skated out to him. He said, "Boy are there many on shore in need or in hunger?" The reply was "No, Sir". He said, "Do you boys want to come aboard and eat dinner?" He said, "I have plenty soup to give." One said, "Soup!" "when we have wild goose for dinner!". Another replied, "Capt. we have plenty." There is only one thing we are short of." He said, "What is that?" They replied "kerosene." That is what we used for lights. He said, "That is all you are short of, hell, go to bed with the chickens." He had brought our mail to us and our doctor which had got caught away. His name was Dr. Rubbie. He said, "If I had a pair of skates I would put them on and skate ashore and eat with you boys. That all sounds good to me." He said, "What building is that in the middle of the Island where that flag is flying?" We replied, "That is our school house." He said, "It is so nice to see you boys and everybody so jolly. Take care of everything. Give my best regards to all the people ashore there. I will be on my way back. You boys move back. Do not stand too close to the track. As he was leaving Capt. Tom Howard said, "You boys be good. Have a good time and enjoy yourself. I have to get back to Cambridge." Away the Gov. Thomas went with her ice plow on. We could see her going up the Bay and could hear her going through the ice. We watched until she went out of sight.

The girls would have taffy pullings at their homes and give parties with spinning the Pie Plate; playing post office and good many games. They had box socials at the Community Hall. Last Saturday in every month they put them up for highest bidder. There was a rule on that the young man that bought whatever girl's box it may be, they were supposed to walk her home. Of Sundays we had service in church. They had old fine class meetings in there. Church at 9:45 every Sunday. They would stand up; give their testimony and they started shoutin some of them old time hymns. They would sing hymns which you never hear now; like The Old Time Religion and When the Saints Come Marching In; ringing in the Sheaves and all of those old time hymns. Then they would have their morning service at 11 o'clock. Their Sunday School at 2 o'clock. Young peoples meeting at 6:45. At 8 o'clock they had worship service. We had a large choir. Every Sunday after Sunday School we would go to good many homes where shutins were and play the old time organ and sing good many hymns. My Grandfather, Jm. A. Parks, was a shut in. For good many years he was blind; he would set in his chair and get happy. He would always say, "Come back next Sunday. I will be looking for you." He was one of the Trustees of The Church and also very active. He would hitch his horse and carriage up and he and Grandmother would ride down to the church which was two miles from where he lived. We had good many nice ministers. And boy, did they preach the Bible; get happy and shout all over the church!

I am going to get back to our school. We had very good teachers and good many of them that taught on there boarded up

to my Grandfathers. Mrs. Anna Willis, Miss Blanch Matthews, Miss Clara Price, Miss Lola Hubbard. I loved all my teachers. They were strict. They would take a switch and they could sure give you a good larkin and there is one of our teachers living here now on Willis St. that was one of the best teachers we had. Her name was Miss Millicent Jones, known as Mrs. May Todd. Our school was nice and warm, we had in there those large stoves that burn coal. We would always help our teachers in building the fire also keep the school clean. It had large blackboards. We kept them clean. It was a large ground to play on. We had a baseball diamond there by the school. Also we would pitch horse shoes. We would play games at recess like King around the Roses; Tap the Base and etc.

In the summer we would go to Camp meetings to Deals Island; Smith Island. You had to go in boats which we did all enjoy. The Island was surrounded by water; you could go in boat in about an hour to Deals Island and Smiths Island. All of our dry goods and all merchandise was freighted there by boat from Salisbury and Baltimore. BCA Steamboat Line came to Deals Island wharf about five times a week. I have seen her leave loaded down with freight, crabs and oysters and poultry. On the Island was a great place for poultry. Every family had good many chickens and ducks. We shipped our eggs to Baltimore. When they got 25 cents a dozen that was a big price. 30 cents for duck eggs. We had a mail boat that brought our mail over to the Island from Deals Island. Some times they would bring passengers, dentist, eye specialist and good many other people there. Fare was a quarter a round trip. What the mail carrier did not like was when he had to bring catalogs. He would have a good

many mail bags full and he carried them on back to the post office which was about a half mile away. His name was Capt. Daniel Webster. He made a trip daily and that was a boat with sails. Later on before the mail route was closed he had a motor in his boat. He had eight miles to sail each way and would never miss a trip, only in the case of a freeze. The coal we used in our stoves was freighted through from Cambridge. Capt. Charles Dean that lived here in Cambridge would freight down there every year in the Sugeye, "Russell Hughlett". In the case of a long freeze there was no one went short of food.

They always stored away for that time. They had plenty hog meat. They grew their own beef, killed there - white potatoes and sweet potatoes. They always had plenty. The two crab houses that shedded crabs on the land belonged to my Grandfather which was a good deal of help to the Island.

They had more than a hundred crab floats that they shedded the crabs in and they had a packet boat that would pack them up and freight them to Crisfield which was 14 miles from the island. A B Higgin and Brothers owned and operated one, and Cooper Dize owned the other. These men lived in Crisfield. The hard crabs we sold to Beals Island where there was a large picking house known as Capt. Robert L. Webster Co. I myself freighted crabs there for good many years across Tangier Sound and made a trip every day. I had good many crabbers that sold these crabs to me. I would bring back their crab pots and gas and anything they did need.

Getting back to my home place that is still there. We kept our home and would not sell it and we went back every spring and summer and used it as our summer home. My father and mother

enjoyed going back every spring and they did that until failing health. That was Grant Parks who was my father and Ellen B. Parks, my mother. Everybody had moved away and after we would not go back any more we sold the place to John Hurst and Brothers. It was a good place for hunting numbers of wild geese and ducks of all kinds, red heads, canvas backs and all kinds of fowl. The place still stands but the shore line is close to it on both sides, the Bay Shore side and the Holland Straits side. My Father had a wharf in front of the Home Place where he bought peelers and soft crabs and he took them out to the Island known as the Lock Coil four miles east of Hollands Island. It was a firm known as the Webster Packing Co. I could just go on and on in my way, thinking it was the garden spot of the world. I was 18 years old when I left from there but still went back in spring and summer for 17 years.

Now all remains is a washed away island. There is not too much land left. The church yard is still there and the markers of tombstones from the river. You can still see them when the sun shines on them they are white. There lays at rest was known as our most prominent people.

Joshua Thomas way back a good many years sailed from one of these islands to the other. He would hold revivals and camp meetings. He lived at Deals Island. Married his wife from Hollands Island. He was known as a prophet. I know a good many have read the book about him. His boat was named "The Methodist." He always had a fair wind to sail his boat. He went over to the western shore and had revivals. He is buried in the church yard at Deals Island in front of the little church that he preached in, and they still use this little church now for many

occasions. They call it the Joshua Thomas Church. The other church is built along side of it, a very nice church. His Bible is still on the Bible Stand and is still in use. The epitaph on his tomb is:

Come all you friends as you pass by

Behold this spot where I do lie

*As you live that do your best  
Remember you will have to die*

There is not too much of Hollands Island remains just as I have stated before - my old home place. When I am sailing down the Bay I look ashore there and it puts me a studying of what it used to be and what it is now. I loved every spot of it. All I can say in closing - God's will must be done.

This is a true story I have given. This is what I know. It is where I got what little education I have and where I was taught to sail my own boat. I have been Captain of a boat ever since I was 14 years old - sailed with my father - W. Grant Parks who was a very good teacher and I'll close with this thought in mind.

Trip lightly over trouble; Trip lightly over wrong.

*The only way to make them double,  
By darning on them long,  
Trip lightly over sorrow,  
Today at night seem dark  
The Sun will shine tomorrow  
and joyfully sing the lack,*

Irving M. Parks, Sr.

~ 1972 ~