

Bill Pride: This tape is property of Tales of Cape Cod, Incorporated and cannot be reproduced without the written permission of Tales of Cape Cod, Incorporated. Today is March 29, 1978. My name is Bill Pride, and I'm visiting with Mr. Dudley W. Hallet, who is president of our Falmouth Historical Society. Go ahead, sir.

Dudley Hallet: I'm pleased to make this recording for the Tales of Cape Cod. My name is Dudley Winthrop Hallet of Falmouth, Massachusetts. One of the things my present-day friends are often interested in is the early years I spent on Cape Cod. I spent the summers of 1907, '08, and '09 in South Dennis. We had become family friends of Captain Howard Kelley of South Dennis, and he made arrangements for us to come down and rent a house for the summer that he knew about through his friend, Mrs. Nickerson. The house still exists today, but I'm sure the rent would be far different from the summers that we were there. The total charge for the season was thirty dollars.

BP: I think that's fabulous.

DH: We had ten acres of land, a seven-room house with a barn and nicely situated and in good repair. As a matter of fact, no one had lived in the house for about ten years, and the bureau drawer was still filled with Mrs. Nickerson's clothes or her daughters' clothes, although they were for children, and the daughters were then grown up.

BP: Beautiful.

DH: Mrs. Nickerson I always questioned my mother about because it was the Nickerson house, but Mrs. Nickerson, as a widow, had remarried, and she had remarried a man named Nickerson.

BP: [laughter] Good story.

DH: I used to ask my mother how that could be. Mother, of course, explained that they were probably distantly related, but there were so many Nickersons in South Dennis and on Cape Cod that it was not an unusual situation. The reason Mrs. Nickerson, in talking with my dad about renting the house, had seemed hesitant about the price, and finally, she apologized, saying that she was sorry, but she felt she'd have to charge us thirty dollars for the season. The explanation of that is that the house rented for ten dollars a month, and we were not going to be there for quite three months because we came after the Boston schools closed and left after Labor Day, probably two and a half months. So Mrs. Nickerson said she was embarrassed to charge the full thirty dollars for the season.

BP: Any idea what the taxes might be back in those days?

DH: Well, I can't tell about the taxes there, but I know the taxes in 1910 when we first built our house in Falmouth were twelve dollars a year. So the taxes in South Dennis, I imagine, were in the ratio of five to six dollars for the year.

BP: Fabulous. Fabulous story. Very good. [Recording paused.] Here we go.

DH: I mentioned that we built our house in Silver Beach, in North Falmouth, in 1910, and we moved in in July of that year. So with the summer coming up, in '78, it will be my 69<sup>th</sup> summer in Falmouth. My father always talked, as we talked about ancestry, that our ancestors sailed – most of them were sea captains – all over the world. But if they lived and were able to do it, they returned to Cape Cod in their last years. So I guess you could say I'm following out the family tradition because I've been here, retired in Falmouth, for ten years now. Formerly, we lived in Scarsdale, New York, and I worked for forty-three years in New York City. My grandfather was Elijah Baxter Hallet of West Yarmouth. He was born in a small Cape house that's still there today. It was built in 1790. It's known as the Captain Edmund Hallet House. Edmund Hallet was my grandfather's grandfather. The house was not his father's house, but they lived in that house. It has been restored by the descendants of my grandfather's sister, who inherited the house. It has recently been lived in with my cousin, Lydia (Spargo?), who was well-known after she retired in the area of West Yarmouth. It's a strange thing that I have Cape Cod on both sides because, whereas the first Hallet, I think, came to Cape Cod about 1642, on the other side of my family, my mother was Rosella Dudley, hence my name – Dudley Hallet – and my grandfather, Dean Dudley was born in Kingfield, Maine, but his mother was Rebecca Bangs from Brewster, the daughter of Captain Dean Bangs, the granddaughter of Captain Elkanah Bangs, who died on the prison ship, *New Jersey*, in the Revolutionary War. Both of them fought, and both of them, father and son, fought in the Revolution. Plus, my grandfather, Elijah Baxter Hallet, who went to Boston when he was a young man and settled there, was a cabinet maker and had a very good business making the cases for parlor organs, which were well-known. The high point of a cabinet maker's art – they had drawers, mirrors, lamp stands, gewgaws of all kinds.

BP: You know they did. Right.

DH: So that was a successful business. I've never traced the Hallets completely, but they all seem to have gravitated to the piano and organ business – the Hallet and Davis Piano was once widely known in the Boston area.

BP: Right.

DH: My grandfather and my grandmother, Florentine Peterson Hallet, lived in Dorchester, Lower Mills, on River Street, where my grandfather was born. Those people who know Dorchester and that area will remember that the air was always permeated with the delightful smell of chocolate –

BP: Walter Baker Chocolate. You bet.

DH: – from the Walter Baker Chocolate family. Although my grandmother always said to me she was a little tired of it. My grandfather and grandmother were married and lived there. They were married over sixty years. In fact, in the family, we always laugh because grandmother was the only girl grandfather ever had. He started carrying her books home from school when they were in the first or second grade, and they never had any relationship with anyone else. But they didn't marry until he was twenty-two years old.

BP: It's a cute story.

DH: My grandmother was a very wonderful lady, and she had an interesting origin. Her father was a Danish sea captain who brought his ship into Hyannis Harbor for repairs after a storm at sea. He stayed there a matter of about six months. In that time, he met my great-grandmother and was married. He went out on another voyage for three or four years, and while he was gone, my great-aunt, Aurelia Peterson, was born. He returned from that voyage and stayed home for about three months. Then he went out on another voyage to be an anticipated three or four years. From that one, he never came back because he fell off the whaleship in the Arctic Ocean, and although they tried – the mate tried to recover him from a cake of ice on which he had fallen, they never were able to do it, so they left him on the cake of ice in the Arctic Ocean. That story always seemed to me, as a boy, very unusual, but when I went to New Bedford in the Seamen's Bethel, I noticed that the walls are covered with plaques for sea captains who fell off their ships. I decided it was not an unusual fate. Of course, in those days, on Cape Cod, there was nothing to do for a widow but to remarry. My great-grandmother remarried a Mr. Taylor, and they had one son, Joyce Taylor of Hyannis, who was well-known in Barnstable. He was a road commissioner and selectman for many, many years. So I have Cape Cod ancestry on both sides. I don't know too much about the Hallets, but I do have the book on the Bangs family genealogy, which was written, incidentally, by my grandfather, Dean Dudley, who wrote the history of the Bangs family, his mother's family, and the history of the Dudley family, his father's family, as well as many treatises on history in the New England area. I've mentioned my grandfather is Elijah Baxter Hallet. Of course, his mother was a Baxter, and my father always taught me that we are chiefly related to the Hallets, the Baxters, and the (Crowells?). The (Crowells?) got in as cousins. My father's cousin, referred to familiarly as Tommy (Crowells?), was president of the Yarmouth Bank for many years. One of the interesting things about having biblical names is that when I was born, my grandfather came down to see us, and he said to my dad, "I'm very glad to have another grandson, but there's only one point I want to make." My father said, "Well, what is that?" He said, "If you name him after me, I'll disown you."

BP: I think that's great. [laughter]

DH: I told that story at the annual meeting of the Falmouth Historical Society, and afterward, one of our prominent members came up and said, "I have a new grandson just born, and his name is Elijah." So the biblical names are coming back. In the old days, I had many interesting times visiting my great-uncle, Joyce Taylor, in Hyannis. Over the years, he became a prominent businessman, but we have family stories about him. When he was a young man, he took a job and went to work, but he only worked a short time, a matter of months. When he returned one time and said he had decided he would never work anymore; he was going to be a trader, and he started in trading perhaps his jackknife for a kite, and then he got into trading horses, and he ended up by being a great operator in the real estate business and in the wholesale antique business. As a matter of fact, I believe when he died in the '20s, he owned a good many of the parcels of land that now compose the airport, the Barnstable County Airport. When I was a boy about eight or nine years old, I had the great experience of going out with Uncle Joyce on his rounds of Hyannis in the morning because he drove a Model-T sedan. He got up early in the morning and went immediately down to the center of Hyannis to get a shave and learn the news of the day. Because he was in the real estate business and the antique business, he always carried two or three thousand dollars in his pocket in case he heard in the news that some resident had

died, leaving a widow and a piece of property and so forth, and he wanted to be ready to go and make an immediate deal.

BP: Beautiful.

DH: Uncle Joyce was a very kindhearted, religious man, actually, and he was widely known because when he bought property, he was interested in the land, but not the house. He always said to the widows, “You, of course, have several children, and until they grow to manhood or womanhood, you might as well stay right on and live in this house. There'll be no rent. You could [live] rent-free. I'll just buy the house, and you live here as long as you want. When you're through with the house and the children are grown, then I'll take it over.”

BP: A fabulous, fabulous story, though, isn't it? I never heard anything like it before.

DH: Well, it worked very well because as the old families were subject to bereavement there, they would say one to another, “Don't sell your house or your property. Don't sell your property. See Joyce Taylor, and he'll take care of you.”

BP: Does anybody do that sort of thing today? Sorry. I never heard of it before.

DH: I don't know if any –

BP: Well, they could afford it, but then – it's a fabulous story. Go ahead. I like that.

DH: Well, that was the manner in which he collected all the land and the acreage where the airport is and so forth. In the family, of course, it was interesting because he died a reasonably wealthy man and never worked in his life. Lived by his abilities as a businessman.

BP: Right, right. Very good.

DH: At one time, I remember he operated the livery stable by the Hyannis Depot. The building is still there now. But, of course, the trains don't come in anymore. His carriages and horses met all the trains and took the people home. So we have these many roots in Cape Cod through the Halletts and, as I've mentioned, on the other side, through the Bangs family of Brewster. Reading the history of the Bangs family, I find out that I'm related to practically everyone on Cape Cod, especially in the lower area, the (Domes?), the (Sparrows?), the Snows, the (Kelleys?), and all the familiar Cape Cod names. I started out by saying that in the years of '07, '08, and '09, we went to South Dennis. Those were marvelous years. We enjoyed that so much. I learned to swim in the Bass River in South Dennis, and we made many friends in South Dennis. We got milk and eggs from a local farmer and his wife – Joshua and Rebecca Smith – and I recall that Mrs. Smith – Rebecca – was especially fond of my sister and me. When we were children, she always saved the turkey's eggs for us to have for a plaything. Milk was ten cents a quart. Milk was – sorry – five cents a quart, and eggs were ten cents a dozen, which goes along with what I was talking about in the first place – thirty dollars for the season, for the house.

BP: Right. Right.

DH: One of the interesting things that I always remember about the Cape in the early days was that when we returned once to South Dennis to visit Captain Howard Kelley, my mother said she thought she would run over and see Rebecca Smith, the farmer. She asked Mrs. Kelley, the captain's wife, if she would care to go over with her. Mrs. Kelley made a very revealing statement. She was a marvelous, fine lady. She said, "No, I don't think I'll go. I believe they're all well."

BP: [laughter] That's a fresh wrinkle [inaudible].

DH: The explanation of that, of course, is that if anyone in the farmer's family was ill, Mrs. Kelley, the captain's wife, would immediately have cooked a chicken or some delicious pie or something and taken it over. But since they were all well, the captain's wife didn't go to visit the farmer's wife, there being two kinds of societies on Cape Cod in the early days.

BP: That's a cute story.

DH: Of course, Captain Kelley often sailed his three-masted schooner into Boston Harbor, and when he did, I would go down and visit with him on the ship. Became hard to get crews to go on sailing vessels in the coast-wide trade. The only way Captain Kelley could do this was to have a very ample food supply on the ship and a wonderful cook. He had a cook that had been with him for twenty-odd years on several ships. Sitting there, I remember vividly one day when the cook took a pan of gingerbread out of the oven, about three feet square from the galley stove, and one of the crew sat down. Seeing this delicious gingerbread, he sat down and ate a quarter of it. But there were no restrictions, and that was how the crew was recruited. The food was so outstanding on the ship. Captain Kelley lost that ship in a storm on Hatteras because he had lost one on Hatteras about ten years prior. Became very hard to get – very expensive to get insurance on a coast-wide sailing ship. So when he needed the three-masted schooner, he had to put in his own money to it because the other investors would not put in their money without ample insurance. The insurance was so expensive, so Captain Kelley put in forty thousand dollars of his own money to buy the ship. When the ship went down in the storm, fortunately, it was empty, and he sailed over the sand bars, and the crew and he were rescued in the breeches buoy by the Coast Guard. As a matter of fact, although he had lost in his lifetime three ships, he never lost a man in any accident. The fact that he was light allowed him to pick a place between the breakers and sail the ship over the sandbar and beach her on Hatteras.

BP: Very good. Shoot.

DH: One of the interesting stories that I remember about Captain Kelley is, he was a most distinguished gentleman. After he retired from the sea, having lost his three-masted schooner, the (Loring Sea Ballard?), he retired to his home in South Dennis to make a contribution to the town. He became the sexton of the congregational church, where I often went with him while he tended to the church needs and interesting that I could go up in the belfry with him. One of the times when he was going down to the church, he passed a neighbor's house where the neighbor was painting on a ladder. Captain Kelley called to him and said, "Come down off that ladder." The man, of course, said, "Who, me?" The captain says, "Yes, you." He said, "That ladder is

not placed right. I want you to move it out about three feet more at the base from the house.” The man says, “Go on, you old coot. I’ll do it as I please.” So when Captain Kelley returned home, he told the story to Mrs. Kelley, Amelia, and Mrs. Kelley, who was a very calm and intelligent lady, said, “But Howard, you can’t go around town telling everybody what to do. You’re no longer the captain of the ship.” He said, “Oh, that’s right. I must try to mend my ways. But he didn’t have the ladder placed right.”

BP: [laughter] That’s beautiful. That’s cute.

DH: Oh, many stories come to mind of the early days on the Cape, when things were really rural. In those days, in ’07, ’08, ’09, there was no high school in South Dennis, only the grade schools. So we made arrangements for Captain Kelley to bring his family to Dorchester and take a flat near where we lived so that his children could go to the Boston schools, and they lived there for quite a few years, which brought our families very close together. But one of the stories I remember is returning in the summer and going around with Maude Kelley, my sister’s close friend, while she sold or solicited for Larkin soap. Her objective was to sell enough soap to get a rocking chair. Those who remember the early days remember that you got a premium if you sold enough soap. I remember going into the backcountry, where there were only wagon tracks and no really roads, and talking to the people with Maude. Invariably, they all said the same thing: “I don’t need no more soap, I guess. But Sarah, here, I think, would like about a dozen bottles of that there elixir, which seemed to do her quite a lot of good.” Of course, those who know knew that the elixir was about forty percent alcohol, and a few tablespoons really would spark up Sarah and make her feel a lot better.

BP: [laughter] Right.

DH: I always remember those trips through the deep country where things hadn’t changed, really, for many years. The summer people hadn’t really come. My family in South Dennis was the only summer family that had ever come to the town, and the local people used to drive by with their horses and wagons and look at us and say, “Those people come from the city, and they come here.” Another farmer would say, “What are they doing here?” Says, “I don’t know. They come down.” He says, “Can’t you understand it?” And he says, “No, I’ve been trying to get out of here for years.”

BP: [laughter] Yeah. Isn’t it always the way? That’s cute.

DH: “Trying to get out of here for years. I’d like to go to Boston.”

BP: Yeah, right.

DH: “Now they’ve come down here to South Dennis. Can’t understand it.” Also, of course, one of the things that they were surprised about was the activity that my mother, who, of course, was a young woman at the time, and my aunt engaged in because my mother and my aunt built a summer house on the lawn with mosquito netting, which is understandable if you remember that. Anyone can remember the clouds of mosquitoes that used to be on the lower Cape. Only way to get to the post office was to break a branch and beat your way through the clouds of mosquitoes

as you pass down the path. So my mother said she and my aunt, who was a schoolteacher at the time, could build this house, and they built a little house with mosquito netting and a canvas roof. Of course, the men driving home one time from a forest fire stopped in front of the yard, and one man said, "You see that there? A summer house." The other fellow said, "Yeah. Womenfolk built that thing."

BP: Cute story. I think that's cute.

DH: Because at that time on the Cape, the women rarely went out of the house except to collect the eggs from the chicken coop or some such thing and to go to church. But we found out then, after those delightful summers in South Dennis, that the train trip was rather arduous with a cat in a bag. Of course, the cat was a South Dennis cat, but still, he didn't like to go in the bag, even to return home.

BP: [laughter] That's a cute story.

DH: As a matter of fact, my sister and I took him back to Captain Baker's general store so he could see his mother. It didn't work out because as soon as his mother appeared, he attacked her.

BP: Is that so? That's interesting.

DH: Much to our disappointment. We thought he was going to be so happy to return home, but he wasn't. He was a wonderful cat and pet but a great fighter. So with this arduous trip on the train, we decided to locate nearer to Boston, and we selected North Falmouth, where we had friends and a new community that was just developing – Silver Beach – where the Silver Beach Land Company had acquired a tract of land from the Nye family, who had a deed from the Indians. They developed a land company there. When we came and built our house in 1910, there were about thirty houses there and where the boat harbor is now dredged out was a marsh with a small creek going in where I spent many days sailing with my friends.

[Recording paused.]

BP: Go ahead.

DH: My family always agreed that the greatest thing that we ever did as a family was to build a summer house in Silver Beach. It meant so much to us. The summers of swimming, boating, and – as well as the many close friends we made. I think it's safe to say that we made more family friends in the summertime at Silver Beach than we did in the city in the wintertime.

BP: Makes sense, doesn't it?

DH: Yeah. My sister's chum married the boy next door to us at Silver Beach, and we had many friends that we were in touch with through the years. 1910 was still an early time on the Cape. It was not as rural and, of course, we were near the town. But in those days, every section of town had its store. We had Dr. (Donkin's?) General Store in North Falmouth. We also had Mrs. Birch's dry goods store – sold cloth and things. Of course, at Dr. (Donkin's?) General Store, you

could buy horse collars, harness parts, shoes, boots, garden tools, crackers, have coffee ground. The thing my mother particularly liked was the wonderful Puerto Rican molasses in a barrel in the back of the store. The only thing that she always urged upon me as I took my quart jar out to get a quart of molasses was to be sure that the clerk pushed the dead flies over to one side on the molasses before he dipped. She didn't want any of them to come home in our molasses jar, although she felt it was the best molasses that she could obtain, better than anything she could get in the Boston stores. On the Cape in those days, you often wondered how people made a living. But in North Falmouth, I found out at least one thing, that you were alright if you owned a cranberry bog because even in those early days, one of our local men owned a cranberry bog on which he did almost all the work himself, and I learned, by being a friend of his, that he made five thousand dollars a year, a very good income for those days.

BP: You bet. Right.

DH: Work was cheap, of course, in those days. And after we moved in, we felt that we should have all the roots, the bushes that had grown on our lot dug out, and a lawn planted. We made a contact with Mr. (Dutra?) of North Falmouth, and he agreed to do it for us, but he had – he said that perhaps it would be more economical if we wanted until fall, and he was freer. In the summer, he had to charge a dollar and a half a day, but in the fall, after the summer people had gone, he would do it for us for a dollar a day. So he came with his [inaudible], and he dug out all the roots. Not a single one ever sprouted from the lawn. He graded, planted the lawn, making a banking, and he accomplished the whole job in forty-two days for forty-two dollars. We never had the lawn plowed or re-seeded after. It lasted for sixty years, just as he planted it.

BP: Amazing story. Is it still there, sir?

DH: Yeah, it's still there.

BP: Very good. Very good.

DH: Although I sold the house now, of course. When we moved to Falmouth, every time I go by and look at my former home, I say to my wife, I must get over there and trim those bushes.

BP: Yeah, right. [laughter]

DH: And fix those because, in the forty years that I worked in New York City, I returned every summer for vacation just to be with my mother and my sister. My aunt lived with us – and bring my kids there for the summer vacation. I always, of course, trimmed the bushes and fixed the gardens, which were – we had very extensive gardens and flowers around the house. I think now it's not maintained by its present owners quite in the style that we maintained it.

BP: That would be a disappointment. [Recording paused.] There you go.

DH: Of course, we had the local store up in North Falmouth, and Dr. (Donkin?) came every morning, especially in the off-season, and took the order for what you wanted. Later in the day, either he or his man returned and put your groceries on the kitchen table. When I describe how



that functioned now to the boys and girls in the historical society school program, they all think it was a wonderful idea, and it was a rather good one. You never had to go to the store. You just gave your order, and it appeared on your kitchen table. Dr. (Donkin?) was a remarkable man. He ran the store, and his wife was the postmistress. He was a retired surgeon and a prominent doctor from New York City. He'd always had cars, and one of the cars that he used in his store business to come and take the order was a side-crank, chain-drive Buick. He used to have a little trouble with it. If the chain slipped off the sprocket wheel, he'd have to stop, dismantle the back of the car, and put the chain back on. But as soon as he did, he was off on his way. I've forgotten how many cylinders it had. I think it was either two or four, but it worked fine. Of course, in the summer, when business increased, he hired young men from the summer community to drive their horses and come around. Of course, horses were used extensively in those days, but if you wanted to go to the center of Falmouth, you took the train. You went up the railroad station and took the train for ten cents fare, landed you in the center of Falmouth, and you could do your shopping. Today, of course, there's no trains, there's no buses, and no real transportation. In the early days, there wasn't much transportation either, but one of the things I remember is the two ladies, two school teachers, who summered at Silver Beach, and they walked to Falmouth quite often. I mean, once or twice a week, they walked down to Falmouth in the morning, being about ten or eleven miles, did their shopping, had lunch somewhere in the center of town, and then walked back – a feat that nobody today can understand. They think it would be an impossibility. But since I remember it accurately, these two fine ladies – it can be done. But I doubt today if anyone today could really do it.

BP: Were they spinsters?

DH: Yes.

BP: Yeah, they'd have to be. Right. [laughter]

DH: Well, they were interesting.

BP: Oh, yeah. Right.

DH: In the early days of North Falmouth, Silver Beach, and in other sections of the Cape where summer people developed and built their houses, one of the things that you must remember is that almost everybody who settled here and had a second home was wealthy or well-to-do. In North Falmouth, we were at Silver Beach, which was started as a more modest community, and still, all the people in the original settlement were extremely well-to-do. They owned their own businesses and [inaudible] a successful jewelry manufacturing business or a successful plumbing business, or something like that. They were well-to-do. Then, of course, as you moved over to the larger houses over in Nye's Neck – [inaudible] the people were truly wealthy. They all had foreign automobiles and chauffeurs, and several maids in their houses. One of the things that was nice in the early days was that the kids – my sister and I and some of the others – had mail routes. We went to the post office. We walked sometimes to the post office and then brought the mail back for neighbors who hadn't any car at the time. Of course, we soon learned that the chauffeurs and the residents were very kind, and when they saw children walking up the street, they'd always stop and pick us up. We could always get a ride from Mr. (Kimball?) in his

Stanley Steamer, but often, from other people, too. So we finally decided to be smart about it all, and we sat down on the side of the road until we heard a car coming. Then we would get up and walk a few yards and be picked up if the driver was someone who knew us. If not, we'd sit down again and wait until another car came along, and invariably we got picked up, taken to the post office, and then brought home again, which made the mail route really profitable.

BP: I would think so. Right.

DH: In those early days, we didn't have to go to Falmouth, of course, for any of our supplies. Not only did Dr. (Donkin?) come around, or his man, to take our orders, but the fish cart from Sam Cahoon's Fish Market came around, and you could come out, select your fish; he'd clean it on the tailboard of the car, put it on your platter, and you took it in the house. Also, the butcher came and cut meat, the bakery cart came, and the Waquoit farmer came with fresh vegetables maybe two or three times a week, and you selected a dozen ears of corn, a bunch or two of beets or string beans fresh from the farm, paid them cash right then and there, and took your produce in the house, fresh for the kitchen. This, too, I describe with a picture of the Waquoit farmer and his old horse, and the kids in today's times think that, too, would be a great advantage if everything came to the front door and you didn't have to go shopping. Of course, now, the supermarkets, all the little stores, the small stores are closed up in the sections of town. In the early days, of course, there were seven sections of Falmouth, each with a store. Now the automobile changed that. One of the things that happened is, we began to be modernized was that Mr. Rand and the Rand family came to North Falmouth. I was fortunate in knowing Mr. Rand. He was a very estimable gentleman. He decided to buy the whole town if he could. He made a bid on every piece of property in North Falmouth. Not all sold to him. He acquired about four or five of the old sea captains' houses, which he extensively remodeled, and then he built about a dozen houses throughout the town. The last one that his son built was the great Spanish house in Megansett. Mr. Rand, at that time, didn't seem to mind how much these houses cost him. It was a hobby to make them truly colonial and fix them up. I've been with Mr. Rand where he had the carpenters hang the shutters and then decided they weren't quite right, take them all down, and fix them different and then hang them up again. Not like them the second time, change them around, fix them up. But then, of course, later times, the Depression came, and Mr. Rand owned so much property. He was the largest taxpayer in the town of Falmouth. He petitioned, I remember, once to pay his taxes in two installments, but the town voted him down and wouldn't let him. They were all due when the bills were rendered. Another interesting thing that showed the early relationships between summer people and townspeople – Mr. Rand owned so many houses and properties, he got concerned about the fire situation, and he offered to buy the town a fire engine, which would be in North Falmouth and would be available to protect his properties. There, too, the town turned him down, and Mr. Rand always felt rather badly about that because they told him they got along very well before he came to town, and they didn't need his fire engine as a gift, and they thought they'd get along well after he'd gone.

BP: Beautiful story. Where did Mr. Rand get the money, sir?

DH: He owned Remington Rand.

BP: Oh [inaudible]. Very good.

DH: Mr. Rand built what now is known as the Rand Canal. He had a large yacht, and he used to come from Buffalo, New York, to spend the weekend. He came on his yacht from Buffalo, New York, and came down the Hudson River, through the sound, and up here to Buzzards Bay. So he dug a canal where he could put his boat in. Of course, Mr. Rand's daughter, Mrs. Hildreth, lived in North Falmouth and was in the real estate business, which was natural, her father having left her so much property.

BP: Yeah. Right.

DH: And a fine woman and a much-respected citizen of North Falmouth. Among the other interesting things from the early days I remember in Megansett, I had the privilege of knowing the Sanborn family and their next-door neighbor, the Chase family. They were Chase and Sanborn, and they had houses side by side in Megansett. Later on, of course, they advertised their coffee, saying what Mr. Chase didn't know about coffee, Mr. Sanborn did. I always thought it was interesting, having known the families and how they were closely associated in the coffee business. I guess Chase and Sanborn's coffee was sold nationwide.

BP: Still is, isn't it? Very good. Right.

DH: So as you think back about the early days and the great fun we had sailing and fishing in Buzzards Bay, we also remember that, at certain times, the southwest wind could come, and Buzzards Bay would really rough up. Sometimes I've been on it when the waves in half an hour got to be ten feet high. Oh, I remember once one of our resident friends there had about a thirty-five, thirty-eight-foot boat. We kept saying that we wanted to go out with him someday when it was really rough. So one day, Mr. (Morse?) said it was really rough, and he'd take us out. I'm speaking of my boyhood chum, Harry Smith, and me. So we went out with him, and at one point, Mr. (Morse?) asked if I'd like to steer the boat. I said, "Sure." So I steered the boat. However, we came into a trough of the wave, and the boat laid down on its side, much to my consternation. I had several thousand pounds of iron elevator weights laid along the keel, and she righted herself. But I was happy to turn the wheel over to Mr. (Morse?) and let him bring his boat back –

BP: Gosh, yes.

DH: – in the ten-foot waves.

BP: That was exciting.

DH: One day, my sister and I went down for swimming in the late afternoon, and it had been a very high southwest wind. We swam there with some friends. There was a young man in his early twenties [who] was visiting our neighbor across the street. They were both in swimming. My sister and I were in. The young man was not a strong swimmer, but he used all his skills in swimming out into the breakers. When he got out beyond the sand bar and discovered he couldn't touch his feet, and he couldn't – and the undertow seemed to take him out. So he called

to his friend to help him, and Mr. (Green?), where he was visiting, was his friend, swam out, and he said to him, "Put your hand on my shoulder, and I'll help you in through the breakers." Well, as soon as the young man got hold of Mr. (Green?), he grabbed him and sat on his shoulders, and pushed him down. Mr. (Green?) described afterward he was walking around on the bottom, but he couldn't get the fellow off his shoulders. But the waves were still going over the younger man, and he called for help. My sister, who was eighteen years old, swam out and pulled him, and she immediately, being a strong swimmer, recognized the situation. She got behind the young man and pulled him off Mr. (Green's?) shoulders, and he continued to flounder through the waves. Mr. (Green?), having breathed and swallowed so much water, couldn't get up from the bottom. My sister dove down and got ahold of him and pulled him up to the top. When he got up, he got a breath of air, and he was able to swim. By that time, the younger man was still floundering with his experience [and] was going down again. My sister towed him in, brought him in from her lifesaving training, and both of them were saved. Mr. (Green?) wrote up the thing to the Carnegie Hero Fund, and it was investigated completely. The representatives of the Carnegie Hero Fund would come and take measurements and get observers and people. There was another man who was an experienced swimmer there. He was in, and he had said that he thought my sister had been foolhardy. He would not have gone out into the undertow to save these people because he was afraid they'd grab him, too, and push him down. My sister, of course, didn't think of that. She had success, so she was awarded the Carnegie Bronze Medal for her lifesaving and a Hero Award of five hundred dollars. This was just before World War I, and it was some time – the awarding of medals was discontinued during the war. So it was some years later by the time that the five hundred dollars award came. My sister was a schoolteacher in the Boston schools. They always remember when it was announced, came out in the papers with my sister's picture. The kids in the school said, "What are you going to do now, Miss Hallet? I assume you'll retire."

BP: [laughter] Beautiful.

DH: So I have my sister that died about thirteen years ago, and one of our prize possessions is, of course, the medal and all the publicity there was. She received about thirty-odd proposals of marriage.

BP: I bet she did. Isn't that funny? That's beautiful. Did she ever marry?

DH: No. She never married.

BP: Okay.

DH: The only one that she was tempted to answer was a fellow who wrote and said he noticed her picture and seemed that he might have known her as a nurse in World War I. She reminded him. One proposal of marriage was from a man in New Hampshire, I think in a logging camp, and he wrote on a piece of a brown paper bag with a crayon, and he said he had two pigs and a cow and two suits of clothes. So he was proposing marriage now to my sister. He needed a strong wife –

BP: Isn't that a beautiful story?

DH: – on his farm, but he thought they'd be very happy. So all those things are now prized possessions that we have, and they're inspirational to my children, who knew their aunt. As the years pass here in Falmouth, I am sure there will be other memorable things to report at a later date. But in closing this particular tape, which I am pleased to make about my memories of early days, I'll say that Cape Cod and the people on the Cape in the early days have had a tremendous influence in my life, all, I believe, to the good. I am happy now to be interested here in Falmouth in historical research and to be the president of the Falmouth Historical Society, which, today, has about fourteen hundred members and probably is the largest historical society in the state. We have three restored houses as museums, and we have about a thousand visitors to our museums and about four hundred or five hundred to our new Katherine Lee Bates House Museum in the summer. Usually about – visitors from forty-five or forty-six states and seven or eight foreign countries every summer. So I find it a fascinating thing, and I hope that bringing alive to the children of today in our program, Falmouth schoolchildren, some of the stories and methods of life in the old days in Falmouth will have an influence on them and creating a love for their town.

BP: Thank you very much, Mr. Hallet, for one of the most delightful tapes that I have had the pleasure to make. Thank you very much, sir. Cheerio.

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Reviewed By Molly Graham 8/15/2022