North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources

State Historic Preservation Office

Ramona M. Bartos, Administrator

Governor Pat McCrory
Secretary Susan Kluttz

Office of Archives and History
Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry

April 16, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mary Pope Furr
Office of Human Environment
NCDOT Division of Highways

FROM: Renee Gledhill-Earley
Environmental Review Coordinator

SUBJECT: Final Ethnographical Context for the Replacement of Bonner Bridge, B-2500, Dare County, ER 90-8304

Thank you for your letter of April 10, 2015, transmitting the above-referenced ethnographical context report. The report fulfills a stipulation of the Programmatic Agreement for the proposed undertaking and will serve as the basis for educational materials outlined as part of additional mitigation agreed upon for the undertaking. We will place the context report in our library and files so that it is available to our staff and the public.

The above comments are made pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's Regulations for Compliance with Section 106 codified at 36 CFR Part 800.

Thank you for your cooperation and consideration. If you have questions concerning the above comment, contact Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, at 919-807-6579 or environmental.review@ncdcr.gov. In all future communication concerning this project, please cite the above referenced tracking number.

cc: Clarence Coleman, FHWA

BEFORE THEY OPENED THE VALVE: DARE COUNTY'S OUTER BANKS, 1865-1963

MITIGATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE HERBERT C. BONNER BRIDGE (BRIDGE NO.11)
ON NC 12 OVER THE OREGON INLET
AND IMPROVEMENTS TO NC 12 TO RODANTHE
TIP # B-2500, DARE COUNTY
FA# BRS-2358(15), WBS# 32635

Marvin A. Brown
Principal Investigator

URS Corporation – North Carolina
1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Morrisville, North Carolina 27560

March 2015

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Prepared For:

Human Environment Section
Project Development and Environmental Analysis Branch
North Carolina Department of Transportation

Prepared By:
URS Corporation – North Carolina
1600 Perimeter Park Drive
Morrisville, NC 27560

Marvin A. Brown
Principal Investigator

March 2015

3-23-15

Marvin A. Brown, Principal Investigator **Date**
URS Corporation - North Carolina

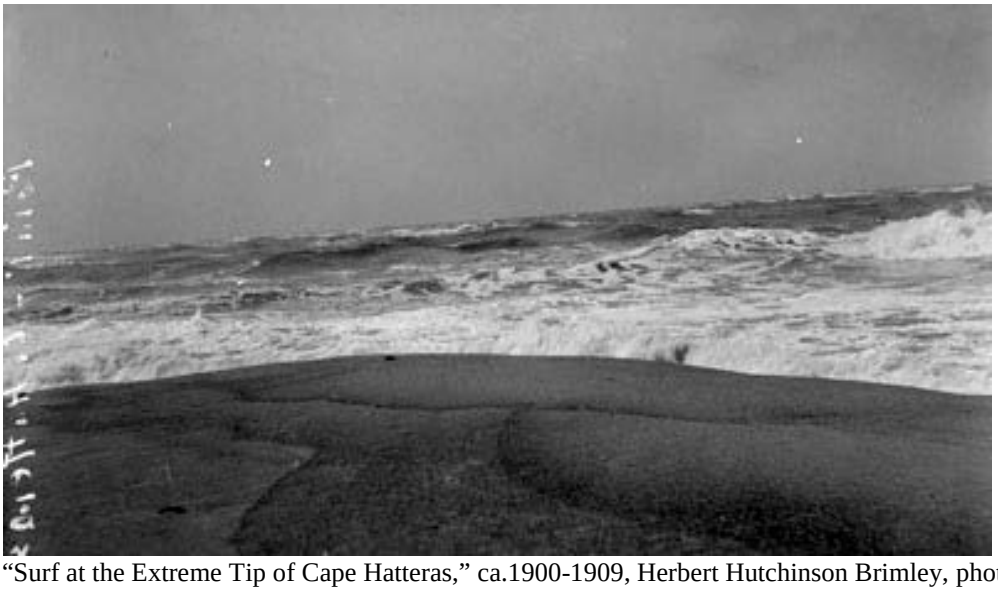
Mary Pope Furr, Supervisor **Date**
Historic Architectural Resources Section
North Carolina Department of Transportation

BEFORE THEY OPENED THE VALVE: DARE COUNTY'S OUTER BANKS, 1865-1963

INTRODUCTION

In his Aubrey/Maturin novels, Patrick O'Brian captures life in the British Royal Navy during the Napoleonic wars. The men and occasional women he peoples the navy's vessels with are hard-working, accomplished at their jobs, brave, resourceful, reliant on each other, and resilient. These character traits apply equally to the Outer Bankers of Dare County of a century later. Indeed the historic worlds of British naval vessels and the Outer Banks had much in common. Their inhabitants were isolated. They had limited resources. They were exposed to the cruelest weather and always in danger of going under. Were they not resourceful and resilient, they would not survive. O'Brian is credited with the creation of a "real, knowable past" (Horowitz 1993). He did this by immersing himself in firsthand accounts of naval life during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This report does not approach O'Brian's success (Snow 1991). It at least attempts, however, to mimic his techniques by consulting myriad types of sources, some available to O'Brian—family histories, government reports, censuses, newspaper accounts and obituaries—and some not—interviews, living memories, online genealogies, photographs. And it attempts to mimic the novelist's success at recovering a real and knowable past.

The following pages broadly consider the significance and effect of Oregon Inlet, and of the United States Coast Guard, Civilian Conservation Corps, and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, on those who lived, fished, and otherwise worked round about, and occasionally for, these entities. They were prepared by URS Corporation-North Carolina for the North Carolina Department of Transportation as mitigation for the replacement of the Herbert C. Bonner Bridge. The report embraces about a century's worth of time, from the end of the Civil War to the 1963 opening of the Bonner Bridge over the once-difficult-to-cross inlet. Its sharpest focus is on Hatteras Island, the place most dramatically affected by the bridge and the activities of the three federal entities. It occasionally looks north to the remainder of Dare County's Outer Banks, too. And, where informative, it also turns an eye toward Roanoke Island and the sound-side communities on Dare's mainland, and even further north and south to North Carolina's other barrier islands. In considering various strands of Outer Banks' life, it rarely closes down to the level of individual villages. That was already carefully done in the early 2000s in an ethnographic study of the eight villages adjoining Cape Hatteras National Seashore (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005a and 2005b). That study included interviews with more than 40 Bankers, the transcriptions of which fill about 1,200 pages (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c). If one wishes to consider the subtle differences between the residents of Rodanthe, Salvo, and Waves (sometimes lumped together by those on lower Hatteras Island as "Chicamacomico'ers"), Avon ("Kinnakeeters"), Buxton ("billygoaters," "goaters," "capers," "sea ticks"), and Hatteras Village ("Hatter'assers"), those reports and interviews are the place to turn (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:452). They served as the source of much of the oral history included below.



"Surf at the Extreme Tip of Cape Hatteras," ca.1900-1909, Herbert Hutchinson Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

The use of the word "Banks" for the barrier islands of Dare County and beyond dates back to at least the nineteenth century. *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, for example, refers to Bodie Island in 1860 as part of "the Banks," which it more broadly defines (Bruce 1860:729) as "the strip of sand which shuts out the sea . . . from Cape Henry to Cape Fear." The term "Outer Banks," however, may date only from the 1940s and did not commonly appear in its capitalized form until the early 1950s (Lee 2008:8-9). In 1941, for instance, Kermit McFarland of the *Pittsburgh Press* wrote about a fishing trip he had taken to Hatteras Village with the paper's Outdoor Editor, Johnny Mock. He used the two-word term, in lower case and quotation marks, to locate Hatteras Island and, as had *Harper's* a century earlier, a much larger area as well: "Hatteras really isn't in North Carolina, it's in the Atlantic Ocean. But down there they say it is on the "outer banks" . . . a narrow strip of land, running from Virginia well-high to South Carolina, which the ocean somehow forgot to cover" (McFarland 1941). Mock (1946) used the term in a column five years later, still in quotation marks but now capitalized.

No attempt is made to pin down the term here other than to uncategorically state that when one crosses the Washington Baum Bridge from Roanoke to Bodie Island, one has entered the Outer Banks. And when one heads south on US 12 and crosses the Bonner Bridge onto Hatteras Island, one has reached the heartland.

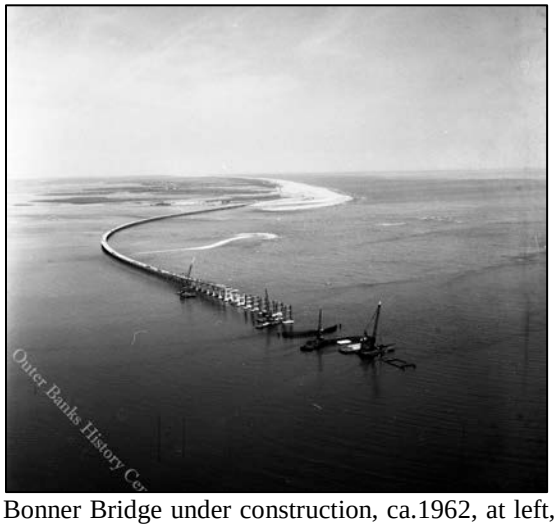
OREGON INLET, ITS BRIDGE, AND THE FEDERAL PLAYERS

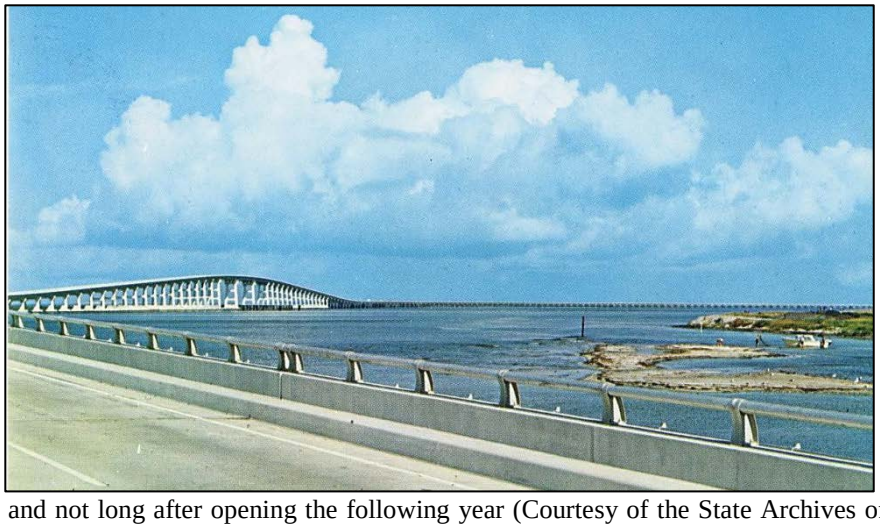
The Oregon Inlet's Bonner Bridge, and the United States Coast Guard, Civilian Conservation Corps, and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, are addressed in this section, briefly, as historical entities. This sets the stage for the core of this report, the effects that these entities and the land and water they occupy had upon Bankers and their visitors. First some facts, then what they meant to the people.

Herbert C. Bonner Bridge—the "Pipeline"

Ernal W. "Ernie" Foster, Jr. has an unusually broad-based perspective on Hatteras Island and the Outer Banks. His father, Captain Ernal Foster, Sr., launched commercial sport fishing in North Carolina on Hatteras Island in 1937. After graduating from North Carolina State University and teaching in Raleigh for ten years, Ernie Foster returned to Dare County, where he worked as a guidance counselor in Manteo for 20 years and every summer captained in his father's "Albatross Fleet." In 1996, following his father's death, he took over the business (Graff 2013). When interviewed in the early 2000s by Barbara Garrity-Blake, he considered the causes of Hatteras Island's dramatic transformation during the last half of the twentieth century (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:366):

> I'm not the right person to ask because I'm operating boats that are vintage boats and the things that I think are important are not all just material or monetary. But anyone who argues we'd be better off without the Park Service, they just can't see. The single biggest factor in changing this island was the bridge. That opened things up. That was the pipeline, they opened the valve.

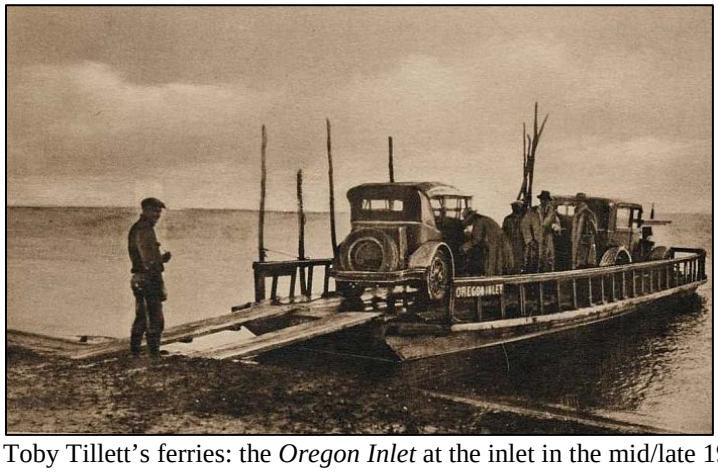


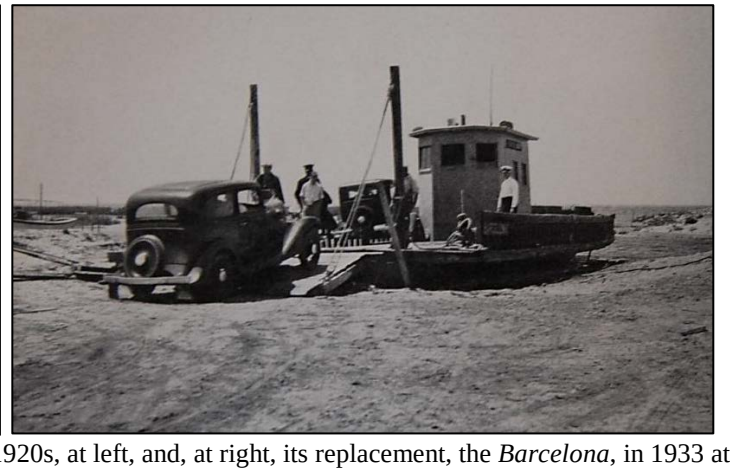


Bonner Bridge under construction, ca.1962, at left, and not long after opening the following year (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at right)

An article describing the Bonner Bridge's imminent opening in November 1963 encapsulated its appearance and impending impact on Hatteras Island. "A curving two and a half mile long bridge of reinforced concrete and steel will be opened this week across Oregon Inlet and end the long isolation of Hatteras Island" it opined. "The bridge means that thousands of persons each year who might otherwise never visit Hatteras will be able to drive quickly and easily from the tourist-popular Nags Head-Manteo area onto the longest and most famous isle of the storied Outer Banks" (Shires 1963).

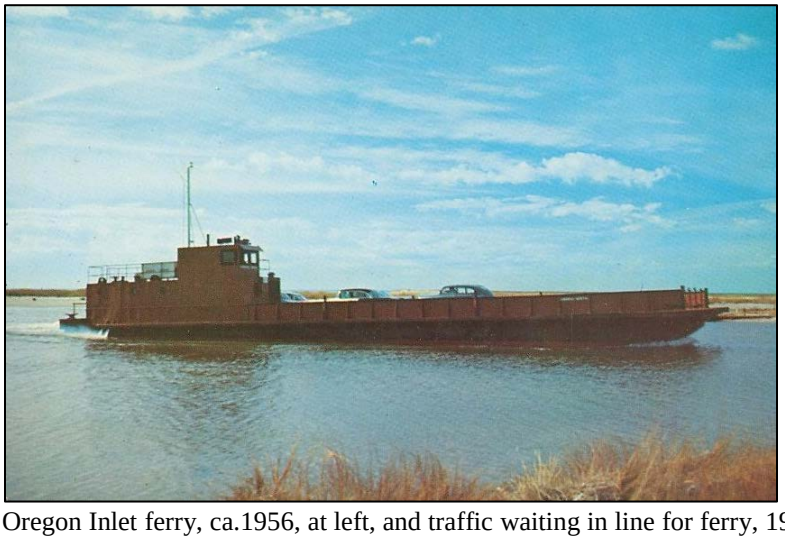
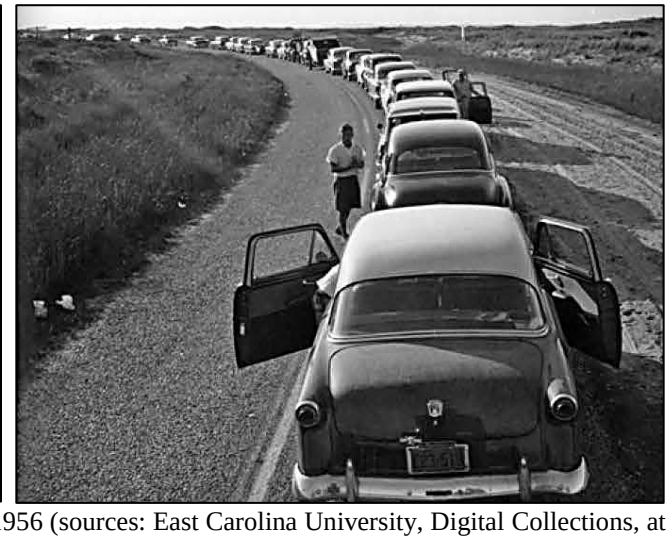
Prior to the bridge's opening, one could access Hatteras Island only by boat or, across Oregon Inlet, by ferry. J.B. "Toby" Tillett started the first service across the inlet in 1924 with a 45-foot, two-car ferry, the *Oregon Inlet*. He replaced that ferry in 1931 with the larger *Barcelona*. The state highway commission, in recognition of the importance of the service to residents—not tourists, who were almost nonexistent—began to subsidize Tillett's operation in 1934. Eight years later it began full reimbursement and Tillett eliminated the tolls. Ultimately, in October 1950, the state completely took over the service (Fish and Wildlife Service 2006; Baldwin 1971:25).





Toby Tillett's ferries: the *Oregon Inlet* at the inlet in the mid/late 1920s, at left, and, at right, its replacement, the *Barcelona*, in 1933 at Rodanthe due to the re-opening of New Inlet the previous year (sources: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at left, and Epler, "A Bit of Elizabethan England in America," Clifton Adams, photographer)

With the assistance of the U.S. Navy, the state acquired and began operating a WWII-era "LCU" (Landing Craft Utility) vessel. In 1953 it added two more of the craft. From 1950 to 1954, under state operation, ferry traffic increased six-fold: nearly 200,000 passengers crossed Oregon Inlet on ferries in 1954. In 1955 the state added a fourth LCU and supplemented its fleet with two more in 1961 (Binkley 2007:131-133, 150; State Advertising Division 1955; Baldwin 1971:25). Traffic still backed up, however, and a push for a bridge continued until the Bonner Bridge was funded and under construction.

Oregon Inlet ferry, ca.1956, at left, and traffic waiting in line for ferry, 1956 (sources: East Carolina University, Digital Collections, at left, and Binkley, *Creation and Establishment of Cape Hatteras National Seashore*, at right, Verde Watson, photographer)

The lack of a bridge affected those who wanted to visit Hatteras Island. It did not, however, just affect outsiders. The same forces that kept mainlanders off of Hatteras Island kept its indigenous residents on. The difficulties of leaving Hatteras (and the remainder of the Outer Banks) promoted the development of its particular self-reliant character.

United States Coast Guard

The U.S. Coast Guard had a greater impact on Dare County's Outer Banks than any other federal entity until the National Park Service established, acquired land for, and opened the Cape Hatteras National Seashore between 1937 and 1953. The history of the Coast Guard, as the website of the office of its historian notes upfront, is a complicated one, for it is the amalgamation of five different federal agencies—the Revenue Cutter Service, the Lighthouse Service, the Steamboat Inspection Service, the Bureau of Navigation, and the Life-Saving Service—with multiple historic responsibilities and missions. Two of these entities, the Lighthouse and Life-Saving Services, played a particularly large role on the Banks.

In 1789 the U.S. Congress created the U.S. Lighthouse Establishment and gave it jurisdiction over existing lighthouses and the authority to support them and other aids to navigation. Congress subsequently established the U.S. Lighthouse Board in 1852 to administer the system. It in turn replaced the Lighthouse Board with the U.S. Lighthouse Service in 1910, which it then merged into the U.S. Coast Guard in 1939 (Strobridge 2012; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012).

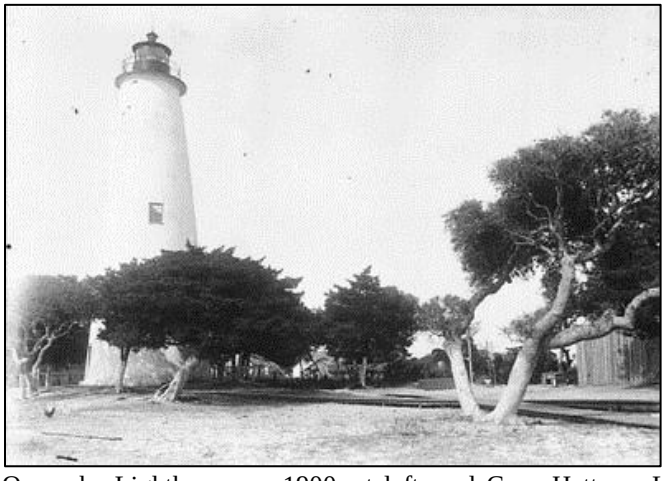
The federal government and its lighthouse agencies erected four lighthouses on the Outer Banks between the Virginia border and Hatteras Inlet in the nineteenth century. In 1797 Congress funded construction of the Cape Hatteras light overlooking the dangerous Diamond Shoals and the Shell Castle Island light in Ocracoke harbor, both of which were completed in 1803. In 1823 the government erected a new lighthouse on a new site in Ocracoke, where it remains to the present. It replaced the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse with the current lighthouse, also on a new site, in 1870. Upon completion, the new lighthouse, at 193 feet above the ground, was the tallest brick lighthouse in the world. That structure also survives, although in 1999 it was moved, in an epically orchestrated feat of engineering, to its current site (Strobridge 2012; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012).

Between 1847 and 1857 the federal government also funded the construction of the Bodie Island Lighthouse. Unstable and leaning toward the sea, this lighthouse had to be replaced in 1859. The new light also had a short life: in 1861 Confederate forces stacked explosives inside it and blew it apart. With materials leftover from the recently completed Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, the government in 1871constructed a new Bodie Island light, which remains in place on its original site (Strobridge 2012; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012). In 1875 the government erected the last of the four lighthouses near Corolla in Currituck County. The Currituck Beach Lighthouse also remains intact and in place, but it is the only one of the four that is no longer in operation or in the hands of the Coast Guard. In 2003 a non-profit organization, Outer Banks Conservationists, purchased the light, which it maintains and keeps open to the public (Strobridge 2012; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012; Outer Banks Conservationists 2012).

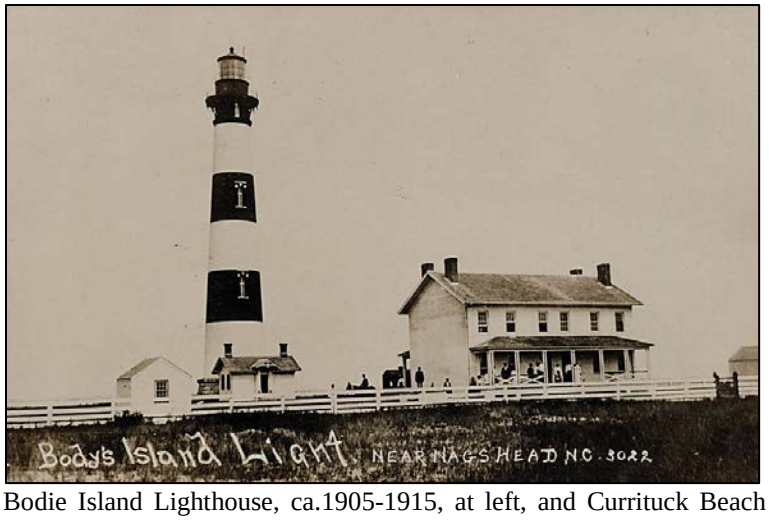
The federal government built and the lighthouse agencies maintained three other lighthouses along the Outer Banks, not on the land but out in the ocean and sounds. The Croatan Shoal Lighthouse first entered service in 1835 and continued operating, in a new tower, in 1887. No longer in existence, it stood near Roanoke Island in, according to Coast Guard records, "8 feet of water, on the northeasterly side of the channel between Croatan and Albemarle Sounds." The government also established the Laurel Point Lighthouse, on the south side of Albemarle Sound, in 1880. A screwpile type lighthouse—its cottage in open water rested upon large iron piles screwed into the floor of the sound—it was destroyed in the 1950s. A third lighthouse was planned in 1891 for the dangerous Diamond Shoals, off the coast of Cape Hatteras in the Atlantic. The project failed and lightships marked the spot until the Diamond Shoals Lighthouse tower was finally erected in 1966. (In 1918 a German submarine commander forced abandonment of one of the early lightships and then sank it.) The Coast Guard extinguished the Diamond Shoals light in 2001 and sold it for speculative development in 2012 (Strobridge 2012; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012; Hairr 1999:72-73; Roberts and Shelton-Roberts 2000; Walker 2012).

One tangential benefit of the lighthouse program, as the following images make clear, was the introduction of the first monumental and carefully designed buildings to the Outer Banks. Not only were the lighthouses imposing, but the keeper's house at each light and the necessary subsidiary buildings were also solidly constructed and handsomely

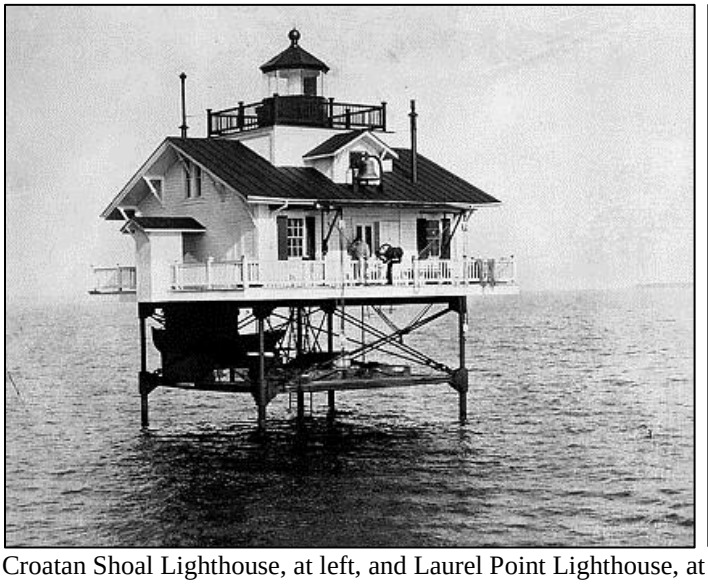
finished. The lighthouses and associated structures remain among the earliest and most imposing examples of architecture on the Banks.



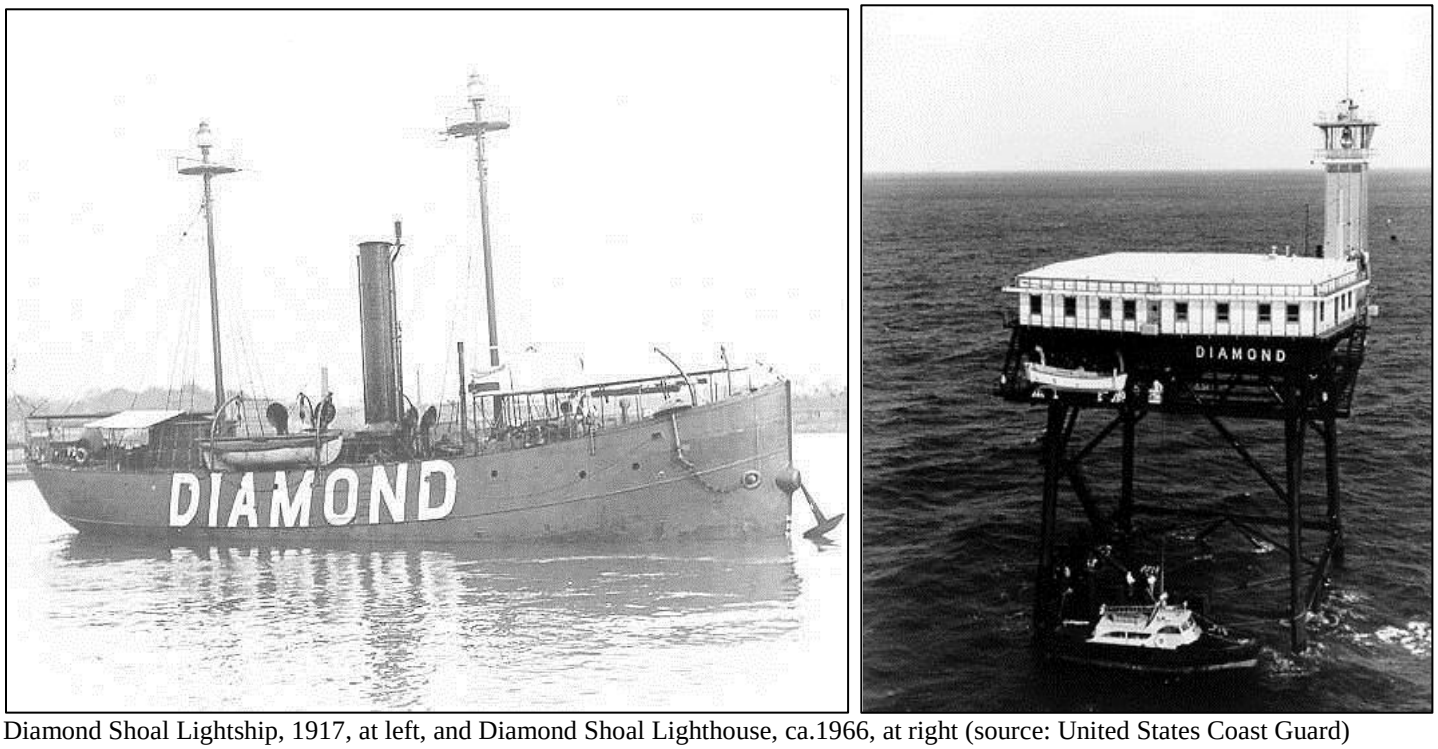
Ocracoke Lighthouse, ca.1900, at left, and Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, ca.1905, at right (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at right)



Bodie Island Lighthouse, ca.1905-1915, at left, and Currituck Beach Lighthouse, ca.1890s, at right (sources: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at left, and Outer Banks Conservationists, "Welcome to the Currituck Beach Lighthouse," at right)



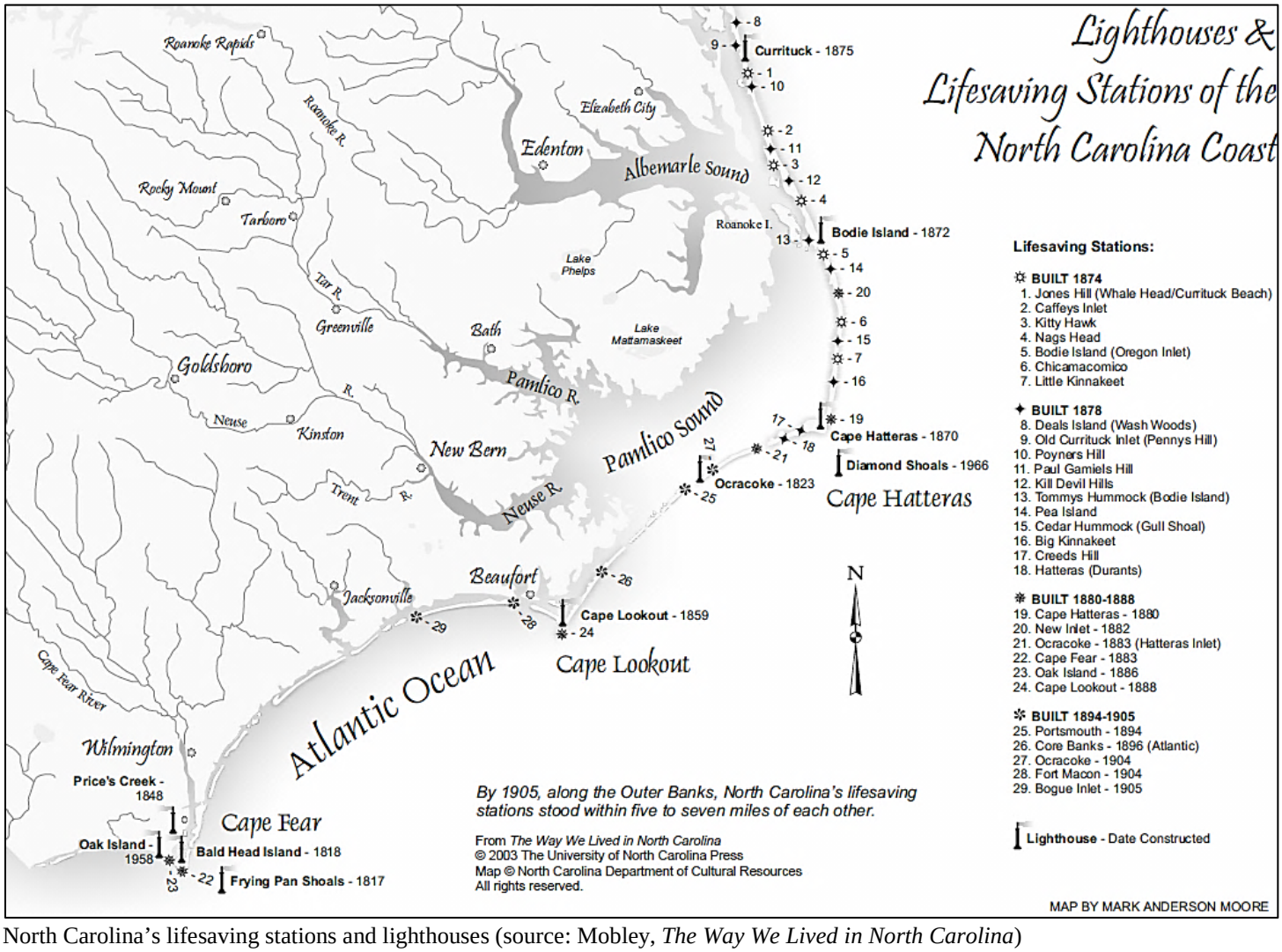
Croatan Shoal Lighthouse, at left, and Laurel Point Lighthouse, at right, undated (source: United States Coast Guard)



Diamond Shoal Lightship, 1917, at left, and Diamond Shoal Lighthouse, ca.1966, at right (source: United States Coast Guard)

The nation's growing network of lighthouses in the nineteenth century attempted to protect commerce by minimizing disasters on the water. But disasters would strike. In the late 1840s federal appropriations established lifesaving stations along the Atlantic coasts of New Jersey and Long Island to minimize deaths of professional mariners. By 1875 stations dotted the coast from Maine to Florida and in 1878 the government formally organized the U.S. Life-Saving Service. Not surprisingly, the Outer Banks, hard by the infamous Graveyard of the Atlantic, was home to many of these stations (Bennett 1998:5-7; Kimball 1889).

Between 1873 and 1878 the government funded the construction of 18 lifesaving stations in North Carolina. It added another six in the 1880s and five more between 1894 and 1905. As the below map makes clear, the lion's share of these 29 stations were on the Outer Banks from the Virginia border south to Hatteras Inlet. On Hatteras Island alone—reflecting the hazards of the Atlantic along its length—ten stations stood. North to south, these were Oregon Inlet (1874), Pea Island (1878), New Inlet (1882), Chicamacomico (1874), Gull Shoal (1878), Little Kinnakeet (1874), Big Kinnakeet (1878), Cape Hatteras (1880), Creeds Hill (1878), and Durants (1878).



North Carolina's lifesaving stations and lighthouses (source: Mobley, *The Way We Lived in North Carolina*)

The keeper of a lifesaving station was an important and respected figure on the Banks. He was required to reside at the station at all times and was responsible for the facility, his crew, and the direction of all rescue activities. He was to man the steering when a boat went out and was required to lead his men and "share their perils on all occasions of rescue." The station's crew of "surfmen," as the men who went out in the boats to save lives were called, initially numbered six with a seventh added depending on need (Kimball 1889). The staffing of stations sometimes led to the creation of small hamlets around them. For example, the Little Kinnakeet station had a tiny nearby community according to maps. As Torres (1985:130) points out in his history of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, only three headstones continue to mark the location of that former community.

A job as a lifesaver was particularly valued on the Outer Banks. As Bennett notes in his history of the service, the surfman's salary became less healthy over time and, as more profitable work became available, many turned from the service. "Only on the desolate stretches of coast, such as Hatteras," he writes (1998:10), "did families continue to pursue lifesaving as a vocation." (The attractiveness of the lifesaving service on the Outer Banks is addressed further at the context section below.)

In 1915 the Life-Saving Service and Revenue Cutter Service were joined together as the newly formed U.S. Coast Guard (Bennett 1998:10; United States Coast Guard Historian's Office 2012). The Coast Guard decommissioned or abandoned all of the stations on Hatteras Island but for the one at Oregon Inlet over the course of the twentieth century.

As did the lighthouse service, the lifesaving service brought many fine buildings to the Banks. Though the early stations no longer operate, some of their buildings, as noted below, remain in place or have been moved to other Banks' sites:

≠ Oregon Inlet (or Bodie Island) Life-Saving Station: First station built in 1874 and subsequently moved. Second station built in 1897-1898 to replace original destroyed by storm. Extensively remodeled in 1933-1934 and expanded in 1978. The Coast Guard replaced the station, on new location, in the early 1990s and in 2000 sold the original building to the North Carolina Aquariums, which subsequently restored it. The restoration included elevating the building 10 to 19 feet above grade and reconstructing the tower with its widow's walk as originally designed (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.).

≠ Pea Island Life-Saving Station: First station opened in 1878. Rebuilt in 1880 followed its racially motivated burning and rebuilt again in 1931. Decommissioned in 1949 and station building, lookout tower, and cistern subsequently sold and moved to Salvo, where the station building was converted to a private residence. (The three resources stand just west of NC 12.) Former cookhouse moved to Manteo and converted into Pea Island Cookhouse Museum in 2008 (U.S. Coast Guard 2013; Wright and Zoby 2000:169-179; Crumley and Miele 2005:30-31; Gorzkowski 2007; County of Dare 2008).

≠ New Inlet Life-Saving Station: Opened about 1882 and discontinued in 1916. None of its buildings survive (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.).

≠ Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station: Opened in 1874 and new station building erected in 1911. Decommissioned in 1954 and purchased by Chicamacomico Historical Association in 1968. Surviving buildings and resources include 1874 and 1911 station buildings, two cookhouses, stable, tractor shed, water tanks, a surfboat, a beach drill cart, a Lyle gun to launch a line out to sea, a life car to carry the rescued, and other rescue equipment (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; Chicamacomico Historical Association 2013; Noble 1976).

≠ Gull Shoal (or Cedar Hummock) Life-Saving Station: Opened in 1878 and abandoned in 1940. Buildings torn down after World War II (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; Stick 1958:286).

≠ Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station: Opened about 1873. In 1904 station building moved to new site and converted to boathouse and new station erected. Deactivated in 1954. Included in the structures that still stand on site are both station buildings (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; McNaughton 2000:29-30).

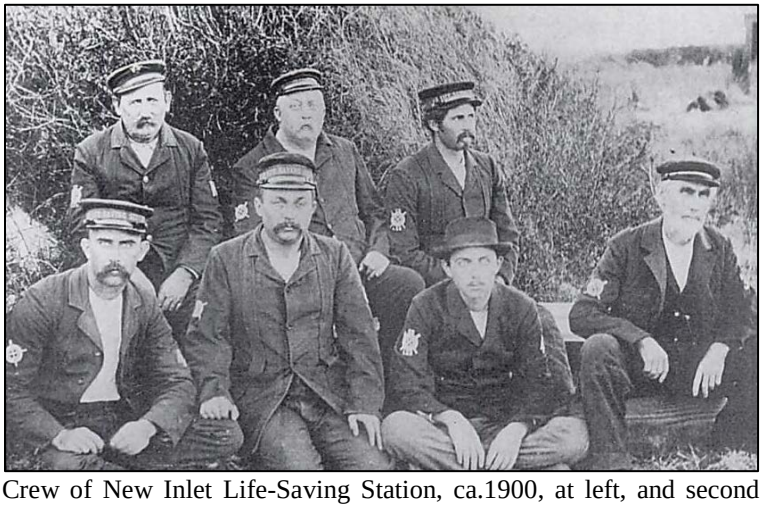
≠ Big Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station: A Coast Guard account of this station states it was erected about 1878 and perhaps abandoned in 1932. Historic photographs indicate that the original station was replaced in the mid-to-late 1910s by a Chatham-Type station. (Life-Saving Service architect Victor Mendleheff developed the first stations of this type about 1914.) The station still stood in 1944, when the Navy gave naval chaplain Leroy S. Hulan a photograph of it to assist him in locating and administering to its crew as he made his circuit ride of the stations within his watch, including those on Hatteras (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; Shanks, York, and Woo 1996:237-41; Hulan 2011).

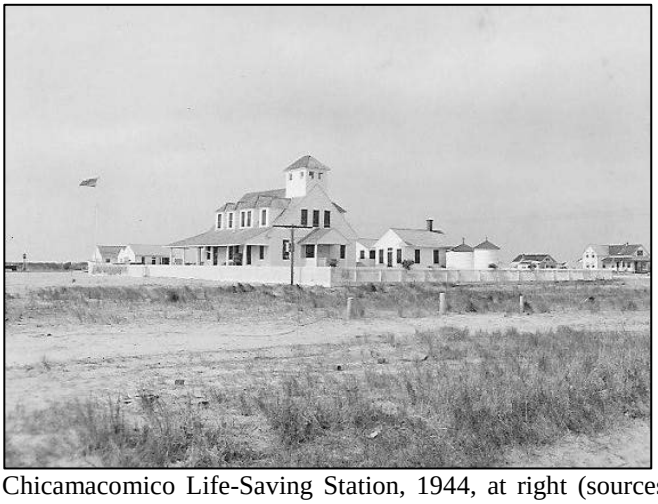
≠ Cape Hatteras Life-Saving Station: Erected about 1880 and replaced on a new location in the late 1930s. Coast Guard demolished original station in 1948 and replaced it with a LORAN facility. The Coast Guard disestablished that station in 1981, but a few of the late 1930s subsidiary lifesaving station buildings still stand, now in the hands of the National Park Service (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; Wilmouth 2004; loran-history.info 2012).

≠ Creeds Hill Life-Saving Station: First station erected about 1878 two miles east of current location. Replaced by new building on current site in 1918. Abandoned and sold in 1947. Subsidiary buildings were given away or, in case of tower, demolished following sale. The station building and freestanding messroom remain intact on site (Brown 2006b).1949

≠ Durants Life-Saving Station: Established as Hatteras Life-Saving Station about 1878 and renamed Durants about 1883. Abandoned about 1939 and later moved closer to Hatteras Village and incorporated into Durant Station motel complex. Destroyed by Hurricane Isabel in 2003, but for cupola, which was reportedly salvaged and placed atop new Durant Station condominium complex after 2007 (U.S. Coast Guard History n.d.; Kozak 2007)

Oregon Inlet Life-Saving Station, ca.1908, at left, and Pea Island Life-Saving Station, 1917, at right (sources: http://www.outer-banks.com/postcards/pclifeore.asp, at left, and United States Coast Guard, at right)





Crew of New Inlet Life-Saving Station, ca.1900, at left, and second Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station, 1944, at right (sources: Hairr, *Outer Banks*, and State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and, at right, Hulan, "Leroy S. Hulan—Outer Banks Life Saving Stations")

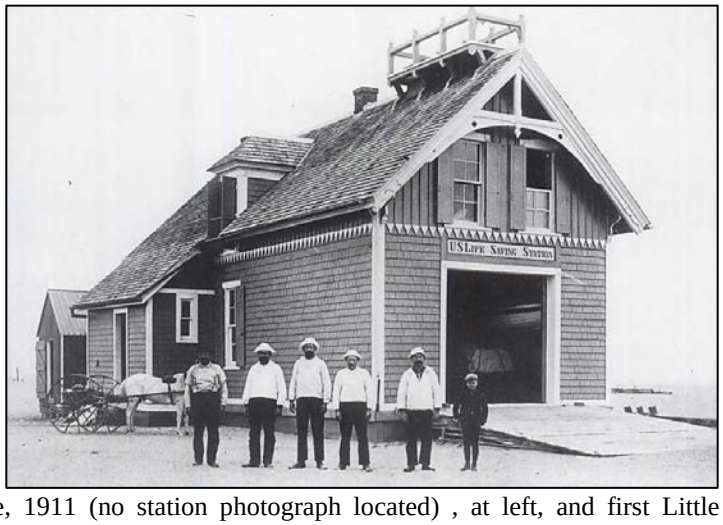
SOMERVILLE, MASS., *August 27, 1911.*

DEAR SIR: Through your office I wish to thank the keeper and men of the Gull Shoal Life-Saving Station, as well as the keepers and men of the stations from New Inlet to Hatteras, for services rendered on the 17th instant in trying to save our vessel, the *Willie H. Child*, and in taking off myself and crew and for kindness shown us while at the Gull Shoal station. Please ask them to accept this note as a personal word of appreciation.

Yours, truly,

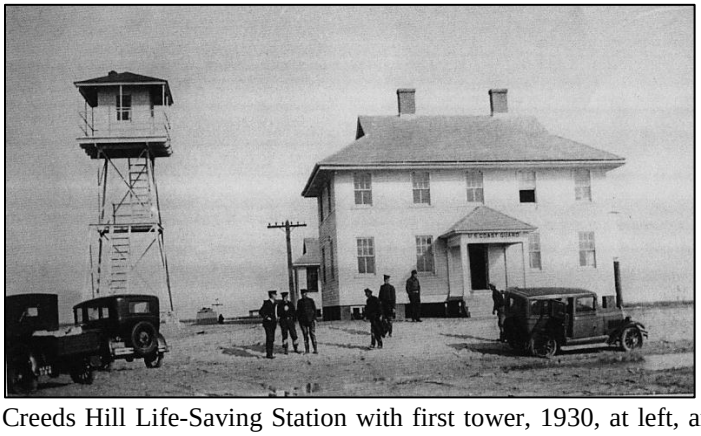
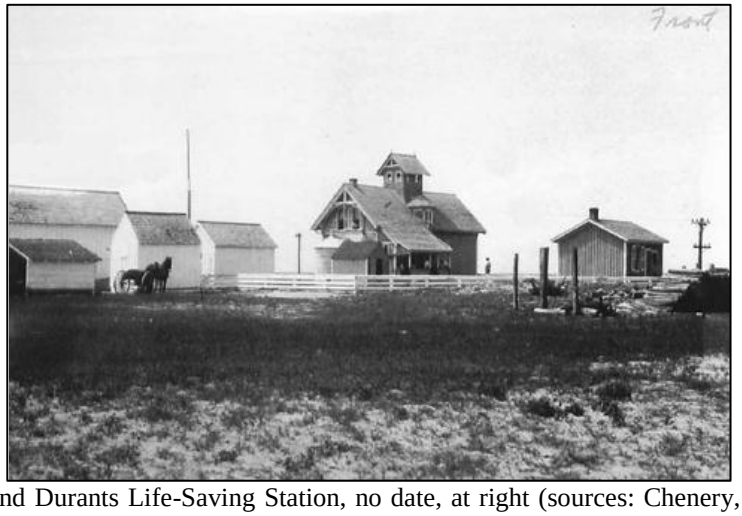
L. N. WATTS, *Master.*

SUPERINTENDENT SEVENTH LIFE-SAVING DISTRICT,
Shawboro, N. C.



Letter of appreciation for Gull Shoal Life-Saving Station rescue, 1911 (no station photograph located) , at left, and first Little Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station, ca.1895, at right (sources: United States Life-Saving Service, *Annual Report for 1912*, at left, and Hairr, *Outer Banks*, and State Archives of North Carolina, at right)


Big Kinnakeet Life-Saving Station, 1944,at left, and Cape Hatteras Life-Saving Station, no date., at right (sources: Hulan, "Leroy S. Hulan—Outer Banks Life Saving Stations," at left, and United States Coast Guard, at right)

Creeds Hill Life-Saving Station with first tower, 1930, at left, and Durants Life-Saving Station, no date, at right (sources: Chenery, *Old Coast Guard Stations*, at left, and, at right, http://www.hatteras.biz/ThenAndNow/durant_station.htm)

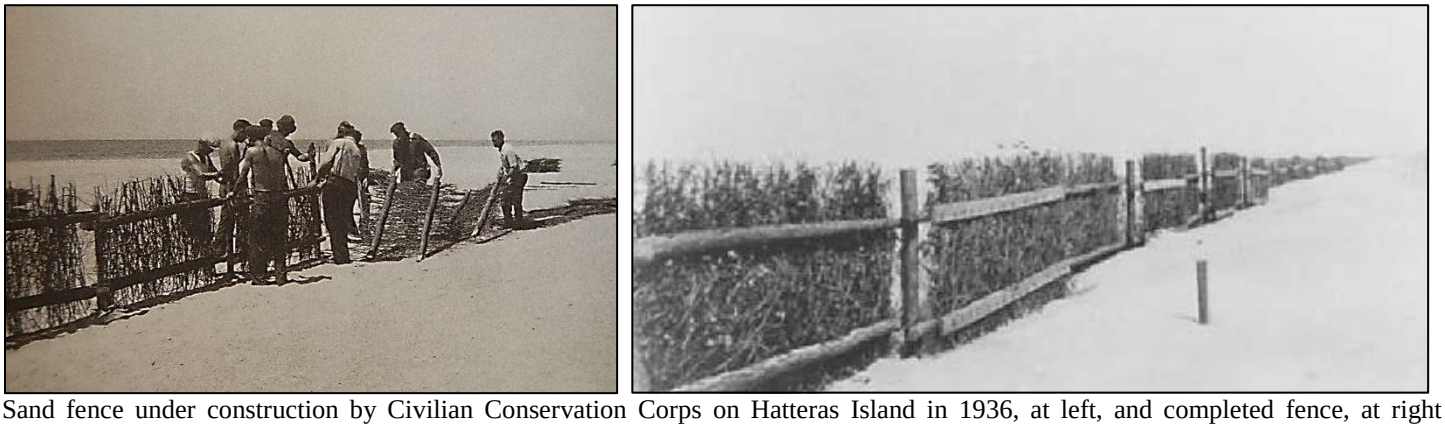
Civilian Conservation Corps

The federal government established the Civilian Conservation Corps or CCC in 1933. During the trials of the Great Depression, the CCC put young men to work throughout the country improving infrastructure and undeveloped areas. In 1934 Manteo became home to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Civilian Conservation Corps Camp NC FWS-2—Camp 436 or Virginia Dare Camp. By 1935 the camp had assigned some of its men to a transient camp on Pea Island near the lifesaving station. One of their primary missions was to restore the beaches and stabilize or create new dunes on Hatteras Island. To accomplish this task, the men put up fences supported by newly planted vegetation (Crumley and Miele 2005:66-68; Paige 1985:1-11 Downing 2013:59-61). A historical account of the Pea Island Wildlife Refuge gives a broader picture of the activities, and a date range, of the CCC's work on northern Hatteras Island (Fish and Wildlife Service 2006:9):

> Upon its establishment, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Biological Survey, managed "Pea Island Migratory Waterfowl Refuge." A U.S. Army Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp (Camp BF-2, Company 436, 1933-1942) in the area was responsible for numerous jobs, including dike construction; dune enhancement; water control[;] structure installation; planting to prevent erosion; land surveys; building fences; maintaining truck trails; marking boundaries; and planting trees and shrubs. One of the most significant jobs the CCC accomplished was the construction of dikes. The initial purpose of the dike

system (according to historic narratives) was to prevent salt water from contaminating the inland freshwater areas.

The dune-stabilization fences were built not in a straight line, but followed the contour of the shoreline to catch and deflect the prevailing winds at an angle. Perpendicular to and behind the shore-facing fences the men built brush fences, to catch additional sands that could reach 40 feet in height and 30 feet in width. According to *High Tide*, an in-house Camp 436 publication: "When the sand builds up to the top of the first fence then another fence is place[d] atop the original and the sand continues to mount higher and higher. This procedure is repeated until the desired height and width is obtained" (quoted in Downing 2013:60-61). According to a modern account (Senter 2003:349): "By the time the project ended in 1941, workers had built over three million feet of sand fencing, planted 142 million square feet of dune grasses, grown and planted over two and a half million trees and shrubs, and radically altered the Outer Banks landscape from Ocracoke village to the Virginia border."



Sand fence under construction by Civilian Conservation Corps on Hatteras Island in 1936, at left, and completed fence, at right (source: Senter, "Live Dunes and Ghost Forests" and National Park Service, at left, and Dolan and Lins, "Outer Banks of North Carolina" and National Park Service, at right)

The work on the Outer Banks in Dare and Hyde counties was groundbreaking for the National Park Service. In 1936 the Service had assumed responsibility for recreational demonstration projects. These included the development of a Cape Hatteras state park. The following year the Cape Hatteras National Seashore became, at least on paper, "the first seashore in the national park system" (Paige 1985:118, 123).

CCC workers came from all over the country and were sent all over the nation to work. Some, however, landed on home ground, including workers at Camp 436 (Crumley and Miele 2005:68). The efforts of some of these men are recounted at the contextual sections below.

The CCC's efforts had a tremendous influence on the modern growth of the Outer Banks and Hatteras Island. One scholar, economist Jeffrey Pompe (2010:8-9), believes that its influence cannot be overstated. He writes:

> The single most important factor that has contributed to the Outer Banks economy of today is the 1930s erosion-control project—a project that planners hoped would mimic natural dunes and protect coastal areas. The dune-stabilization project, which created an effective barrier to ocean overwash, protected infrastructure and created a sense of security that encouraged development. The project begun in the 1920s transformed the struggling Outer Banks economy—which depended on commercial fishing, maritime traffic, and the U.S. Coast Guard—into an economy that thrives on tourism.

Pea Island Wildlife Refuge

The federal government established the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge on the north end of Hatteras Island in 1938. The refuge extends the width of the island from Oregon Inlet to Rodanthe, 13 miles to the south. It encompasses almost 5,000 acres of land (reduced through erosion from its original 5,915 acres) and approximately 26,000 acres of boundary waters in Pamlico Sound. This land and the adjacent sound waters were historically used for market, sport, and personal waterfowl hunting and fishing and also as graze for free-ranging livestock. It is said that wild peas that thrived on the

backsides of the coastal dunes gave the island its name, which was in place by 1837, when Congress considered constructing a lighthouse "on Pea Island, near New Inlet" (Fish and Wildlife Service 2006:7, 9; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2013; Stick 1958:283; Payne 1985:149). For centuries at least Pea Island has only intermittently been a distinct island. This has confused many visitors to the Banks, as "Uncle" Jack Goldberg (1982:1-2) humorously and perceptively indicates in a question he asked and answered in the *Outer Banks Current*:

Dear Uncle Jack,

I enjoyed my visit to the Outer Banks last month but I got very confused because I kept seeing signs that said "Bodie Island," "Pea Island," and "Hatteras Island" but I could never find any islands. Does "island" mean something different on the Outer Banks that it does in other places?

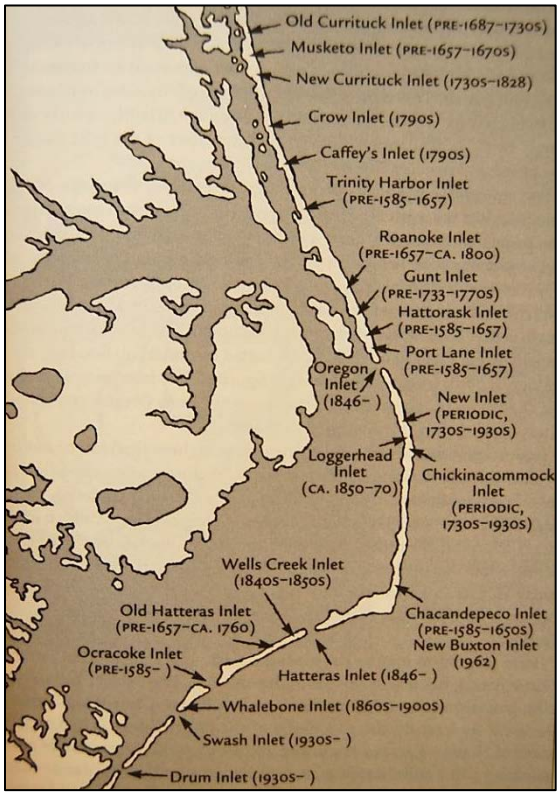
Geography Major, Chapel Hill

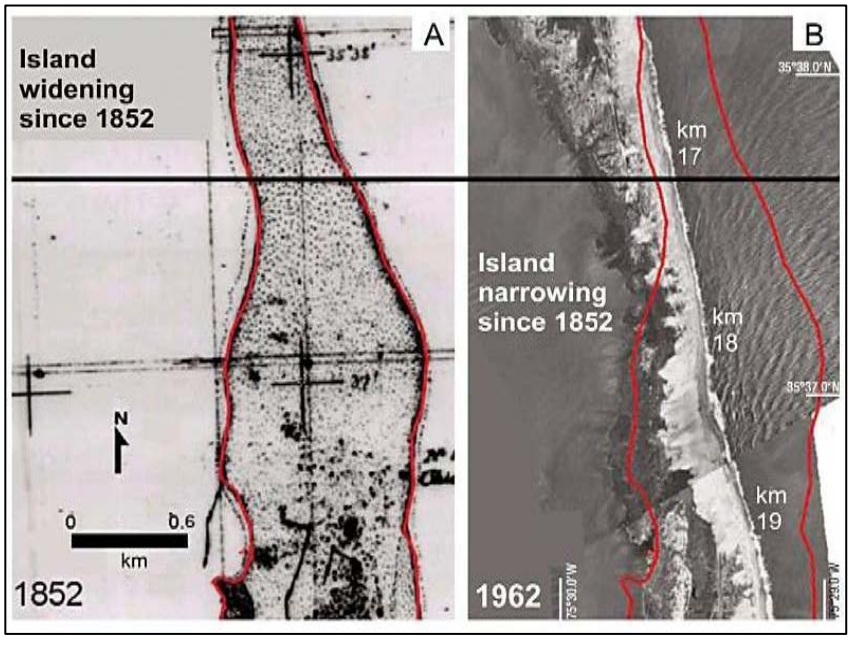
Dear Major,

You have unwittingly discovered one more example of the wisdom, frugality and patience of the hardy folk who settled this fragile strand known as the Outer Banks. Bodie Island (pronounced "body" as in Raquel Welch) and all the other non-islands you name, really were islands at one time. When the inlets filled up and they weren't islands any more nobody bothered to change the signs because everybody who lives here knows that one of these days—maybe next week—they're going to be islands again.

Geodetically, Uncle Jack

A map in Frankenberg's (1995:3) book on environmental processes on the Banks identifies inlets by name, opening date and, where relevant, date of closing. One can see the confusion in identifying islands. Before Oregon Inlet opened in 1846, Bodie Island to its north and Hatteras Island to its south were connected. And each time the periodic New Inlet has opened since 1846, an island—Pea Island—between Bodie and Hatteras has been in place within the current Pea Island refuge. Further, with or without an entirely independent character, Pea Island and the wildlife refuge have grown and shrunk over the years, as shown by paired 1852/1952 maps of a section south of New Inlet (Riggs et al 2009).



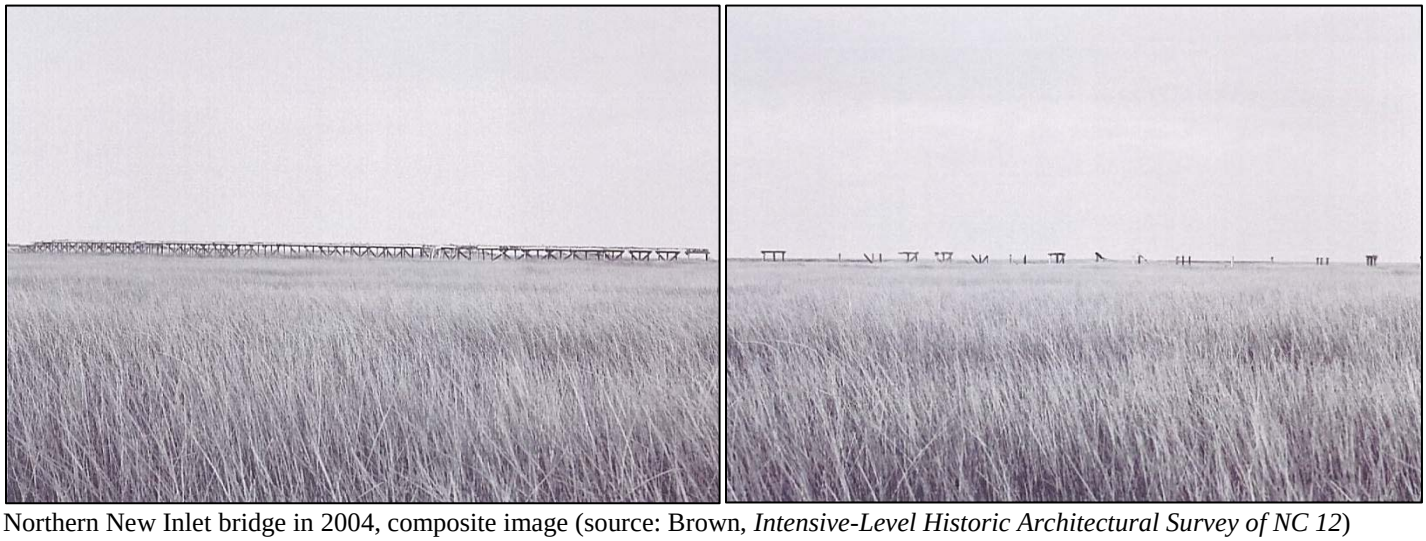


Historical and current Outer Bank inlets, at left, and images depicting narrowing and shifting of Pea Island south of New Inlet between 1852 and 1962, at right (sources: Frankenburg, *The Nature of the Outer Banks*, at left, and Riggs et al., "Eye of a Human Hurricane," at right)

Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge boundaries in 1938, at left, and 1980, at right; note large wildfowl ponds in color image (sources: North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission, *Dare County*, at left, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps collection, at right)

Occupation of the lands within the refuge has apparently always been sporadic and temporary. The refuge has no documented cultural resource sites. An archaeological assessment in 1978 that included research and field reconnaissance concluded that it is unlikely that any preserved archaeological resources due to the dynamic nature of geological forces (Fish and Wildlife Service 2006:31). The buildings of the Pea Island and New Inlet Life-Saving Stations would be significant, were they still in place. In their absence, the only documented resources within the refuge that are not modern are the remnants of two narrow New Inlet bridges about six miles north of Rodanthe on the sound side of NC 12. The

state constructed them to span two small channels opened by hurricanes in the fall of 1933. The bridges were connected by an elevated roadway, but the inlets soon closed and the structures were abandoned to the elements (Stick 1958: 279, 283; Brown 2005:67-69).



Northern New Inlet bridge in 2004, composite image (source: Brown, *Intensive-Level Historic Architectural Survey of NC 12*)

Although little physical evidence of life on Pea Island survives, written accounts and photographs indicate it has been visited many times over the course of its history, mostly because of its exceptional birdlife. While its birds have excited many, its prospect has rarely recommended it. When Dr. Louis B. Bishop, a noted ornithologist, visited Pea Island in February 1901 to record its winter birds, he wrote: "Bleak and dreary seemed Pea Island—a monotonous sand-flat with promontories of marsh-grass, its dull level broken only be a few scattered buildings and here and there a low sand hillock . . . ." At high tide he could see little but the "crest of the ocean beach, a few sandhills covered with a sparse growth of beach grass, and islands of salt marsh showing that there is land beneath the waves." When the tide was out, though, the sound side of the island was transformed. His first view of the island was "from a small boat which two colored boatmen had succeeded in getting hard aground on the flats that stretched for miles into Pamlico Sound" (Bishop 1901:260-261). The point of origin of an at-first curious photograph of Rodanthe, shot two years before Bishop's visit, is the midst of these flats. The work of the CCC was to greatly change the appearance of the island 35 years later.

Rodanthe looking east from the wide flats of Pamlico Sound, 1899 (source: Carol Cronk Cole photographic collection, Outer Banks Historical Center, State Archives of North Carolina)

Noted Southern hunter, writer, and tale spinner Horatio Bigelow (1943:93), in his memoir of a life of hunting, fondly recalled the bird life of Pea Island north of New Inlet. He wrote in 1943 that: "It has always been a Mecca for wild fowl; in fifty years of gunning I have never seen so many geese in one place as used to congregate on the Pea Island sands in the Westerly gales or fed in the shallow reaches of the Sound."

Even after the CCC had largely stabilized Pea Island's dunes, thereby making it less forbidding, it was a challenging place. A 1951 state tourism pamphlet, in surprisingly objective language, describes the Pea Island refuge and its road, as it were, just prior to the paving of NC 12 through it (State Advertising Division 1951:4):

> On the north, the surfacing ends at the boundary of the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, an important wintering ground for waterfowl on the Atlantic Flyway. The Refuge extends the 17 miles northward to Oregon Inlet. Its most famous boarders are snow geese, which are there in considerable numbers about six weeks from late November to early January. No hunting is permitted on the refuge.
>
> The stretch of sand tracks through the refuge which serves as the "highway" on this portion of the island is rugged going, and driving along it is not recommended for beginners. Even experienced sand drivers encounter difficulties, especially during wet weather when large flooded spots are likely to be found.

The Fish and Wildlife Service authorized a specific road easement for the state passing through the refuge in 1951 and the state soon extended NC 12 along the remainder of Hatteras Island through the refuge, from just north of Rodanthe to Oregon Inlet (Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region 2006:

The Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge, which is conterminous with a large portion of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore, occupies a shifting and contradictory space, physically and in terms of its mission. Physically, its lands are in some sense unnatural. As its Comprehensive Conservation Plan notes (Fish and Wildlife Service 2006:19)

> Pea Island would be an overwash-dominated island if left to completely natural processes. Starting with the extensive dune building in the 1930s with the Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration, however, man has stabilized the island. Since that time, dune building with sand fences, bulldozers, and vegetation has stabilized the island and held it in place. Overwash is a natural coastal process that adds elevation to central parts of the island and to the sound-side shoreline. The North Carolina Department of Transportation continually removes storm overwash deposits from the roadway of North Carolina Highway 12, and rebuilds artificial dunes between the highway and the beach. Thus, the lack of natural sediment redistribution hinders the island's migration during a time of rising sea level. The oceanfront beaches are narrower than they would naturally be, and the interior and sound shorelines of the island are starved of sediment. The artificial dunes are not in their natural position, composed of their natural stratigraphy and sedimentology, or of natural shapes and sizes.

Gabriel Francis Lee reads broader contradictions in public and private life on Pea Island and the Outer Banks in his insightful *Constructing the Outer Banks: Land Use, Management, and Meaning in the Creation of an American Place* (2008:195-196):

> The "primitive" nature of the Banks that the National Park Service sought to preserve also stood outside of history. Some efforts had been aimed primarily at preserving threatened species, which was the purpose of the Pea Island Wildlife Refuge for migratory waterfowl on the northern end of Hatteras Island, but preservation only extended to the type of nature that visitors liked. On the other end of the spectrum, the Park Service, for approximately the first decade of administering the park, sought to eradicate mosquitoes by ditching wetlands. In essence, it was not "nature" so much that was being preserved, but a certain version of nature. It was a nature that appealed to urban and, increasingly, suburban visitors. When vacationers came to the Outer Banks, they sought the rejuvenating nature of an undeveloped seashore, the isolation of islands stretching out into the Atlantic, the idealized experience that [National Park Service director] Conrad Wirth described in his 1937 essay. Wirth was certainly neither the first nor the last to describe the Outer Banks as a primitive, romantic wonderland, but he captured well what the Park Service thought they were preserving with their initial investment and annual appropriations. It was not so much

> the natural landscape that mattered, but rather the experience in that space. With proper management, similar experiences could be preserved for generations of Americans seeking pristine beaches and superb fishing. By making the islands easily accessible and creating camping areas or letting entrepreneurs lodge guests, visitors could purchase that experience at a price. The Cape Hatteras Seashore commodified the nature of the Outer Banks just as developers around Kitty Hawk had commodified the meaning of the past, a past that included Wright brothers, doomed colonists, and pirates, but often nothing meaningful to the existing communities or to locals' ideas of themselves.

Whether one agrees with Lee's assessment or not, Pea Island—the island that is not an island—and the Outer Banks are unquestionably complicated places. The following contexts provide different lens through which one can view the efforts of Bankers, and their rare early visitors, to come to grips with and even thrive in such a challenging landscape.

Undated postcard depicting "Great Snow Geese" wintering at the Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge (source: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards)

OUTER BANKERS AND THEIR OCCASIONAL VISITORS: THE CONTEXTS

The following contexts are not exclusive. They overlap in time, content, and membership by necessity, for Outer Bankers, like the islands they occupy, have never been static. Bankers can be viewed by activity or occupation—fishing, lifesaving, midwivery, "keeping house." They can be approached by the duties and restrictions imposed on them by gender or race. They can be treated as insiders and, on occasion, outsiders. A consideration of the dangers of Outer Banks' life, whether permanent or transitory, casts a particular kind of light upon them. One circumstance all Bankers had in common until the opening of the Bonner Bridge in 1963, however, begins this fluid contextual account—isolation. As a Banker, by necessity, you made the most of the benefits and the least of the difficulties of a life cut off from easy or ready contact with the outside world.

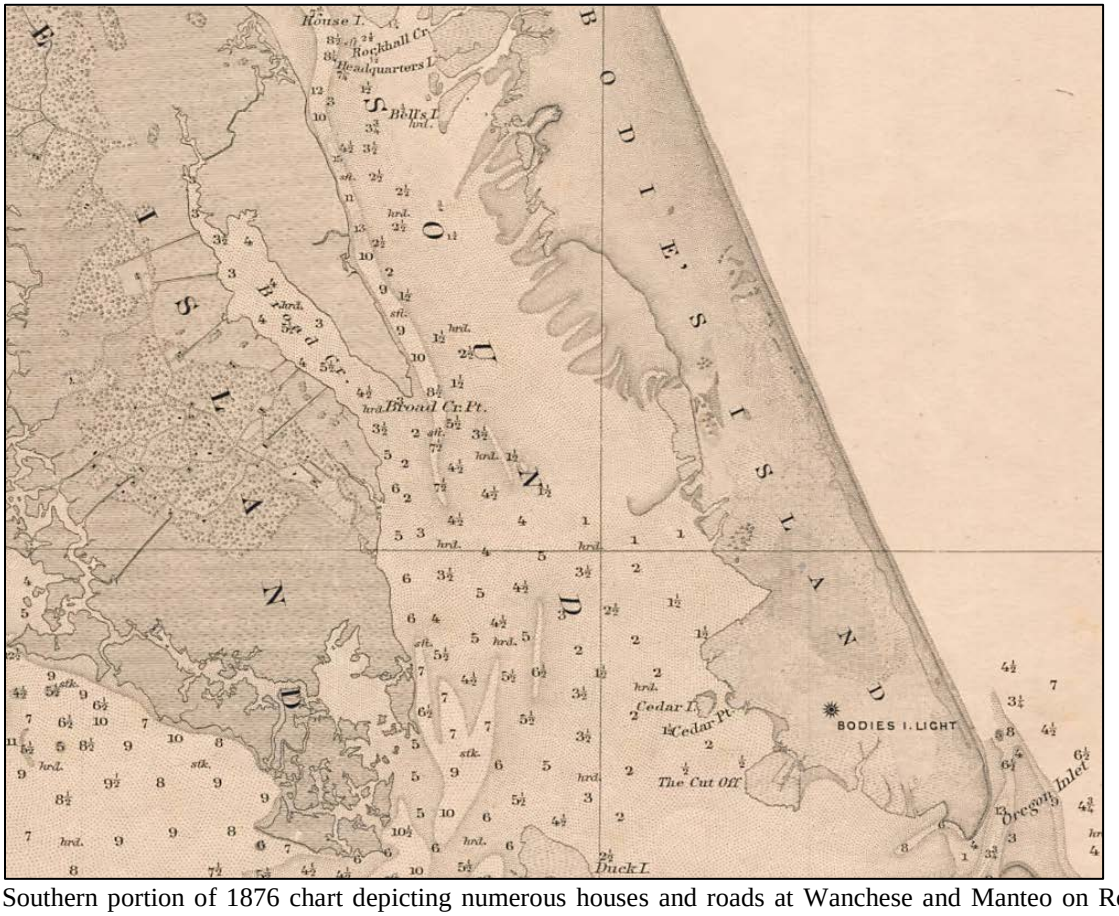
Isolation and the Coming of the Paved Road and the Bonner Bridge

Censuses indicate that it was the very rare late nineteenth- or early twentieth-century Outer Banker who was not born in North Carolina of North Carolina-born parents. Obituaries and other sources suggest that virtually all of these residents

were not only North Carolina natives, but were born on the Banks. The small number of surnames shared by a substantial number of Dare County Outer Bankers reflects the insular nature of their lives. The surnames were so few that it was not uncommon for women and men with the same last name, but only distantly related, to marry. Among the many examples of women with the same maiden and married surnames are Barbara Gray Gray (1933-2004) of Hatteras, Lovie Gray Gray (1897-1944) of Avon, Arretta Midgett Midgett (1890-1989) of Rodanthe, Camille Helen Midgett Midgett (1896-1985) of Waves, Laura Vandetta Midgette Midgett (ca.1890-1977) of Buxton, Eliza Rollinson Rollinson (ca.1876-1959) of Hatteras, Pauline Rollinson Rollinson (1921-2011) of Buxton, and Jennette Stowe Stowe (1883-1983) of Hatteras (http://www.ncgenweb.us/dare/obits/).

Maps, charts, and aerial photograph make obvious the isolation of Dare County's Outer Banks, particularly Hatteras Island. Taking into account their varying level of detail, which is largely based upon their intended use, these show few changes from 1876 through the late 1940s. Those changes are telling, however, especially in connection with a federal presence on Hatteras. One should note that the focus here on the narrow stretches of land included on the charts is particular to this study. To the mapmakers, and to the ubiquitous Outer Banks fisherman, the water rather than the land was the focus of these charts. They include numerous soundings of the ocean and sounds and detailed shorthand descriptions of bottoms, buoys, and other features critical to those who spent much of their time off of the land.

In 1876 the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey prepared the earliest identified map or chart depicting portions of Currituck and Dare County's Outer Banks in detail. Its precision is such that roads, houses, woodlands, and fields are clearly displayed on Roanoke Island. There was much less to map on the Banks: some houses and a few roads from Nags Head north to Currituck and on Colington Island; a few other dwellings; and a single hotel north of Nags Head. South of Nags Head there is not a single road or house the length of "Bodie's Island" down to Oregon Inlet. The only identified place or building is the Bodie Island Lighthouse. The bit of Hatteras Island depicted south of the inlet is blank as well. An 1879 U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey chart running south from Currituck Beach to Oregon Inlet is little different, but for the addition of the new Bodie Island Life-Saving Station near the light.

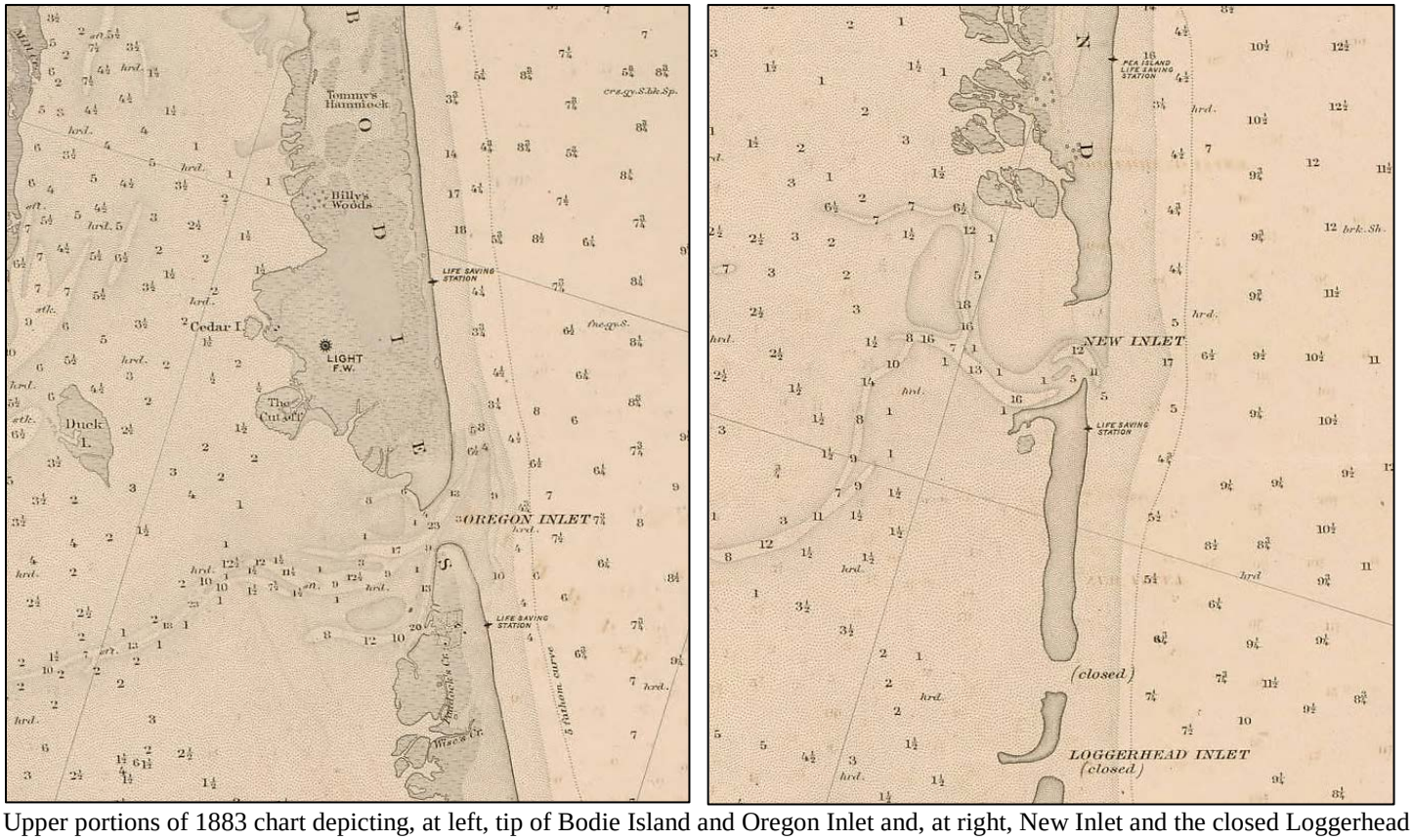


Southern portion of 1876 chart depicting numerous houses and roads at Wanchese and Manteo on Roanoke Island, at the left, but nothing other the lighthouse on lower Bodie Island, at the lower right (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Maps)

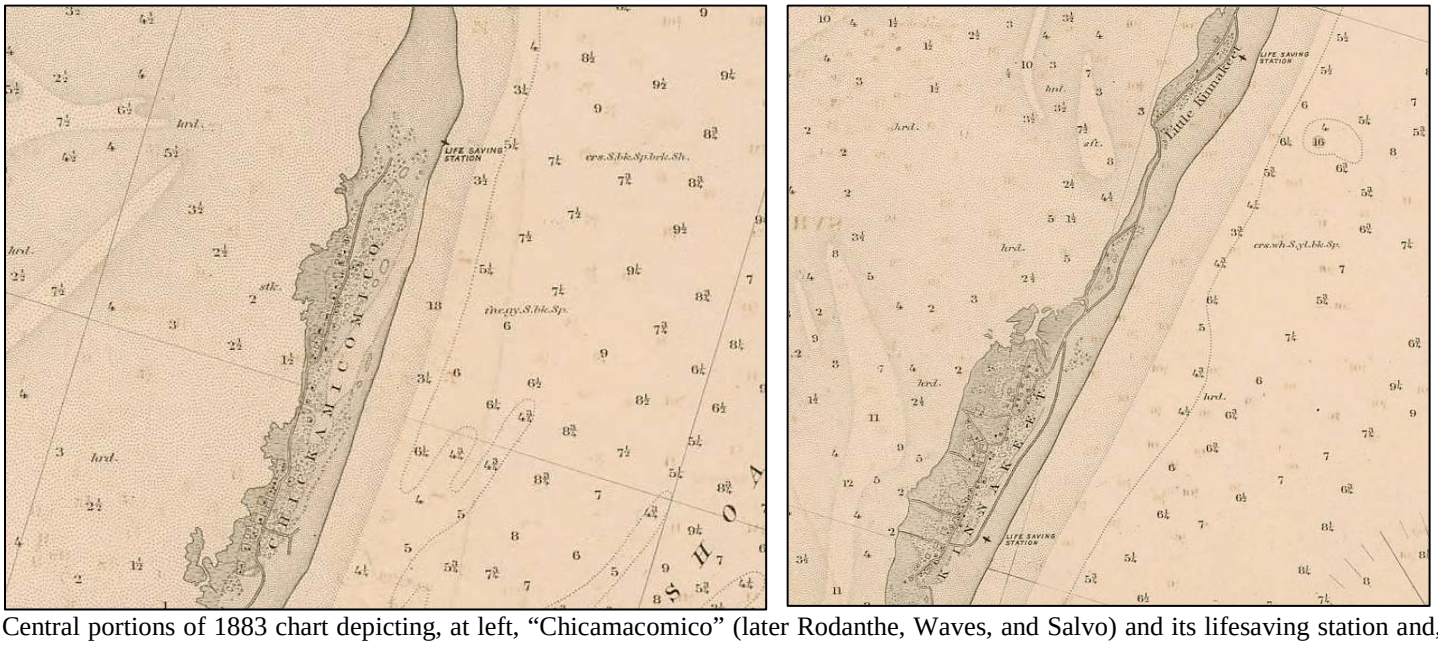
The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey chart of 1883 of "Pamplico Sound"—the first to show all of Hatteras Island in detail—is packed with information. At its top it depicts two lifesaving stations, one to the north of Oregon Inlet and one to the south. It does not name either, but the top one is the Bodie Island station and the lower one the Oregon Inlet station. A bit further south the chart depicts New Inlet, which at that time divided Hatteras Island into two pieces. (The chart also includes an additional pair of inlets, named Loggerhead Inlet, which it notes were already closed by the time of its drawing. Loggerhead had long been sealed, since about 1870.) North of New Inlet is the Pea Island lifesaving station. To the south is the Gull Shoal (Cedar Hummock) station.

Just south of the former Loggerhead Inlet is another lifesaving station—Chicamacomico—and the communities of Rodanthe, Waves, and Salvo, denoted together under the name Chicamacomico. All three are strung along a single road or path oriented to the Pamlico Sound. No land route of any kind marks the map north of the lifesaving station. Trips north of the three villages to Oregon Inlet or Bodie Island apparently required a strong set of legs, a horse or, most likely, a boat. From Chicamacomico south, however, one could travel an artificially regular course of road through thinly or unpopulated terrain to the tiny hamlet of "Little Kinnakeet" and its lifesaving station, which bore the same name, and then on to the village of Big "Kinnakeet," later Avon, home of the Big Kinnakeet station.

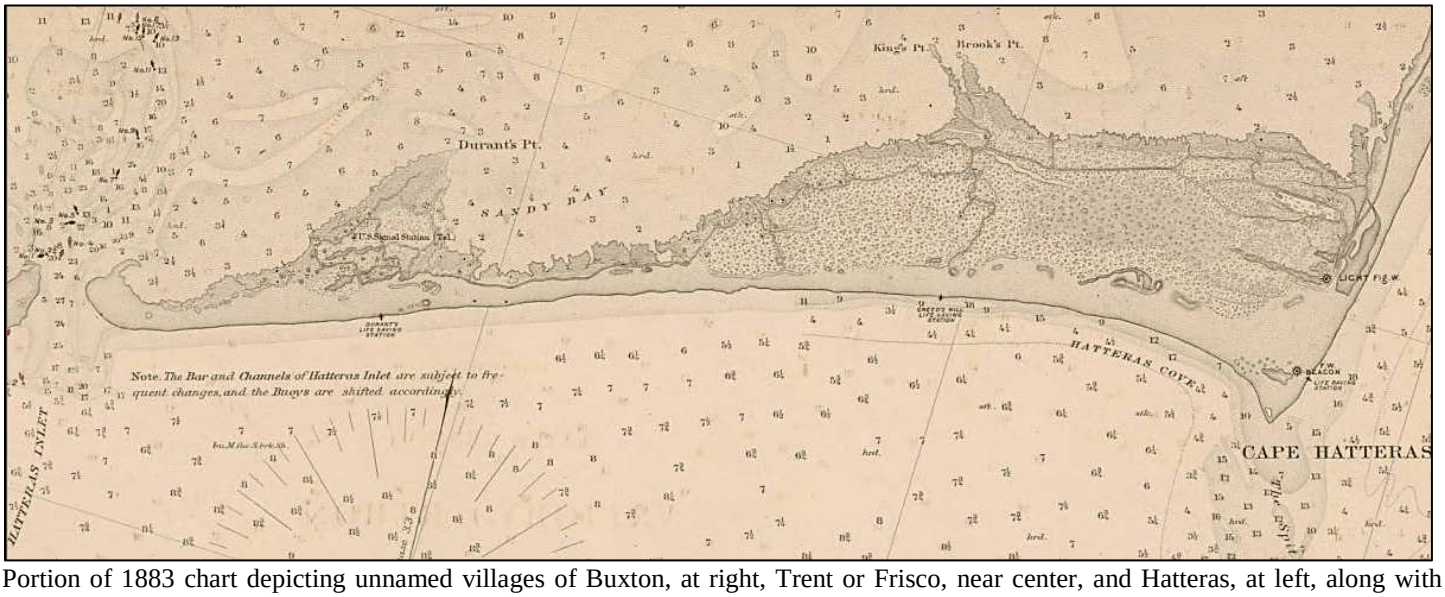
At the bottom of the chart, where the elbow of the island turns it west, the chart depicts three additional communities and four more lifesaving stations. At the elbow is Cape Hatteras, as yet not called Buxton, and two lifesaving stations, one named for the cape, the other called Creeds Hill. Further west is a cluster of houses in a hamlet not yet identified as Trent or, as it was later renamed, Frisco; the Durant Life-Saving Station; and the also unnamed Hatteras Village. Across Hatteras Inlet is the Ocracoke Island (or Hatteras Inlet) Life-Saving Station. Numerous buoys and markers—a key component of the chart—pepper the inlet. In short, from top to bottom the chart depicts an isolated, thinly populated island with its residents clustered together in a handful of small villages. Isolation leavened by community.



Upper portions of 1883 chart depicting, at left, tip of Bodie Island and Oregon Inlet and, at right, New Inlet and the closed Loggerhead inlets; neither section includes any north-south road (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Maps)



Central portions of 1883 chart depicting, at left, "Chicamacomico" (later Rodanthe, Waves, and Salvo) and its lifesaving station and, at right, "Little Kinnakeet" and Big "Kinnakeet" (later Avon) and their stations, all connected by a road or path (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)



Portion of 1883 chart depicting unnamed villages of Buxton, at right, Trent or Frisco, near center, and Hatteras, at left, along with three lifesaving stations and, at far left, numerous markers in Hatteras Inlet (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)

Not until a 1918 chart depicting Cape Hatteras from Wimble Shoals south to Ocracoke Inlet does the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey catch up with some of the newer names on Hatteras Island. It assigns the names "Buxton" to the village at Cape Hatteras and "Hatteras" to the village at Hatteras Inlet. It names the Frisco community, but as "Trent" rather than "Frisco." A 1928 chart of the central and lower part of Hatteras Island finally includes the name Frisco. It also identifies "Salvo," but continues to call out Avon as Kinnakeet (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey 1918 and 1928). As David Stick (1958:174) points out, the names of the towns were not organic to Hatteras, but assigned by postal service authorities in Washington, who discarded locally submitted names for post offices that they considered "too long or too hard to spell" or that they "just did not like."

Numerous sources, factual and even fictional, refer to the difficult of reaching and traveling through the Outer Banks and the associated isolation this produced. During the 1840s George Higby Throop (1818-1896), a native of New York state, tutored the children of Cullen Capehart on his Bertie County plantation. In the summer, when the heat and disease-bearing

insects made life in the coastal plain uncomfortable and dangerous, he traveled with the family to its vacation home at Nags Head. In 1850 Throop gave a fictionalized account of his experience, under the pseudonym Gregory Seaworthy, in a book titled *Nag's Head: Two Months Among "The Bankers": A Story of Sea-Shore Life and Manners* (Sparrow 2000:33). He described 'Seaworthy's' first encounter with the Banks upon disembarking from the boat that brought him there (Seaworthy 1850:24):

> . . . I straightaway set forth along the shore of the sound for my new home. Did you ever walk in the sand, worthy reader, for a considerable distance? Do you remember anything in life that so moderates any undue exuberance of animal spirits, or a chance phase of romance or enthusiasm in your feelings? Do you know of anything more discouraging?

Caroline "Carrie" Rowland Gray (1914-2005) did not have the luxury of a two-month stay with slaves and servants at her beck and call. She started out an outsider, but made her life on the Banks, and her experience extended beyond the transitory discomfort of walking through the sand. Gray was born and raised in Patchogue, a then-small town on Patchogue Bay facing the Atlantic, about 60 miles east of Manhattan. In 1931, at the age of 17, she married Ellis "Swan" Andrew Gray, Sr. (1902-1989) and soon moved with him back to his Avon home. At her death in 2005, she was known as "Mama Carrie" to her numerous relatives and friends (*Coastland Times* 2005c). When interviewed by Barbara Garrity-Blake in the early 2000s, Gray indicated that the adjustment from Long Island to Hatteras Island was far from immediate:

> BGB: . . . Was it shocking to you to move from Patchogue, New York to Hatteras?
>
> CG: Well, to say the least, it was. We come down—no roads nowhere, just you know, car guts, and we rode the beach down part of the way, and then on the sandy car ruts, and the cattle was roving, the horses all roved free.
>
> BGB: My gosh, what did you think.
>
> CG: I'll tell you what I thought. After we bought the old church and moved up here, the outhouse was back there in the marsh and there was no trees it was all the saltwater grass. I went out to the outhouse, and when I turned to come back there was this old brindle bull between me and the house, and I was stuck out there for about two hours. He was a gentle old thing, but I was from New York and I didn't know nothing about gentle bulls.
>
> BGB: Maybe he was old buck [of Rodanthe].
>
> CG: He could have been, but after awhile he finally moved on and I got out.
>
> BGB: And were you a new bride then?
>
> CG: Yea. I was 17.
>
> BGB: And did you think what in the world did I get myself into?
>
> CG: It was different. It was different. Everybody was nice and wonderful though. Swan Ellis' family couldn't have treated me no better. They were just wonderful people.

Gaskill "Gack" Austin (1929-2010) extends the story of bad roads and isolation through the 1940s. He recalled the limited number of times most left Hatteras Island when he was a teenager and the difficulty in doing so (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:30):

> It was a two-day trip to go to Manteo. It took a full day to get off the island because you walked and pushed the vehicle more than you rode. There was no such thing as a four-wheel drive and no roads of course except for the sand. So, you were stuck a lot. When you got to Oregon Inlet, there was no scheduled ferry. There was a little wooden ferry and you had to try to get his attention by waving your

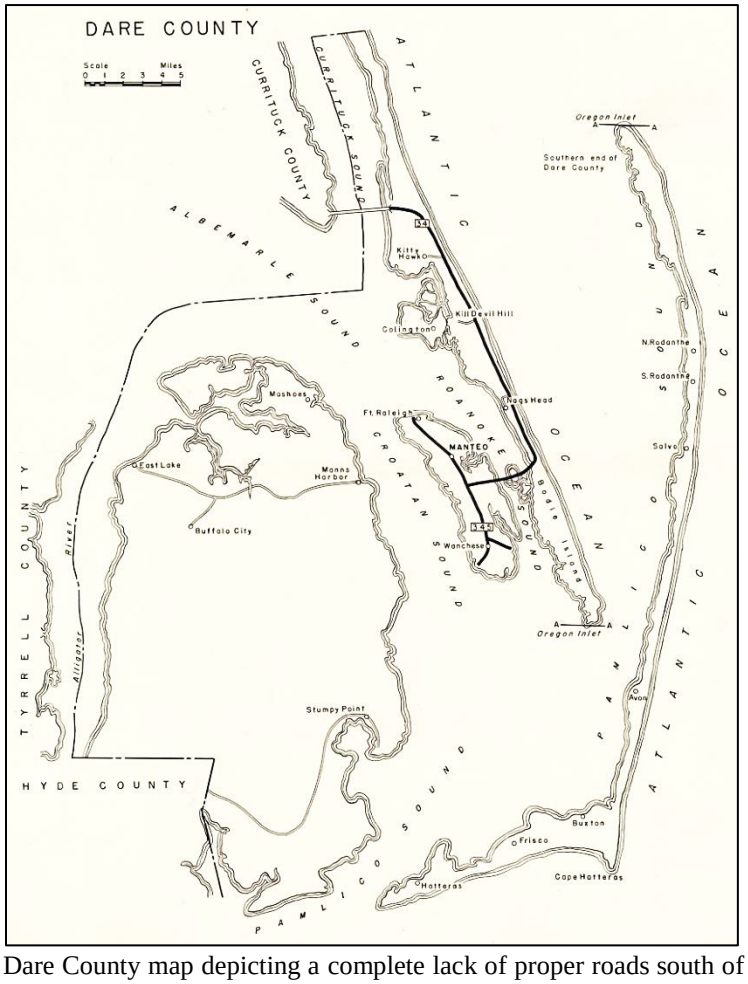
> arms because he sat on the north side and he would come across and get you. It was a full day to get there and do whatever you had to do and another full day to get back.

Due the difficulties of the trek, he only left the island a few times a year.

The various maps that depict a road of some sort passing down much of Dare County's Outer Banks were identifying a shifting, meandering path rather than one set, as it were, in stone. The lines indicated that there was some sort of path extending between the county's Outer Banks communities, not that there was a proper road. A tale told to *The State* magazine publisher Bill Sharpe grasps the true nature of what passed for a road on Hatteras Island prior to the late 1940s (Stick 1998:289):

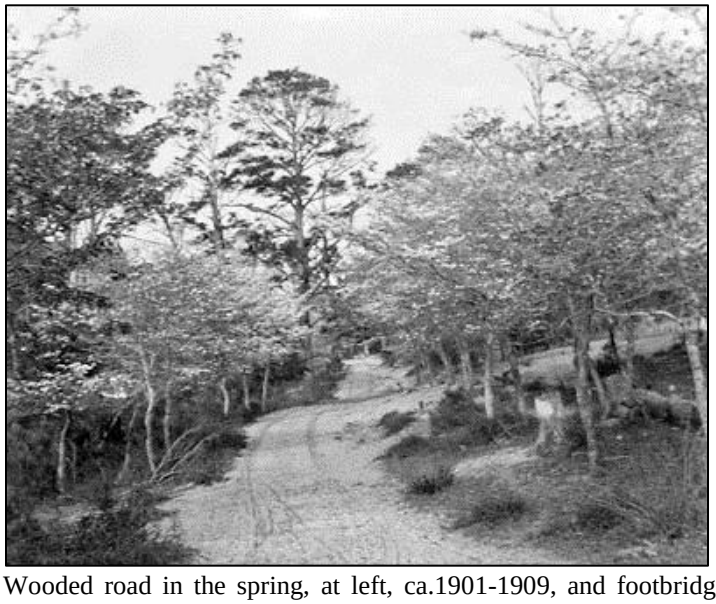
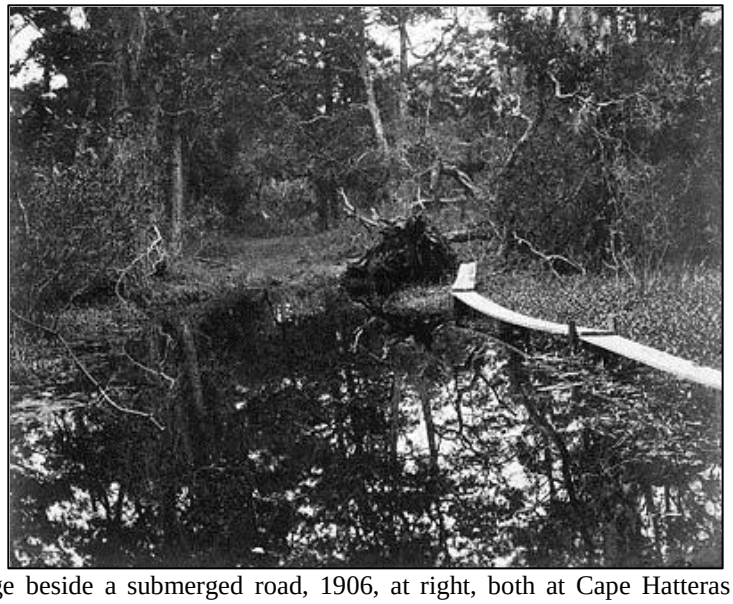
> Back in 1936, a bewildered motorist, struggling through the sandy ruts of the Outer Banks, stopped on top of the great flat near Pea Island where a WPA worker was building sand fences. He wanted to know which road to take to Hatteras. "Take road 108" he was told. A half-hour later, after following one auto track in the sand after another, he had circled back and approached the same man. "Which road did you tell me to take to Hatteras?" he asked. The boy wearily pointed to the maze of ruts. "Take 108. There's 108 roads to Hatteras.

A 1930 Dare County road survey map makes the transitory nature of Outer Banks roads clear. The only hard-surfaced ones depicted in Dare ran down Roanoke Island and along the Banks between Kitty Hawk and Nags Head. No state or county road of any type—hard-surfaced, gravel, graded, or unimproved—was mapped from south of the Nags Head area to Hatteras Village. A 1940 map showed no improvement on the Banks, although it does finally include the Washington Baum Bridge from Manteo to Bodie Island—the first to reach the Banks—which had been completed in 1928 (North Carolina State Highway Commission 1930 and 1940; Stick 1958:245-246).

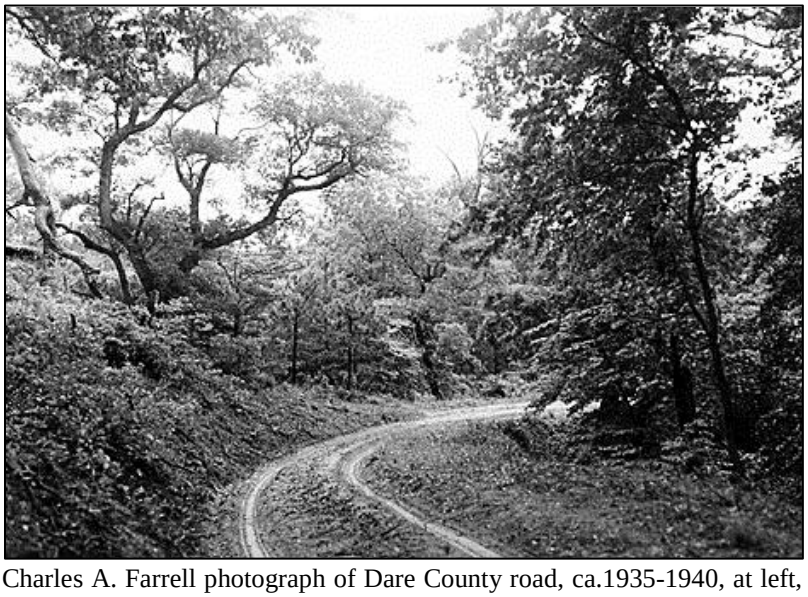
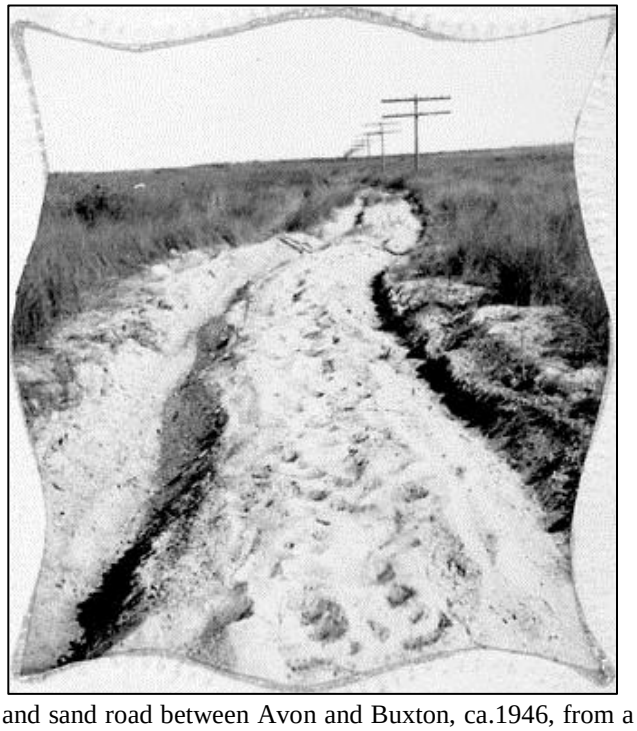


Dare County map depicting a complete lack of proper roads south of the Washington Baum Bridge to Hatteras Village, 1940 (source: Federal Writers' Project and University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)

A much better sense of Hatteras roads can be gathered not from maps and charts, but from period photographs. Along with the memories of Outer Bankers, whose accounts of pushing cars out of the sand are legion, these grasp the challenges of overland travel on much of the Outer Banks until the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Wooded road in the spring, at left, ca.1901-1909, and footbridge beside a submerged road, 1906, at right, both at Cape Hatteras (source: H.H. Brimley Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)

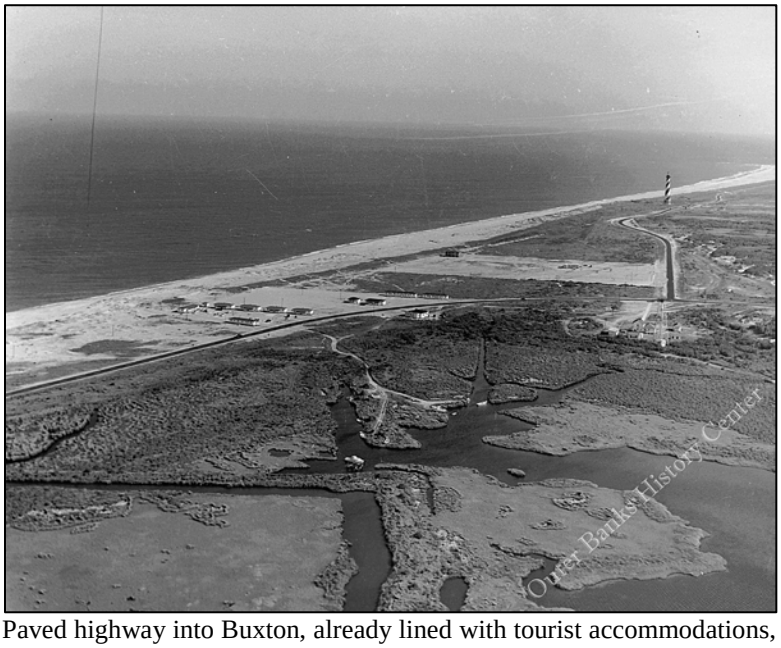



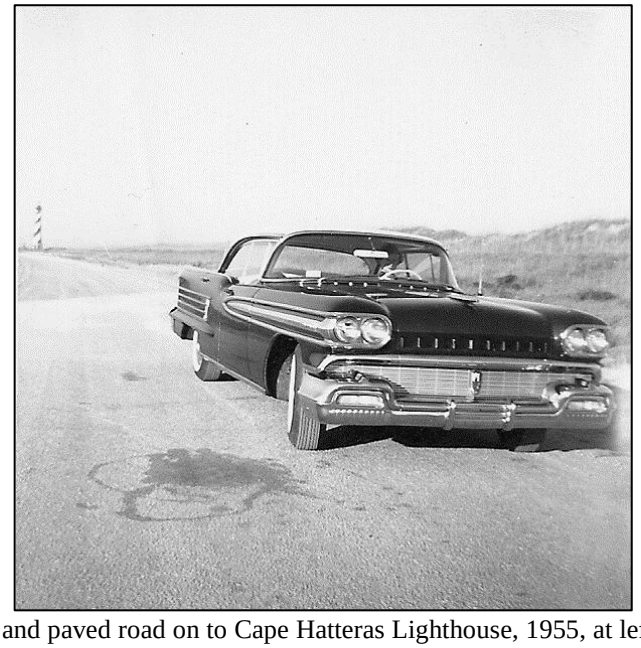
Charles A. Farrell photograph of Dare County road, ca.1935-1940, at left, and sand road between Avon and Buxton, ca.1946, from a Christmas card made by Virginia Pou Doughton (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Governor J. Melville Broughton, at center in fedora, helping dislodge car stuck in sand on Hatteras Island, ca.1941, and sand roads in Hatteras Village, ca.1940s (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

The state finally paved a road the length of Hatteras Island—North Carolina or NC 12—after World War II. Beginning in Hatteras Village, it completed a 17.3-mile section east through Frisco and Buxton and north on to Avon in 1948. A 17.8-mile segment from Avon north to Rodanthe it finished in 1950. By 1952 it had paved the remaining 12.4 miles to the north to Oregon Inlet (McAllister 2009:168).

Hatteras Island's first paved roads, and even a few streets in Avon, Buxton, and Hatteras Village, were almost still fresh when they appeared on a state map of Dare County of 1953 (North Carolina State Highway and Public Works Commission). That map is also the first to use all of the current names of Hatteras Island's towns, including Rodanthe and Waves instead of North and South Rodanthe.



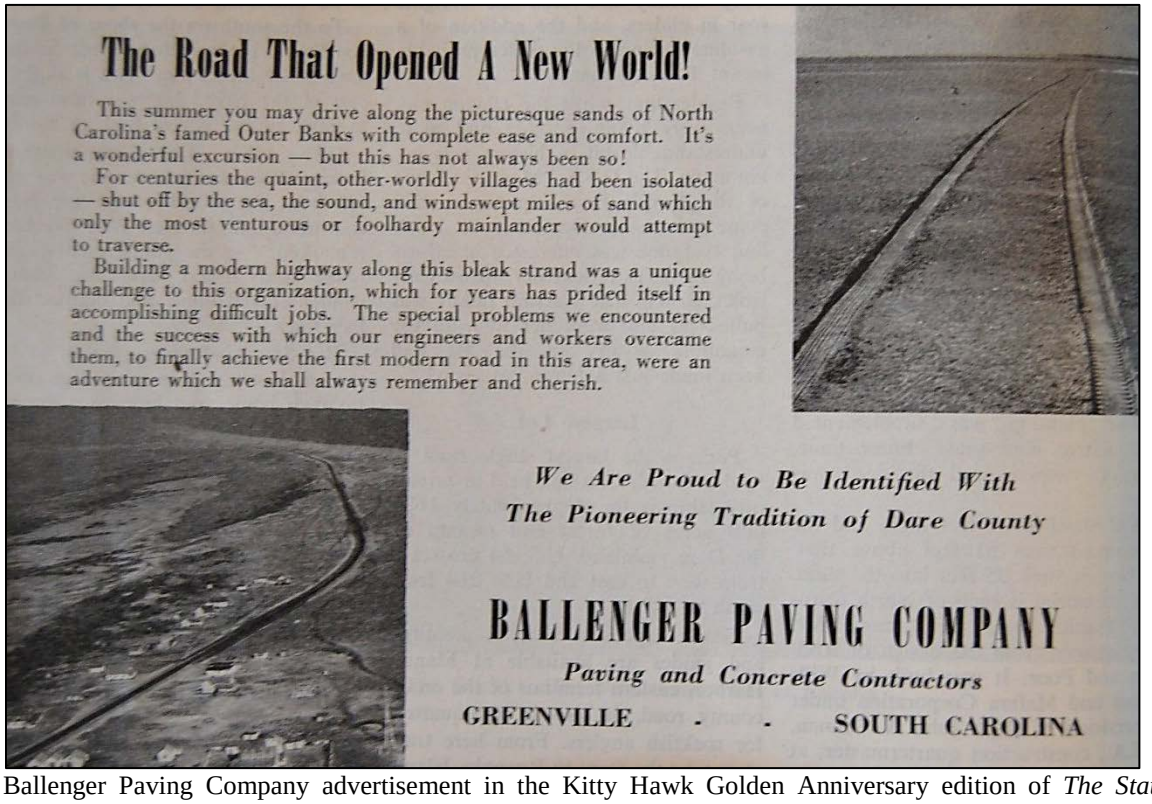

Paved highway into Buxton, already lined with tourist accommodations, and paved road on to Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, 1955, at left, and Sharon Ludwick "gives the new asphalt pavement a test run!" in Buxton, ca.1953 (sources: State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and, at right, Peele, "Family History and Memories of Old Hatteras Village")

Bill Sharpe believed that Hatteras Island would change irrevocably once a paved road spanned it. He concluded his July 1952 account of the "Hatteras Highway," written as the road neared completion, with the following admonition (Stick 1998:292):

> So here's the way it is: Those who want their Hatteras with comfort and convenience and with all the good things a highway can bring, will have to wait a little while. Those who want to see a simpler, more rugged Hatteras they'll never see again, had best get going. Fast!

Visitors actually had another decade to explore the old Hatteras, for the nail driven through the heart of the "simpler, more rugged Hatteras"—for better or worse, as Sharpe perceived—was to be made not of tar and asphalt, but of two-and-a-half miles of reinforced-concrete and steel in the guise of the Bonner Bridge.

Sharpe warned travelers who wanted to see the old Banks to hurry up, but there is little or no evidence of anyone at the time bemoaning the replacement of the treacherous sandy paths with paved roadway. A 1955 advertisement for the concern that built the road, Ballenger Paving Company, sums up the sentiment of the day by calling the new highway "The Road That Opened A New World!" and proudly identifying their efforts with Dare County's "Pioneering Tradition" (Ballenger Paving Company 1953).



Ballenger Paving Company advertisement in the Kitty Hawk Golden Anniversary edition of *The State*, July 18, 1953 (source: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection)

The Dangers of Life on the Banks

Life on the Outer Banks was tough, isolated from the outside world, and possessed of its own particular blend of dangers. Strong family ties and community support cushioned their lives, but Bankers nonetheless required perseverance, resilience, and a measure of good luck to survive their threatening environment. In an account of the category four-strength San Ciriaco hurricane of August 1899, S.L. Dosher, the U.S. Weather Bureau observer in Hatteras Village, identified the extreme dangers Outer Bankers could face (as quoted in Stover 2007:15-17):

> The scene here on the 17th was wild and terrifying in the extreme. By 8 a.m. on that date the entire island was covered with water blown in from the sound, and by 11 a.m. all the land was covered to a depth of

> from 3 to ten feet. The tide swept over the island at a fearful rate carrying everything movable before it. There were not more than four houses on the island in which the tide did not rise to a depth of from one to four feet, and at least half of the people had to abandon their homes and property to the mercy of the wind and tide and seek the safety of their own lives with those who were fortunate enough to live on higher land.
>
> Language is inadequate to express the conditions which prevailed all day on the 17th. The howling wind, the rushing and roaring tide and the awful sea which swept over the beach and thundered like a thousand pieces of artillery made a picture which was at once appalling and terrible and the like of which Dante's Inferno could scarcely equal.
>
> The frightened people were grouped sometimes 40 or 50 in one house, and at times one house would have to be abandoned and they would all have to wade almost beyond their depth in order to reach another. All day this gale, tide and sea continued with a fury and persistent energy that knew no abatement, and the strain on the minds of every one was something so frightful and dejecting that it cannot be expressed.
>
> In many houses families were huddled together in the upper portion of the building with the water several feet deep in the lower portion, not knowing what minute the house would either be blown down or swept away by the tide . . . .

Bankers could learn how to address threats. (They may well have been less panicked than Dosher, a Brunswick County, North Carolina native, was during the 1899 hurricane.) Drowning was an almost daily threat, so they learned to swim. Floods could wash their homes away, so they identified where the high ground was and how best to reach it. But they could only do so much when confronted by the onslaught of hurricanes, squalls, and other natural disasters, or when faced with epidemics, accidents tied to their livelihoods, and minimal medical care.

Due to its isolation, small population, and lack of wealth, the Outer Banks had limited medical supplies and few doctors until well into the twentieth century. George McNabb, a Massachusetts native, captures the isolation and dearth of medical resources in his account of the influenza epidemic of 1918 on Hatteras Island. While still a student, he was snatched from U.S. Naval Pharmacist's Mates School in Hampton Roads, Virginia and shipped off to a "rural plague-ridden community, involving ultimately, the care, single-handed, of over 500 cases of influenza . . . ." (McNabb 1928:91). With few supplies he was sent to Manteo and from there by boat to Buxton where he reported to the Coast Guard Station. His assignment covered all of Hatteras Island, which had been without a doctor for three weeks. His supplies soon ran out and he had to send to the naval operating base at Hampton Roads for more. His patients lacked not only doctors and medicine, but even nourishing, or sedating, food (McNabb 1928:92): "Diets for the sick were scarce in that part of the country; liquid diet consisted chiefly of soups and broths made from clams and oysters. Whisky could be obtained in very small quantities. Oranges and lemons were at a premium. Storekeepers were urged to obtain such fruits from Elizabeth [City], N. C., by way of freight schooners."

In 1920 McNabb, who had remained on the island, had to combat another flu epidemic that had stricken Buxton, Frisco, and Hatteras Village. Here he faced yet another difficulty, travel over land that lacked improved roads. He recalled (McNabb 1928:93): "In response to an urgent call at the beginning of the second epidemic, and clad in a suit of oilskins and oversized boots, the writer set out on foot from Buxton to Hatteras at 2 a.m. one cold, rainy night in February, accompanied by a Coast Guard man, who built fires and made coffee while en route. He in turn was relieved at dawn by a good fisherman. Calls at every house were made along the way, and in response to queries, invariably replies were that some member of the family was "bad off." At noon on the following day, exhausted after 10 hours' work, the Navy "doctor" completed his tour of Hatteras. Outside of badly skinned heels caused by overlarge boots, he felt able to continue on and soon began making calls again.

McNabb not only encountered cases of the flu. He dealt with other diseases, too, including the mumps, measles, whooping cough, tonsillitis, scabies, and Vincent's angina or trench mouth. He also encountered injuries common to those who worked with their hands in rural environments—broken bones, snakebites, an axe injury—and others found only along the coast, "two stingeree [stingray] poison cases" (McNabb 1928:93).

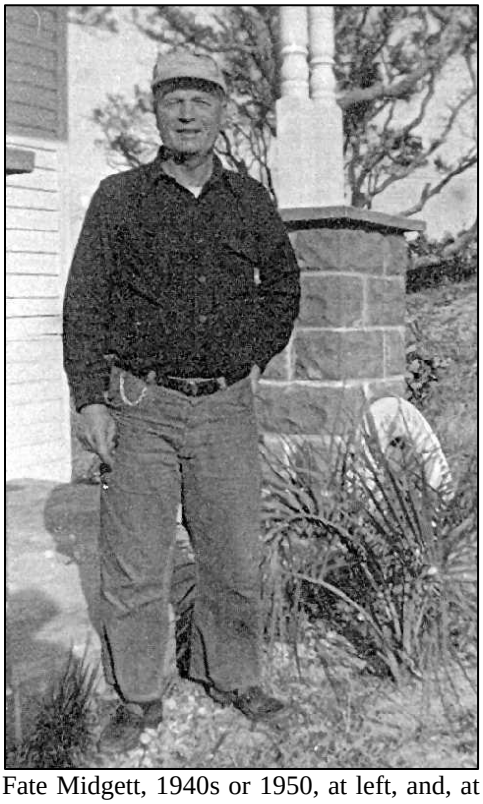
In spite of his travails, the chief pharmacist's mate was sad to depart Hatteras Island (McNabb 1928:93): "It was with great reluctance that the writer left these good people, for, after having spent 2 years among them, he felt that he had become one of their own." McNabb shock off any lingering despondency, and perhaps did become "one of their own," in 1926 when he wed Hatteraswoman Loza W. Midgett Midgette (LaDue 2001).

One axe injury that was absolutely not addressed by any professional care was that suffered by future surfman Walter Loran Barnett (1876-1944) prior to the turn of the century. As a teenager, following his father's death, Barnett took many odd jobs to help his mother support his family (McArthur 2001:2):

> One of the things he did was to chop wood to keep the fire going to boil tar for the fishermen to put on their nets to preserve them. While doing this, he cut off one of his big toes. The men found the toe, dipped it in hot tar and replaced it, using a rag for a bandage. Although he never recovered feeling in the toe, it healed very well, but left a black ring around his toe.

And with or without doctors, common diseases took the lives of many Bankers. Mary E. O'Neal, about 22, died in Trent (Frisco) in 1878 of "dropsy" (*Economist* 1878a). In 1902, just short of his 21st birthday, Millard Garfield Balance of Salvo died of consumption (*Tar Heel* 1902e). That same year pneumonia claimed the life of Wilson Daniels, 57, of Wanchese (*Tar Heel* 1902d).

Unlike the British sailors of the Napoleonic era alluded to at the onset of this report (O'Brian; Compton 2013:18), most Outer Bankers could swim. Not just the surfmen of the Life-Saving Service, whose job it was to survive in high and deadly seas, but everyday Bankers. Many anecdotes of their swimming abilities and the stock they placed in the skill are recorded. Lafayette "Fate" D. Midgett, Sr. (1897-1972), who was born in Salvo and spent his adult life in Buxton, would rise at 4:30 and, at least in warm weather, swim "straight out from the beach until he was nearly out of site" before returning (Ianuario 2007). Maude O'Neal (1885-1997), in addition to teaching and serving as Hatteras Village's postmaster, taught village children to swim in the 1920s (Coastland Times 1997). African-American children swam in the ocean on Pea Island in emulation of the black surfmen who manned the lifesaving station there (Sandbeck 2001:35).



Fate Midgett, 1940s or 1950, at left, and, at right, the crew of the Pea Island Life-Saving Station, ca.1944, from left to right: Maxie Berry, Lonnie C. Gray, Ruben Gallop, Fleetwood M. Dunston (?), and Herbert M. Collins (sources: Inauario, "Lafayette Douglas Midgett, Sr.," at left, and United States Coast Guard, at right)

In spite of their general adeptness in the water, however, drowning was a fact of life for Bankers, whether though bad weather, bad decisions, or just plain bad luck. In 1878 Thomas Perry of Colington Island fell overboard and drowned while fishing in the sound (*Economist* 1878c). In 1902 "Uncle" Joe Guard, about 70, and his son-in-law, Tom Farrow, drowned in the Alligator River near East Lake after falling from a small boat loaded with net stakes (*Tar Heel* 1902d). Their bodies were found three months later under a bank on the shores of the river "within a stone's throw of friends" (*Tar Heel* 1902b). Eighteen-year-old A.B. Gray of Avon was "carried overboard by the gibing of a boom" from the schooner *E.R. Daniels* and drowned during a storm in Pamlico Sound, early in January of 1908 (*Tar Heel* 1908). Lathan Mann drowned at Nags Head in 1922 when the dory he was in with his brother, Dewey, "capsized in the breakers while they were trying to reach a net they had set in the ocean." He was 30 (*Independent* 1920b). Barney Burns and James L. Twiford of Engelhard in Dare County on the Pamlico Sound drowned following fishing in the Pamlico in 1924, likely as a result of a "gale that swept the sounds" (*Independent* 1923).

Sometimes a drowning was clearly connected with the hazards of Outer Banks' fishing. The Elizabeth City *Tar Heel* reported in 1910:

> News was received here this morning that a young fisherman named J.F. Midgett was drowned at Rodanthe Thursday afternoon while in the Sound fishing his nets. The fishermen in the lower Sound section have a practice of using a long board across the boat, with the end of it sticking far out over the water. On the end of this board a man is placed for ballast while they are sailing. This was what young Midgett was doing when the plank broke and he was thrown into the water and drowned. His companion hastily anchored the boat and jumped into the water to save him. He managed to get hold of Midgett and get him back to the side of the boat but the waves were strong and he became exhausted before he could get into the boat and had to turn Midgett loose. When the other fishermen reached the boat they found that Midgett had sunk and that his companion was nearly drowned too. Mr. Midgett was about 21 years old. He lived at Manns Harbor where he had a wife, a bride of one week.

Sometimes a drowning was connected with different activities that carried their own hazards, as another *Tar Heel* (1909) piece reported. On a stormy day in December 1908, D.M. Gaimel and John Hill collected four gallons of whiskey from the freight boat in Kitty Hawk and went on to Currituck County to sell their game. They then "rambled the Sound in their boat" until they reached what they thought was their landing about 9 p.m. They left their boat and waded to shore, but could not find their way home. Gaimel, who was located the next evening "lying on his face on the cold marsh in mud and water," briefly rallied, but died shortly thereafter. Hill, found doubled up and unconscious on rushes in mud and water with his "jug at his feet," recovered.

Working and drinking were not the only backdrops to death on the water. A 1903 newspaper story titled "Drowned in the Storm—Horrified Father Sees His Wife and Child Perish" reported the tragedy that struck the Creef family and W.J. Basnight, all of East Lake at the edge of the Dare County mainland, while returning on the water from a visit with friends (*Tar Heel* 1903):

> The party was in a shad boat which was struck by the cyclone mentioned in last week's Tar Heel. The fierce gale suddenly swooped down on the little craft and before the sail could be lowered the mast was wrenched from its socket and carried away, taking Mr. [F.F.] Creef with it and at the same time overturning the vessel throwing the woman and her two children and Mr. Basnight into the foam capped waves which the wind created. Mrs. [Phoebee Owens] Creef and a three year old child [Grady A. Creef] were drowned. The two men and a twelve year old boy saved themselves. The body of the baby was found afterwards jammed in-between a section of the vessel but the remains of the ill-fated mother have not yet been recovered.

And drowning wasn't the only danger on the water. Lightning struck a boat carrying Archie Spencer, 20, and his father, Rudolph, while they were shrimping in Stumpy Point Bay, off of Pamlico Sound, in 1951. Archie, who was born in Stumpy Point, was killed (*Coastland Times* 1951).

You could even die in the water when your feet were firmly planted, or so you thought, high on solid ground. In an 1878 letter to the editor of the Elizabeth City *Economist* (1878b), Lewis S. Mann of Manteo recounted the following:

> I write to inform your readers of a sad affair that occurred at the Screw Pile Light House on the 27th of April. Miss Melissa Smith, a young lady who lived with the keeper of the light at that time, accidentally fell through the trap door of the Light House and was drowned. The keeper was an old man and sick and was unable to save her. The assistant keeper was absent. The body has not yet been found.

Improved and quickened access to proper medical care came to the Outer Banks in the mid-twentieth-century with the newly paved roads. Ironically, the roads also brought a largely new way to die, vehicular accident. For example, in 1951 oysterman Leslie Roscoe Tillett, 48, of Wanchese died not on the water, but when a truck he was a passenger in ran off the road and turned over near Kitty Hawk Coast Guard Station (*Coastland Times* 1951). Linda Kaye Scarborough perished in 1961 when a speeding car hit hers while passing another vehicle about a mile north of Avon (*Virginian-Pilot* 1961). Easier access to the outside world included easier access to that world's own particular set of dangers.

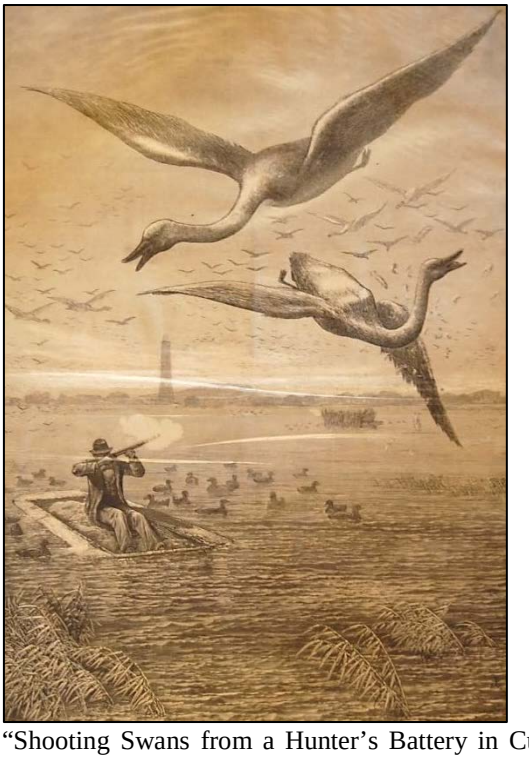
In the face of such a wide variety of dangers, whether connected with or cut off from the mainland, Outer Bankers remained capable and resilient. John Morgan, who visited his grandparents every summer in Hatteras Village during the 1930s and early 1940s, recalls the measured response of his "Nana"—the formidable midwife, Jennette Stowe—to the Great Atlantic Hurricane of September 14, 1944 (Morgan 2001:108-113). (His "Grandpop Irv" (John Irvin Stowe) was shrimping in the sound and had taken refuge in Englehard Creek on the mainland to wait out the storm, leaving the house and family in Jennette Stowe's capable hands.) On the evening of the 13th those in the house—Morgan, Stowe, Morgan's Aunt Mable, and her five-year-old son, Earl—placed all of the furniture up on blocks and battened down everything they could. Nana woke Morgan up about 4:00am on the 14th and sent him up the road to help Mrs. Lovie Burrus take her chickens in. (Morgan was a student, on break from the University of North Carolina.) She also had him chop off the head of a Rhode Island Red hen she had intended to serve for Sunday dinner. They cleaned the bird, but it up, and placed it in a stewpot to which Nana would later add potatoes and pie bread (dumplings) and find time to cook. By 8:00am the sound waters had risen and begun slapping up against the house. A few hours later they were rising into the house through a six-inch hatch Grandpop Irv had cut in a corner of the living room floor: the weight of the water in the first floor—18 inches, 22 inches—helped anchor the house on its foundation blocks. As Morgan, Nana, Aunt Mable, and "little Earl" retreated upstairs, the child hollered that he had to "wee-wee." Aunt Mable told him to let loose through the stair posts into the pool that was the living room. "While the hurricane was at its height," Morgan recalled a half-century later, "we were sitting in [the] middle bedroom upstairs enjoying stewed chicken, pie bread, boiled Irish 'taters, cold biscuits and iced tea. Every time a sea would crash against the side of the house, the ice would tinkle in the glass. Never did something to eat taste better than food did that day!" Nana's measured response to the hurricane continued after the sky cleared and the tide began to recede early in the afternoon. She broke out brooms, a small zinc tub, and a bottle of Lysol and all four, including little Earl, began to sweep muck out the front door, bail out the back porch, swash out the dirt, and disinfect the floors, walls, and furniture. For Jennette Stowe, it was one of many storms ridden out during her 99-year life on Hatteras Island. If she was as affected by the hurricane as S.L. Dosher had been a half-century earlier, she certainly did not show it.

Fishermen and Watermen: Wresting Food and a Living from the Ocean and Sounds

During the winter of 1874-1875, Nathaniel Bishop, a New England naturalist, journeyed north to south along North Carolina's coast, taking in the length of its Outer Banks and barrier islands. This passage was part of a 2,500-mile voyage he took in a heavily lacquered paper canoe from Quebec south to Florida (Bishop 1878:v-vii). As he entered Currituck Sound, Bishop observed flocks of swans, "clouds of ducks," Canada geese, and brant. Heading south from "Dew's Quarter Island" along Currituck Sound into Albemarle Sound, he noted numerous waterfowl hunters (Bishop 1878:162): "The beach shore now became more thickly settled, while out in the water, a few rods from each little house, arose the duck-blind, with the gunner and his boat inside, anxiously watching for birds, while their decoys floated quietly on the surface of the water." Heading further south, however, the hunters transformed into fishermen.

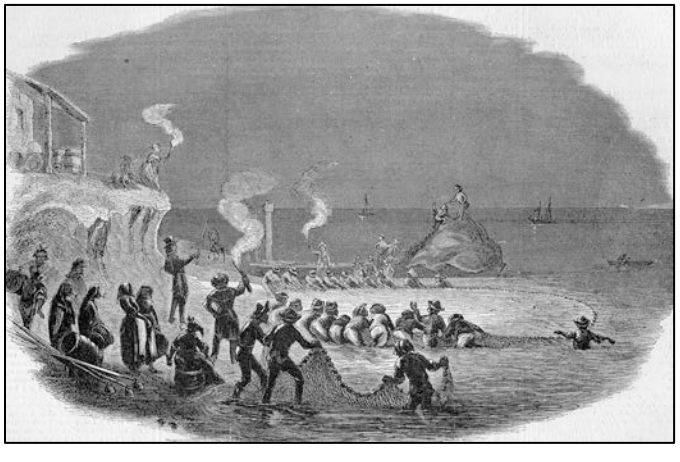
At Nags Head, Bishop found the homes of a few fishermen. (As one might observe at the present, he also encountered, on a cold December's day, empty hotels that cast an air of desolation over the locale.) On Hatteras Island south of Chicamacomico a few days later, Bishop (1878:175-176) again met fishermen: "Here Captain Abraham Hooper lives, and occupies himself in fishing with nets in the ocean for blue-fish, which are salted down and sent to the inland towns for a market." Bishop joined Hooper the next day in fishing, "with nets in the surf." the last of the bluefish run. On his way the day after to Cape Hatteras, he met yet another fisherman sailing a dugout made of two cypress logs who assisted him.

Bishop's account suggests that there were many market hunters of waterfowl in Currituck Sound and the upper part of Albemarle Sound, on the northern Banks in Currituck County and perhaps in Dare as well. He also encountered them at Portsmouth Island in Carteret County, raising geese from eggs to "decoy their wild relatives" toward the gun (Bishop 1878:194). From Nags Heads south through Ocracoke, however, fishing dominated the local economy. With the exception of lighthouse keepers and surfmen, everyone Bishop met on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands fished for a living.



"Shooting Swans from a Hunter's Battery in Currituck Sound from *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, April 6, 1878 (Source: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection)

Indeed from the beginnings of European settlement well into the twentieth century, the vast majority of residents of the Outer Banks made their livings as fishermen, seamen, sailors, mariners, oystermen, ferrymen, and in other pursuits that took them off of dry land and out upon the water. (One might even suggest that the waterfowl hunters in their blinds in the sounds were watermen as well.) Statistical evidence of the occupations of Dare County's Bankers prior to the county's formation in 1870 is limited. Pre-1870 manuscript census schedules for the counties from which Dare was carved—Hyde, Currituck, and Tyrrell (Corbitt 1987:85)—do not clearly identify who lived on Hatteras Island and other parts of Dare's Banks. Even with the difficulty of teasing out the Hatterasmen from the mainlanders, however, it is crystal clear how heads of Hatteras households made their livings in 1860: they went out on the waters.



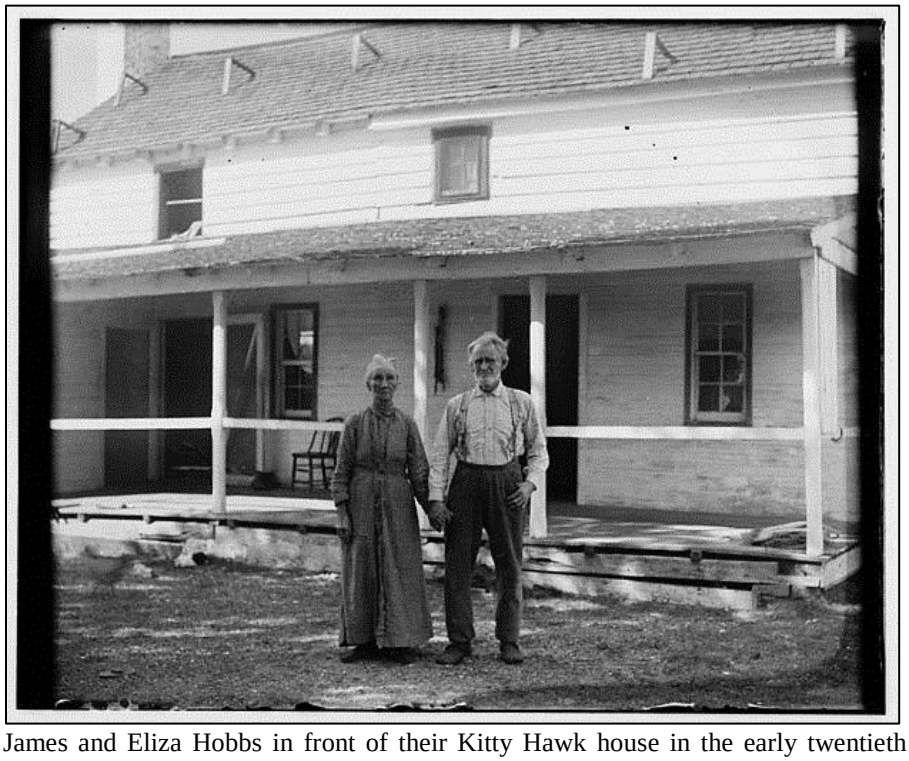
"A Night Haul" by African-American seine net fishermen in the Albemarle or Pamlico Sound in 1861, drawn by David Hunter Strother, in *Harper's Weekly*, September 28, 1861, at left, and, at right, a shad boat along the Wanchese waterfront in Croatan Sound, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

By far the most common occupation listed for these coastal men in 1860 was "mariner." Coming in a distant second was "pilot." (Prior to the development of detailed coastal charts and the construction of a web of lifesaving stations, pilots were in especial demand by those who plied the "Graveyard of the Atlantic" and the treacherous inlets of the Banks.) There were also a handful of men identified as "seaman," "oysterman," and "fisherman." An even tinier number had land-based occupations. The large majority of Hatteras' adult males left the land for the water to make a living, although exactly what they were doing on the water—and whether that water was the salty ocean or the brackish sounds—is unclear from the evidence of the census alone. A "mariner" in the nineteenth century (and the present) was a sailor or seaman (Webster 1828 and 1886). A "fisherman," however, was one who fished. The census taker's terminology suggests that, prior to the Civil War, Bankers spent much of their time on the ocean in sailing ships, rather than in the sounds fishing. Whether this was truly the case is beyond the scope of this study. It is likely, however, that most Bankers made a large chunk of their livings, even before the war, fishing rather than sailing the ocean (Lee 2008:70). As Stick (1958:212) concludes from his reading of the 1850 census: "Even with the census figures available, it is difficult to get a true picture of Banks occupations, for the man who listed himself as a fisherman might have been devoting an equal portion of his time to stock raising and hauling freight in his boat, while the boatman might have owned a net and done some fishing too."

The tale of two Outer Bankers who unquestionably sailed the seas in the mid-nineteenth century—Tom Toler and James Hobbs—has survived. The obituary for Toler, who died in 1922 at the age of 92, noted that he was an "interesting citizen, having spent much of his younger life on sailing ships plying around Cape Horn or the Pacific Coast, he was able to relate many stories of his voyages for the entertainment of his visitors" (*Independent* 1922). A more detailed reminiscence of Toler's and Hobbs' sailing life and the life that followed Hobbs' retirement is found in a letter sent to Toler in 1909 by his old friend and shipmate (*Dare County Times* 1944b):

> Kitty Hawk, N.C. - Nov. 7, 1909
> Dear Tom and Old Friend and Playmate and Shipmate
>
> After love to you and family I oftimes think of you and oftimes think to write to you but 'crastination is always the thief of time. The other day while overlooking my old books I found the dates when we left New York for San Francisco. December 10, 1852 we went on board of the clipper ship "Winged Racer" and sailed on the 12th for San Francisco, 53 days to Cape Horn and 55 more to the Golden Gate, making 108 days; 57 years this December—that is a lifetime for some people. Well, dear friend I have a hard time of it in this world in my old age, but thank God it is no worse but time will fetch all things to a close. Nothing here has any appearance of our boyhood. Well, my old woman (I mean that beautiful girl I married 54 years ago) part of the time she can make out to cook what we eat by my waiting on her but thanks to God I am yet on the stage of action—able to cut and saw my own wood and keep a fire. Well, dear Tom I hope this will reach you all right and find you and family enjoying good health. As for me I am most worn out but as well as can be expected and my old darling will never be well.
>
> Yours most truly old shipmate,
> James R. Hobbs

James Riley Hobbs (1828-1918) was a 52-year-old sailor in 1880 when he called Currituck County's Atlantic Township his home. According to an account based on Coast Guard records, Hobbs was a fellow not to be trifled with. On July 7, 1884 he shot and killed Theopolis Lee Daniels at the Kitty Hawk Life Saving Station, where both were stationed. He was found to have acted in self-defense and acquitted. A photograph likely taken in the early twentieth century depicts him and his wife, Elizabeth or Eliza (1833-1909), in front of their house. Eliza, who married Hobbs about 1855, was a rarity among Bankers of her day. Not only was she not born in North Carolina, but she was not a native-born American: she was a Liverpudlian by birth (Jennings and Sheppard 2005). The Hobbses stand in front of a traditional Outer Banks' dwelling, a story-and-a-half house referred to on the Banks as a "story-and-a-jump."



James and Eliza Hobbs in front of their Kitty Hawk house in the early twentieth century (source: Eastern North Carolina Digital History Exhibits, Wright Brothers Exhibit, East Carolina University)

The 1870 census identified Thomas Toler as a resident of Kitty Hawk Township and a sailor. He was 40 years old when the census was taken. His wife, Elizabeth, was three years older. She kept house and took care of their three children, Thomas (seven), Mary (seven), and Magdaline (five). Neither Tom nor Elizabeth could read or write, but they owned a home valued at the modest sum of $150. He was apparently a rough-and-tumble sort as well, at least in his youth. He was born in Currituck County in 1830 and sailed before enlisting in the Confederate army in August 1861. He was captured on Roanoke Island in February 1862 and then paroled and exchanged by August. On November 1, 1862 he deserted, likely taking to the seas again (Sheppard 2005).

Toler and Hobbs were certainly the exception, if they were ever the rule, by 1870. The two men who took the census in Kinnakeet and Hatteras townships in that year—Dare County's first—employed a broader and likely more careful nomenclature than their 1860 predecessor. Of the approximately 360 employed individuals they identified, about 250 (66 percent) worked as fishermen. (The handwriting in the population schedules can be difficult to decipher, so numbers discussed here are not exact.) They identified about 52 other residents of the two townships (14 percent) as sailors, seamen, or mariners. The townships were also home to about a dozen pilots, all of whom lived on Hatteras Island and were listed in the latter pages of the island's census. This suggests that the census taker went north to south and came upon pilots first in the vicinity of Cape Hatteras/Buxton and then again in Hatteras Village.

In summary, in 1870 more than four out of every five men with a listed occupation in Kinnakeet and Hatteras townships, which covered all of Hatteras Island, made their livelihoods from the water. An analysis of census data for Bankers living in Nags Head Township to the north would in all likelihood yield similar figures. Most Dare County residents who lived in Croatan and East Lake townships on its various sounds—Albemarle, Roanoke, Croatan, Pamlico, East Lake—whether on Roanoke Island or the mainland, would have had similar occupations as well, if in somewhat smaller numbers.

However, it was only on Hatteras Island, David Stick emphasizes in *The Outer Banks of North Carolina*, that commercial fishing was the primary occupation by the mid-nineteenth century. He opens his chapter on making a living from the sea on the Banks with a warning (Stick 1958:212): "One of the most common misconceptions about the Outer Banks is the belief that commercial fishing has been the primary occupation and source of income in the area since the days of earliest settlement." It may have been a primary source of food for people throughout the Banks, but they were required to engage in a variety of additional activities to get by.

Hatteras Island was ahead of the commercial fishing curve in 1870 and, 30 years on, its residents continued to rely on the water for both calories and currency. According to the census schedules of 1900, about 57 percent of Hatteras Township residents with listed jobs were fishermen. (Again, the census taker's handwriting makes it difficult to read all occupations.) About nine percent were sailors and another eight percent oystermen. Together, these three waterborne occupations employed about three out of every four men in the southern portion of Hatteras Island. The figures were similar in Kinnakeet Township on the northern stretch of the island. About 47 percent of working men there were fishermen and 31 percent oystermen. With the township's two sailors, almost four out of every five Kinnakeet men who listed an occupation went out on the water.

The most notable differences in water-based occupations between the 1870 and 1900 censuses were the decline in the numbers of sailors and pilots and the rise in oystermen. Not a man on Hatteras Island listed himself as a pilot in 1900. There were still about 17 sailors in Hatteras Township, but farther north in Kinnakeet Township perhaps only two. Oystering, however, had clearly risen, particularly in Kinnakeet. While only a few Hatterasmen identified themselves as oystermen in 1860, about 65 (31 percent) in Kinnakeet Township engaged in that occupation. The numbers were smaller in Hatteras Township (about 15 oystermen or eight percent), but by 1900 about 20 percent of the island's men dredged, gathered, and raised the mollusk. The census caught oystering near its peak, for after the winter of 1889-1890—when, in the words of David Cecelski (2000:89), the "oyster boom hit like a gold rush"—it steadily declined. By 1909 the boom was over (Lee 2008:73-74; Cecelski 2000:87-92; Dunbar 1958:85-86).

The findings of the censuses are fleshed out by other accounts, as well as contemporary photographs and drawings. An 1893 study of the fishes of the Albemarle Sound by the U.S. Fish Commission noted the importance of commercial fishing, locally and nationally, in the sound: "Viewed from the standpoint of commercial fishing, the Albemarle Sound region is one of the most important in the United States, and there is no other fresh-water basin on the Atlantic coast having such extensive fisheries. The especially prominent fish occurring here are the shad, alewives, striped bass, black bass, and white perch. The seine fisheries for shad and alewives are by far the largest in the country. In 1890 . . . the total output reach[ed] the enormous quantity of 18,663,102 pounds, with a value to the fishermen of $439,581" (Smith 1893:186).

Alewives (particularly menhaden) comprised over 13.7 million pounds of this total and almost a third of its cash value. The approximately 3.1 million pounds of the highly prized shad made up nearly half of the value of the fishery. The third largest catch was nearly 500,000 pounds of striped bass, although its value of just over $25,000 was less than six percent of the total fishery value.

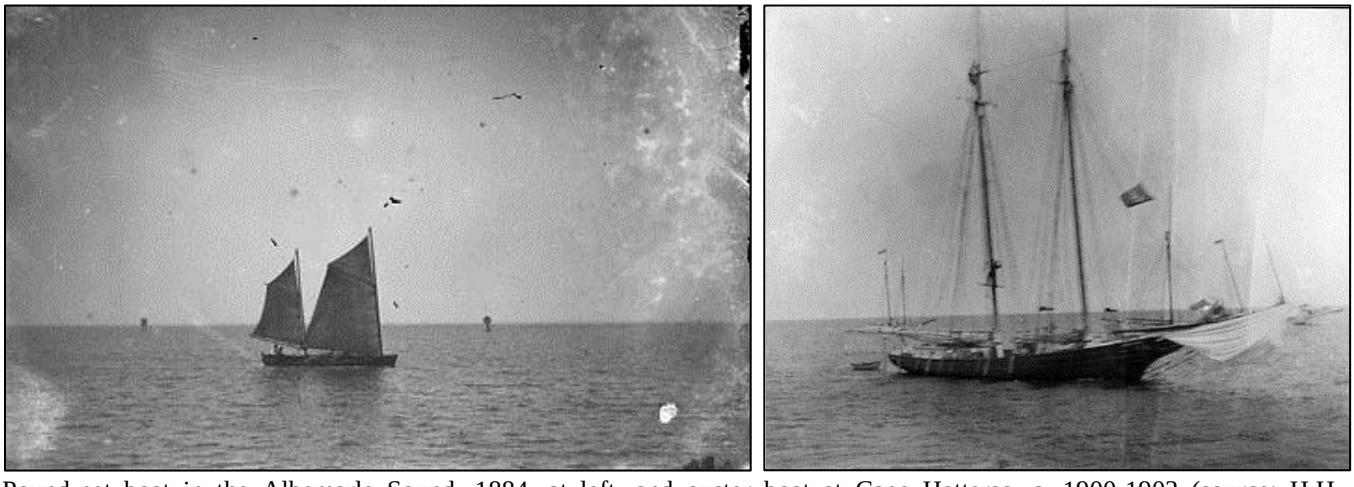
At least around Roanoke Island, striped bass (or rockfish) was central to the Albemarle Sound fishery. A report by the U.S. Fish Commission of 1889 had found that fishery second only to shad: "About Roanoke Island, in the spring time, the shad fishery produces about 500,000 shad, valued at $110,000, and the fall "rocking" is considered by the fishermen to be equal to two-thirds of the shad catch, or about that" (Worth 1889:193).

The account also identified the methods of fishing; the numbers of seines, nets, and boats used by each method; and the number of men employed by each method, as summarized in the following table (Worth 1889:194):

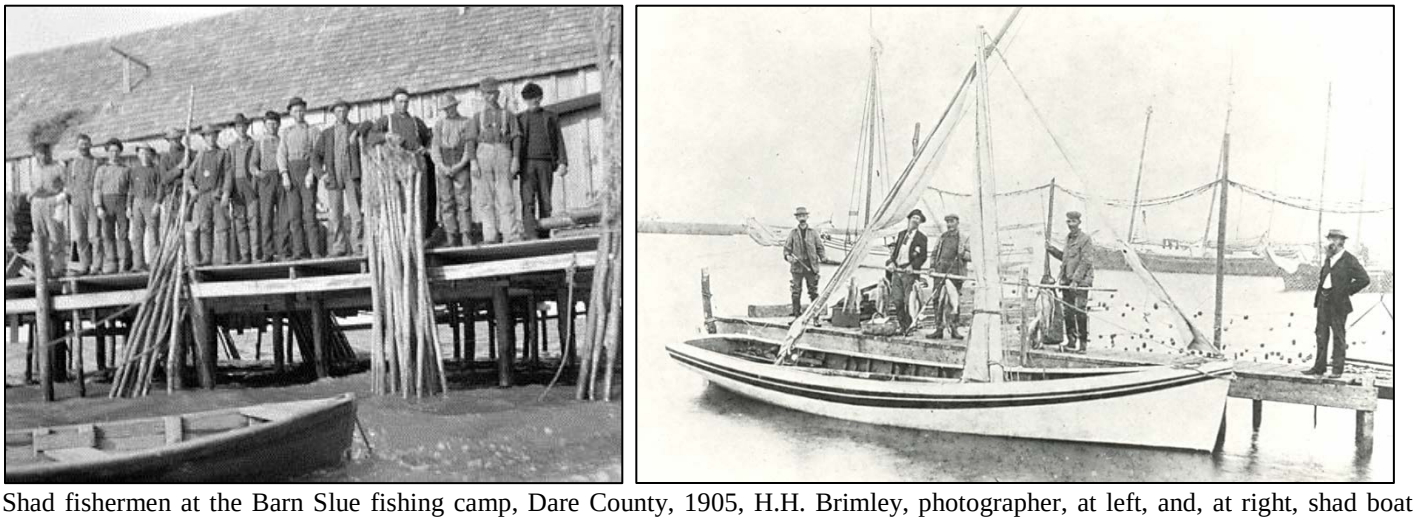
	Numbers of seines/nets	**Boats**	**Number of men employed**
Methods of fishing			
Haul-seine:	1 seine	2 flats	12
Purse-seine:	9 seines	9 sloops and schooners of 9 or 10 tons and 18 small boats	63
Drag-net:	25 nets	25 small boats	75
Gill-net:	5 nets	5 small boats	50
Pound-net:	66 nets	22 small boats	12

In total, the fishery employed 212 men who worked 70 small boats and 11 larger flats, sloops, and schooners.

These fisheries confirm a dramatic shift over the course of the last half of the nineteenth century to pound-net fishing. Unlike the large and expensive operation of haul-seine fishing—which included boats famous for their large numbers of shanty-singing, African-American, menhaden fishermen—pound-net fishing was relatively inexpensive and accessible to the common Outer Banks' fisherman. "Use of a stationary net, the pound net" Lee (2008:71) writes, "probably did more than any other technique to democratize fishing in the sounds." Large fish numbers and big hauls should not be confused with wealth or even money-on-hand, however. "Distant from paying markets" in the late nineteenth century, Outer Banks fishermen more often traded than sold their catch (Lee 2008:74-75).



Pound-net boat in the Albemarle Sound, 1884, at left, and oyster boat at Cape Hatteras, c. 1900-1903 (source: H.H. Brimley Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)



Shad fishermen at the Barn Slue fishing camp, Dare County, 1905, H.H. Brimley, photographer, at left, and, at right, shad boat at Manteo, ca.1900, W.H. Zoeller, photographer (sources: State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and Madden, "North Carolina State Historic Boat–the Shad Boat" and State Archives of North Carolina, at right)

The 1930 census schedules place fishing and other waterborne activities at the top of the list of Outer Banks' occupations again. Just over 50 percent of individuals on Hatteras Island who offered occupations to the census takers claimed the title of fisherman. About five percent more identified themselves as sailors or workers on freighters or tugboats. The drop in the number of fishermen was matched by a rise in the number of men employed in federal jobs largely related to the sea: Coast Guard surfmen and other employees; men working at lighthouses; and members of the U.S. Navy and Radio Service. These government jobs employed about 25 percent of the workforce on Hatteras Island. Taken together, the jobs in fishing and with the government approached 80 percent.

Of the five separately inventoried communities on Hatteras Island in 1930, Hatteras Village had the most watermen. About 92 or close to 70 percent of its working men fished and another seven worked on freighters or a tug. Salvo's workers almost entirely labored on or in association with the water. The hamlet had about eleven fishermen (76 percent), six Coast Guardsmen (about 30 percent), and two merchants. In Rodanthe about 20 men (just under 50 percent) were

fishermen or, in two instances, sailors. About 16 more (near 40 percent) worked as surfmen or otherwise for the Life-Saving Service. In Frisco about 45 percent of workers (16 fishermen and a sailor) labored on the water and nearly half (about nine Coast Guardsmen and nine lighthousemen) kept an eye on it.

The figures from Buxton are the most telling. Twenty men identified themselves as fishermen in 1930, only about 30 percent of the workforce. Thirty-one or about 45 percent, however, worked for the Coast Guard, the Lighthouse Service, the U.S. Radio Service, or the Navy. These figures suggest the challenges to fishermen on Hatteras Island and throughout the Outer Banks as the twentieth century progressed. The causes for the reduced numbers of fishermen included depleted fish stocks, the inherent uncertainty of fishing, and the attraction of government jobs with regular paychecks. Even in 1930, however, a shift away from fishing owed little to the availability of tourism-related jobs.

In Colington and Duck in the northern portion of Dare County's Outer Banks, the employment situation was much the same as it was on Hatteras. About 70 percent of Colington's employed men (32) were fishermen and about 15 percent (seven) drew wages from the Coast Guard. In Duck about 40 percent (22) of those working were fishermen and about 15 percent (seven) were Coast Guardsmen.

Even in Kitty Hawk almost 50 percent of workers made their livelihoods on the water (about 33 fishermen, four boatmen, and a ferry operator). And about another quarter (20) worked for the Coast Guard. The community's closer connection to the mainland, however, was reflected in a wider variety of other jobs that hinted at things to come. Its workforce included non-traditional jobs, such as building contractor, non-domestic cook, auto mechanic, garage mechanic, filling station owner, and trucker.

Personal accounts and photographs—which follow a few of the accounts below—capture various phases and types of fishing. Gack Austin of Hatteras Island described the effort it took to catch mullet, especially as a teenager in the 1930s and early 1940s, to researcher Jennifer Miller in the early 2000s (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:40):

> JM: Okay, could you describe a little bit about fishing with your grandfather at night, what was that like?
>
> GA: It was pretty hard. We used to go out in sailboats, of course, and if there was no wind you pushed the boat with a paddle. There was a lot of manual labor involved. You looked for fish, schools of fish and when you find them, mostly mullets, you would set your net out as far as it went and one of the other boats would fasten their net to yours and continue in a big loop around this school of fish and then you would start by closing in on them and they start jumping over the net like sheep but you had to get overboard then and wait around and catch them individually, the big mullets.
>
> JM: With your hands?
>
> GA: Yes and wrap them up in a net and catch them and throw them in the boat because they didn't get gilled in the net, when you pulled it like conventional fishing. The smaller fish, they go in and get stuck in the net and you pull the net in. Once the net is on the boat or on land, you'd pick the fish out. But the mullet fishing was quite different. It was a lot manual.

Austin remembered that fishing for drum, done from the beach along the ocean rather than in the sound, was equally demanding (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:42):

> Our winter staple was from drum fish and we use to have about two runs in a year. You would have one in say April and they would be through when the fish went north and the October run when they came back south, that was the big one. We would get on the beach and we didn't have fishing rods. We used hand lines. It was the precursor of the spinning reel. You used a big coil of line on your hand and you went and threw it in the ocean and let it run off your hand like a line goes off a spinning reel nowadays. When you hooked the fished, you just wrapped him over your shoulder and ran up the beach with it.

Ephraim O'Neal, born on Hatteras in 1920, also described his career as a fisherman—first in the ocean, then in the sound—to interviewer Miller (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:833-834):

JM: You were fishing. Is that what you did most of your life?

EO: Yes, when I first came home I fished in the ocean with boats gill netting for trout, croakers and stuff and then I started fishing what they call pound, what they call pound nets in the Sound on my own. I bought my own nets, three of us got together, and we hauled seine on the beach here. We fished on the beach in the wintertime for 20 years.

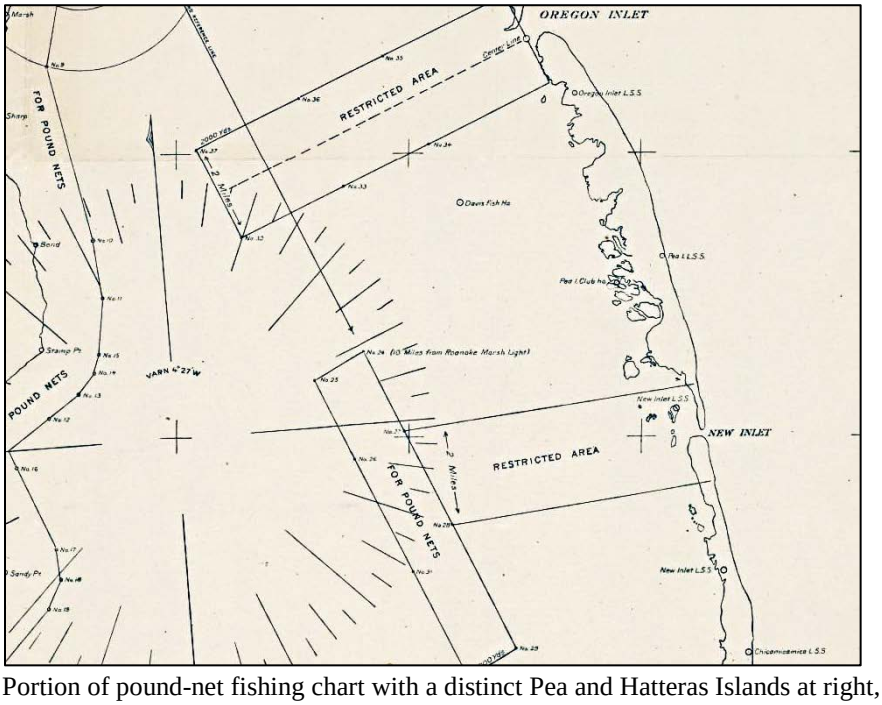
JM: . . . When you went out pound netting, describe an average trip to me, what it was like.

EO: Well, pound nets are nets that you take out; you set a long larger marsh net. We used poles then but they don't use poles now. They use anchors and floats but about every 30 yards you would tie it to the pole and let the bottom line lay slack. About every three yards apart you put a brick on the bottom and you got a square net, it kind of forms a heart, you got a opening where the fish goes in and then you got a tunnel that lead through into the trap in the square part. You just go fish them in the mornings.

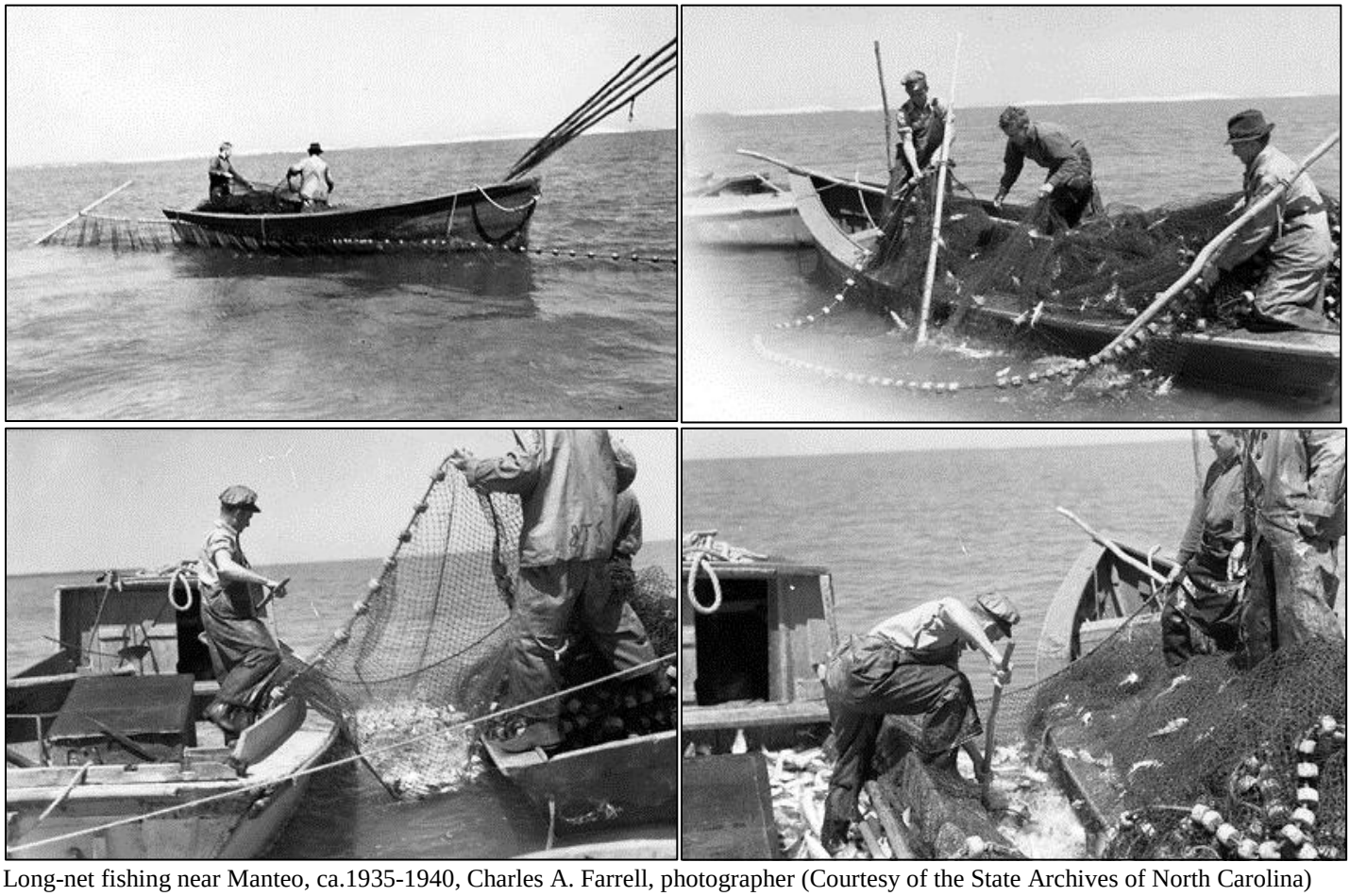
JM: You set your nets out at night and go back and check them.

EO: You just left them. You'd put them out all summer. We used tar on them, cold tar and gas tar. If we got too much cold tar then we would use that gas tar and that would cut some of the cold tar off, you know when it gets so heavy but you would have to take them up every two or three weeks in July, August and September because grass and stuff would start growing on them and it would get so heavy it would break your poles down and the leader we call it, you go about five or six weeks with that. You'd take it up and put another one in the place of it and dry that, mend it and have it ready to go again. You just went out to a boat, you'd go inside, you pull the net up and work it across, and it go back under the boat and you dip the fish out with a small mash.

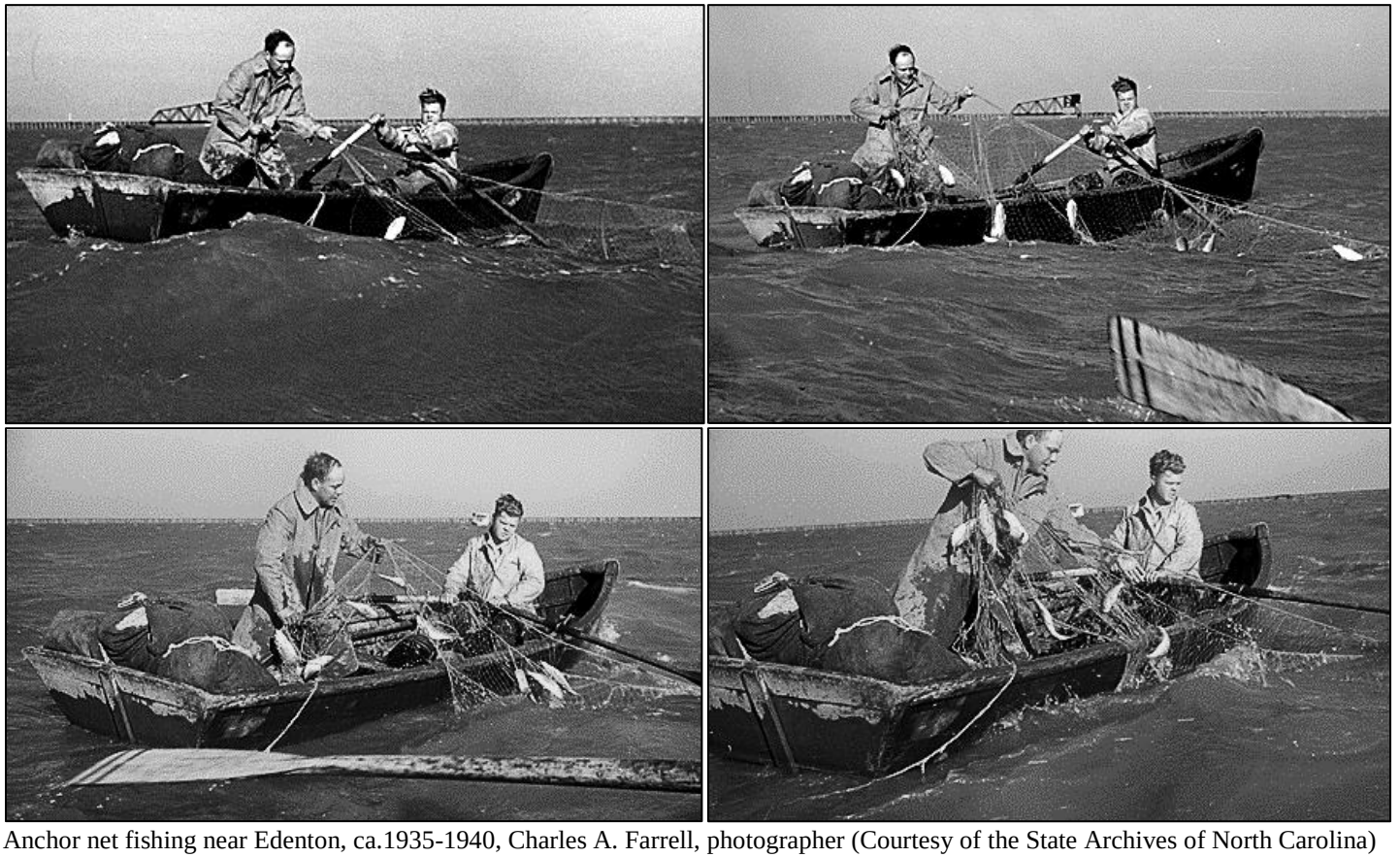
Fishing with pound nets was not as informal as oral accounts suggest. A chart produced about 1910 by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Coast titled "Croatan and Roanoke Sounds and Part of Pamlico Sound, North Carolina" identifies parts of the sounds open to pound nets as well as restricted areas. An explanation on the chart states that it depicts "restricted areas and areas limited to dutch- or pound-net fishing as prescribed by an Act of the Legislature of North Carolina in 1909."



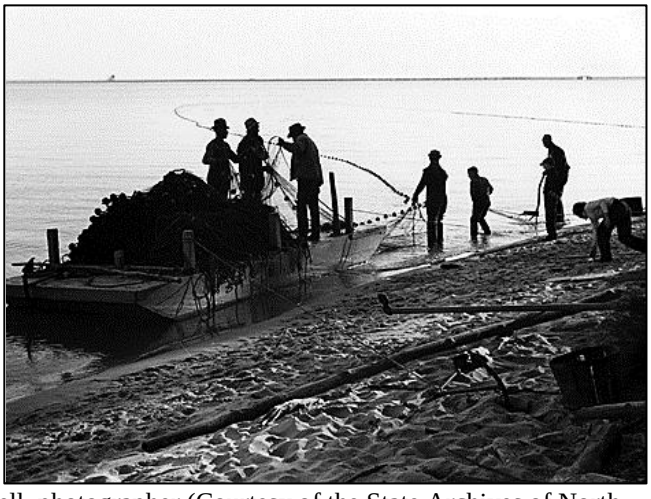
Portion of pound-net fishing chart with a distinct Pea and Hatteras Islands at right, 1910 (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Maps)



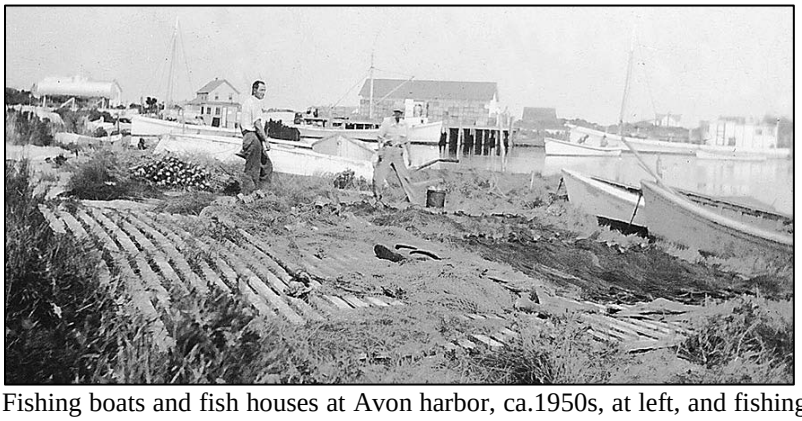
Long-net fishing near Manteo, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)



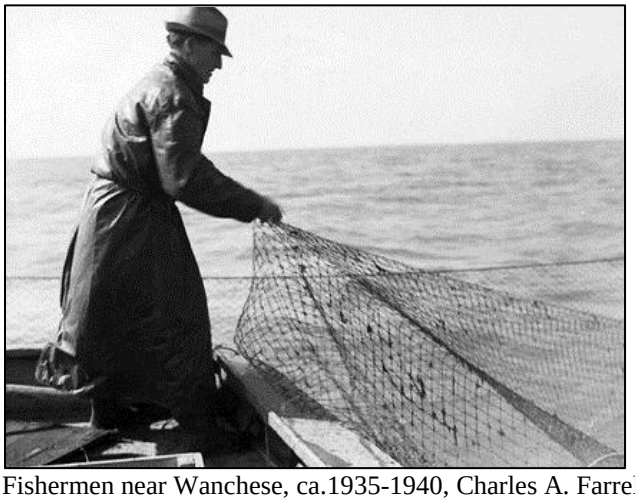
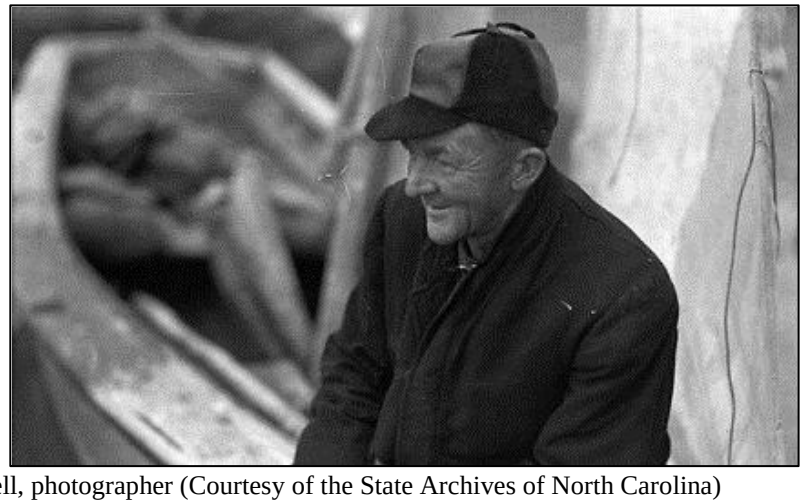
Anchor net fishing near Edenton, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

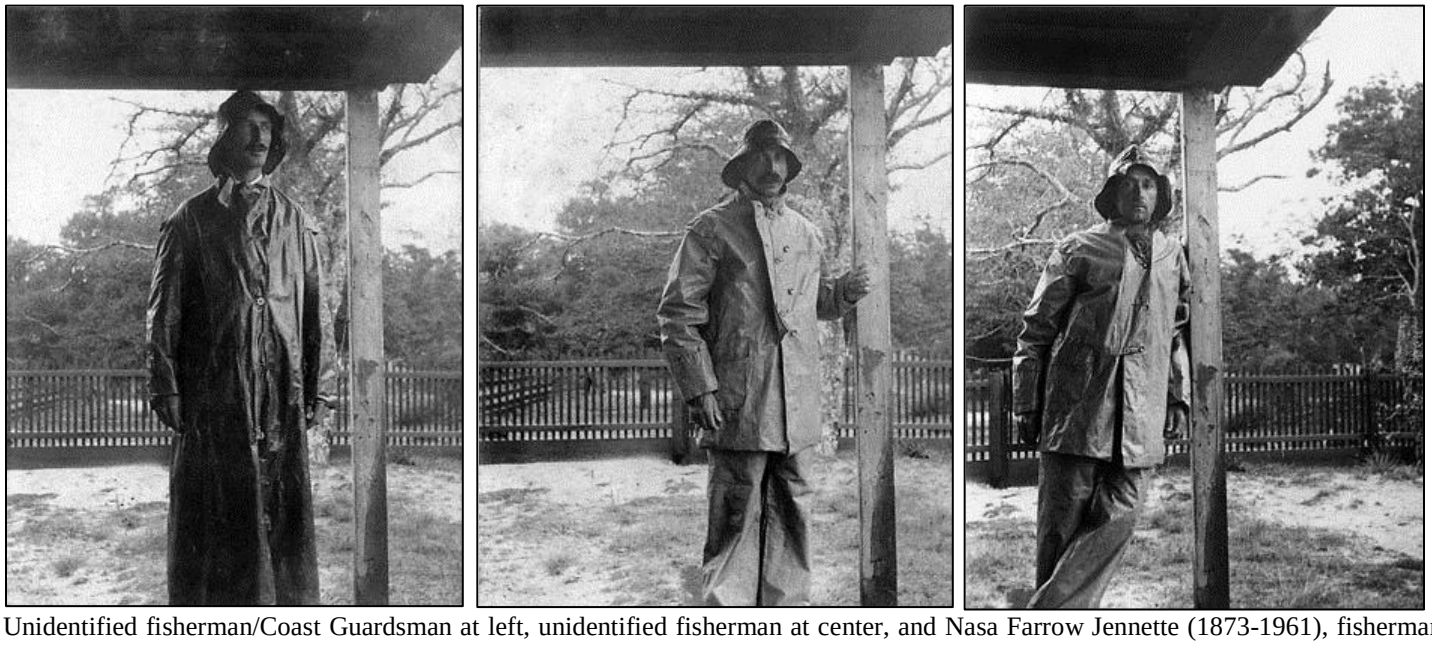
Fishing for shad and herring near Edenton, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)




Fishing boats and fish houses at Avon harbor, ca.1950s, at left, and fishing boats at Hatteras Village harbor, mid-twentieth century, at right (sources: http://www.ncgenweb.us/dare/photosbios/avonharbor.jpg, at left, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at right)

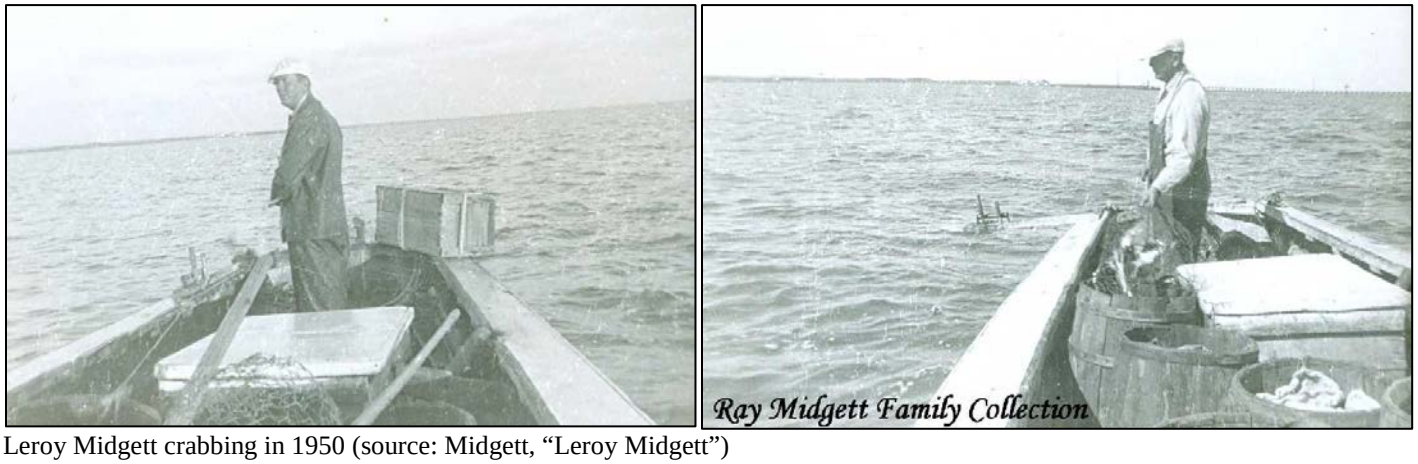
Fishermen near Wanchese, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)



Unidentified fisherman/Coast Guardsman at left, unidentified fisherman at center, and Nasa Farrow Jennette (1873-1961), fisherman and game warden, at right, ca. 1901-1903, Herbert Hutchinson Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Some fisherman fished for creatures other than fish. Some sought out oysters, as noted above. Others hauled in crabs. Photographs that depict Leroy Midgett crabbing in 1950 are accompanied by the following detailed description (Midgett 2009):

> Leroy Midgett (1906-1952) crabbing a line just north of the old Manteo Bridge in 1950. The old crab lines, in those days, would run from 1 to 2 miles long with strips of "pickled bull-lip" tied every 3 feet. The line was anchored on the starting end and buoyed on the end. It was run out of a barrel of bull lip juice. Note the old shad boat with the fish box sitting on the stern as Leroy ran the line out. The fish box was tossed overboard to steady the boat as it ran down the line to dip the crabs. The dip net was made from chicken wire. The old wooden barrels would hold 100 lbs of crabs. Note the runner which held the crab line as he dipped the crabs....the engine box covering the gasoline engine....and his "oil clothes" which kept him dry. The Manteo Bridge [is] in the background.

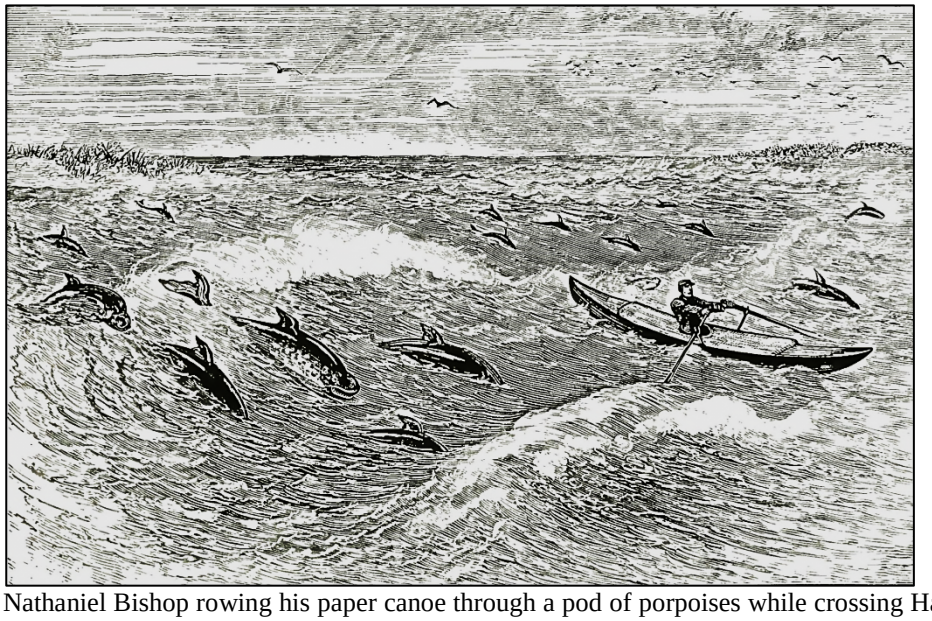


Leroy Midgett crabbing in 1950 (source: Midgett, "Leroy Midgett")

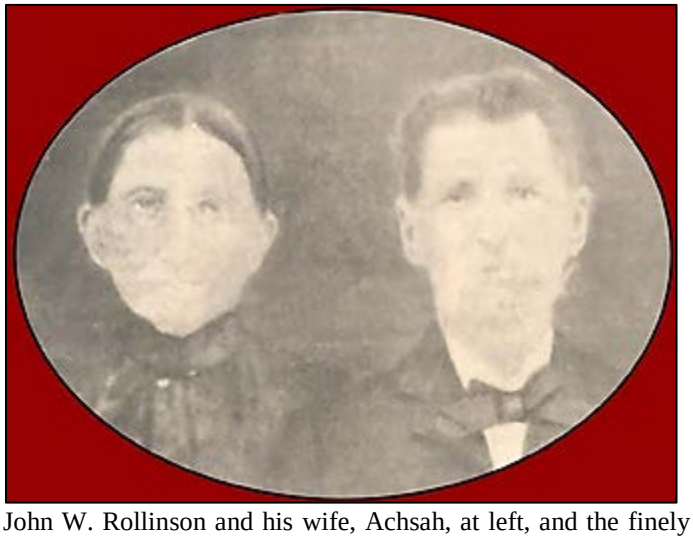
Another potential source of maritime income for Outer Bankers was the bottle-nosed dolphin. Coastal residents of Dare, Hyde, and Carteret counties hunted and processed them throughout the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. By 1803 slave watermen ran a dolphin factory near Ocracoke Inlet and during the 1886-1887 season, at a high point of the fishery, John W. Rollinson (or Rolinson) and his crews caught 1,313 dolphins, 618 in November alone. In 1887 a handful of factories operated along the coast, including one in Hatteras. The market for the mammal's oil dropped in the 1890s, and

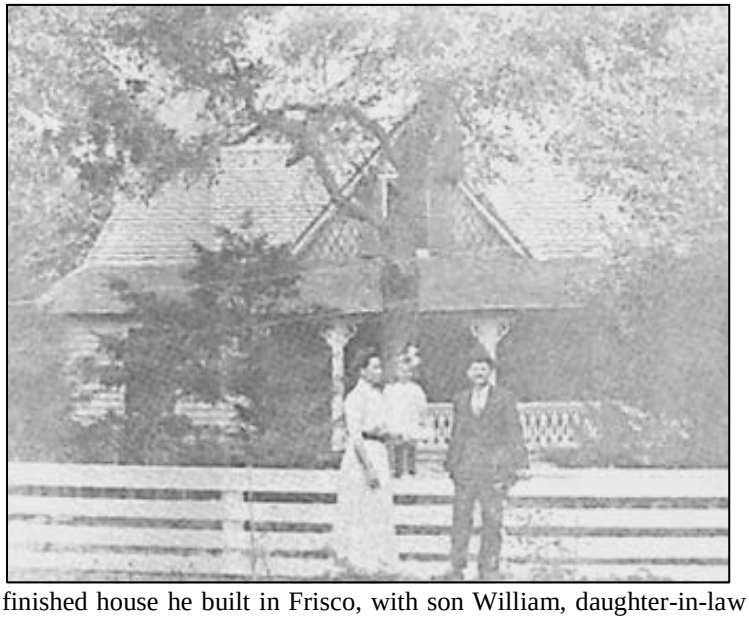
the budding industry along with it, but a fishery still operated at Hatteras into the 1920s. The story of the dolphin fishery is illustrative of the measures Bankers took to support themselves and their families. Rollinson (1827-1903), who was born and buried in Frisco, "Like most Bankers . . . did a bit of everything to make a living." He was a "schoolmaster, a port collector, a seaman, a fisherman—and the superintendent at Colonel Jonathan Wainright's dolphin factory located halfway between Hatteras and Frisco." Hunting dolphins was, briefly, a means of getting ahead, a difficult goal to attain on the Banks. The take-home pay was small, Cecelski (2000:83) writes:

> Yet during the heyday of the dolphin industry, Outer Banks families had few other sources of income. Watermen earned a bit of cash as sailors and pilots but made little money in commercial fishing until early in the twentieth century. Although barter and self-sufficiency were still the rules throughout coastal North Carolina, watermen increasingly wanted real dollars for a few luxuries—a new oyster dredge like the ones used by the Chesapeake Bay fishermen, or a bolt of calico or denim that might spare their wives a month of late-night weaving. Hunting dolphins was one of the few ways to afford such labor-saving items.



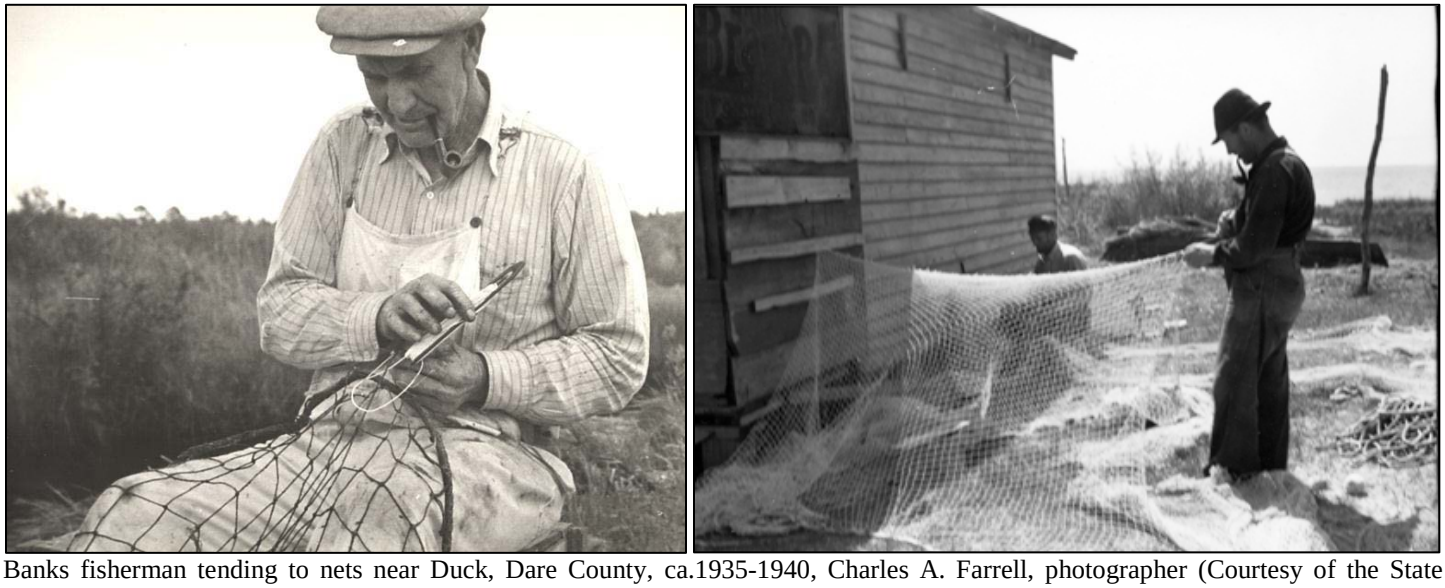
Nathaniel Bishop rowing his paper canoe through a pod of porpoises while crossing Hatteras Inlet in December 1874 (source: Bishop, *Voyage of the Paper Canoe*, 1878)





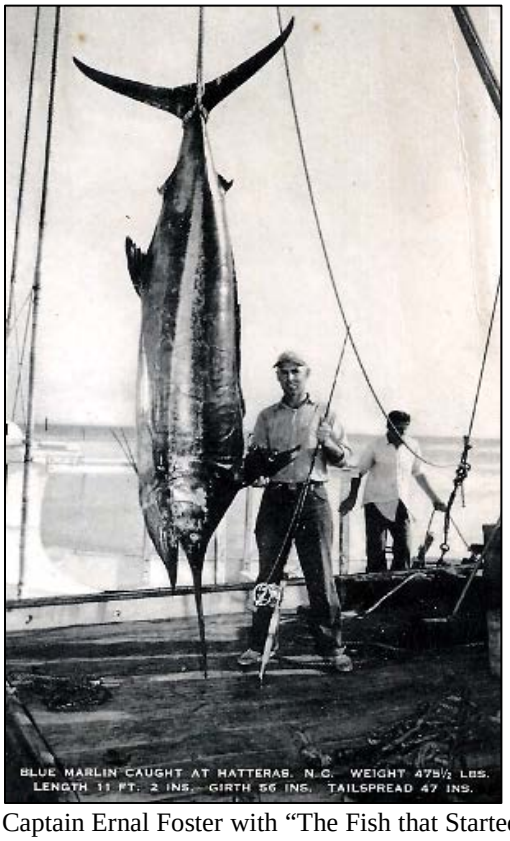
John W. Rollinson and his wife, Achsah, at left, and the finely finished house he built in Frisco, with son William, daughter-in-law Theresa, and granddaughter Mary out front, 1912 (source: Couch, "John W. Rollinson's Journal")

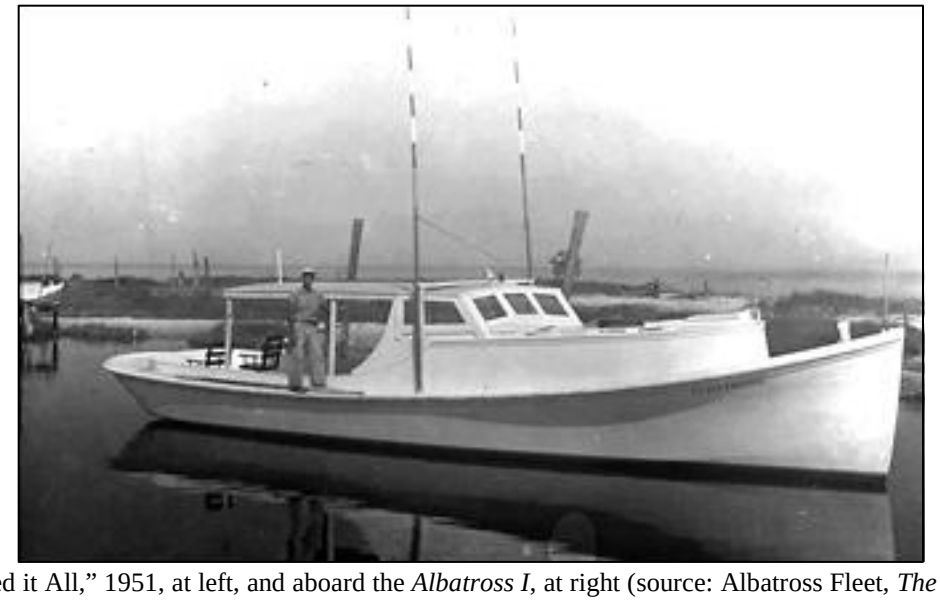
Outer Banks fishing required more than standing on the shore or heading out in a boat to bring the catch in. It required nets. Everyone, from children to grandparents, tied nets, according to Gack Austin and his wife, Eileen. “You learned to tie nets when you were small you know,” he recalled (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:39). He continued: “Any free time that’s what you did was tie nets so you would have them available when you needed a net you put lines on it.” They agreed that tying was often done by women, who were particularly good at it.



Banks fisherman tending to nets near Duck, Dare County, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Another type of fishing that was to become particularly popular after roads were paved and bridges opened, and one which remains popular today, is charter fishing. Ernal W. Foster, Sr. (1910-1986) of Hatteras Village started a charter fishing business, dubbed the “Albatross Fleet,” in 1937. His obituary identified him as “one of the pioneers of offshore sportfishing” in North Carolina and noted that his catching of a blue marlin in 1951, “began the serious pursuit of bill fish off the N.C. coast” (*Coastland Times* 1996b). That marlin, which Foster called “The Fish that Started it All,” was indeed a catalyst. By 1953, only two years later, so many blue marlin had been caught around Hatteras, and the tourist trade had become so strong, that Captain Foster added a third boat to his enterprise, the *Albatross III* (Harrison 2005:77-86). Foster’s success was not a fluke. A story about the 75th anniversary of the Albatross Fleet sums up his epiphany in the mid-30s: “There were plenty of fish in the water around Hatteras, but catching them for any purpose other than sending them to market or for the family dinner was unheard of. Ernal Foster had a better idea–catching fish for fun and sport. Tourists, especially sportsmen, were starting to come to Hatteras Island, and Foster figured that these mostly well-heeled visitors would pay to go fishing.” To commence his enterprise, Foster purchased white cedar planks, cured them for a year, and took them to the Willis Boat Yard in Marshallberg in Carteret County to have the first *Albatross* constructed. The total cost to build the boat, which he launched in 1937, was $550 (Albatross Fleet n.d.; Nolan 2012).

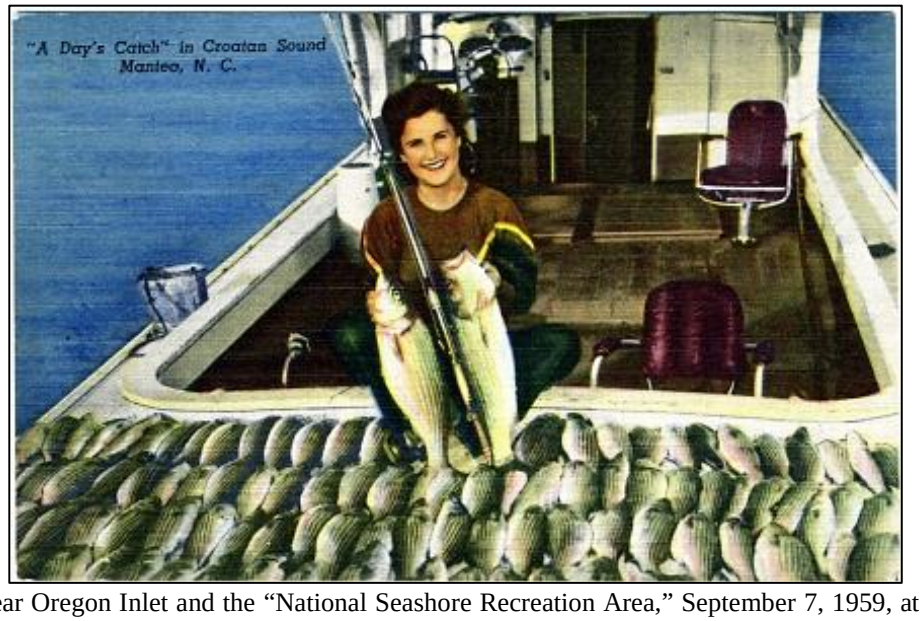




Captain Ernal Foster with "The Fish that Started it All," 1951, at left, and aboard the *Albatross I*, at right (source: Albatross Fleet, *The Albatross Fleet*)

Other Outer Bankers followed Captain Foster's lead. Like many Bankers, Ephraim O'Neal, who was a teenager with little money during the Depression, worked more than one job. He considered himself first a fisherman, but in the early 1950s he added a small charter business. He would fish his nets early in the morning, come back in, pick up a party of tourists from a tackle shop in Hatteras Village—his first customers were from Pennsylvania—and take them out fishing for half a day. He recalled that there were three charter businesses in the village with boats big enough to go offshore, Ernal Foster's three-boat Albatross Fleet and those of two other men who had boats of about 30 feet. O'Neal started out with a small open boat and stuck to the Hatteras Inlet and the beach. Initially there were a few other such small-scale charter businesses, but until it caught on in later years, it was a difficult operation and their owners did not stick with it (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:834).

Fishing for the big one soon quickly transformed the charter boat business. The descriptive text of a 1959 postcard, for example, reads "Pictured is a Blue Marlin, landed by an angler fishing at the edge of the nearby Gulf Stream in Dare coastal waters of North Carolina, which have become famous in recent years, for big game fishing, including White Marlin, Broadbills, Sailfish, Tuna, Wahoo, and Channel Bass" Another glowing description, from a postcard of a year earlier, announces: "Fishing is always at its best in Dare County Waters. More different species of fish have been caught in these waters than in any other fishing area in the U.S. These striped bass caught in Roanoke Sound were taken with rod and reel and with lures trolled in the wake of a power boat. Charter boats for inlet fishing are available at the Roanoke Sound Bridge on U.S. 158 between Nags Head and Manteo, or at Wanchese."



Blue marlin weighing 322-1/2 pounds caught near Oregon Inlet and the "National Seashore Recreation Area," September 7, 1959, at left, and rows of striped bass caught from a power boat, 1958, Aycock Brown, photographer (source: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards)

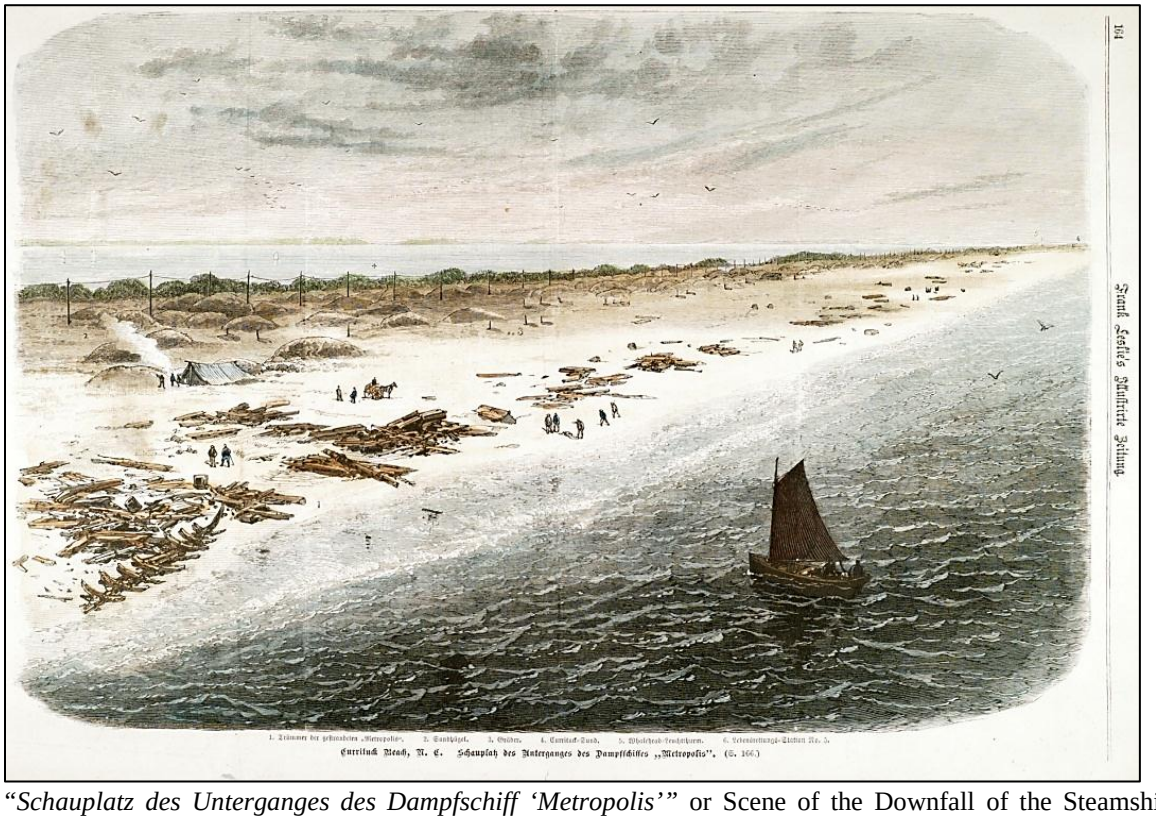
Fishing for channel bass or red drum was also popular, bolstered by a 1955 article in *Sport Illustrated*. The opening paragraph nestled the sports fisherman down in the sand and waters of the Outer Banks (Gallico 1955): "Picture a clear stretch of shimmering aquamarine-blue Atlantic, a hundred yards or so from a beach of dazzling whiteness off the North Carolinian coast, hard by Oregon Inlet, the gateway to Albemarle Sound. To the north stretch the grass-tufted sand dunes, rising to Kill Devil Hills at Kitty Hawk, whence the Wright brothers took off on man's first powered flight. To the south the sands curve to Hatteras."

The prominence of Oregon Inlet in the *Sports Illustrated* piece is not surprising. In 1946 a small group of charter captains had located their operations along a narrow roadside canal, locally known as Dykstra's ditch, which started at the Bodie Island terminus of the old Roanoke Sound bridge. In the early 1950s they shifted their operations toward the southern tip of Bodie Island near Oregon Inlet (Conoley, Conoley, and Conoley 2007:65).

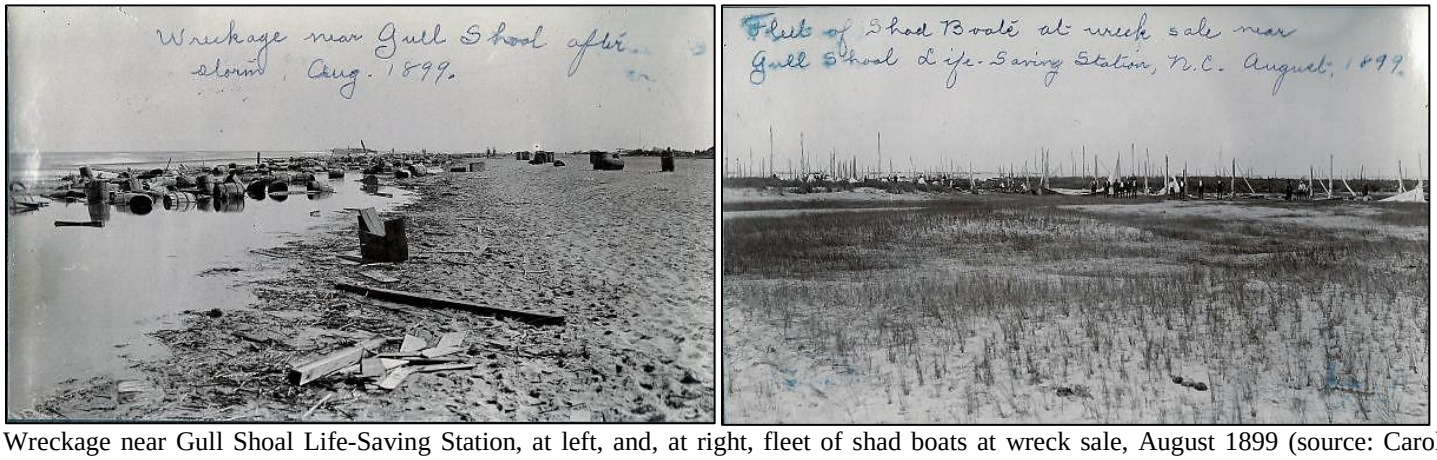
Oregon Inlet Fishing Center harbor, 1952 (source: Conoley, Conoley, and Conoley, *Carolina Flare*)

The Atlantic Ocean and sounds provided means of making a living other than hauling in fish or hauling around tourists. These included wrecking, seaweed gathering, boat building, and fish dealing.

There are various occupations, or at least means to make the occasional hard dollar, that appeared rarely if at all in the censuses and disappeared by early in the twentieth century. One in particular is well steeped in lore: wrecking—salvaging the remains of shipwrecks. When the opportunity presented itself, particularly during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Bankers were not averse to wrecking. With the Graveyard of the Atlantic at their doorstep, wreckers could turn disaster on its side to supplement their often precarious subsistence existences. *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper*, in its German-language as well as English editions, published an image of the wreck of the *Metropolis* at Currituck Beach in 1878. It includes not only the scattered remains of the steamship, but wreckers camped out on the beach and even sailing in for a look at, or more likely a piece of, the broken vessel and its cargo. "Scenes like this," according to Cecelski (2000:23), "were common on the Outer Banks."



"Schauplatz des Unterganges des Dampfschiff 'Metropolis'" or Scene of the Downfall of the Steamship *Metropolis* from *Frank Leslie's Illustrirte Zeitung*, December 2, 1878 (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)



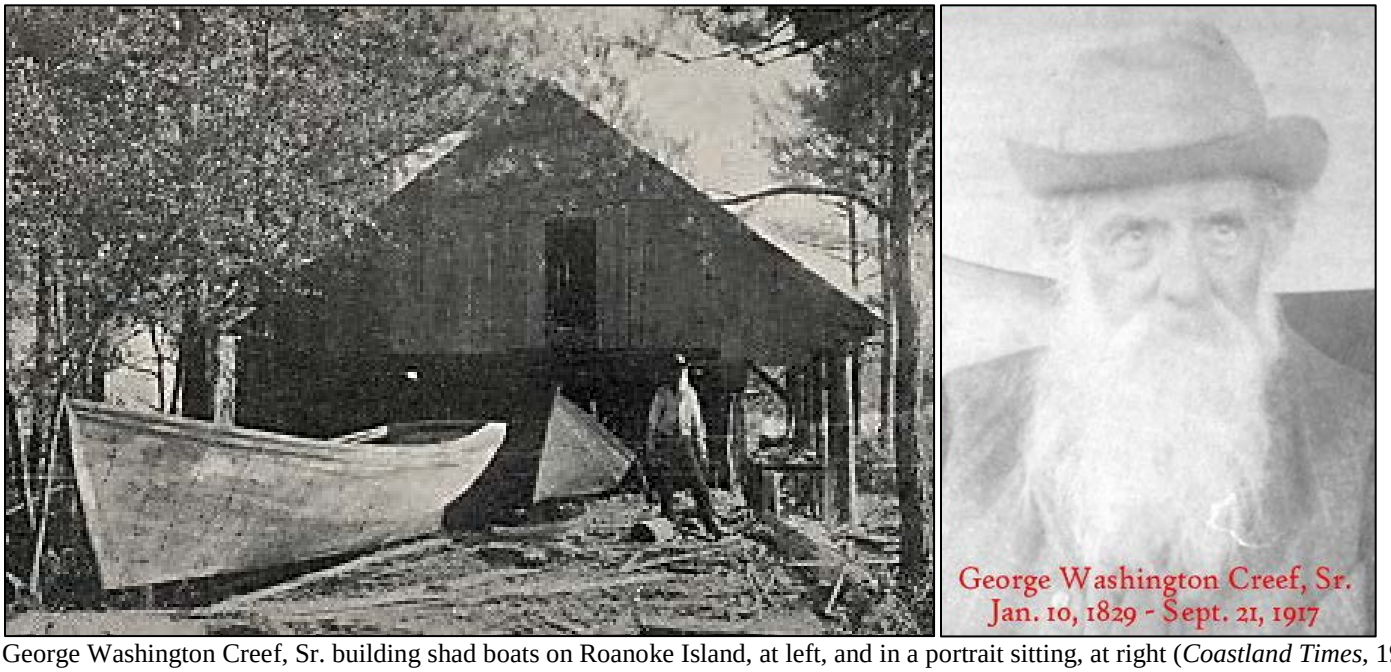
Wreckage near Gull Shoal Life-Saving Station, at left, and, at right, fleet of shad boats at wreck sale, August 1899 (source: Carol Cronk Cole photographic collection, Outer Banks Historical Center, State Archives of North Carolina)

For a time in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century, some Bankers made money collecting and drying seaweed. Willard Gray, who was born in 1913, recalled that his wife's grandfather, Ignatius H. Scarborough, Sr. (1856-1923), gathered large quantities of the plant (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:522-523): "They had a huge house. Had a sealer and a baler and they had flats, what they called barges. They'd go along the shore, they had pitchforks and take the green seaweed and throw it up on the shore. It would dry, they'd spread it out, they take it and haul it out to their big houses, and let it dry out. After it was dry, they wouldn't do nothing with it while it was wet, it had to be perfectly dry. They'd put it in the big sealers and balers, like bales of hay, and they'd carry boatloads of it. They used [it] for furniture upholstery."

It does not appear that the censuses ever acknowledge Scarborough's seaweed business. The 1910 population schedule, true to form, identifies him as a fisherman.

L.P. O'Neal Jr. recalled Charlie Williams (Avon's postmaster in the 1930s, who kept a store in the town) having men gather "seaoars" or seagrass in the summer when it broke loose. They'd set it on racks and turn it with pitchforks until it was completely dried out. Then they'd bundle it and ship it on boats to Elizabeth City, from which it moved on to a mattress factory in Norfolk (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:911).

Some Outer Bankers and other Dare County residents, particularly on Roanoke Island, built boats for sale as well as personal use. The traditional North Carolina shad boat was originated by Roanoke Island boatbuilder George Washington Creef, Sr. in the 1870s. His boat works turned out many shad boats through the early 1930s and Creef also taught others how to craft the vessel, which combined conventional plank-on-frame construction with traditional split-log techniques (Babits 2006). Fortunately, at least one image of Creef (1829-1917) working on a boat survives. His long white beard, which appears in a few surviving portraits of him as well, suggests he was captured building shad boats in Wanchese late in his long life.

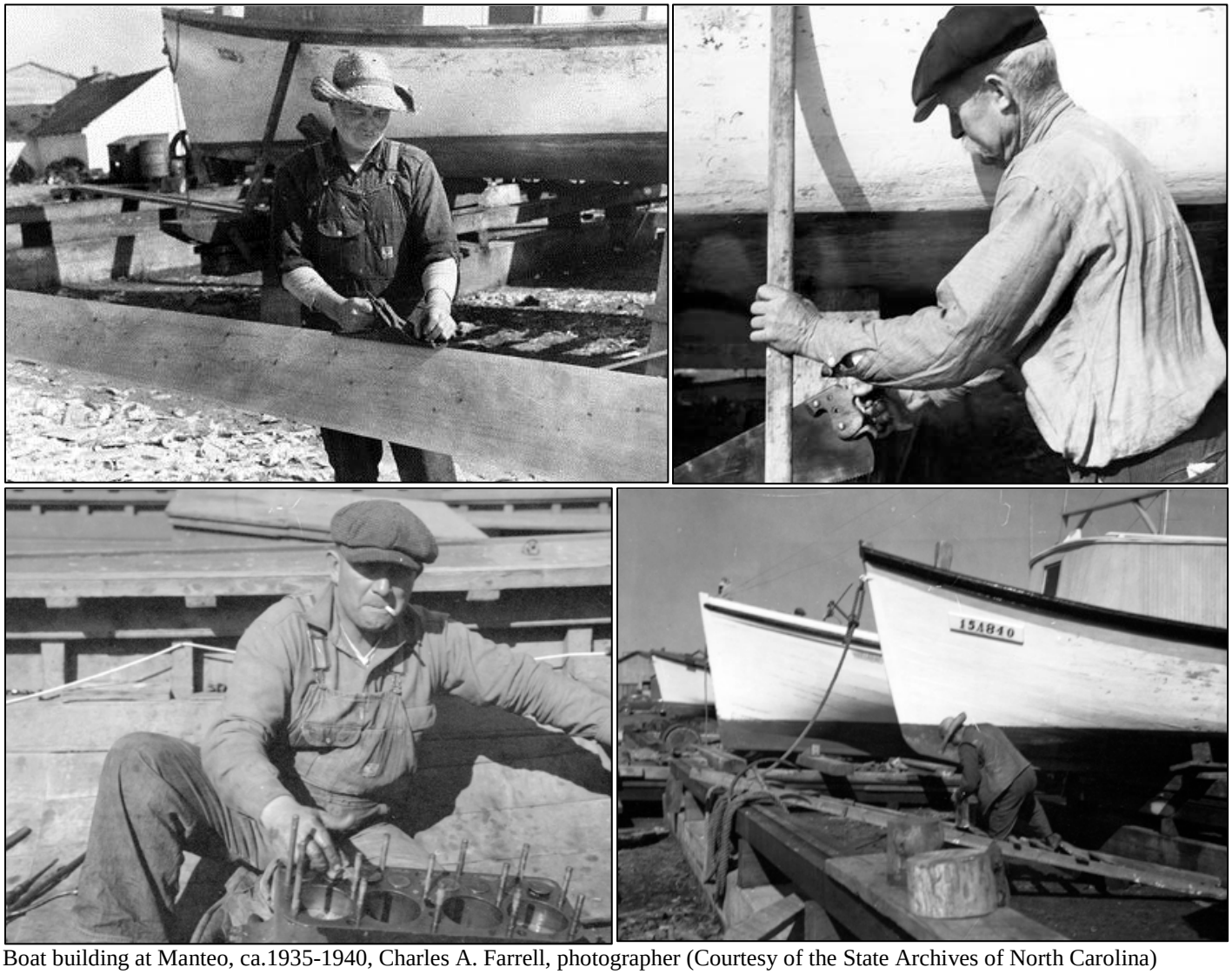


George Washington Creef, Sr. building shad boats on Roanoke Island, at left, and in a portrait sitting, at right (*Coastland Times*, 1977)

When Wynne Townsend Dough of Manteo died at age 91 in 1998, his obituary called him the first in a family of boat builders known for their shad boats (*Coastland Times* 1998). He actually came from a long line of notable builders. A 1921 newspaper article noted that his father, W.O. Dough of Manteo was a boat builder, as was his father. W.O. passed his knowledge onto all five of his sons, not just Wynne (*Independent* 1921).

North Carolina shad boat at Wanchese, builder not identified, ca.1939 (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

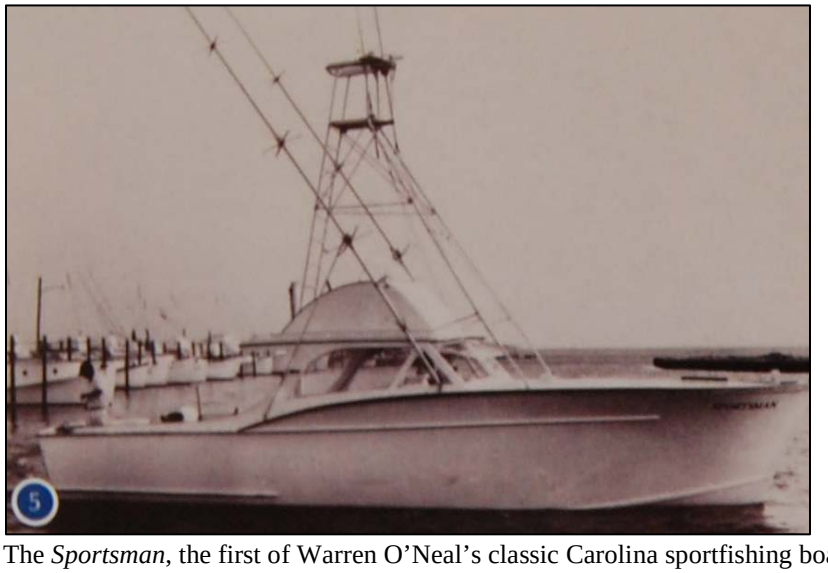
Photographs taken by prolific Greensboro photographer Charles A. Farrell capture men building boats in Manteo between about 1935 and 1940. Unfortunately the images do not identify the yard or the individuals.



Boat building at Manteo, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Warren R. O'Neal (1909-2000) followed a largely typical Outer Banks trajectory before founding O'Neal Boatworks in 1959 in downtown Manteo. His connection with boats and the water started about 1919, when at the age of nine he went fishing for mullet in the sound with his grandfather on a sailboat. In 1925, at 15, he built his first boat, a flat-bottomed skiff. In 1949, with Otis Dough of the Dough boat building family, he completed construction on a round-stern boat of juniper intended for commercial fishing. He purchased the boat, named it the *Pearl* after his wife, and fished it. Throughout the 1950s he pulled long nets, shrimped in the off season, and took fisherman out on the waters (*Coastland Times* 2000; Harrison 2005:87-91).

O'Neal's post-1959 "classic Carolina boats" that became a mainstay of the Outer Banks sportfishing fleet" revolutionized the Outer Banks boatbuilding trade, in form and methodology. O'Neal is acknowledged as the first local boat builder to put his designs down on paper to make sure their lines and proportions were pleasing, rather than to rely on his eye during construction. His design innovations included deep-V-forward hulls, a broken sheer line, an inset cabin comfortable for sportfishermen, an exaggerated tumblehome, and a flared bow (Harrison 2005:87-91; Conoley, Conoley, and Conoley 2007:157-159).



The *Sportsman*, the first of Warren O'Neal's classic Carolina sportfishing boats, at Oregon Inlet, 1961 (source: Conoley, Conoley, and Conoley, *Carolina Flare*)

In Dare County one was often a fisherman. On occasion one made the boats that fishermen fished from. But what happened to those fish that did not appear on the dinner table? The answer to that question provided yet another avenue for making a living off of the water—fish buying and selling. No fish buyers or dealers are listed in either the 1870 or 1900 census schedules, but there certainly were fish dealers then. S.L. Dosher, in recounting the damage to Hatteras Village of the San Ciriaco hurricane of August 1899, states that 13 fish-packing houses had been located on the village's waterfront, only three of which survived the blow (Schwartz 2007:114). Outer Banks fishermen in the late nineteenth century therefore either sold their fish to dealers who considered themselves fishermen first and buyers second, or transported their hauls to freight boats in the sounds or to Roanoke Island or mainland market towns. As discussed separately below along with trade in general, heading across the sound to sell one's fish was common into the twentieth century. As the century wore on, though, fish houses became more common, or at least dealers became a bit more willing to identify themselves as such.

The 1930 census includes five men—a tiny figure, but larger than zero—on Dare's Outer Banks who identified themselves as fish buyers or dealers. One was located in Hatteras Village, two in Buxton, and two in Duck. There were many more, but even at this relatively late date, when asked for an occupation by the census taker, Outer Banks men continued to go with "fisherman." Even some who told the census taker they dealt in fish were, particularly in their obituaries, remembered as fishermen. John Alex Gray (1875-1965) and his son, John Raymond Gray, were Rodanthe fish buyers according to the 1930 census. The elder Gray's obituary, however, referred to him as a native of Dare County and a retired fisherman rather than a fish dealer (*Coastland Times*, April 9, 1965).

The undercounting of fish dealers in the census may also in part have reflected the presence of outside (Manteo, Wanchese, Elizabeth City) interests in the trade. For example, Rodanthe-native Rudy Gray remembered three fish houses in Rodanthe alone (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:462). One was owned by the Globe Fish Company of Elizabeth City, one by Willy Etheridge of Wanchese, and one by Herbert Midgett, Sr. of Rodanthe. (Typically, Midgett's obituary mentioned his church and masonic affiliations and his Coast Guard career, but not his fish-dealing enterprise (*Coastland Times* 1984).) Gray's father, Asa Hamilton Gray, Jr., delivered Pepsi Cola on Hatteras for half a century and hauled fish out of Rodanthe, certainly on the same truck (*Coastland Times* 1996a). Rudy Gray recounted the lively process of dealing with fish houses to Barbara Garrity-Blake:

> RG: . . . You would come to the dock or the long haulers would come to the dock with boat loads of fish, and it would be a bidding war on how much fish were going to be. Right there at the dock in Rodanthe.
>
> BGB: Did you have somebody talking like an auctioneer?
>
> RG: It wasn't like an auctioneer. . . . Whoever would be there to the fish house, you would come in to see, and boatload of spots comes in there. And say this person would bid five cents a pound, the next might say five and a half cents, and then the next person might go six cents.
>
> BGB: And they would holler it out?
>
> RG: They would holler it out. The boat was kind of still sitting in the middle of the creek, and they were bidding on it. It seemed like Will [Etheridge]'s house over there, he pretty much knew what he could pay, but whoever was running the house for the Globe Fish Company would have to call up Elizabeth City on the old crank telephone to find out what the Daniels brothers, they wanted you to pay for them. . . . Whoever was the highest bidder that's where that boat would go at. Go there and unload (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:462-463).

Daniel Willis and his wife, Mildred, also provided a colorful memory of fish houses, at least in Hatteras Village, to interviewer Jennifer Miller in 2003 (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:1152-1153):

> DW: When we were growing up, the fish houses was out into the sound. The harbor that they've got down here now is, you get small boats in it. They kept their boats in it, bigger boats they kept them anchored out in the sound. And then they used their small shove skiffs to go out to the boat. They had their fish houses out in the sound. That's where they'd bring their fish in and we used block ice to ice the fish down.
>
> MW: They served three purposes in there at least.
>
> DW: Yeah, the boats would come in and they'd bring your ice. They'd bring ice and you'd store it in your little ice house, which that was like a double wall filled with sawdust. They'd pack sawdust in it to insulate the walls. Which it kept the ice good, they'd wrap it up and keep it. And they had hand shavers to shave it up to put in on the fish. They had mostly sail boats would come in to start with, they had big sail boats to come in. And then they started coming out with the boats operating with gasoline motors.
>
> JM: Now when you say "out in the sound," were they buildings on stilts in the sound?
>
> DW: They put 'em on pilings just like you see some of these fishing piers.
>
> MW: And actually, when they got automobiles, the automobile could even run on them.
>
> DW: My uncle was the first one built a pier out to his fish house that you could drive on. My cousin, Vern Willis, he run off of it. He runned off of the bridge. The steering on some of the old Model A's wasn't as good as they are now. They had a lot of what we call loose motion, you had a lot of loose motion in them. Had to turn the wheel about half way around before it'd take a hold. The bridges was just narrow enough, just wide enough to go down it and that was all. Most of 'em just had little foot bridges out to their . . .

JM: So they weren't out very far then?

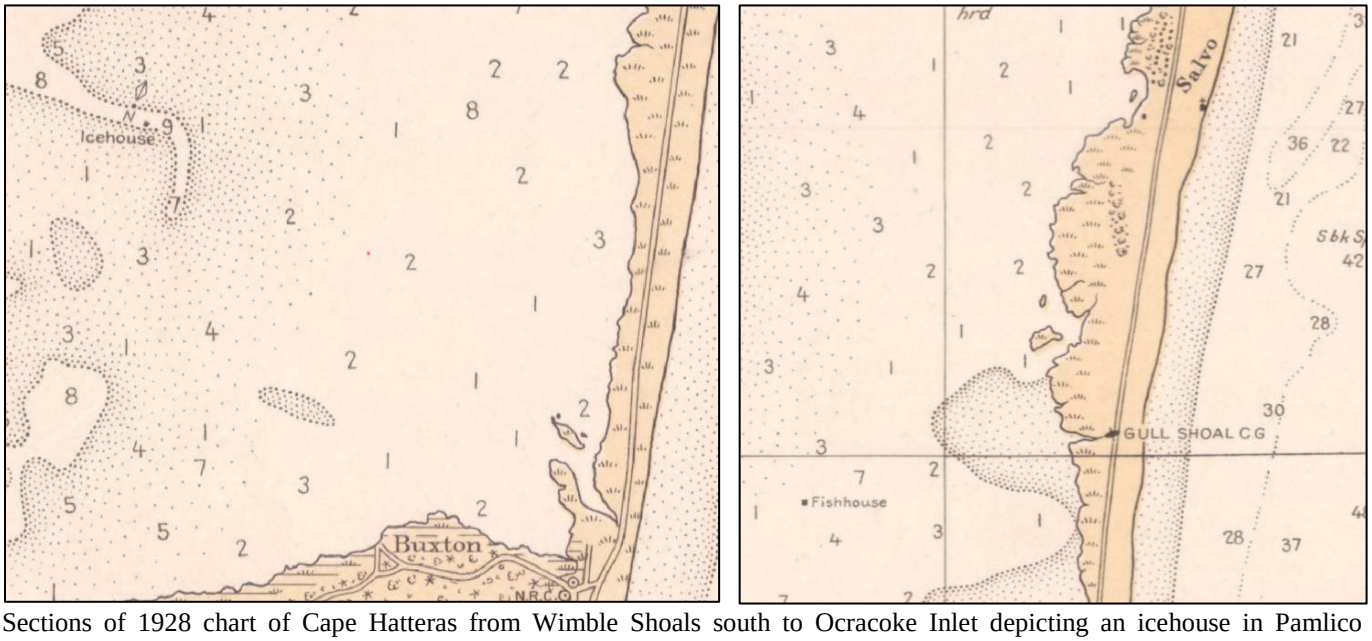
DW: No, probably two or three hundred yards.

JM: And how large were they, as building structures?

DW: Wasn't much over probably twenty by twenty, something like that.

Fish houses and icehouses went hand in hand, for without ice, it was difficult to store fish long enough to transport it to market.

An icehouse appears, certainly standing on pilings, in the Pamlico Sound about equidistant from Buxton and Avon, on a 1928 chart of the area. The same chart depicts only one fish house in the sound, which is surprising considering the many accounts of such buildings from around this time.



Sections of 1928 chart of Cape Hatteras from Wimble Shoals south to Ocracoke Inlet depicting an icehouse in Pamlico Sound northwest of Buxton, at left, and a fish house in the sound southwest of Salvo, at right (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1928 and University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)

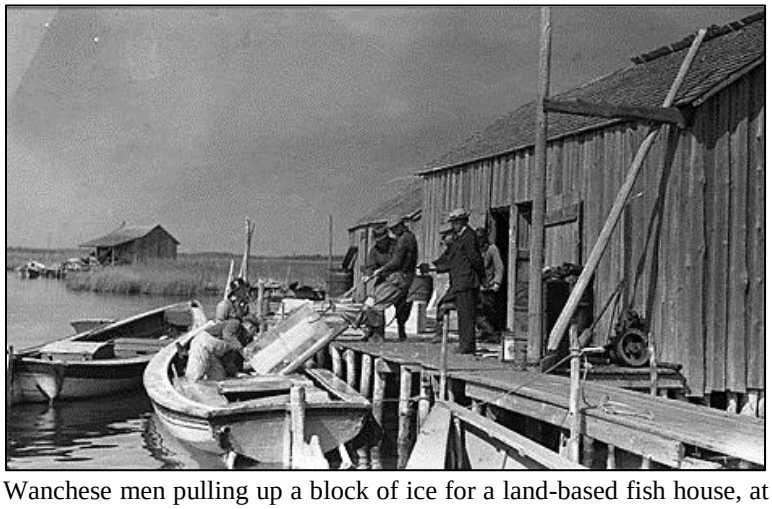
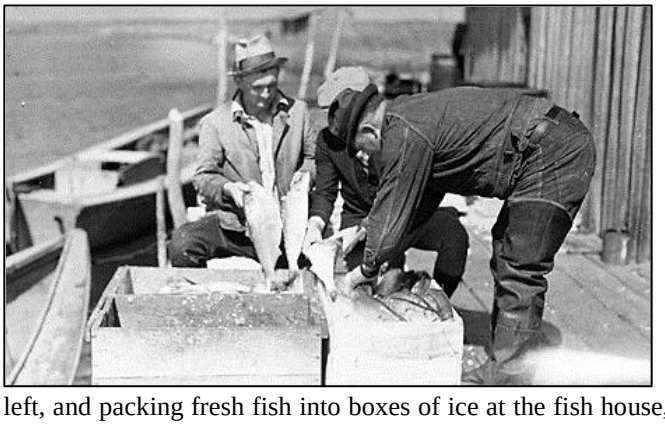
John Morgan recalls many icehouses, or "wharves," in Hatteras Village's harbor in the 1930s, including those of John Meekins, Rance Oden, Dolph Burrus, and Irish Willis. They were located a short distance from shore, in water five or six feet deep where boats could moor. Freight boats from Elizabeth City or Washington delivered ice in 300-pound blocks to them. In typical Outer Banks fashion, Rance Oden had his hand in various economic pots. He had an icehouse—"Rance Oden's wharf"—was the Gulf Oil dealer, and sold burial caskets. With S.P. and Pete Willis, the owners of the S.P. Willis Fish House in Washington, he owned the *Mary Fletcher*, the freighter that weekly supplied him with gas, oil, and other provisions, presumably including his caskets (Morgan 2001:67-69).

Ice did not have to be shipped from the mainland. Alvah Haff Ward (1894-1952) of Manteo—an important entrepreneur and public servant in Dare County in the 1930s and 1940s—saw his first success when he perceived in 1928 that the ice business was a void that needed filling. His plant, which allowed for the development of packing facilities on Roanoke Island, was the forerunner of five other ice plants in the area (*Coastland Times* 1952). An undated postcard depicts one of these facilities. Images also survive of fishermen making use of this important commodity.

Hatteras Village also got an ice and electric facility at the early date of 1935. Hatteras business Frazier Luther Peele, who would later open the first ferry between the village and Ocracoke Island, teamed with Thomas Spurgeon "Tom" Eaton of New Bern, the son of a Reynolds Tobacco Company executive, to bring a large diesel generator up from Florida and open

the facility. (As Carlson (2005:58) writes, "Hatteras Village had entered the Ice Age.") The two men also teamed up to acquire a 68-foot freight boat, the *Hadeco* (short for their Hatteras Development Company), which carried passengers, goods, and four cars between the village and Engelhard on the Hyde County mainland (Carlson 2005:57-59; Peele n.d.).

Frazier Peele maintaining the diesel generator of his electricity and ice plant in Hatteras Village, at left, and with two workers in the icehouse at the left of photo at right, ca.1947 (sources: Morgan, *A Pleasant Gale on My Lee* and State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and Peele, "Family History and Memories of Old Hatteras Village," at right)

Wanchese men pulling up a block of ice for a land-based fish house, at left, and packing fresh fish into boxes of ice at the fish house, at right, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Food other than Fish: Gardens, Livestock, and the Mainland

Even Outer Bankers could not live on fish (or by helping visitors fish) alone. From the earliest days of settlement, they supplemented their diets and their incomes with other sources of food. They turned to gardens, free-ranging and some kept livestock, and trade, but never farming.

In Dare County near the oceans and the sounds, only Roanoke Island and, to a lesser extent, the coastal mainland had the land to support farmsteads. The narrow sandy Outer Banks did not. Census records suggest that the Banks never had proper farms such as the one held and cultivated by the Etheridge family on Roanoke Island from 1783 into the twentieth century. The Etheridge or Island Farm, located a few miles north of Manteo, encompassed over 100 acres and included slave quarters, a farmhouse, barns, animal pens and other outbuildings, as well as a vineyard and allée of cedars (Smith 2001:3). Branson's North Carolina business directory of 1890 identifies 65 farmers in Dare County. Nineteen were on the mainland at or near East Lake (13), Mann's Harbor (4), and Stumpy Point (2). The other 46 were on Roanoke Island at or near Manteo (28), Wanchese (12), and Skyco (6). Not a one was identified in Colington, Kitty Hawk, or Nags Head, Rodanthe, Waves, or Salvo, or Avon, Buxton, Frisco, or Hatteras Village. The list is not conclusive, but certainly not a single farm worthy of note stood anywhere along the length of Bodie, Pea, or Hatteras Islands (Branson 1889:225-226).

The 1860 portion of the Hyde County census that covers Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands and the mainland community of Swan Quarter fails to identify even one farmer. It names two "herdsmen"—70-year-old Stephen Gray and 72-year-old Elias Outlaw—but their advanced age suggests they may have taken up minding livestock after their days at sea were done. The 1870 and 1900 census schedules identify no one on Hatteras Island as either a farmer or a herdsman. The 1930 census again includes no farmers or stockmen on the island. On all of Hyde County's Outer Banks—from Sanderling and Duck south to Hatteras Village—it names no farmers and only one "stockman," 63-year-old O. Shales (or Shalor) Meekins, who reported that he raised cattle and lived with his nephew and family in Colington.

Fish was abundant and played a prominent role at most meals. But with what, and how, did Dare County's Outer Bankers supplement their oysters and crabs, their shad, bass, mullet, and other fin fishes? Bankers had three major ways of broadening their diets. They raised gardens and livestock, they shipped in produce and staples, and they headed off-island to purchase or trade for what they lacked.

Almost every Banker family seems to have had a garden. According to Bert Austin—former Dare County sheriff and little-"b" banker who was born in the mid-1930s (*Virginian Pilot* 2007)—vegetable gardens were numerous and prolific. "[W]e grew our own vegetables around here," he recalled in the early 2000s (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:12). "My uncle Rumford up in Frisco, Mildred's father, had a garden there. He could grow anything you wanted." Gack Austin, born in 1929, also recalled gardens and the work required to maintain them and complete other teenage chores (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:26):

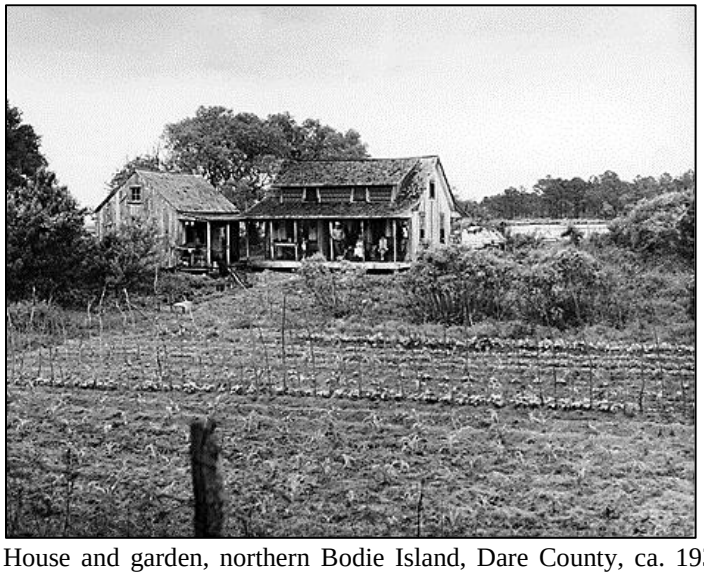
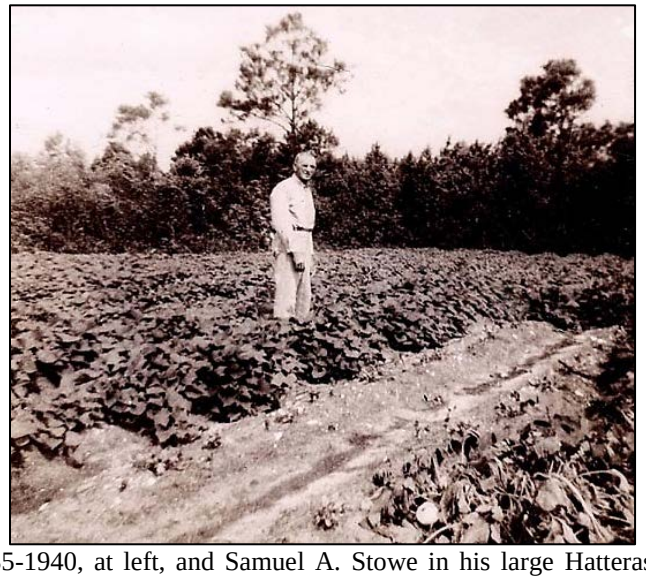
> Well, I would go to the Sound at night with my grandfather and we would fish until 2 maybe 3 o'clock in the morning with the other boats, come home and sleep a couple of hours and go to school. When you get home from school you have chicken[s] to feed and ducks, pigs and wood to chop. There was a lot to do. . . .
>
> Well, we use to go dig clams and that was all a part of fishing. But that was about it as far as work. There was no jobs per s[e], everything was self-sufficient work. . . .
>
> We had gardens too. We grew some vegetables and stuff, so they had to be tended and taken care of.

Jennette Stowe (1883-1983), born in Hatteras Village in 1883, remembered gardens, a chicken yard, mulberries, and the fig trees that continue to be a hallmark of Hatteras and Ocracoke islands. Her mother would gather figs for preserves and, under the family's mulberry tree, lay a sheet to catch the fruit that fell when Jennette and her siblings shook the branches (Foster and Balance 1976:36). She also recalled: "In them days we had a big chicken yard out here. Evening I'd go out, pick my apron up like that, pick up the eggs. And on this side, all this side was a garden. We raised everything in that garden. . . . . And we raised potatoes, collards, beans. We raised everything into it. We didn't have to buy a thing except our coffee and sugar" (Foster and Balance 1976:38).

Like Jennette Stowe, Ruby Gray Williams (1912-2011) was a Hatteras Island native who lived to the age of 99 (*Coastland Times* 2012). In the early 2000s she remembered her father's garden in Avon, where he "used to grow collards, cabbage, potatoes, all kind of stuff" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:1070).

Even though Hatteras folk had gardens, it does not mean they had an abundance of vegetables to eat. Loran Pierce "L.P." O'Neal, Jr. recalled that growing up the children were forced to take a nasty tonic made of "asafetidy" (that is, asafetida,

which, as one of the root words in its name suggests, has a fetid smell). He said children were forced to take it to get rid of the worms they often had. In his estimation, these worms were caused by a lack of green vegetables, which were in short supply even though just about everyone had a garden. His family had a cow for milk and they drank yaupon tea that a neighbor made, but generally subsisted on "fish, crabs, oysters, and things like that" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:910).

House and garden, northern Bodie Island, Dare County, ca. 1935-1940, at left, and Samuel A. Stowe in his large Hatteras Island garden prior to 1947, at right (sources: Charles A. Farrell Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, left, and Winslow, "By the Gallon or the Peck," right)

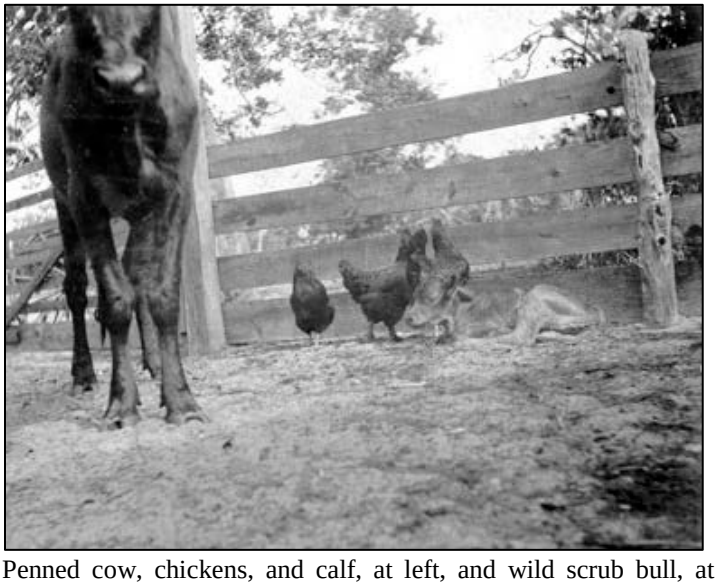
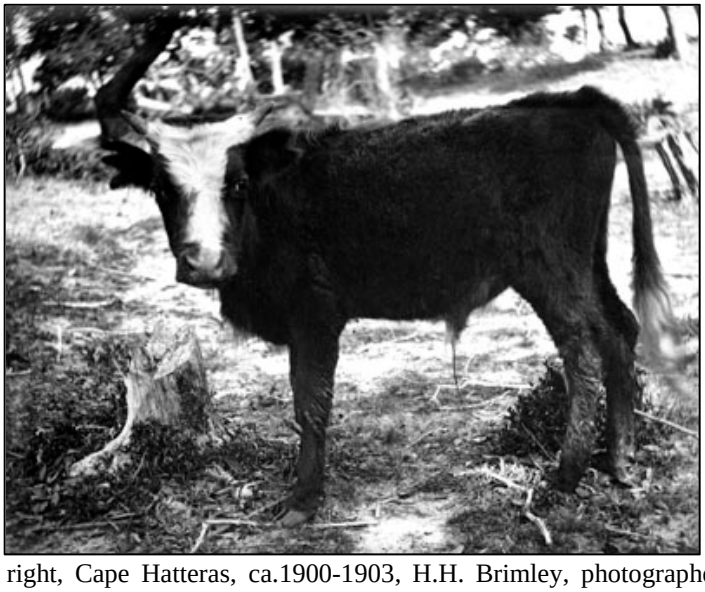
Outer Bankers also had access to livestock, either left to roam free, until the state enacted a forced-fencing law on the Banks in the late 1930s, or kept in pens. Rany Jennette (ca.1922-2001), the son of Hatteras lighthouse keeper Unaka B. Jennette, recalled:

> The keepers had their quarters furnished, and they had a lot of their food paid for. Almost everyone owned his livestock. I can remember when my dad raised his own hogs; he had his own chickens; he had forty head of cattle; he had seventeen beach ponies. The way everyone on the island could tell which horse belonged to whom was they had their own brand. Ours was just the letter "J." The cattle were marked by cropping their ears, and each person knew what the other man's mark was. They didn't brand the cattle at all, they just marked the ears. The lighthouse department fixed stables for horses; they fixed pens for the pigs, chickens, and other animals. And so they provided them with a pretty good living back in those days" (Farrow and Jennette 1976:14, 16).

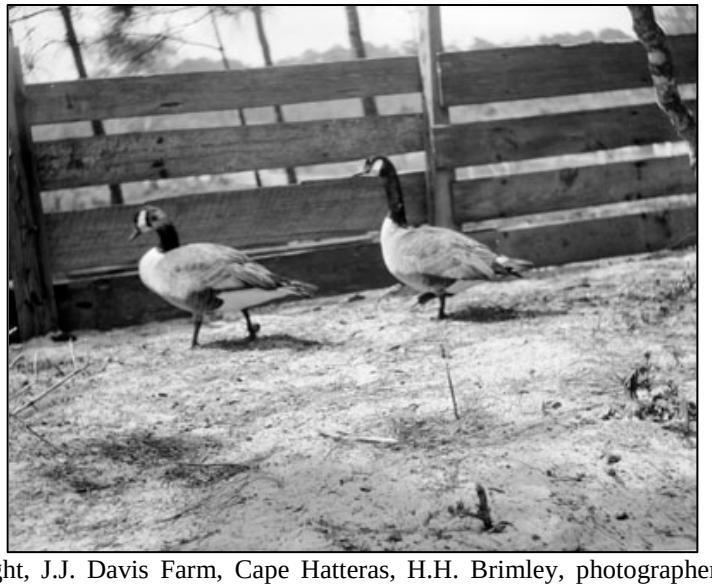
According to Ruth Scarborough Tate (1905-1999) of Duck, folks built fences around their houses to keep livestock out, not in, so they would not ruin their gardens and damage their houses by rubbing against them. The forced-fencing law was therefore called the "no fence law" by natives, she said, because they no longer had to build fences to keep the animals out (Tate 1986:18).

Herbert Hutchinson Brimley, the first curator of what was to become the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, photographed a menagerie of beasts—kept and free-ranging—on Hatteras Island between 1901 and 1909. They included cows, bulls, and calves, boars, sows, and piglets, and chickens, turkeys, and tamed wild geese.


Razorback hog on Cape Hatteras beach, ca.1905, at left, and penned sow and piglets, Cape Hatteras, ca.1900-1903, at right, H.H. Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Penned cow, chickens, and calf, at left, and wild scrub bull, at right, Cape Hatteras, ca.1900-1903, H.H. Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Penned turkey, 1909, at left, and tamed wild geese, 1905, at right, J.J. Davis Farm, Cape Hatteras, H.H. Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Elsie Hooper of Salvo, who was born in the mid-1930s, recalled the keeping, and eating, of livestock (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:596):

> [W]e had a man who lived up to the next village, Waves, that had cattle in a pound, now where they're building all them big houses up there, why they were what they call the cow pen. He would kill a beef, and sell it through the neighborhood here. I can remember him selling mom a piece of beef and all. Now, people in the neighborhood here had hogs. They had hogs. My dad had hogs, and they would kill 'em, and he'd make his own bacon, smoke his bacon, and his hams and things like that.

The family supplemented their meals—which might include beans and bread or potatoes and onions, as well as tea, coffee, and water—with other proteins they raised, shot, or gathered: "[W]e had our own eggs, and we had our bacon and stuff too, and ham, and all. We were allowed with the fowl, you know the geese and the ducks, daddy could kill that we could have that, and you know, clams, oysters . . . ."

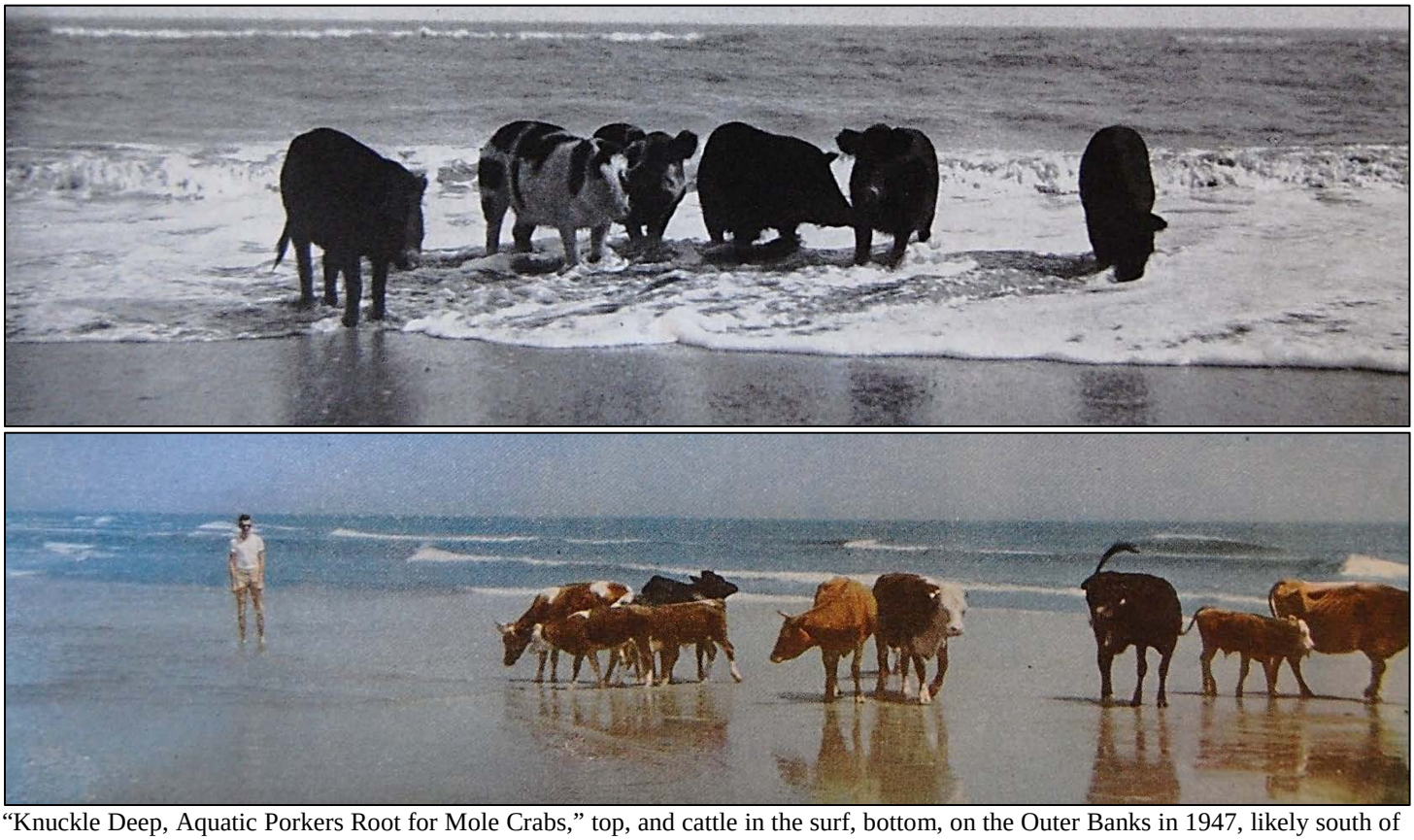
Similar memories of Hatteras' livestock came to the mind of Ephraim O'Neal, who was born in 1920, when he was interviewed in the early 2000s (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:825): "On Sunday if we were lucky somebody killed a beef, cattle would run free on the island then. There were horses, sheep and pigs. People would make pens, catch one of the pigs, put it into the pens, and kill it and then different one[s] would get some of the meat."

The parents of Ruby Gray Williams, Nelson and Betty Scarborough Gray, kept livestock as well. They traded a piece of land they owned in Frisco to a man from Hatteras Village for a jersey cow and calf: "Brought her up here and my mother would go out and milk her. She'd have a pan of soapy water and she'd go out there wash her tits and things off, and the calf would get on the other side and he'd start to get another tit you know, my mother'd shove his head away until she'd get so much milk, you know." Her mother also raised chickens in a screened coop. If she planned on cooking one, she would "put this chicken in there and feed her nothing but corn for three or four days before she killed her. Clean 'er out, you know, of all the bugs and everything that they got on the outside. Cause the chicken was the nastiest thing that were around, they'd eat anything" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:1070-1071). Williams' distaste with the keeping of livestock reached a head with the slaughter of a particular hog raised by her father:

> And he had hogs too. He had a hog he fattened up, and well they didn't want ta kill it, they you know, had him shot and cut up, and they used every part of that hog but his squeal. . . . And they'd salt, salt that meat you know. And I wouldn't never eat meat. I wouldn't never eat nothin' a part of a hog. And we cried and cried over that hog that somebody came here and killed and cut up.

With fencing laws, the keeping of livestock dramatically changed, for it was easier and cheaper to pen hogs, cattle, and sheep out than in. Maggie Mae Twiford, who was born in 1900, recalled many years later (Poyer 2012:20): "My daddy never had much money but he always raised a lot of stuff to eat around him. Even guineas. And hogs. He had a lot of hogs. We didn't have to buy no meat, no lard. The hogs went free till the new law, the fence law come in, and he had to get rid of them. The woods used to be full of hogs and cattle."

The law Twiford referred to outlawed—in 1937—the open grazing of all livestock on the Banks north of Hatteras Inlet. It was intended to protect the dunes and the nascent Cape Hatteras park, for it was believed that such grazing had deforested the Banks (Angley in Division of Coastal Management 1996:11). (In all likelihood, however, the Banks had never been notably forested (see Birkemeier, Dolan, and Fisher 1984.) Not only did the law require the building of pens, but penned animals needed to be fed, which added an additional expense to keeping stock. The increased expenses coupled with better transportation and easier access to meat led to the disappearance of livestock from the island in the mid-twentieth century (Garrity-Black et al. 2005a:124). The park rather than local needs drove the law, for the unusual circumstances of the Banks made enclosure laws unnecessary. Due to the water, pigs, hogs, sheep, and cattle could not wander far and rustlers could not easily spirit them away. Livestock faced no natural predators or modern dangers, such as wolves, trains, and speeding automobiles. And, with no farms, roving animals posed such a small threat to crops that Bankers rarely even felt the need to put up barbed wire fences (Pompe 2010:42).



"Knuckle Deep, Aquatic Porkers Root for Mole Crabs," top, and cattle in the surf, bottom, on the Outer Banks in 1947, likely south of Hatteras Inlet, John E. Fletcher, photographer (source: Guild, "Exploring America's Great Sand Barrier Reef")

Visiting the mainland, to trade for or purchase food, was also an option. (Buying food from Banks' stores, perhaps the simplest option, is discussed separately below.) One could always trade fish or game for various staples. References to men setting off in boats to trade appear in interviews, personal accounts, and even newspaper pieces on accidents (Lee 2008:74-75; *Coastland Times* 1959c; Foster and Balance 1976:38). One typical, matter-of-fact comment came from Olen Miller (1908-1979), the son of surfman Baxter Benjamin Miller, when he was interviewed in the mid-1970s. He related that in the late nineteenth century, fishing "was the only thing you could do down here," and that his father, before joined the Life-Saving Service in 1890, fished and traded: "They caught fish and went across the sound and traded it for corn and wheat" (Balance, Foster and Farrow 1976:40). Jennette Stowe (1893-1993) recalled that her husband, John Irvin (or Ervin) Stowe (ca.1879-1959), a fisherman and noted Hatteras Village boat builder, hauled his catch to the mainland (*Coastland Times* 1959c; Foster and Balance 1976:38): "My husband used to carry fish across the sound to sell 'em. He'd go off in the morning and come home, you know, and I'd help him clean the fish and then he'd go over to Hyde County, sell 'em, then come on back that night. And you see he had a little sail skiff. He didn't have no gas boat, just a sail skiff."

Some families took their cash rather than goods to the mainland to buy food and other necessities. Gack Austin, thinking back on the 1930s and early 1940s, recalled that he left Hatteras Island "just a few times a year and maybe twice a year we would go, my grandfather, and grandmother and myself, because he had a pickup truck that was fairly new. We would go to Elizabeth City and get flour, sugar these types of things in a hundred pound bag, and we would load the truck with that and bring it back, and that was for everybody, the family" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:30).

One food product that some Outer Bankers partook of was yaupon (or youpon) tea. Made from the leaves of a holly that thrived on the Banks, yaupon had been consumed ritually by Native Americans (as "black drink") across the Southeast as far west as Texas. Its attraction to Indians and Bankers alike was in part due to its high level of caffeine: it was a rare concentrated source of the stimulant amongst native North American plants. Into the early twentieth century, yaupon was closely associated with and generally treated as nearly exclusive to the Banks (Dunbar 1958:34-35; Crown et al. 2012).

Some Bankers produced the tea, which was only consumed locally, as a supplementary source of income. The portion of the 1860 Hyde County census that likely covered Hatteras or Ocracoke Island identified 33-year-old Asby Quidley as a

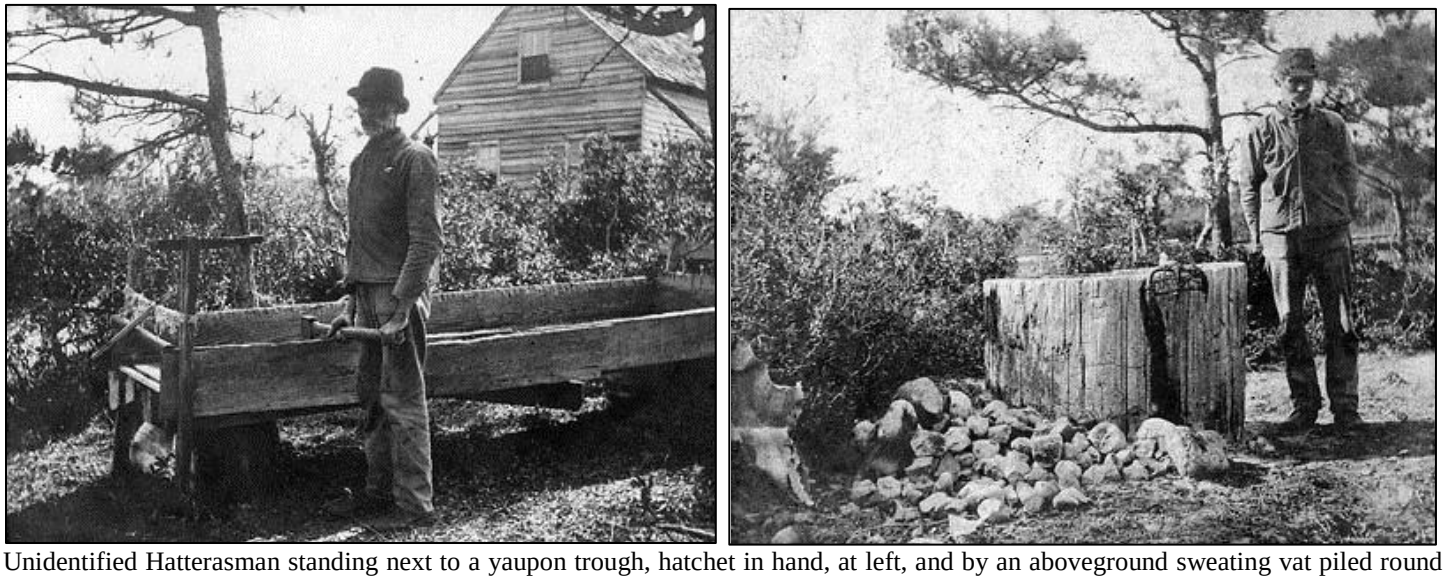
"yappan manuft" or yaupon manufacturer. If Quidley made a living processing the holly, he may have been unique. Samuel Alonzo Stowe (1876-1962) is more typical of its producers. He made yaupon tea on Hatteras Island in the 1930s and 1940s to supplement his Coast Guard income. According to his daughter, Evelyn Stowe McKinney, during most of his 31 years in the service Stowe was paid about $67.50 a month by the Guard. In 1976 McKinney described the process of making the tea (Winslow 1976:56):

> He cut it and chopped it and he was careful not to get any berries in it. He put it in a chopping trough and chopped it with a very sharp hatchet. He chopped about 3 or 4 bushels of youpon at a time. He then put it in a hole in the ground that he called a vat and it was lined with tin to keep the dirt out. While he was doing all the chopping and stuff he had rocks in a fire and when they got red hot he would throw them in the bottom of the vat on the sand and he put a piece of metal on top of it. A piece of canvas was put on top of the leaves and fastened tightly. Then the leaves would be left for 3 or 4 days to sweat. After the stones had cooled completely he then took out the leaves and spread them back out in the trough to dry, which took about a week. While it was drying he would turn it all around and at night he would cover it with a piece of canvas to keep off the dew or any other things that might harm it or cause it to mildew. The next day when the sun came out again he uncovered it and turned it and when it was through it was a nice brown color. When it was dry he would measure it with a measure that had a gallon on one end and a peck on the other and when it was measured it was ready to be sold.

For 11 years Stowe made and sold the yaupon tea for 25 cents a gallon or 50 cents a peck. He relied on it for cash to buy necessities such as flour, sugar, and milk. Other items the family produced. They grew all of their own vegetables and had chickens and hogs that they cured themselves. McKinney recalled that her mother, Elizabeth B. Austin Stowe (1879-1954), made her own soap and butter, but had nothing to do with yaupon processing. When help was needed, the children lent a hand.

McKinney also described the equipment her father used. The trough that he built was about eight feet long and two feet wide, with sides five or six inches high and open ends through which to slide out the chopped leaves and twigs into a basket. Six- or eight-foot posts he drove into the ground supported the trough at about waist level. He used the same heavy trough for more than a decade of chopping, smoothing it out as needed. The stones, gathered from the beach or donated, he heated on an old cook stove. Using split 50-pound lard tins, he fashioned the metal sheets that lined the belowground vat and protected the yaupon from direct contact with the super-heated stones. He stored the cured yaupon in barrels until he sold it in gallon or peck bags.

Stowe stopped making the tea in 1947 when he moved to Manteo. Although there are no photographs of him making yaupon, there are images of a man from Cape Hatteras who utilized an almost identical process at the opening of the twentieth century. An image does survive of Stowe, however, in his expansive garden on Hatteras (see above).



Unidentified Hatterasman standing next to a yaupon trough, hatchet in hand, at left, and by an aboveground sweating vat piled round with rocks, at right, ca.1906, H.H. Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Government Work: Keeping Lighthouses, Saving Lives, and other Federal Jobs

During his 1874-1875 canoe trip along the Dare County Outer Banks and the barrier islands to the north and south, Nathaniel Bishop identified three groups of working people—fishermen, waterfowl hunters, and federal employees. On Hatteras Island in particular he met federal workers. They included lighthouse keepers, lifesavers, and even an employee of the U.S. Signal Service working on installing a telegraph line from Norfolk south to Cape Hatteras. On top of his personal encounters, Bishop relied on charts produced by the U.S. Coastal Survey to determine his safest course of passage. Lee (2008:31-33) digs more deeply into the role of the government in such a remote place:

> [T]he increasing federal presence on the banks also shaped the communities Bishop found and their response to his presence. The 1870s was a decade of great transition for people along the Carolina coast. The federal government was busy building new and larger lighthouses across the banks and expanding the Lifesaving Service, which became the economic lifeblood of several villages. The same waterways that allowed Bishop easy access to North Carolina from the north also allowed wildfowl and fresh fish to be efficiently shipped out, and the years that Bishop travelled coincided with a dramatic local transition toward a commercial economy.
>
> . . . The outer banks that Bishop witnessed were the products of both governmental projects and locals' shaping of place, each seeking to use the land in varying ways for productive purposes. Knowledge and understanding of the land diverged between local familiarity and abstract generalization, illustrated well by Bishop and his maps. Those toiling in the sun to tend gardens, shoot wildfowl, or drag a net through the sounds had a very different perspective than those in administrative centers. Colonial and state officials were much more interested in regional commerce than the productivity of local environments, and they sought to alter the islands and their inlets in the interest of maritime trade. But by the late 19th century, federal and local purposes increasingly intertwined as governmental employment offered new ways to labor for pay.

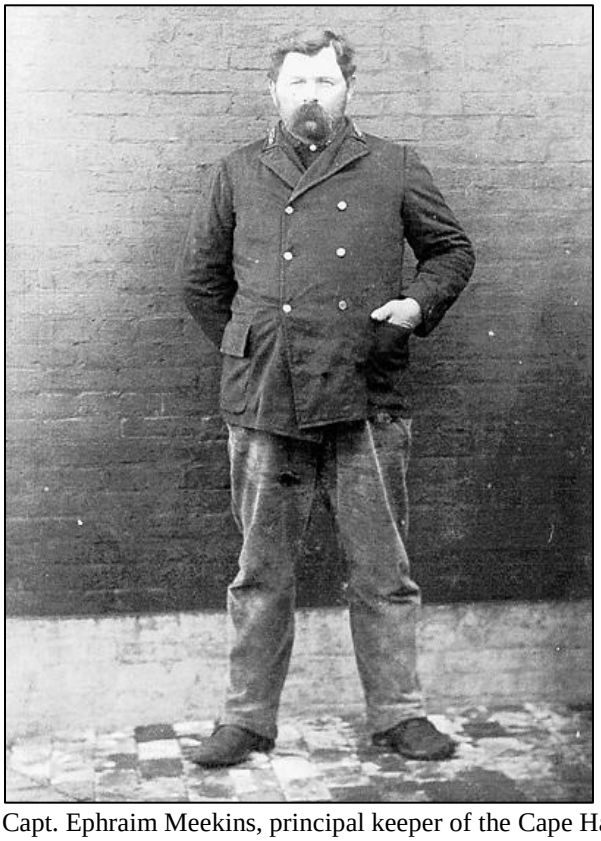
The late nineteenth century was certainly a turning point for federal employment on Hatteras Island. In 1870 only six men identified themselves to census takers as lighthousemen, who labored for the federal Lighthouse Board, and no men worked yet for the U.S. Life Saving Service. Federal employment on the island was therefore minimal, apparently limited to the men at the Hatteras light and the local inspector of customs, Homer W. Styron.

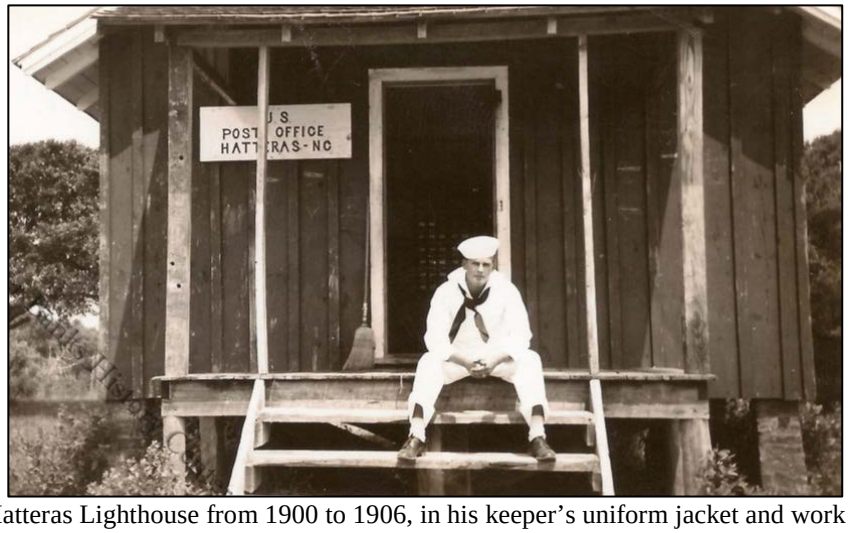
By 1900 the federal government was a significant employer on the island. Four or five men stated that they were employed as keepers, at various levels, of the Hatteras Lighthouse. Another four or five were lifesaving station keepers. Additionally, 19 surfmen lived in Hatteras Township and 24 in Kinnakeet Township. The more than 50 jobs provided by the federal government at the lighthouse and lifesaving stations accounted for about one out of every eight jobs on Hatteras Island.

Willard Gray, who was born in Avon in 1913, recalled to Susan West in the early 2000s that Coast Guard jobs were good jobs (Blake-Garrity 2005c:521):

> WG: . . . The big livers around Avon at that time were the Coast Guard. There was Creeds Hill, Durants, Cape Hatteras, Big Kinnakeet, Little Kinnakeet, Gull Shoals, Oregon Inlet. They had an average of eight to twelve men in a crew. At that time they were the big livers. A day's pay in the Coast Guard at that time was $60 a month; that's what I got in the Coast Guard. Sixty dollars then is as much as $500 is now. . . .
>
> SW: . . . So the Coast Guard was pretty good, I mean, a steady check.
>
> WG: That was all there was here. The fishermen wasn't hardly doing anything. My father got out of the Coast Guard when I was probably 12 years old. He came home and got him a stand of shad nets, they called it, and he fished two or three times. He left them sitting in the sound and went back to the Coast Guard.

The lighthouse and lifesaving services, eventually folded together into the Coast Guard, were the biggest federal employers on Hatteras Island, but not the only ones. Censuses from the first half of the twentieth century identify Hatteras Islanders working for a number of national entities, including the U.S. Navy, Weather Service, Radio Service, and Postal Service.





Capt. Ephraim Meekins, principal keeper of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse from 1900 to 1906, in his keeper's uniform jacket and work pants, at left, and unidentified sailor at Hatteras Village post office, no date, at right (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Among the most respected federal servants, and certainly the ones with the highest profile and the most lore, were the surfmen and keepers of the Life-Saving Services. The history and bravery of these men have been recorded in depth in numerous publications. The following photographs of members of the service on Hatteras Island, and accounts of the life of the legendary Little Bannister Midgett III, touch upon the subject.

An eloquent obituary captures the life and death of the larger-than-life Coast Guard lifesaver Little Bannister Midgett (1852-1928) (*Independent* 1928):

> Capt. L. Bannister Midgett, Dare County's foremost hero of the surf and one of the most picturesque figures of the coastland, died Thursday afternoon while sitting serenely in his chair at the home of his son at Bodie Island Coast Guard Station near here. He was 76 years old last May 30. For many year[s] Captain Midgett has been know[n] as the dean of American Coast Guards. The end came suddenly with the shifting winds on the coast and a change of weather that presaged the return of days such as those when Captain Midgett was making his record as a surfman. He had weathered hundreds of storms and his record as a lifesaver embraced a half-century during which time he attended more than 100 wrecks on the beach and assisted in saving over 1000 people from watery graves on the storm-swept coast. Captain Midgett was born at Salvo. Early in life he became keeper of the lifesaving station at Chicamacomico and for 30 years was the leading citizen of the isolated community. He was doctor, preacher, teacher, and general arbiter of all disputes. As a surfman he knew no peer. His record was the most outstanding of his day and the work of his station crew was famed far and wide. Universally loved and respected, not even headquarters of the service interfered with his work and he came smiling through 32 investigations inspired by jealous natives. One time when called to task for an unkempt station, he dismissed his commanding officer by saying, "I'm a surfman. It is my business to save lives. If you want a housekeeper,

> get one of the old women in the neighborhood to keep house here for $10 a month." The veteran Coast Guard retired on a pension 13 years ago but he never strayed far from the sound of the surf. The wildest days were his days and on the broad waters of the Pamlico would be seen his little fishing vessel.

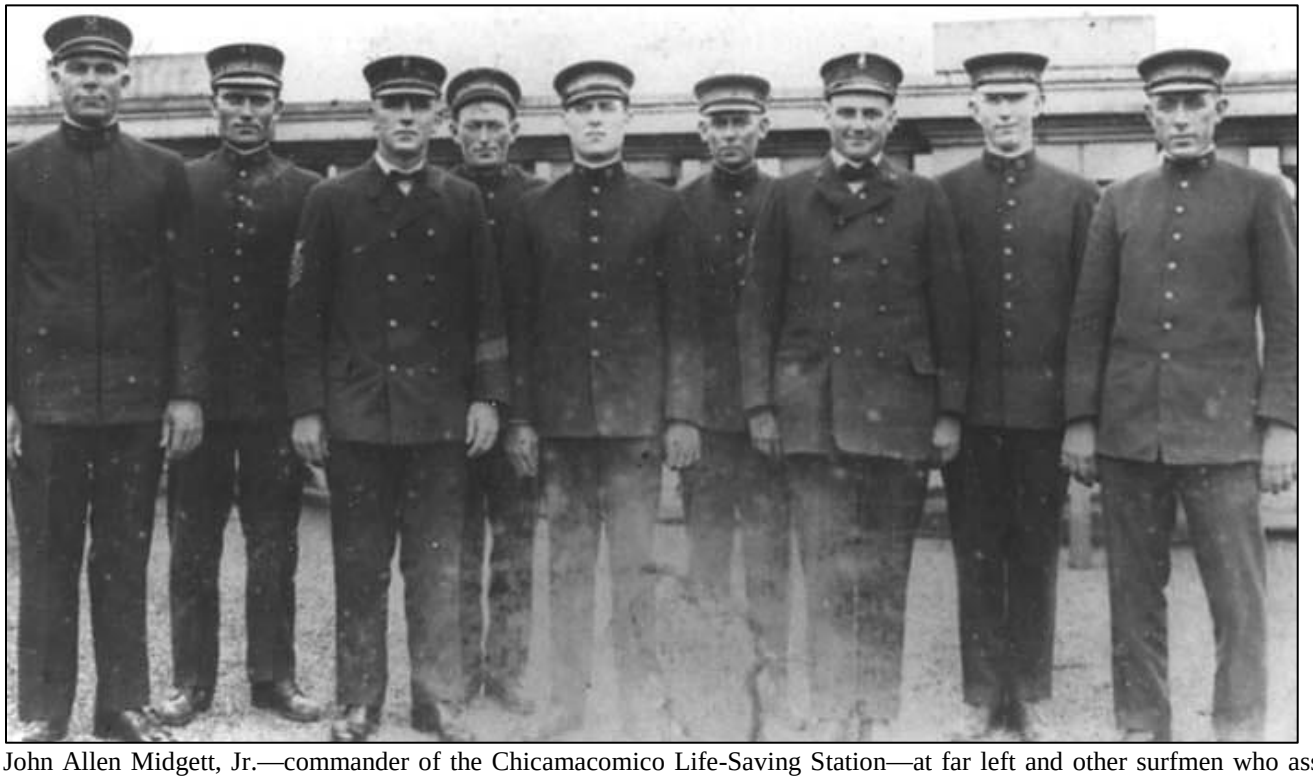
The *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography* account of Midgett, drawn in part from Coast Guard records and his logbooks, accents Midgett's lineage and, family name aside, sheer raw power (Wechter 1991:267-268):

> Midgett was a mighty man with an oar. He had an instinctive knowledge of the sea and how to use an oar in a surfboat. His logbook, in which he wrote most often in private, reflects a simplicity and directness that never shows a consciousness of his own heroism. His feats in a surfboat are legend. Of all the "Mighty Midgetts," he safely can be called the Paul Bunyan, because so many traditions have grown out of his life. A proud, yet humble man, he was descended from a long line of Outer Banks Midgetts who were not afraid of anything in the sea or out of it. It would be difficult to list all the shipwrecks in which he participated as a lifesaver. Perhaps no one will ever know for sure the exact number of lives he saved. In 1881 he rescued six survivors from the rigging of the stranded Thomas J. Lancaster, which broke up in a hurricane off Chicamacomico. When the George L. Fessenden broke into pieces off the Outer Banks in 1898, Midgett fired his Lyle gun, placing the line almost in the hands of the sailors hanging onto the boom. However, the seamen were unable to grab it because the vessel suddenly disintegrated, killing two crewmen with debris and knocking the others into the churning waters. Midgett, with his surfmen, heaved lines and succeeded in dragging three survivors from the surf.

"Midgett's philosophy," the account continues, "was the traditional one of the Outer Banks lifesavers: 'Regulations say you have to go out; regulations do not say anything about coming back.'"

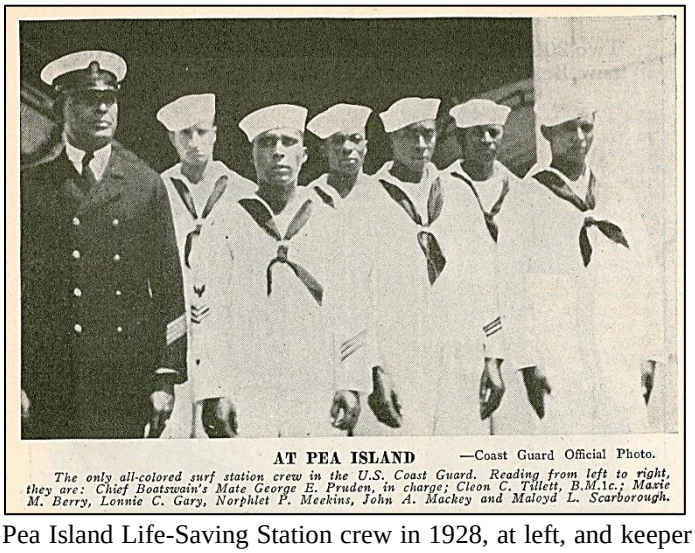
No image of Midgett was identified with certainty, but those of keepers and surfmen of his time suggest the physical presence that all accounts say he was possessed of.

Kitty Hawk Life-Saving Station men, 1900, from left to right: Robert Lee Griggs, Robert Fulton Sanderlin, Thomas Edward Hines, Joseph Baum (cook), Samuel J. Payne, James Riley Best, and Thomas Nelson Sanderlin, and companion dog, Brown (source: Eastern North Carolina Digital History Exhibits, Wright Brothers Exhibit, East Carolina University)



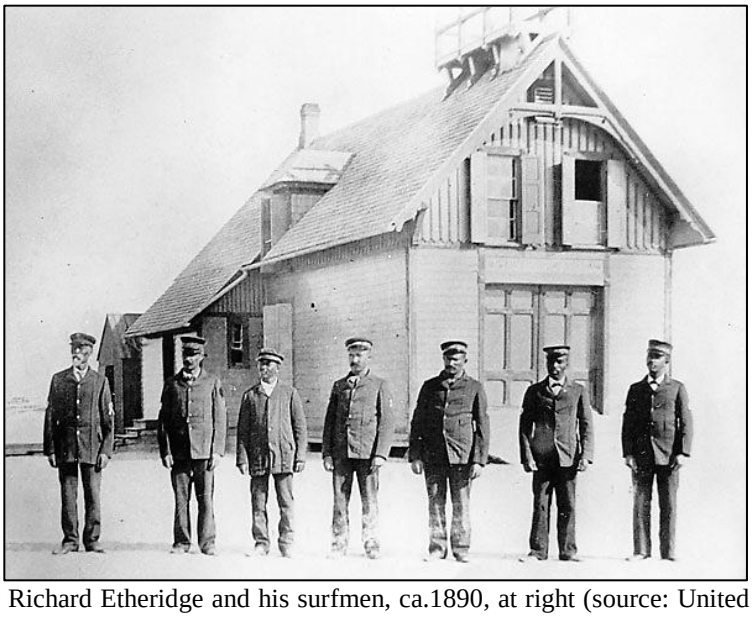
John Allen Midgett, Jr.—commander of the Chicamacomico Life-Saving Station—at far left and other surfmen who assisted in the rescue of 42 men from the *Mirlo*, a British tanker torpedoed by a submarine off the Outer Banks on August 16, 1918 (source: Midgette, "Capt. John Allen Midgett & The Mirlo Rescue")

Not all lifesavers were white, at least on Hatteras Island. Photographs of the crew of the Pea Island Life-Saving Station, the only all-black station in the service, show the same fearless resolution as that of their white counterparts. They were distinct, however, in their sole reliance on the Pea Island station, for few if any other government jobs were open to African-Americans throughout the first half of the twentieth century on the Banks. (The Pea Island men are addressed further below.)



AT PEA ISLAND —Coast Guard Official Photo.

The only all-colored surf station crew in the U.S. Coast Guard. Reading from left to right, they are: Chief Boatswain's Mate George E. Pruden, in charge; Cleon C. Tillett, B.M.1c.; Maxie M. Berry, Lonnie C. Gary, Norphlet P. Meekins, John A. Mackey and Maloyd L. Scarborough.



Pea Island Life-Saving Station crew in 1928, at left, and keeper Richard Etheridge and his surfmen, ca.1890, at right (source: United States Coast Guard, "Station Pea Island, North Carolina")

During the Depression the federal government additionally provided temporary employment for many men and some women on the Outer Banks, both locals and outsiders. Willard Grandy Gray, Jr. (1913-2006) recalled the Depression-era

work that his brother did with the CCC, out of camps in Buxton and Manteo, and that he accomplished for the Works Progress Administration or WPA. As an elderly man, he provided great detail on their efforts around Cape Hatteras (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:501):

> Well they [the CCC workers] built these sand fences and planted grass, and they worked around where the old lighthouse used to be. It was all rocks where the lighthouse, you know the old one? My brother, he used to tell me about seeing these large cottonmouth snakes around them rocks when they were working in there. They used to have them CC camps. They had, I imagine they had, I imagine they had probably 75 or 100 people. They was working, then they had a, what they call a transit camp. That was a different; they lived on barges up in Rodanthe. I worked on that WPA; they called it, Work Progress Administration. I was driving a truck, working with a truck driver, and I did a lot of the driving. We would haul these green myrtle bushes from Rodanthe down to the beach there, you know. Then they'd build these sand fences, where they built the dikes. That's why I say I could stand in that door and see cars go up and down the wash of the beach. There wasn't any dikes or anything down there. . . .
>
> No dunes at all. . . .

Gray did not make much with the WPA—"$10.56 every two weeks, forty hours"—but he did not go hungry (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:506): "I'd go home and I'd go get $10 worth of groceries. You could get a big box of groceries for $10 then. They always said you could take a wheelbarrow full of, if you take $10, go to the store, and get a wheelbarrow full of groceries. Now you have to have a wheelbarrow full of money to get a small box of groceries."

The WPA provided work not only for men on the Outer Banks. According to Willard Gray, the agency also set up sewing jobs for about eight or ten women in Avon, who worked out of the old store or warehouse of Charles Williams. (The 1930 census identifies Charlie Williams as Avon's postmaster.) The WPA gave the women material for making shirts and other items. It paid them "a little bit" and provided with some training. (According to Williams, whose wife briefly worked with the women, at least one of them needed the teaching: he recalled seeing a man in one of their shirts that had its pocket set under the arm.) Some food apparently came with the jobs as well, Williams remembered (Garrity-Blake et al. 523-524): "They had sewing, and they gave sewing lessons in that same building where they have that warehouse down there. They used to bring food down here, this WPA. They'd bring tubs of butter, beans, and potatoes in barrels. . . . They had canned hamburger, beans, meal, flour, and stuff like that." No images of these seamstresses have been identified, but one from a few years later depicts a group of women who worked in a sewing room in Buxton during World War II. They made clothes and distributed them to those in need.

Buxton volunteers who made clothes for those in need during World War II, including Louria Dailey Midgett, seated at far left, and Lonie Bragg Conkey Tolson, standing at far right (source: Gamiel, "Buxton Seamstresses")

Daniel Willis of Hatteras Island also had memories of the CCC and the WPA, when interviewed in 2003, that merged into distaste with the National Park Service (Garrity-Blake et al. 1119):

> CCC's come in right about the time WPA did, that Civilian Conservation Corps. They come in. They had a camp up here in Buxton. And they built sand fences. And those sand fences was put all down the beach, that's what build the sand dunes. They, you had one crew maybe up in Currituck would cut brush. They clear a field out for the farmers. And they use the brush and limbs and stuff to make those old fences. And they'd bring them down. If the Park Service would use that system now, they wouldn't have to worry so much about these beaches. But they're afraid they'll ruin the beauty of the beach by putting stuff out. They ruther for [it] to go away than try to save it.

Opinions on the National Park Service and maintenance of the beaches under its control course through the interviews conducted by Barbara Garrity-Blake and her researchers in the early 2000s (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c). Taking their measure is well beyond the scope of this study. A carefully considered environmental history of the Banks that addresses these and many other issues—Gabriel Francis Lee's (2008) *Constructing the Outer Banks: Land Use, Management, and Meaning in the Creation of an American Place*—can be accessed online, however, at http://repository.lib.ncsu.edu/ir/bitstream/1840.16/2509/1/etd.pdf.

Other Ways to Make a Living on the Banks

The water and the federal government were major providers of food, jobs, status, and much else of what it took to get by and even thrive on Dare County's Outer Banks. They could provide some respite from the isolation and some protection from the dangers of life there. They could not provide the solace and comfort of family and community, but certainly made life easier for many. Going out on the water or working for the government were not the only means, however, of making or at least supplementing one's living. Bankers engaged in many activities, commonplace and distinct to the place, in order to maintain their hold on their Banks.

In 1870 about 39 individuals on Hatteras Island were servants. They were largely white girls in their teens and twenties, although their numbers included two older black domestic servants in Kinnakeet Township who had likely once been slaves. One was Celia Gray, aged 40, who lived in a Gray family household. The other was 45-year-old Catherine Pain, who lived in the home of Benjamin R. and Jane M. O'Neal, the only African-American household on Hatteras Island. The 1900 census identified only five servants, all white, on Hatteras Island. By 1930, there were but five identified servants, all of whom were white, along the entire length of Dare County's Outer Banks.

An equally venerable activity was running a store. From 1870 on, and without a doubt before, there were merchants in Dare County's various Banks' villages. The 1870 census listed one merchant in Kinnakeet Township and three along with a clerk in Hatteras Township. Kinnakeet also include in 1870 one curious merchant of a sort, 39-year-old Charles Thomas. Not only was he Hatteras Island's only huckster (or peddler). He was its only non-North Carolina-born resident. (Thomas' place of birth was New Jersey.) The 1900 census records named five merchants in Kinnakeet Township and two or three in Hatteras Township.

The more detailed census schedules of 1930 identify the range of merchants in Dare's Outer Banks. Every community had at least one, ranging from one to three in Frisco, Duck, Salvo, Rodanthe, Kitty Hawk, and Colington, to five in Buxton and 14 in Hatteras Village. These merchants variously identified their businesses as dry goods stores, grocery stores and even, in Colington and Kitty Hawk, as department stores. The stores in Hatteras Village in the 1930s and early 1940s included those of Ander Austin, Rance Oden, John Meekins, Reuben Ballance, Irish Willis, Dolph Burrus, Dan Oden, Millard Stowe, and Ben Austin. Other businesses in the village at the time included the fish houses, out in the sound, of Meekins, Burrus, Willis, and Rance Oden, which demonstrated that owning a fish house went hand in hand with owning a store. Among other dry-land enterprises were Lauren Ballance's pool room (in the center of the village next to the school yard), Damon Gray's barber shop, a movie house, an entertainment pavilion near the Atlantic View Motel owned by Ellsworth Ballance, and Willie Newsome's dancehall and nightspot, The Beacon. Another dancehall/nightspot, in Buxton, went by the name of the Bloody Bucket. The evocative name was due to the carousing and fighting that occasionally

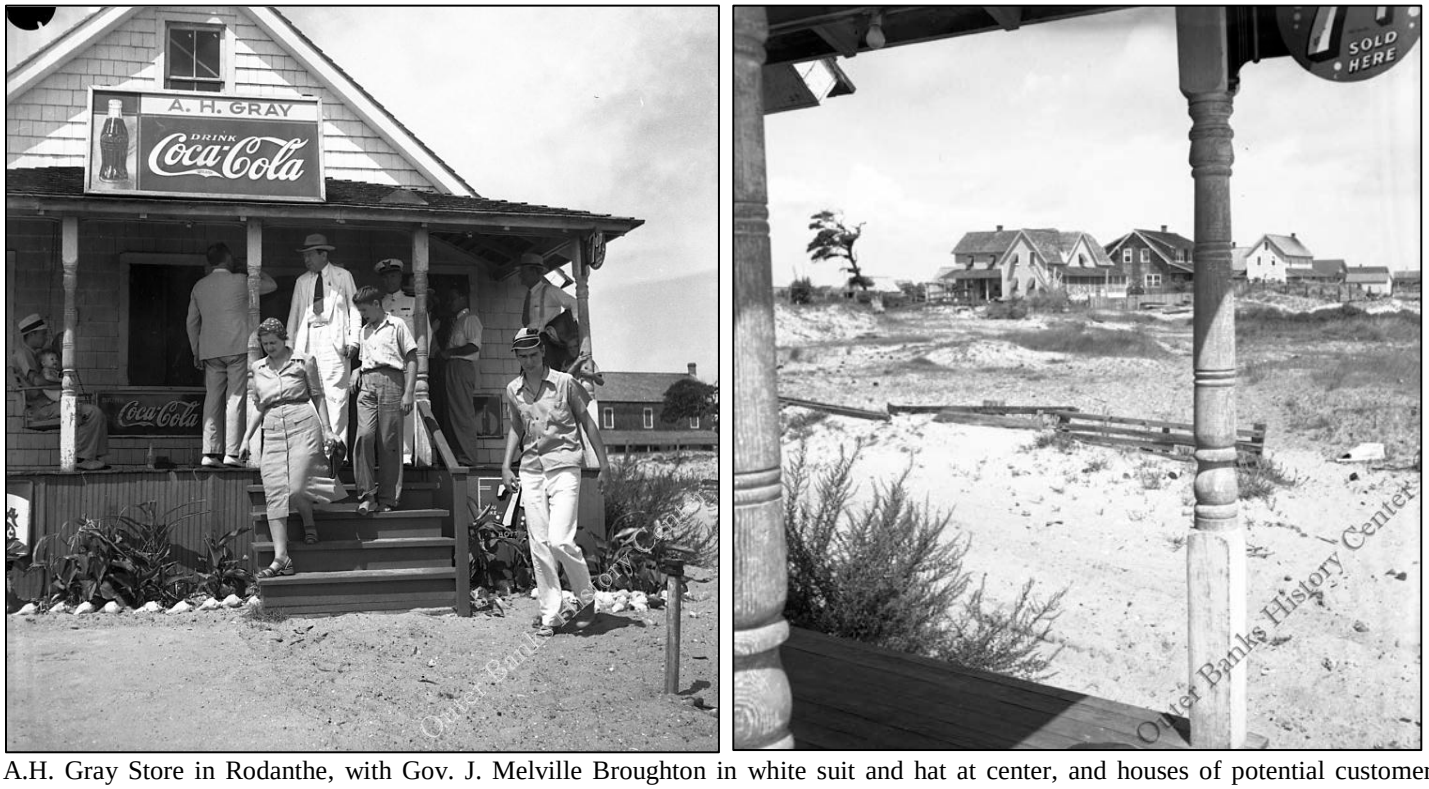
occurred there following the consumption of bootleg liquor that had found its way across the sounds from East Lake in Tyrrell County or elsewhere on the mainland (Morgan 2001:67-73).

The characterization of Outer Banks stores differed widely, perhaps depending on which side of the counter one stood on. While two merchants chose to call their establishments "department stores," Gack Austin questioned whether those in Salvo in the 1930s and 40s even merited the appellation "general stores." During an interview with researcher Jennifer Miller, he engaged in the following exchange (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:29):

> GA: … Down by Lesley [Hooper]'s house, his grandparents on his mother's side, they had a store there [Aaron W. Hooper's] and his aunt had a store. It was a little building, maybe 15, 18 feet wide by 25 foot long and it stored some can goods and stuff. Again, no refrigeration so you could not store anything that wasn't self-contained.
>
> JM: Sure, so it was can goods. I guess dry goods too. Did they sell things besides food in these stores?
>
> GA: Not that I'm aware of. That was the type of thing where, it's a misnomer really, it's called a store rather than using the word storehouse, that's about what it was because they didn't open up and people came and went; when you needed something you went and got it. You went in the building and got whatever you needed.

John Morgan (2001:70-71) recalled that in the 1930s/early 1940s period, Millard Stowe operated a grocery out of an old kitchen standing to the rear of his Hatteras Village home.

Joyce Ersie Midgett Rucker, who in 1932 was born in Rodanthe and grew up there, also recalled stores, and flexible hours, in the upper-island communities of Hatteras. Among others, Rowan Midgett and Sudie Payne had stores in Rodanthe and Asa Gray ran one in Waves. Her father, Theodore "Stockton" Midgett, Sr. (1894-1934), started the family's Rodanthe store about 1936 to serve members of the Civilian Conservation Corps. (Among Stockton Midgett's other enterprises before his untimely death was the initiation of Hatteras Island's first bus service.) The store, run solely by family members, "more or less opened when needed" during the day and at night when called for. It mostly carried dried and canned goods, general groceries, and toiletries, supplemented by a weekly truck delivery of bread, milk, and fresh meat. An icebox kept produce and drinks cool, and when electricity came, the store added ice cream to its stock. The store was also the only place in Rodanthe other than the lifesaving station that had a telephone. The Midgetts kept track of purchases in a ledger and most people paid up at the end of each month. If a family was in difficulty, they received credit. Rucker recalled that the store closing about 1952, not long after she had finished business school up in Norfolk (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:998-999 and 2005a:82). The obituary of her mother, Ersie Midgett Midgett (1893-1977), however, stated that Mrs. Midgett owned and operated a store in Rodanthe until retiring in 1963. The confluence of the date the Bonner Bridge opened and the Midgett store closed was likely not a coincidence. Easy off-island access would have been another nail in the coffin of the Hatteras Island general store.



A.H. Gray Store in Rodanthe, with Gov. J. Melville Broughton in white suit and hat at center, and houses of potential customers viewed from porch, ca.1941 (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Merchant George O'Neal and retired Coast Guardsman and customer George H. Meekins at O'Neal's Avon store in 1955, at least in part gussied up with models of ships for the new wave of tourists, J. Baylor Roberts, photographer (source: Anderson, "October Holiday on the Outer Banks")

Even store ownership on the Banks was not without its dangers. Ignatius S. Midgett (1872-1937) of Rodanthe went into the mercantile business after he retired from the Coast Guard. He left the business after "the storm of '33 wiped away both store and stock of goods" (*Dare County Times* 1937).

As Joyce Rucker noted, trucks often brought goods to stores. Before he left Hatteras Island in 1950 just before a road was paved down its center, Bert Austin used to work with a man who "brought produce down." He recalled: [W]e'd go to Norfolk and load a big truck and then start back with it. I always told him we were stuck [in the sand] more than we were travelling" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:11). Stores were also supplied by freight boats, which could do double duty hauling store provisions and fish. While reminiscing about fish houses in the sound just outside of Hatteras Village's harbor, Mildred Willis recalled: "The freight boats would put off freight merchandise for the stores and then they would pick up fish and boxes and take them to market. That went on a long time." Her husband Daniel added: "Yeah they'd bring freight in, and they'd load it on horse and carts and take it to the stores, deliver it to the stores" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:1153):

A 1948 publication trumpeting the advantages of Roanoke Island identifies two freight services. One, the Eastern Carolina Transportation Co., operated the steamer *Trenton* daily between the company's Elizabeth City headquarters and Nags Head and Manteo. The steamer carried mail and could accommodate 108 passengers and several hundred tons of freight. The *Trenton* had replaced a "small gas boat" only the previous year (Scott 1948:5). The Globe Fish Company of Elizabeth City also ran a steamer, the *Guide*, from that coastal port to Roanoke Island. The steamer served passengers and gave "the fishermen of the sounds a daily route for marketing fish." Greatly bolstering the utility of the Globe Fish line to the fishermen of Hatteras Island were the four gas-propelled boats it daily ran "up and down the sound, touching at all points between Elizabeth City and Hatteras" (Scott 1948:16).

Advertisement describing the services of and depicting the *Trenton*, 1926, at left, and, at right, Captain Martin L. Johnson (1872-1959), Roanoke Island native and president of Eastern Carolina Transportation, no date (sources: *Independent*, 1927 and North Carolina Collection, East Carolina University, at left, and *Coastland Times*, 1959d, at right)

The censuses of 1870, 1900, and 1930 identify a small number of occupations with few members. These include carpenters (some labeled as house builders, a few others as boat builders), mechanics, and teachers. Teaching was essentially the only occupation open to women during these years other than midwivery. Although the censuses name some male teachers, pictures of children gathered in front of their schools invariably include female teachers. The censuses also always named at least a few professionals—ministers and physicians, but no lawyers—on the Banks. One of the ministers was Kenneth R. Pugh (1831-1936) (*Coastland Times* 2010a). His obituary reported that he was also the longtime postmaster of Salvo and "known as the father of his community" (*Dare County Times* 1936b), another example of the many-tasking Outer Banker.


Buxton school, ca.1900-1905, with female teacher standing to the side of her charges, at left, and Rodanthe school with teacher Lucretia Evelyn Midgett at center, ca.1943; note: 35 of the 36 individuals in the Rodanthe photograph (one is unidentified) were named Midgett (source: H.H. Brimley Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and Midgett, "Rodanthe School," at right)

Two ways of making a living that in the mid-/late twentieth century supplanted the water and the government—tourism and real estate—were in their infancy on Hatteras Island prior to the opening of the Bonner Bridge. Tourism had an early if limited history on the Outer Banks. From the eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century, some non-Bankers visited the Nags Head area to avoid the insalubrities of eastern North Carolina summers. George Higby Throop described, in the guise of fiction, his visit with an inland planter family in the 1840s (Seaworthy 1850:46-47):

> The "season" at NAG'S HEAD, in the summer of 184-, was a gay one. The spring and summer had been unhealthy, and, early in July, family after family packed up the necessary household conveniences, got on board the little packets, and were speedily domiciled at their respective homes on the sea-side. The hotel was thronged. Scores of children and youth, whole regiments of young ladies and young gentlemen came thronging on, until the worthy innkeeper stood aghast. . . . As a matter of course, among such a throng, there was no lack of amusements. The mornings were spent at the bowling-alley, in fishing, or fox-hunting. The dinner and the siesta occupied the afternoon; and tea and the toilet occupied the time until a venerable negro, after a few preliminary turns of the screws, gave forth the startling, thrilling, life-awakening notes of his violin. Presto! change!
>
> In came the dancers, the sets were made up, and, with a tone such as new-created sheriffs shout "O yes!" "O yes!" at the sessions of the most worshipful the Court of Common Pleas, the sable musician exclaimed BALANCE ALL! And the evenings amusements were begun. . . .

Historian Guion Griffis Johnson (1937:188) wrote that in colonial times some residents of eastern North Carolina shifted to the coast during the summer to escape heat, malaria, and what they called the "miasma." He also quoted an 1853 article from the *Southern Weekly Post* that ranked Nags Head up with Saratoga, Cape May, Niagara, and other "watering places and fashionable resorts of the Union." The *Post* was published in Raleigh, however, and likely gave Nags Head too much credit as an attraction. The author of an 1860 piece in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine*, a national publication, averred that Nags Head was frequented by residents of eastern North Carolina during "the bilious season," but that "before travelers from other States hear any thing about this interval of daylight the three months have passed, and darkness settles once more on the waters. Save to North Carolinians, the spot thus remains absolutely unvisited." Roanoke Island, "that lonely isle in Albemarle Sound, is so unfamiliar," he wrote, "that the mapmakers often forget to label it." He added, "A wilder country than the Banks cannot be imagined" (Bruce 1860:722-723).

Other than hunting at exclusive clubs (discussed separately below), the Outer Banks beyond Nags Head did not see tony visitors like those in Throop's book until the late twentieth century. Those who stopped at remote spots such as Hatteras

Island were much more likely to be outdoorsmen or individuals with family connections, such as Wilma Langley Brewer (Brewer 2007).

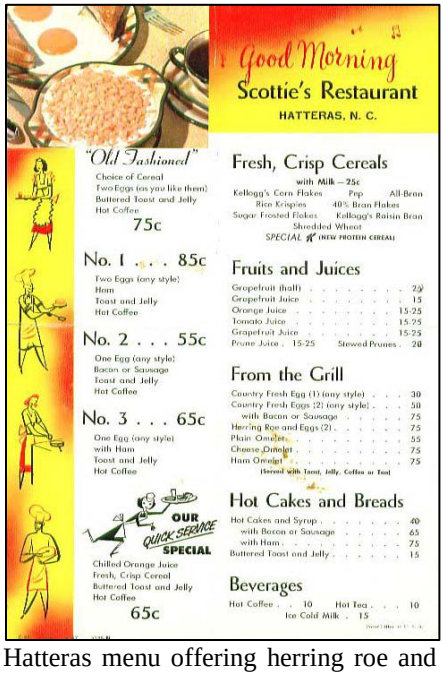
Outer Banker Lorena Pearl Bragg Midgett, in dress, and Georgia visitor Wilma Langley Brewer, in bathing suit, late 1940s/early 1950s (source: Ianuario, "Welcome to Buxton!")

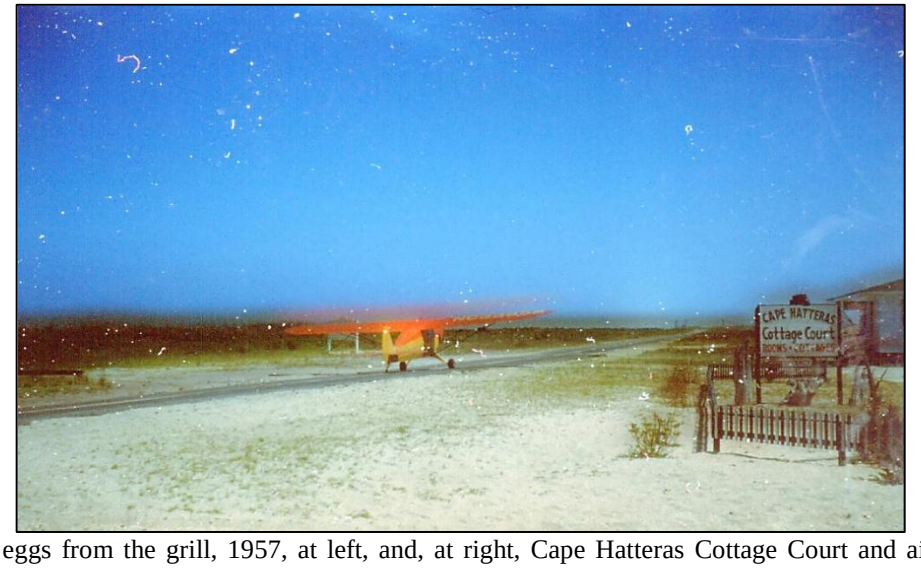
Although tourism was quite limited on Hatteras Island prior to the 1963 bridge opening, it was not entirely absent, particularly in the 1950s and early 1960s, when the roads were paved and the ferry service greatly improved. Growth between 1950 and 1955 was dramatic when compared with earlier times, in all likelihood due to the improvements. In 1950 Marion Shuffler, a representative of the National Park Service, wrote a report assessing how the Outer Banks had changed since the national seashore was authorized in 1938. He concluded that the Banks were only a bit less isolated than they had been when the original park prospectus had been created (Mork 2001:49). State-issued tourism pamphlets of 1951, 1953, and 1955, however, capture a budding industry on Hatteras Island. According to the 1951 publication, "Getting to the Banks is no great problem, but the going can be rugged. . . . The bus trip, despite the relief of the new hard-surfaced road part of the way, is rough. After leaving U.S. 158 just below Nags Head, you have to negotiate nine miles of bumping, twisting sand trails down Bodie Island to Oregon Inlet (crossed by free ferry) and 17 miles of sand from the Inlet to the start of the paving a mile north of Rodanthe". One could find accommodations on the island in Buxton "at a boarding house or cabins" or in Hatteras Village at the "small comfortable" Atlantic View Hotel operated by Mr. and Mrs. William "Scottie" Gibson. Hatteras also offered "rooms for visitors at several homes" (State Advertising Division 1951:7).

The 1953 pamphlet had grown to 16 pages, twice the size of its predecessor. It included a section titled "Highway to Hatteras" that trumpeted the newly paved road and even included before and after photographs. It also carried a photograph of Capt. Ernal Foster with a blue marlin he caught, capturing the Banks on the cusp of a sportfishing boom. The pamphlet further listed a larger number of accommodations at more locations. One could stay at Toby Tillett's hotel and eat at his restaurant on the north side of Oregon Inlet on Bodie Island; at the Cape Hatteras Hotel in Avon; at the eight-unit Cape Hatteras Cottage Court or Mrs. Maude White's apartments in Buxton; and, in Hatteras, not only at the Atlantic View Hotel, but also at the ten-unit Durant's Tourist Court or apartments maintained by A.S. Austin and Dan Oden (State News Bureau 1953). When a potential Pittsburgh tourist asked the *Pittsburgh Press* in 1955 where he and a buddy could stay while fishing for "big red drum" on Hatteras, the paper suggested the Atlantic View or Durant's Tourist Court. (The writer may have been intrigued by big Banks' drum after reading pieces by Johnny Mock, the *Press*' Outdoor Editor. Along with the paper's Sports Editor, Chester L. "Chet" Smith, Mock had been fishing from Hatteras Village since before World War II. He likely provided the names of the recommended accommodations as well (Carlson 2005:58; Mock 1946; *Pittsburgh Press* 1973; Latham 1963).)

In spite of growth, the places one could stay on Hatteras Island were far fewer than those of the "Nags Head-Manteo" area, which included "Full hotel service, cottages, [and] motor courts" (State News Bureau 1953). They were a big a step up, though, from what had been available only two years earlier.

Two views of the Atlantic View Hotel, Hatteras Village, late 1940s/early 1950s (source: http://www.obxconnection.com/outer-banks-forum/forum-thread.aspx?Thread=62373)



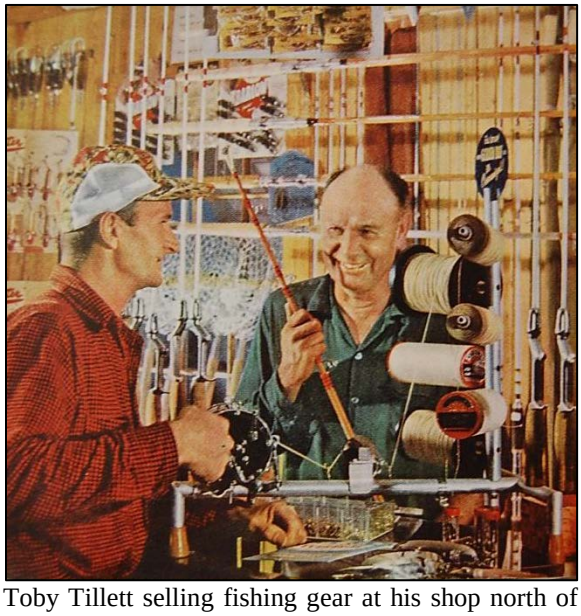


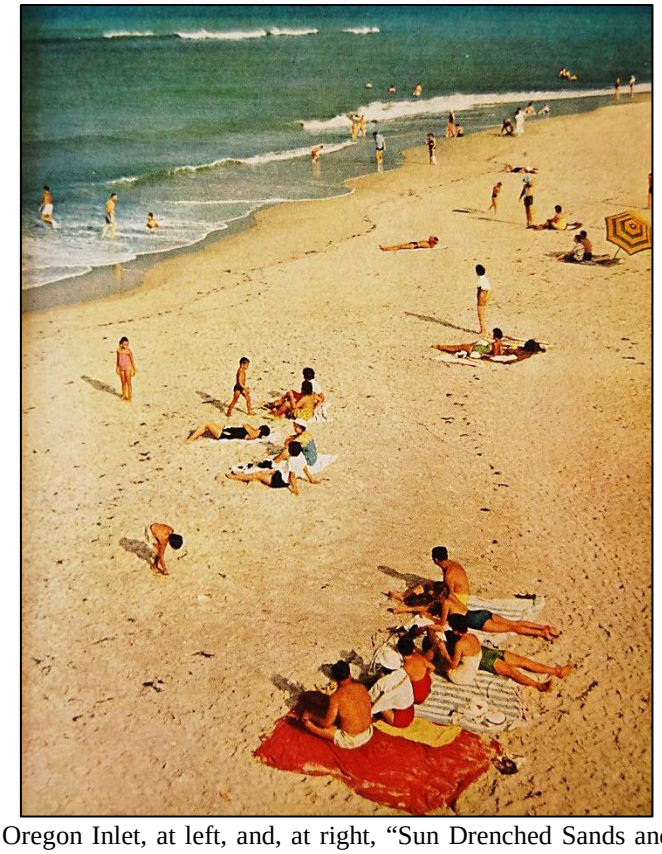
Hatteras menu offering herring roe and eggs from the grill, 1957, at left, and, at right, Cape Hatteras Cottage Court and air strip, Buxton, 1956, (sources: http://www.obxconnection.com/outer-banks-forum/forum-thread.aspx?Thread=62373, at left, and, at right, http://forum.reddrumtackle.com/attachment.php?s=046d266c24d6f365c0d5a2d3c44fb926&attachmentid=4435&d=1293212171)

Outer Banks summer rental, Kill Devil Hills area, 1956 (source: http://www.obxconnection.com/outer-banks-forum/forum-thread.aspx?Thread=74279, at right)

Growth was so rapid in the next two years that the State Advertising Division felt compelled to release an "Information Bulletin" titled "THE RAPIDLY CHANGING OUTER BANKS OF NORTH CAROLINA (1955 Supplement to Outer Banks Pamphlet)," which stated that the growth of the past two years had made the 1953 publication out of date. The news release highlighted improved transportation features in place or soon to open—a new bridge to open across Croatan Sound from Roanoke Island to the Banks, improved ferry service across Oregon Inlet, the completion of survey for the new paved road down Ocracoke Island—that were rapidly increasing the volume of tourists. It stated that "motor court and restaurant capacity" had more than doubled on Hatteras Island in but two years. However, it also noted that "The influx of tourists has had its greatest effect on the Outer Banks north of Oregon Inlet" (State Advertising Division 1955). The island was still a relative tourism backwater and would remain so until everything changed with the 1963 opening of the Bonner Bridge.

The *National Geographic Magazine* was attracted to the Outer Banks in 1955 by its beauty and, not incidentally, its improved access to visitors. It noted that "With completion of a paved road to Hatteras village, numerous commercial resorts have sprung up in the once-isolated region" (Anderson 1955:505). That same year *Sports Illustrated* ran a piece describing the joy of drum fishing off of Oregon Inlet (Gallico 1955). Both pieces mentioned Toby Tillett's tackle shop just to the inlet's north. By 1959 even the Automobile Club of Michigan extolled the easy travel on paved roads and modern ferries along the Outer Banks in a piece titled "The Road that Beat the Sand Dunes" (Barnes 1959).





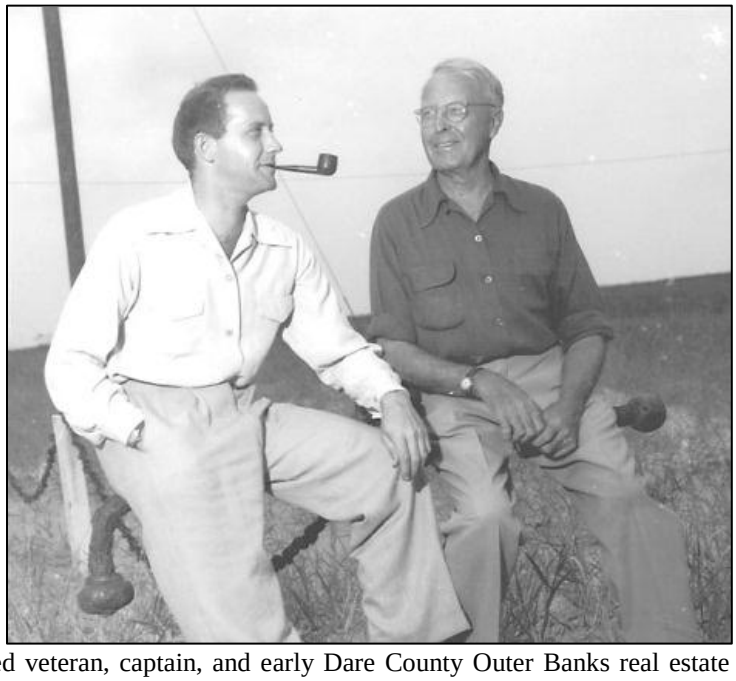
Toby Tillett selling fishing gear at his shop north of Oregon Inlet, at left, and, at right, "Sun Drenched Sands and Rolling Surf" at Nags Head, 1955; photographer, J. Baylor Roberts (source: Anderson, "October Holiday on the Outer Banks")

Like tourism, real estate was not a growth industry for Hatteras and other isolated points on the Banks until well into the twentieth century. Millie Midgett Burrus of Buxton recalled in 2004 that even at mid-century oceanfront land on Hatteras Island was not given much thought. The property a Banker wanted to own was on the sound (Burrus 2004). Men such as Dare County-native Daniel Webster Hayman (1886-1952) were rare. In addition to captaining a steamboat and serving as the master of oceangoing ships, Hayman in the mid-1920 was "in the forefront at the beginning of the boom in the Dare County beachlands, buying and selling" (*Coastland Times* 1952). Captain Hayman was from Kill Devil Hills, however, not Hatteras Island (*Dare County Times* 1944a). Frank Stick—one of the principal forces behind the establishment of the Cape Hatteras National Seashore and other transformations of the Outer Banks—first visited in 1926 to hunt and fish with a fellow resident of the New Jersey shore, Allen R. Hueth. Stick fell in love with the Banks, moved there, and began developing property in Kill Devil Hills with Hueth and Captain Hayman. As historian David Stick dispassionately wrote

of their venture in his unpublished history of Banks real estate, "Not only was Virginia Dare Shores the first full-scale planned real estate development on the Outer Banks, in a relatively short period of time it also became the first real estate failure." He notes that even when the economy finally picked up again following the end of the Depression and the war, real estate sales and development remained ad hoc. In 1947, when he moved back to the Banks and began developing property with his father (Stick 1973):

> [A]ll you needed to set yourself up in the real estate business was to pay twenty-five dollars for a state privilege license. There was no requirement of any kind that you know anything about either real estate or business, and anyone suggesting adoption of a code of ethical practices would have been laughed off the beach. A couple of years later, however, a representative of the North Carolina Association of Realty Boards came to Manteo to discuss with real estate agents in the fast-growing resort area, the advantages of their forming a Dare County Board of REALTORS. Everyone who had bought a state license to practice real estate was invited to the meeting, but on[ly] three people showed up: Ernest E. Meekins and Alpheus W. Drinkwater of Manteo, and David Stick of Kill Devil Hills. With so little interest, the idea of establishing a board of REALTORS was not pursued.

Busy property development and buying and selling of real estate on Hatteras Island had yet to hit its stride during the period covered by this report.



Daniel Webster Hayman, decorated veteran, captain, and early Dare County Outer Banks real estate investor, 1944, at left, and, at right, Frank Stick and his son David (with pipe) (source: http://www.ncgenweb.us/dare/obits/haymandaniel.jpg and http://www.trianglemodernisthouses.com/stick.htm)

With ready access to the outside world, the Outer Banks was a different place by the mid-1960s. In 1965 almost all of Dare County's basic income—more than 96%—came from three sources: the tourist industry (57.5%), commercial fishing and processing (10.5%), and the federal and state government (28.6%). Nags Head/Roanoke Island had 1,934 units in motels, cottage courts, and efficiencies that could accommodate 5,874 visitors; Hatteras Island had 421 such units capable of holding 1,316 tourists; and even Ocracoke Island—long the tourism stepsister of the area—had 180 units with room for 468 tourists. An additional 12,150 visitors could be housed in cottages and at camping sites and trailer parks. In sum, the county, including Ocracoke, could accommodate just shy of 20,000 tourists (Hayes 1967:25-35). As tourists only "visited" mainland Dare County while driving to and from Roanoke Island and the Outer Banks, it is clear that tourism was the undisputed king of the county's coast by the last third of the twentieth century. And with the opening of the Bonner Bridge, its kingdom extended south to Hatteras Island.

Since the opening of the Bonner Bridge, many former visitors have taken up residence on Hatteras Island. This raises an issue that would never have been raised prior to the 1960s on the island and elsewhere along the Banks: who is a tourist, a

local, or a native? A question and answer posed and responded to by "Uncle" Jack Goldberg (1982:1) in the *Outer Banks Current* sardonically addresses this issue (Goldberg 1982:1 (paragraphs collapsed)):

> **Dear Uncle Jack,**
>
> On the Outer Banks, what's the difference between a "native" and a "local?"
>
> **Tourist, Pittsburgh**
>
> **Dear Tourist,**
>
> A local is somebody who lives here all year round but isn't a native. Most locals used to live in or near Pittsburgh. Locals are permitted to leave the Outer Banks for up to three weeks during January or February. If they stay away longer than three weeks they are shunned by other locals who sneer at them and call them tourists. A native is somebody whose family has always lived here. Natives never leave the Outer Banks except to join the Coast Guard. Natives converse with each other in an unintelligible tongue which linguists believe may be an early form of English. Many natives carry on the ancient trades and crafts of their forefathers such as hunting, fishing, crabbing and selling real estate. As far as Uncle Jack has been able to determine there are no important anatomical differences between natives and locals that would prevent them from mating.
>
> **Insouciantly, Uncle Jack**

Little further clarity has been achieved in the past 30 years, although with increases in tourism and permanent residency, the number of natives as a percentage of the total population has unquestionably declined.

"Keeping House" and Then Some: Outer Banks Women

Almost every Outer Banks resident from the 1870s through the 1950s was a native of the Banks and most had roots that extended down and back for multiple generations. Common place of birth did not mean equal opportunity, however, particularly for two groups of Bankers, women and African-Americans. By the nature of societal restraints, women were limited in what they could do and prejudice constrained the opportunities of the few black residents of the Banks during the period, both women and men. Most African-Americans and women lived and worked within the boundaries allotted to them. A few pushed beyond the walls of their designated boxes. All lived within their own peculiar contexts. First the women.

The 1870 federal census schedules provided for the recording of the "Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male or female." The instructions to census takers stated (United States Census Bureau 1870):

> The term "housekeeper" will be reserved for such persons as receive distinct *wages* or *salary* for the service. Women keeping house for their own families or for themselves, without any other gainful occupation, will be entered as "keeping house." Grown daughters assisting them will be reported without occupation.

By contrast, census takers in 1900 were instructed that a wife or daughter who "simply keeps house for her own family" was not in any case to be identified as a housekeeper (United States Census Bureau 1900).

The desire for accurate recordation fell short in at least a few ways. Based upon the activities of Outer Banks' women gleaned from family accounts, local histories, and obituaries, married female Bankers rarely offered up, or census takers rarely noted down, occupations other than keeping house. And the instructions, detailed in so many ways, failed to identify what keeping house meant. A recent history of a Virginia county on the North Carolina border considers the definition (McClurken 2009:62):

> The most common occupational classification for veteran women (and white women as a whole) [in 1870] was not even a formal job in the eyes of most census takers, yet it hid work essential to the families' survival. . . . Women "kept house" by cooking, cleaning, sewing, rearing children, gardening, storing food, nursing the sick, and caring for boarders. The categorization obscured women's agricultural efforts, especially among poor and yeoman families.

This broader definition applies to Banker women of Dare County as well as to those of Pittsylvania County. They kept house—laundering, cooking, making clothes, raising children, caring for animals, gardening—and then some. They tied nets and otherwise helped with fishing. They delivered babies and doctored the sick. They sang at funerals. A few pushed out farther: at least one drove a truck, another built her own house, a third served as a wreck commissioner. If Outer Banks men took on many jobs to provide for their families, Outer Banks women filled many roles to do the same.

Women of Duck, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Clean up after a flood was an occasional task. Laundry was forever. Ellen Fulcher Cloud, who was born in 1940 on Ocracoke Island (Cloud 2007:64), recalled how houses were built of wood with beaded-board walls and linoleum floors to help with post-hurricane and flood clean-up. And she remembered the handwork it took to clean clothes and the surprising liberation of not having the latest gadgets (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:220):

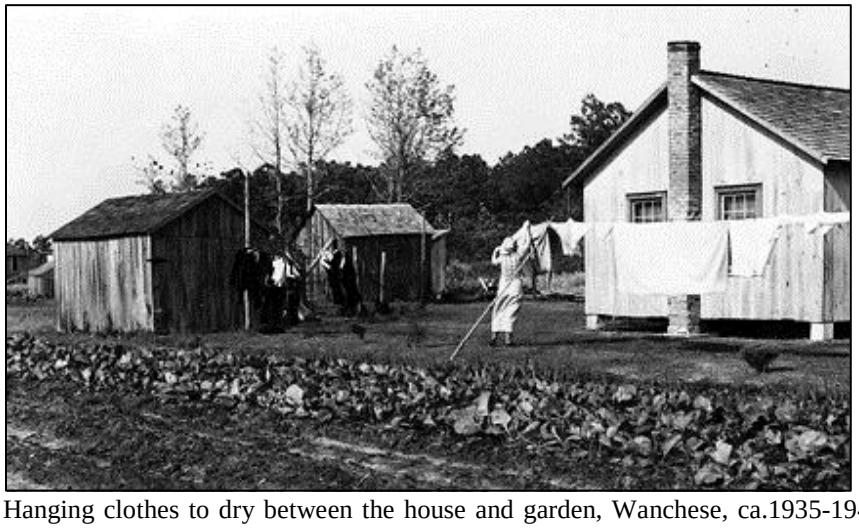
> You didn't have the modern conveniences that you do now. And it took all day to do laundry. We had the old wringer washing machine. Of course I always had to help with that, hang up the clothes and all that.

> Even those days people had time to sit on the porch. Every afternoon they would sit on the porch. The neighbors would come over and everybody would sit on the porch and talk and visit and have a good time. Sit for a time then get up and cook supper. Now nobody has time to visit their neighbors. They don't! They have to work all the time to pay for these modern conveniences. So it was a better life then.

Elsie Hooper, born in the mid-30s, recalled helping with washing and cleaning as well (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:599):

> And Mama, many a time when we were growin' up she would take us by the hand, get up real early in the mornings and boil our…get our clothes washed and boil 'em in an old pot, our white ones and all. Rinse 'em real good and get 'em on the line, and then she would clean the house and as I growed older I had to help to that, you know, and sweep the floors and scrub the floors. Then the floors was like our kitchen floor is today, and all that, and help take clothes in, help fold 'em up. I was very young when I learned to iron, and I stood on a little ol' wooden box to stand to…we didn't have no sink…to the table to wash the dishes. I had a pan to wash 'em in and a pan to rinse 'em in, and a pan to turn 'em bottom up in."

The water she used had to be pumped from the family's well.



Hanging clothes to dry between the house and garden, Wanchese, ca.1935-1940, Charles A. Farrell, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

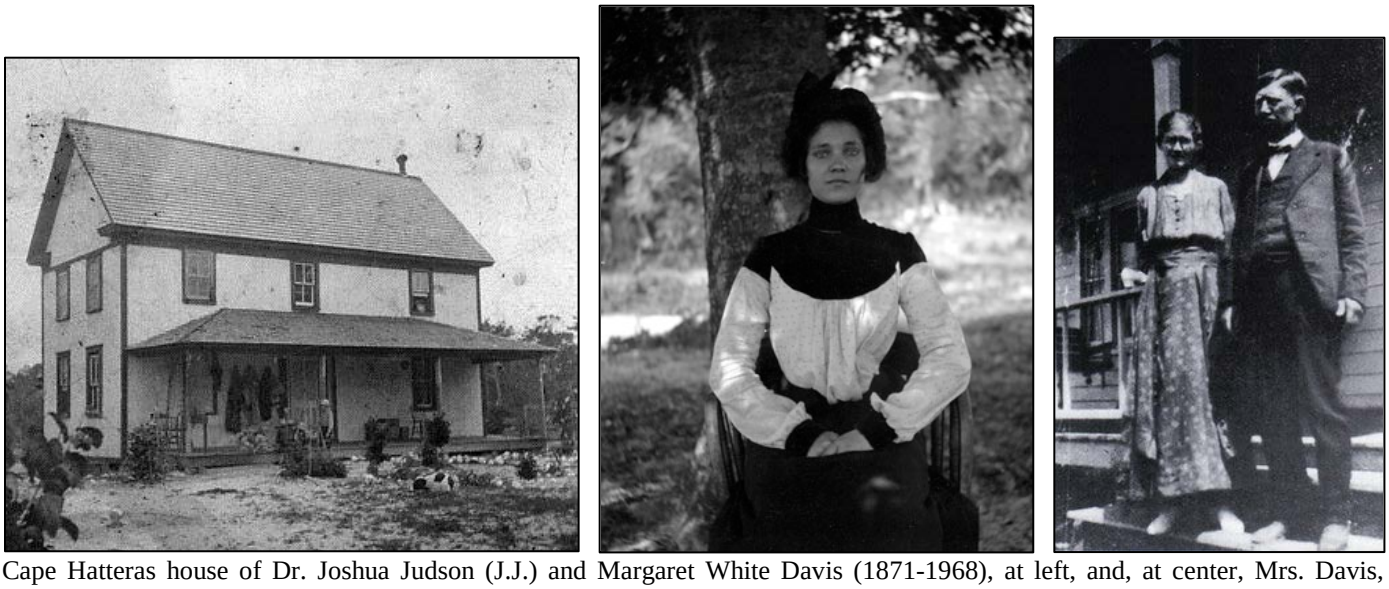
Banks women made clothes as well as washed them. In the early 2000s Gack and Eileen Austin showed a researcher a beautiful piece of lace his grandmother had crocheted. "Everything, all our clothes and everything were all handmade; very few store clothes," he said. "The underwear, like I said earlier, when we [went to Elizabeth City] for the staples in the big hundred pound bags, those bags were made out of material cotton and a lot of them had prints on them so you could make dresses." He recalled that the women also made bedding and blankets and, at bees, quilts. He figured that "probably 98% of the things we used here were created right here. It was a very self-sufficient type of existence" (Garrity-Blake 2005c:41-42).

Children were also the responsibility of women. They fed them, clothed them, and looked out for their physical and spiritual wellbeing. L.P. O'Neal recalled his mother dosing him with nasty-tasting asafetida (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:910). Pharmacist's mate cum doctor George McNabb (1928:92-93) commented on the variety of "nostrums" of limited utility the "good people" of the Outer Banks used to fight influenza and other ailments. While combating an epidemic of the Spanish flu on Hatteras Island in 1918, he had the following sobering experience:

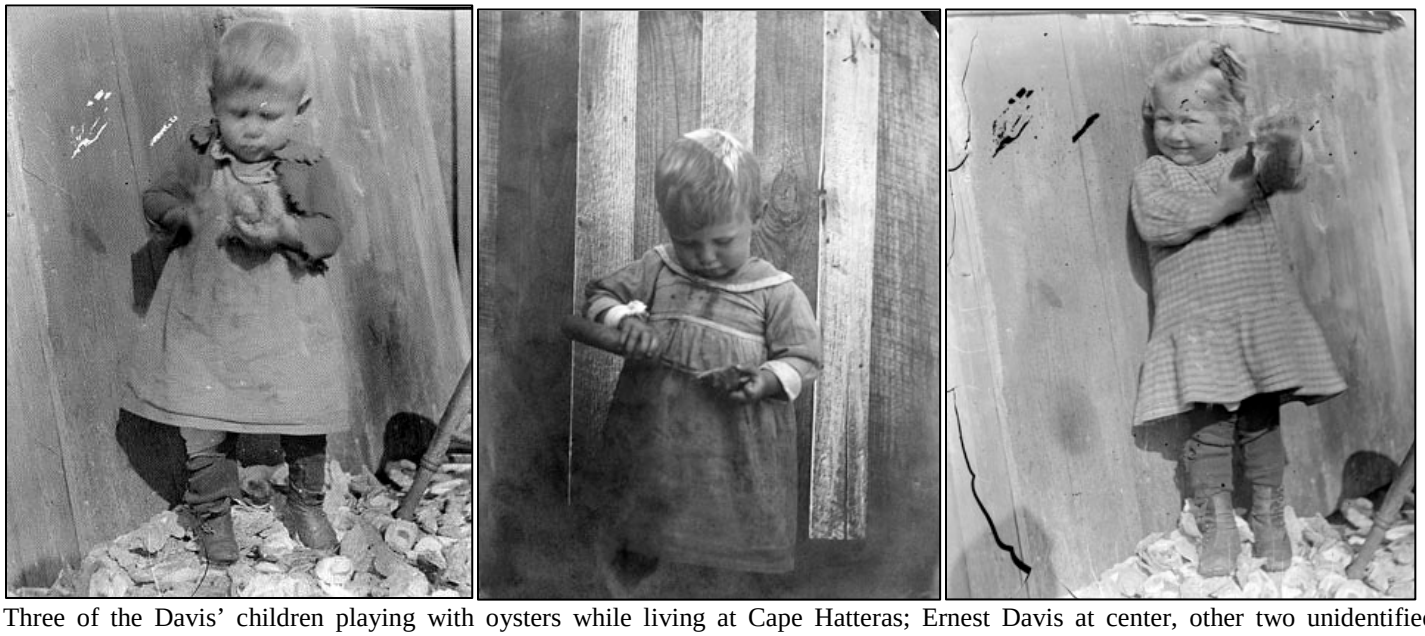
> In one instance a pseudophysician, while passing through, had left what he said was "more than enough" medicine for the treatment of 10-year-old girl who was very ill with influenza. The child's mother brought out the medicine, and upon examination it proved to be what was left of a large bottle of camphorated tincture of opium, with directions labeled "A spoonful when needed." She stated that her daughter had not been complaining since taking this medicine. On the day following all efforts to save the child's life failed.

Manerva Wedmore Gaskins Willis (1872-1966) of Hatteras Village worked hard before and after her marriage. At the age of 13, following her father's death, she earned 50 cents a week laboring for a widow chopping wood, doing household chores, mending nets, and doing whatever other hard work needed doing. She married surfman David E. Willis at the age of 19 and her work continued, with the addition of caring for their children. Although she had nine, she made all of their clothing, from their heads down to their knitted socks. Yet she found time to tend to their spiritual growth as well. She and her husband would take the children to camp meetings in other villages, where she packed along a five-pound bucket full of food that would last them from Saturday through Monday. They would lay rushes and quilts on the ground for sleeping and flip for shelter the boat they had used to reach the meeting (McArthur 2001a:2).

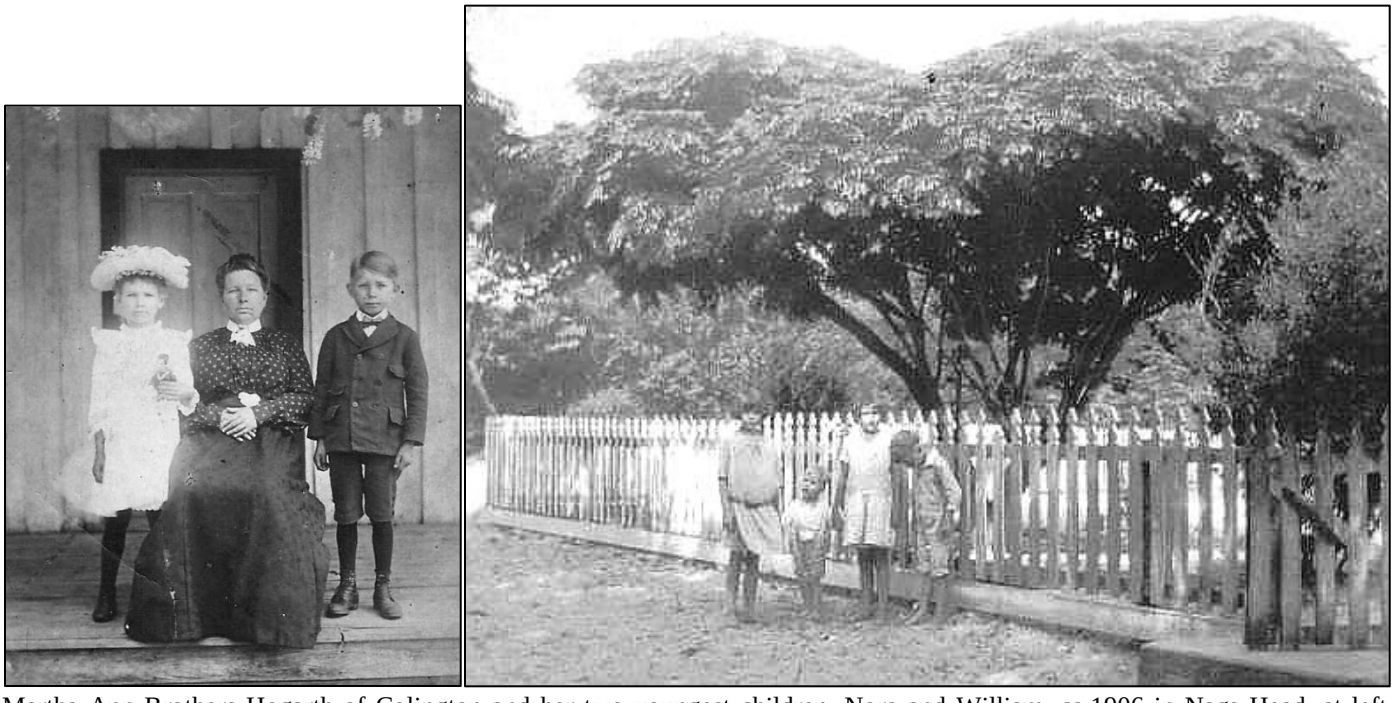
Spiritual efforts continued even with death. Likely few eyes remained dry when, at the funeral of Aaron W. Hooper in Salvo's Assembly of God Church, Louise Leary sang "I Won't Have to Cross Jordan Alone" (*Coastland Times* 1959a and 1959b). Or when Alpine Midgett and Virginia O'Neal harmonized on "Give Me the Roses While I Live" at the Rodanthe graveside service for Beulah Anna O'Neal (*Coastland Times* 1964).



Cape Hatteras house of Dr. Joshua Judson (J.J.) and Margaret White Davis (1871-1968), at left, and, at center, Mrs. Davis, both ca.1900-1907 at the Cape, Herbert Hutchinson Brimley, photographer; the Davises later in life, at right (sources: State Archives of North Carolina, photos at left and center, and http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=82355067, at right)



Three of the Davis' children playing with oysters while living at Cape Hatteras; Ernest Davis at center, other two unidentified, ca.1900-1907, Herbert Hutchinson Brimley, photographer (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)



Martha Ann Brothers Hogarth of Colington and her two youngest children, Nora and William, ca.1906 in Nags Head, at left, and Buxton children, absent visible mothers, ca.1930, left to right: Stella Best, Edison Wilton Midgett, Caddie Urias "Rossie" Gaskins, and Howard Boyce Midgett (sources: Ball, Hogarth, and McMillen, "Hogarth Photo Album," at left, and, at right, Gamiel, "Buxton Children circa 1930")

The obituary of Mann's Harbor native Gloria Sutton Armstrong (1931-2009) noted another important role of the Banker women. In addition to being a "wonderful wife and mother," Armstrong was a formidable cook:

> Cooking was a favorite pastime and she spent many joyful hours in the kitchen preparing delectable meals (in large quantities) that were generously shared with family and friends. Her home was always filled with mouth-watering aromas of something simmering on the stove or baking in the oven. Her crispy fried chicken, homemade biscuits, collard greens seasoned with salt pork, dumplings, and baked sweet potatoes satisfied many a palate craving good "country cookin'." Coconut, carrot, and vanilla pound cakes often beckoned from the counter. It was her heart's delight to have everyone come together to partake of good food and fellowship. Her expertise at preserving the abundant fruit and vegetables harvested from the bountiful garden so lovingly by [husband] Henry, resulted in a well-stocked pantry and freezer" (*Virginian-Pilot* 2009).

The activities of Ruth Henly Gallop Tillett (1911-1997) were likely typical of those of many other Outer Banks' women throughout much of the twentieth and earlier centuries. Her obituary (*Virginia-Pilot* 1997) noted her active membership in the Kitty Hawk United Methodist Church and stated: "There are countless family members and friends who will cherish their memories of time spent with Ruth fishing, crabbing, "putting" up fruit and vegetables, sewing, playing dominoes and cards and just sittin' and rockin'."

At about the age of 90, Ruby Gray Williams, who was born in Avon in 1912, recalled the effort her mother had to go through to make clabber biscuits, beginning with the freshly washed udder of their jersey cow (Garrity-Blake et al 2005c:1071):

> Well she'd milk this cow, and she had a milk box, she had it on the porch and it was screened in and she'd put bowls of milk in there and let it clabber. And she skimmed that cream off you know, bright yellow, I can see the looks of it now, and would take and beat it and beat it, until it made, and she sometimes she'd sprinkle salt into it, and it would make butter. And she would make clabber biscuits. I remember that. She would take flour and baking powder and salt and a little bit of sugar, and she'd take that clabber, and water, she'd take that clabber and keep workin' into that flour until she got it like, you know to make biscuits. And that was called clabber biscuits. And they were good.

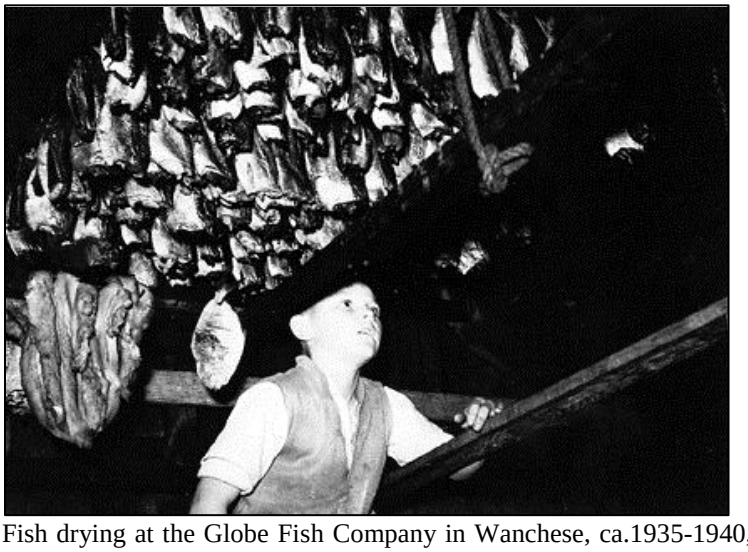
The foods women cooked and served up on the Banks varied with the seasons. In the winter, for example, they put up drum. According to Gack Austin, the drum:

> . . . was very important to us because that was our winter staple. Because after that [October] run, there was very few fish to be had. So, you didn't have a heck of a lot to eat, so what they would do is catch as many of them as they could while they were running, and the women would cook 'em and cut 'em in cubes like inch and a half, and boil 'em and then put 'em in jars like you do fruit jars and that's how they preserved them.

The cook boiled the "pick fish," as it was known, once more before serving. Mixed with boiled potatoes and sprinkled with pig cracklings, "it was quite a tasty dish" (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:43).

Austin also described the smoking of fish, although he did not specify whether it was the work of women, men, or both (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:44).

> Yeah, they would smoke mostly the shad and the oil fish in the shad family, herring. They're all in the same family. They're very bony. They smoked them and they would also fillet them. They would fillet both sides of the fish, and take out the backbone and everything, and open it up. It was like butterfly wings, they would hang those over the clothesline and let them air dry, and again they would preserve that way. Another way is in a big barrel, wooden barrel they would salt them. Put a layer of fish, a layer of salt, a layer of fish, a layer of salt and again that was for herring and that type of fish, which wasn't the greatest thing in the world. (laughter)

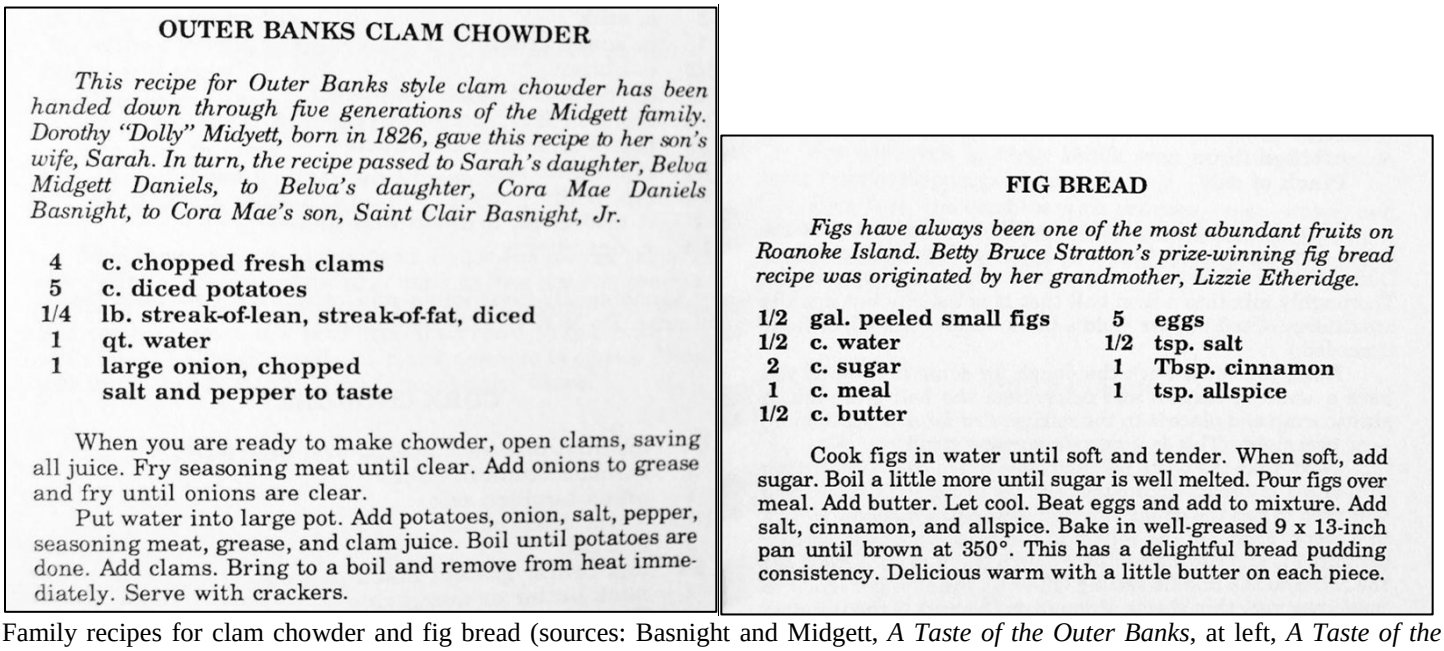



Fish drying at the Globe Fish Company in Wanchese, ca.1935-1940, at left, Charles A. Farrell, photographer, and, at right, "Dinner from the docks: Hatteras Village, June 1945" (source: State Archives of North Carolina, at left, and Carlson, *Hatteras Blues* and University of Louisville, at right)

Whether they caught or bought their fish, smoked it or filleted it fresh, Outer Banks women prepared it for innumerable meals. Local cookbooks include some of the traditional fish, seafood, and other recipes handed down from Banker woman to Banker woman. In one prepared by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Chicamacomico Banks Volunteer Department in 1980, Mrs. Zenovah Hooper submitted recipes for "Chicamacomico boiled old drum fish" and "Chicamacomico style clam chowder," which was also submitted in a slightly different form by Mrs. Asa Gray, Jr. The recipes were limited to a few basic, easily available ingredients: potatoes, onions, salt and pepper, salt pork, and drum (channel bass) or clams. Mrs. Viola Midgett seasoned her "Stewed wild goose" with an onion, a stalk of celery, and salt and pepper. She warned the cook that "if the goose tends to be on the old side," it should be soaked in salted water for several hours prior to stewing.

Later cookbooks announce the origins of their traditional recipes. In *A Taste of the Outer Banks* of 1990, a recipe for "Outer Banks Clam Chowder" notes that it was passed through five generations of the Midgett family, beginning with Dorothy "Dolly" Midyett, born 1826 (Basnight and Midgett 1990:19). In *A Taste of the Outer Banks II* the following year,

the authors included a recipe for fig bread from Betty Bruce Stratton, who had received it from her grandmother, Lizzie Etheridge. The recipe notes that "Figs have always been one of the most abundant fruits on Roanoke Island (Basnight and Midgett 1991:21). It could have added they were abundant on Hatteras and Ocracoke Islands as well. The cookbook's recipe for "Stewed Old Drum" with cornmeal dumplings was submitted by Chesley M. Midgett, who got it from his mother, Pearl B. Midgett of Buxton. Pearl's mother, Ann Bragg, ran a boarding house on Ocracoke Island in the late 1880s, the recipe recounts, and "most likely served these old-time favorites to her boarders" (Basnight and Midgett 1921:39).



OUTER BANKS CLAM CHOWDER

This recipe for Outer Banks style clam chowder has been handed down through five generations of the Midgett family. Dorothy "Dolly" Midyett, born in 1826, gave this recipe to her son's wife, Sarah. In turn, the recipe passed to Sarah's daughter, Belva Midgett Daniels, to Belva's daughter, Cora Mae Daniels Basnight, to Cora Mae's son, Saint Clair Basnight, Jr.

4 c. chopped fresh clams
5 c. diced potatoes
1/4 lb. streak-of-lean, streak-of-fat, diced
1 qt. water
1 large onion, chopped
salt and pepper to taste

When you are ready to make chowder, open clams, saving all juice. Fry seasoning meat until clear. Add onions to grease and fry until onions are clear.

Put water into large pot. Add potatoes, onion, salt, pepper, seasoning meat, grease, and clam juice. Boil until potatoes are done. Add clams. Bring to a boil and remove from heat immediately. Serve with crackers.

FIG BREAD

Figs have always been one of the most abundant fruits on Roanoke Island. Betty Bruce Stratton's prize-winning fig bread recipe was originated by her grandmother, Lizzie Etheridge.

1/2 gal. peeled small figs
1/2 c. water
2 c. sugar
1 c. meal
1/2 c. butter
5 eggs
1/2 tsp. salt
1 Tbsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. allspice

Cook figs in water until soft and tender. When soft, add sugar. Boil a little more until sugar is well melted. Pour figs over meal. Add butter. Let cool. Beat eggs and add to mixture. Add salt, cinnamon, and allspice. Bake in well-greased 9 x 13-inch pan until brown at 350°. This has a delightful bread pudding consistency. Delicious warm with a little butter on each piece.

Family recipes for clam chowder and fig bread (sources: Basnight and Midgett, *A Taste of the Outer Banks*, at left, *A Taste of the Outer Banks II*, at right)

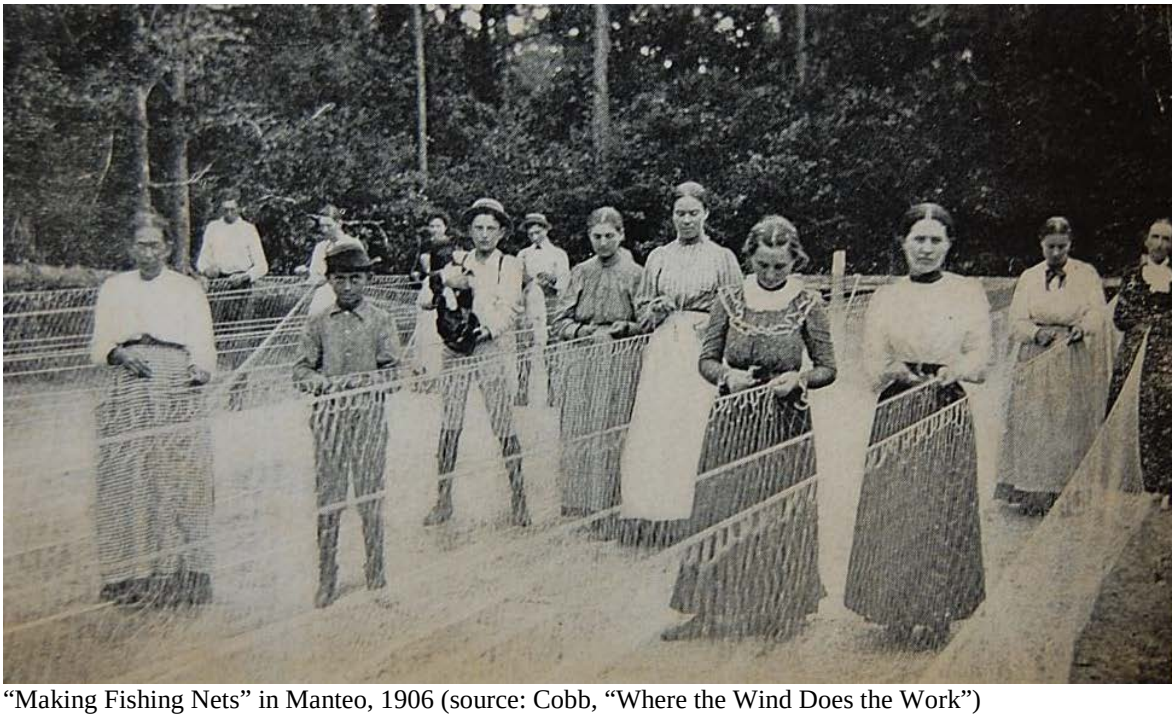
Jennette Stowe (1883-1983), whose memories of Hatteras Village extended back into the late nineteenth century, recalled helping her husband clean and preserve the fish he had caught: "We'd salt down enough fish to last all winter. Salt 'em and put 'em in a keg. Spot and things like that. When we wanted to eat 'em, we'd take 'em out and soak 'em." (Foster and Balance 1976:36, 38).

Some women helped with the fishing by doing some fishing. Nathaniel Bishop (1878:193) admired the tough "old dames" he encountered on Ocracoke Island in 1874, who "can pull a pretty good stroke, and frequently assist their husbands in the fisheries." Lucy Austin Hooper's many activities included fishing (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:29). And midwife Jennette Stowe often went out on the water with her husband. Late in her life she recalled to a pair of high school interviewers (Foster and Ballance 1976:38) one instance when he was adamantly opposed to her joining him:

> And I used to go off fishing with him some mornings. And one morning he didn't want me to go. He said, 'Now Jenette honey, you don't want to go.' He never spoke a cross word to me in his life. He knows better I reckon. But he said, 'You don't want to go this morning.' I said, 'I tell you I am going.' So I went down there and got in the skiff. After we got off a little ways, you know what he did? He grabbed me up and threw me overboard. I said, 'You _____!' I came to the shore a cussing for everthing I could lay my mouth and tongue to. And his father was standing on the shore. He said, 'Jenette, what's that rascal done to you?' I said, 'Your see, he threw me overboard!' He said, 'I'll settle with him.' 'When he comes ashore,' I said, 'You won't have the privilege of it, 'cause I'm gonna kill 'em!' When he come home I watched him walking up the path. He came up here to the door, he throwed his hat in and said, 'If the hat can stay in I can stay in, can't I.' I jumped at him and run 'em. He run and jump over the fence and I run him clear on down to his father's.
>
> Oh, we used to have some fun.

Besides helping with smoking and, occasionally, catching the fish, women also tied nets, a necessary precursor to Outer Banks' fishing. Rudy Gray recalled the skill of his great-grandmother at the task during an interview with Barbara Garrity-Blake in the early 2000s:

> BGB: Why would your grandmother knit the net inside the house instead of outside?
>
> RG: Well, she had chores to do in the daytime and then nighttime activity not much going on.
>
> BGB: Women worked so hard back then.
>
> RG: Yes, that's true and not much going on. Like I said there was no television to watch and not much activity going on. She could really tie a net, my great-grandmother. She was really fast at tying the net.
>
> BGB: Did any of the men tie nets too?
>
> RG: Oh yes, there were some men who tied nets around here. My dad he also tied nets, but he could never tie as fast as my great-grandmother. It seemed like my great-grandmother could get her hand going so fast tying that net you could hardly see her hand or hardly see the needle. It was moving so fast (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:462).



"Making Fishing Nets" in Manteo, 1906 (source: Cobb, "Where the Wind Does the Work")

Not all Banker women were defined, or allowed themselves to be defined, by their facility at "keeping house" and tending to the needs of their children and husbands. Sisters Maude (1885-1987) and Minerva (1888-1971) O'Neal were highly regarded by the community even though they never married or bore children. The *Coastland Times* (1997) said of Maude when she died just short of her 102nd birthday: "Those who knew Maude O'Neal as a teacher and postmaster well remember that she feared no one or thing. She was a leader in her village, an independent woman of her time who fought many good fights in the interest of education and physical fitness. She was instrumental in getting a high school for Hatteras village in the 1920's after serving as a teacher there since 1907. In 1914 she became postmaster at Hatteras and in the 1920's she managed both jobs plus the extracurricular activity of teaching swimming to the village children."

Sybil Austin Skakle (2013) tells an even more personal tale of sneaking out of her Hatteras house at dawn as a girl to take swimming lessons from Maude O'Neal:

> Miss Maude believed in exercise and physical fitness. She told me when I interviewed her when she was nearly one hundred and one years old at Highland Farms Rest Home in Black Mountain, North Carolina, August, 1986, that as a young woman she had freely walked the seashore in spite of her mother's misgivings. Her mother cautioned that the men at the Lifesaving Stations would ogle at her. Miss Maude dared anyone to question her integrity or virtue. In return she received the respect she expected. She did as she pleased at a time when women were far less free to come and go as they pleased. . . .
>
> We children were in awe of our postmaster—note: postmaster. She had taught school before her post office appointment. She let them know that it was to be postmaster. "I was never mistress to anyone," she told me.
> . . .
> As a child I feared her disfavor and sought to be one invited for her swim excursions. As an adult I enjoyed her, respected her for who she was and am grateful for all she did to make my life better. We learned more than we realized from the woman who encouraged us to get up so early to go swim.

Minerva O'Neal took her skills off island. She studied nursing in Norfolk and entered the army, where she saw service with American troops on the Mexican border, nursed in France and German during World War I, then served in the Philippines and as chief nurse at several Veterans Hospitals back in the states. She retired with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps (*Independent* 1924a)

Maude O'Neal, at left, and younger sister Minerva O'Neal, at right (source: Reilly and Sheppard, "O'Neal/Gray Family Photo Album")

Other Banks women married and still managed to take largely untrodden paths. Lucy Austin Hooper (1901-1975) of Salvo not only kept house and raised children, but fished, pastored, tended a store, and excelled at carpentry. According to Gack Austin she built her own house and "could do anything a man could do and probably do it better" (Garrity-Blake et

al. 2005c:29). In its history of the North Carolina District of the Assemblies of God, the denomination proudly told part of Hooper's story (Cookman et al. 1994:17):

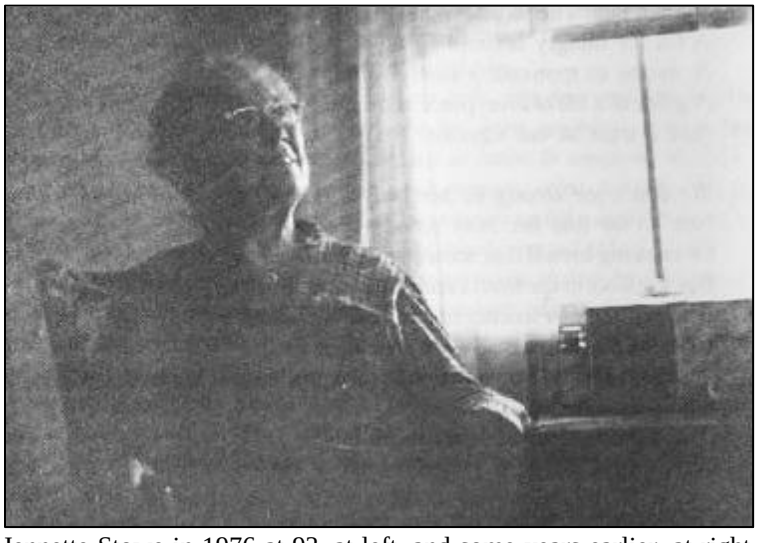
> In 1933, a four-masted schooner, the *G A. Kohler*, ran aground two miles south of the village of Salvo. She was purchased by a local man for salvage. The story of the old ship's redemption centers on an incredible woman by the name of Lucy Hooper.
>
> She was saved in 1926 under the ministry of Reverend Myrtle Chambers at Avon. In 1931, Lucy was part of a prayer meeting in Salvo. Her call to ministry came by the scripture in Revelation 3:8; "See I have set before you an open door, and no man shall close it." With the help of a few villagers, she threw herself into the work of salvaging timber from the *G. A. Kohler* to build a Pentecostal church in Salvo.
>
> The timbers of the great ship were refashioned into beams and support structure. One of the masts became the ridge-pole. The people worked hard, but none harder than Lucy Hooper. A church building was rising from the wreckage of a schooner.
>
> The first service was conducted on October 6, 1935 by Rob Douglas. Shortly thereafter, Lucy assumed the pastorate. For more than thirty years she lead the church. The Assemblies of God in North Carolina owes much to outstanding women like Lucy Hooper. She will forever be remembered as the lady who looked upon a shipwreck and saw a sanctuary.

Rosa Gray Drinkwater was the wife of noted Manteo figure Alpheus W. Drinkwater, but "in her own right one of the most widely influential and beloved women ever to live in Dare County" (*Coastland Times* 1952). In addition to managing a telegraph office (her husband telegraphically relayed the first message of the Wright Brothers' flight), she was at her death in 1952 "the only woman in the history of N.C. to hold the post of Wreck Commissioner" (*Virginian-Pilot* 1952). Miriam Cudworth Daniels of Wanchese, who died in 2006 at the age of 92, supported the business of her husband, Arnold, a commercial fisherman, by driving his previous day's catch to market in Norfolk, Virginia. She was also notable for having left Wanchese to attend East Carolina Teachers College (now East Carolina University) in Greenville after graduating from Manteo High School. The tombstone she shares with her husband at the Cudworth Cemetery in Wanchese suggests that in spite of her non-domestic activities, her role as "a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother" (in the words of her obituary) was central to her position in her family (*Coastland Times* 2006a). In quotation marks above her husband's name is the word "CAPT." Above her name, also framed by quotes, is the epithet "WOMAN."

One occupation, or at least vocation, left solely in the hands of Outer Banks women was midwivery. Among the most famous and prolific of these midwives was Jennette Stowe (1883-1983), who lived all of her 99 years in Hatteras Village (*Southern Post* 1983). In 1976 she recalled her activities as a midwife and, more or less, a doctor to residents of Hatteras and Ocracoke islands. (She was a licensed midwife but, beyond that, had no medical training.) She delivered babies, more than 300, in all sorts of circumstances (Foster and Balance 1976:35):

> I've gone in snow, sleet, tide. Walked way up the road. Didn't have no cars then. Walked way up the road to tend to them, come home, put out my big washing, then go back again. I've delivered babies all the way from Ocracoke to Chicamacomico, all up and down the banks.

When the mother could not pay, she sometimes only asked that the baby be named Jennette.




Jennette Stowe in 1976 at 93, at left, and some years earlier, at right (source: Foster and Balance, *Sea Chest*, at left, and Morgan, *A Pleasant Gale on My Lee*, at right)

Stowe recalled instances when people would go to nobody but her when they were ill. She informed her interviewers, high school students working on a bicentennial edition of the local *Sea Chest* (Foster and Balance 1976:32):

> Now, let me tell ya something. I done a day's work in my lifetime. I haven't played. Now let me tell ya something. It's nice to know I can tend to people. I didn't only go to them baby cases. When anybody was sick I had to tend to them just the same. They'd come after me just the same. If they'd cut their fingers or cut themselves, they'd come to me to do it up, and if anybody died they'd come to me to shroud 'em, before they had this funeral home up here. Give them their bath and dress 'em. That's what they called it, shrouding (Foster and Balance 1976:36).

The federal census never identified Jennette Stowe as a midwife. She was simply the wife of the head of the household, her husband John Irvin Stowe, who was also a person of more parts than a look at a single census might reveal. According to his obituary, he was a "famed boatbuilder of the Outer Banks" and, as Outer Banks' obituaries so often state, a "retired fisherman" (*Coastland Times* 1959c). The obituary does not mention the occupation by which he identified himself in the 1920 census schedules—civil engineer—or his job as an engineer on a freighter, as recorded by the census of ten years later. To unearth the many occupations and activities of Bankers takes looking at as many sources as possible. In Jennette Stowe's case, the censuses do not reveal her midwivery, but the 1976 article does, as does her obituary, which identified her as a "retired registered midwife." Her husband was in the same boat.

Joyce Ersie Midgett Rucker of Rodanthe remembered midwives serving Hatteras Island, including Orenda Midgett (1866-1944). If there were no problems, babies were born in the home with the help of midwives and family members were available to mind the household for the new mother. In Rucker's case, difficulties with her birth required a Coast Guard helicopter to fly her mother, Ersie Midgett Midgett (1893-1977) off of Hatteras Island to a hospital (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:1002).

Another long-serving Hatteras midwife was Bathsheba Foster. Known as "Mis' Bashi," Foster befriended an unlikely Outer Banks visitor, Illinois-born and Johns Hopkins School of Medicine-educated Blanch Nettleton Epler (born 1884) in the early 1920s. Epler, who led a peripatetic existence that took her to jobs all over the country, accepted a post with the United States Public Health Service at the Cape Hatteras Coast Guard Station in 1923 (Epler 1933:695; Cecelski 2000:119-125; Alumnae Association of Mount Holyoke College 1937; *Washington Post*, June 18. 1923). Mis' Bashi—78 years old in 1923—greatly impressed the doctor, who in *National Geographic Magazine* a decade later sang her praises (Epler 1933:704):

Her sand pony Napoleon carried her in a two-wheeled cart through woods and sand and water, in gale or sunshine, to her patients. Often afoot she swung with her Viking strike down beaches or through woods. She was smart, exact, and knowing, though she signed by mark, and she was known as a "couthy" (capable) woman. Her dignity of bearing and courtesy were exquisite. Thus she fell into the role that Nature cast for her.

Months later I realized how her personality, linked with a touch of science, prevented morbid results from household conditions. She established her own art of medicine and it worked.

Midwife Bathsheba "Mis' Bashi" Foster making soap from lye, ashes, and grease, 1933, Clifton Adams, photographer (source: Epler, "A Bit of Elizabethan England in America")

One Dare County Outer Banker who did tell a census taker in 1930 that she was a midwife, Emma R. Beasley, circles the story back to the reticence of female Bankers—largely raised to respond to the call "Woman!"—to give an occupation to a census taker. No information beyond that given in the census—she was 55 and the sole occupant of her Colington household—has been found on her. Quite likely because she supported herself, Beasley viewed midwifery as her occupation. She would have lacked the opportunity to refuse pay or ask only that a delivered baby be named for her. Indeed most of the women identified with an occupation in the 1930 census of Dare's Outer Banks were single. Some, like Beasley, were widowed. Others appear to have never married or at least to have not married yet. Whether married, widowed, or never married, their numbers were few.

Hannah Sanderlin of Kitty Hawk worked as a seamstress in 1930. Not only was she a 34-year-old widow, but she had four children to support, a 12-year-old son and girls who were six, eight, and ten. Her household also included her widowed 29-year-old sister, Bertha Spruill, who listed no occupation. Maude Miller White (1900-1987) was a rare married woman who gave an occupation to the census taker in 1930. A teacher, she lived in Buxton with her husband, Estus P. White. Like Jennette Stowe, she had a husband who was more worldly than most of his Outer Banks contemporaries. Estus P. White (1892-1972) had served in the Navy during World War II and was to become an insurance agent, a county commissioner, and a member of the county board of education (*Coastland Times* 1972). Levetta Jennette Gray (1896-1974) may have had a similar situation. In 1930 she identified herself as a music teacher in Buxton. Her husband, Hollowell J. Gray, was a Buxton merchant. For the lion's share of Outer Banks women, however, "keeping house" was sufficient unto the day.

Lifesavers, Ice Cream Makers, and other African-Americans on the Banks

North Carolina's coastal African-American residents before the Civil War, slave and free, largely worked on the water. Until well into the twentieth century, many coastal blacks continued this maritime tradition (Cecelski 2001). Even though its economy was based on waterborne activities, however, the number of blacks on the Outer Banks was always small. Indeed, African-American residents of Dare County's Outer Banks were so few from Reconstruction though World War II that with the census schedules of 1870 through 1940 in hand one could perhaps name every one of them.

The only notable black community near the Banks not located on the mainland was that of Roanoke Island. In 1850 the island's 168 slaves constituted 27.5% of its population (Stick 1970:89). The island's black population soared after Northern forces seized it from the Confederacy in 1862 and established a Freedman's Colony at its northern end. At the close of the war, more than 3,000 African-Americans lived on Roanoke. Their numbers soon dropped precipitously, however, and by 1900 only about 300 remained (Wright and Zoby 2000:123; Carpenter 2004:15-16). These individuals and their descendants, who continue to live on the island, worked throughout much of the century as fishermen, crab pickers in factories in Manteo and Wanchese, and as laborers (Crumley and Miele 2005:54; Carpenter 2004:16). As fishermen, they were visible to residents of Hatteras and Ocracoke islands, even if very few of them lived on the Banks.

In 1850 about 84 slaves and four free blacks resided on Hatteras Island. They accounting for less than seven percent of the island's total population (Stick 1958:89). In 1860, when Dare County was still part of Hyde, Hatteras appears to have had no free black residents, although it did have enslaved African-Americans. By the end of the Civil War not a single freed black remained on Ocracoke Island (Cloud 1989:i).

The census of 1870, by which time Dare County had been carved out of Hyde, includes a small number of African-American on Hatteras Island. Five black families lived in Hatteras Township. Their heads-of house were Harry Farrow (age 52), a fisherman (household of six); George Warner (63), at home (household of four, including 100-year-old Edella (?); Smith Pugh (43), a fisherman (household of eight); Lewis Midgett, still a fisherman at 82 (household of three); and Augustus Midyett—Lewis' neighbor—a 46-year-old sailor (household of three). Joining these 24 African-Americans was Dorcas Farrow, a 75-year-old woman who resided in a white household.

Only four African-Americans resided in Kinnakeet Township on the northern half of the island in 1870. Benjamin R. O'Neal (28) lived with his wife Jane (19) and 45-year-old Catherine Pain, who worked as a domestic servant. Not far distant, domestic servant Celia Gray was part of the household of a white family named Gray. The census identifies Benjamin O'Neal as a fisherman. His brother Marcus O'Neil of New Bern was a fisherman as well. Benjamin, Marcus, and Celia were likely siblings born slaves in Chicamacomico, or at least in Dare County, to a family that worked the water (Freedman's Bank 1869; Masur 2007).

The fishing heritage of the O'Neals is not surprising. Fishing was a logical calling for all men on the Banks, white or black. In particular, African-Americans along the Banks and elsewhere on the coast have had a long tradition of seining for and processing menhaden, small oily members of the herring family with a variety of uses, from food to fertilizer to lipstick (Greenberg 2009). They have "always been the mainstay of the menhaden industry" in the state (Cecelski 2000:68).

The common Hatteras Island surnames of Midgett or Midyett, Farrow, O'Neal, and Gray suggest that most of the island's 29 black residents in 1870 were Hatteras natives and had been born into slavery. Otherwise, they do not stand out from their neighbors. All were native North Carolinians, as was everyone else on the island. Most were illiterate, but that was common on the island. Some owned real estate valued at the modest sum of $50, others little to nothing, all of which were not uncommon. And many of the males of working age, along with their fellow Bankers, fished or sailed the sea.

As the nineteenth century wore on, the number of blacks on Hatteras Island diminished to close to zero. By 1900, according to the census schedules, Dare County had 230 African-American residents who comprised almost 20 percent of the county's total population of 1,310. Most lived side-by-side in Manteo. A smaller group, again largely located next door to each other, called East Lake Township on the mainland home. Likely only six lived on Hatteras Island, although the poor quality of the census manuscript makes this difficult to confirm. One was Jesse Williams, a 48-year-old man who lived in a Midgett household in Hatteras Township. He is identified as a servant, but his occupation appears to read

"ditching." The other five African-Americans, also in Hatteras Township, were members of the Scarborough family: Mack, a pensioner, who was 68, and his four sons, all of whom were fishermen.

There were other African-Americans at Hatteras Island in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, at least offshore in boats. Fisherman Ephraim O'Neal, born in 1920, remembered when menhaden steamers and purse boats worked just off of Hatteras Village. He reminisced in 2002 (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:860):

> When I was a boy it was a show to go down on the beach—they pursed the nets by hand, colored fellas on the crew, and we'd see 15, 20 boats working. Those colored fellas would get right there to the net and get a hold of it, one would sing "Hmmmmmm," hit a tune, and they'd all sing—pull and then sing, pull and then sing. They sang like mockingbirds!

But he did not recall them ever coming ashore in the village.

By 1930 the racial makeup of the easternmost portion of Dare County, the communities on the Outer Banks from Duck south to Hatteras Village, was essentially unchanged: only two black men were officially reported living there. The census schedules for Duck, Colington, Kitty Hawk, Salvo, Avon, and Buxton record no African-Americans. One black man lived in Rodanthe, 45-year-old John White, a servant who resided in the house of and cooked for Cornelius and Daisy Midgett. The other, Tom V. Angel or Angell, lived in Hatteras Village.

The little that is known about Tom Angell is fascinating. According to Chapel Hill, North Carolina chef Bill Smith (2006:187): "Tom Angel was the stuff of family legend. His story varies from telling to telling. He was known as an ice-cream maker." According to one of the stories: "Tom was the child of a freed slave who had worked for [Smith's great-great-great grandmother, "Grandma Angel"] on Cape Hatteras. She had tried to leave him a little property in her will so he would always have a home, but she was prevented from doing this…by some regulation or other. So she adopted him. For some reason that was not illegal. As far as I know, Tom Angel never married. His grave is at Cape Hatteras."

The census confirms at least part of the story (or stories) passed down to Smith. Angell, about 50 years old in 1930, lived by himself in a house at Hatteras valued at $500, an amount comparable to that of the homes of many of his neighbors. He listed his occupation as "Confectionary" and was the only identified candy, cake, or ice cream maker on the Dare County Outer Banks.

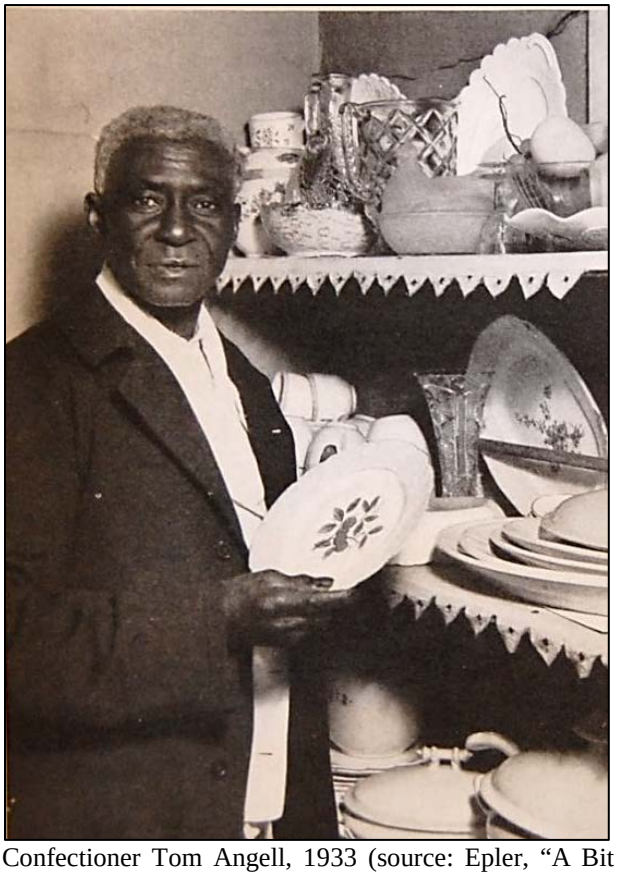
A history of the Foster family of Hatteras Village includes a brief history of Tom Angell as well (Carlson 2005c:189-190). It recounts, based upon the memories of old residents of the village, that Angell was a homeless black child from somewhere on the mainland—Elizabeth City, perhaps, or Washington, DC—"adopted" by Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Paul Angell and brought to Hatteras Village, where Nelson Angell worked for the Lighthouse Service. A childless couple, they "raised Tom right along with them." The old Hatterasers recalled that Angell worked as a cook at Hatteras' Gooseville Gun Club and made ice cream that he gave away in the little gazebo behind the Hatteras house. In his cookbook *Seasoned in the South*, Bill Smith (2006:187-188) includes an exceedingly rich and creamy recipe for a confection he calls 'Tom Angel's Ice Milk'."

Another account finds much common ground between Angell and his fellow Bankers (Morgan 2001:77-79): "Tom Angell was like a lot of other villagers who did whatever they could to earn enough to clothe and feed themselves and their families. Life was much tougher in those times than now. Tom fished on shares, raised chickens which he sold for whatever he could get for them, and did baking for regular customers. He would rent a room to drummers coming into the area and wanting to spend the night."

The stories, or the recounting of them, are a bit confused. However imprecise they may be, the accounts warmly remember the former confectioner and ice cream maker (Carlson 2005c:190):

> On Saturdays and Sundays people came over to his place for his ice cream and chocolate cake. Miss Beaty Peele remembers when he died: "They had a big room in the house, and he was laid out in there. When it came time for the funeral, they took his coffin out of the house and put it on the walk before the door, in the yard, and all the people were standing around. There was a right good crowd at the funeral." They then buried him out back under the live oaks.

Tom Angell is buried in the Gaskins/Foster Cemetery in Hatteras Village under a marker that carries the words "Thomas Vine Angell, 1882-1937, from his friends of the Gooseville Gun Club." Fortunately, a few images of Angell survive, including one in the *National Geographic Magazine* in 1933 with a caption that reads in part "All the Folk of the Banks Know this Old-Timer," but neglects to identify him by name (Epler 1933:719).



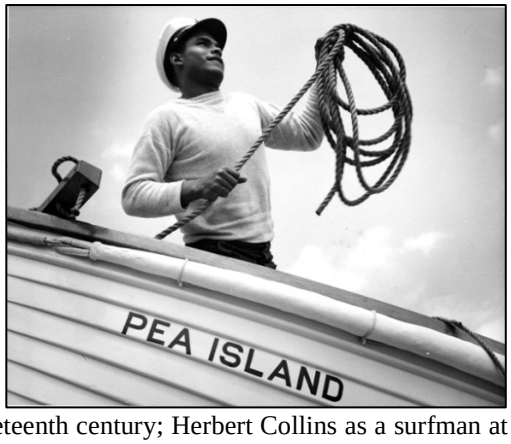
Confectioner Tom Angell, 1933 (source: Epler, "A Bit of Elizabethan England in America" and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection)

The absence of African-Americans on the Outer Banks is highlighted in a story told by Elsie Hooper in the early 2000s (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:595). Hooper, who was born in the mid-1930s on Hatteras Island, remembered a childhood visit to her great-grandmother's when she first saw an African-American. Three members of the all-black Pea Island Life-Saving Station, on horseback in uniform, scared her so much that she ran and hid behind the house, to the great amusement of her family:

> I went over to my dad…that was dad's mother that lived across on the east side, and to tell my mother…grandmother…what I'd seen, and she laughed. I can hear her right now, she and my grandfather laughed just as hard as they could. I'd never seen nothin' like it, you know, 'cause you didn't get off of the island like it to see nothin'.

The most notable African-Americans on the Outer Banks were the men of the Pea Island Life-Saving Station, who had scared Elsie Hooper so. The station was opened in 1878, between Oregon Inlet and New Inlet, and in 1880 became the first and only Life-Saving Station with an all-African-American crew. It had to be rebuilt in 1880 follow a racially motivated burning and it was rebuilt once more in 1931. The Coast Guard decommissioned the station in 1949 and it no longer survives on its site. However, its station building (now a residence), lookout tower, and cistern have been relocated together to Salvo and the cookhouse moved to Manteo, where it was converted into the Pea Island Cookhouse Museum in 2008 (U.S. Coast Guard 2013; Wright and Zoby 2000:169-179; Crumley and Miele 2005:30-31; Gorzkowski 2007; County of Dare 2008). More important than the station's physical presence, though, is the memory of its keepers and crew.

Richard Etheridge (1842-1900), the first keeper of the all-black station, was raised as a slave on John B. Etheridge's farm on Roanoke Island. He was "a talented and literate young man who as an avid waterman easily navigated Roanoke Island's sounds, bays, and marshes" (Smith 2001:31). In 1863, following the Federal reclamation of Roanoke Island, he enlisted in the Union Army and served for three years before returning to the island. In 1870 his household at North End included his wife, Frances, their infant daughter, Oneida, and African-American servant Orphia Alexander and her daughter, Victoria. He farmed and briefly worked as a surfman at the Bodie Island Life-Saving Station in 1875-1876 before joining the Pea Island station as keeper in 1880. The station was intended to have a "checkerboard" or integrated crew, but when he arrived, the four white surfmen who would have served under him departed, leaving two black surfmen behind. The station was continued with an all-African-American crew and operated as such through World War II.



Pea Island Life-Saving Station and crew, keeper Richard Etheridge at far left, late nineteenth century; Herbert Collins as a surfman at Pea Island, at right (sources: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at left, and Lagan, "Remembering LT Herbert Collins," at right)

Keeper Etheridge successfully guided his crew through many rescues, including that of the passengers and crew of the *E.S. Newman* on October 11, 1896, which required an exhausting ten trips through crashing seas. Neither this rescue nor any other of the African-American station was acknowledged through commendations by the Life-Saving Service or Coast Guard until 1996, when Etheridge and his six-member crew were each posthumously awarded a Gold Lifesaving Medal for the *Newman* rescue (Stover 2008:20-21).

In 1900, after two decades of service as the Pea Island keeper, Etheridge died at the station. The cause of death was probably malaria (Smith 2001:35).

Six keepers followed Richard Etheridge. The last was Manteo native Herbert Collins (1921-2010), who Admiral T.W. Allen, Commandant of the United States Coast Guard, memorialized as a "legendary" Coast Guardsman (*Coastland Times* 2010; United States Coast Guard 2006). Two years before his death Collins discussed his dreams of serving at Pea Island (Lagan 2010): "As a young kid, I would watch the surfmen come home and always admired their uniform…and I said to myself that I was going to get in the Coast Guard and Pea Island Station." The Pea Island surfmen inspired many young black men up and down the coast. William Bowser, who immediately preceded Collins as keeper, had similar recollections and dreams. He recalled (Sandbeck 2001:35) "swimming at Pea Island as a child with his other friends, all of whom idolized the crew. "We all wanted to be like them," he said."

Outsiders and Insiders: Outer Banks Gun and Hunt Clubs

Clubs for wealthy northerners and other outsiders were scattered throughout the Outer Banks in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With the tourism business barely smoldering outside of Nags Head—awaiting the match of sound-spanning bridges and paved roads—these clubs were the only places one found outsiders in any numbers during the

period. Although the clubs have all but vanished along with the Banks' once-copious wildlife, various turn-of-the-century accounts of those of the Currituck Sound survive in period sporting journals. Wealthy Virginia sportsman Alexander Hunter (1843-1914) lauded the hunting opportunities along the sounds of southern Virginia and North Carolina, particularly the Currituck (Badger 2011:8). Along the Currituck, he averred near the turn of the century (Hunter 1897:463): "All the best points have been bought by syndicates, and the members of them have formed clubs. As a consequence, a small area on the North Carolina coast contains the largest collection of clubhouses found anywhere in the world, in so small a space. A strip about forty miles long by three to ten miles wide, is literally sown with them, varying from the spacious mansion to the shanty of the market gunner."

He continued, in equally broad and sometimes far less laudatory fashion, to describe the quantities and quality of waterfowl, the lay of the land, and the knowledge and supposed indolent nature of its inhabitants. According to Hunter (1987:463):

> [Wild-fowl shooting] is the only attraction the place has, for if there is a spot on earth otherwise more dreary and uninviting than this region, I have never heard of it.
>
> The strip of land that separates the Atlantic Ocean from the Currituck Sound is the very embodiment of desolation. In the winter the storms careen over it at will, and the low marshes and sea meadows are alternately flooded with water and swept by shifting sands, and in the summer the sand-flies and mosquitoes make life a burden; yet there is a hardy race which inhabits these shores, and its members have lived here for two centuries. The men are as tough as pine knots, have sallow skins that are as thick as parchment, and loose, raw-boned figures. They earn their living entirely by fishing, hunting, and acting as guides; at home they are as lazy as Indians.

Hunter's words expose some of the tensions, or at least differences, between outdoorsmen on the Outer Banks in this one area where insiders and outsiders most often overlapped. According to a recent account of the evolution of hunting and fishing in Virginia, his disdain for the residents of the Banks and other sporting spots in Virginia and North Carolina "illustrates the gulf that had developed between people whose ancestors viewed wildlife as a means of subsistence and those who view it as sport" (Badger 2011:6). As a member of the Virginia legislature, Hunter was an early and successful advocate of laws that protected wildlife through restrictions on hunting, particularly after observing what he felt was the wanton slaughter of birds on Hog Island, a barrier island along the cost of Northampton County, Virginia. His legislative success reflected and broadened the gulf (Badger 2011:7-8):

> And so our great store of fish and game had gone from becoming a matter of survival for early colonists to a government-regulated source of sport for those with leisure time and money to spend. And rural people, such as the Broadwater residents of Hog Island, felt that they had been converted from Godfearing, law-abiding citizens to outlaws almost overnight by the passage of such laws. Hunting and fishing heretofore had been governed by natural law. Duck season began when the ducks arrived. It ended when they left.

Hunter had a warm spot for leisure sportsmen. The typical New Yorkers or Bostonians who hunted for pleasure were "companionable, easy going, [and] hospitable . . . middle-aged *bon vivants*, who love sport and good living equally well" (Hunter 1897:466). They were flush with cash to boot: "To belong to a crack club on Currituck Sound," he claimed, "is almost as expensive as keeping a yacht. . . . (Hunter 1897:463-464).

Clubs in Currituck County on the northern Banks—running from the Virginia border south to Dare County—included the Currituck Sound Club (founded by Northern businessmen at a meeting in New York City in 1857), the Swan Island Club (founded by men from New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts after 1870), the Monkey Island Club (chartered in 1919 by Virginians), the Narrows Island Club, the Lighthouse Club (formed by New Yorkers in 1874 and transformed into the posh Whalehead Club in 1922-1925), the Currituck Shooting Club, and the Palmer Island Club (McNaughton 2000:39-61; Roberts and Sumner 1980; Roberts 1979; Bateman, Bateman, and Sheppard 2009; Roberts and Sheppard 2009a and 2009b).

Johnson and Coppedge (1991:8-9) break the historic and current clubs of Currituck Sound and Back Bay, just to the north in Virginia, into five types: corporate—the large well-heeled operations; partnership—formed by a few generally well-to-

do friends; single ownership—ranging from small to large enterprises; sporting lodges (or boarding lodges)—set-up and operated by locals to cater to the average hunter; and groups of friends—modest operations set up by friends who might be local residents. The range indicates the wide variety of ways that hunters of differing means and from different places could do what they all liked to do, hunt, and do it the way they liked to do it, with peers or friends.

There were clubs of various types in Dare County as well, although considerably less has been written about them. Hunter (1897:466) wrote in 1897 of the "most sociable club" in the vicinity of the Currituck Sound, one "lately formed" on Roanoke Island called the Roanoke Club. This was the only one of the clubs of which he wrote "where ladies visit."

Not all sportsmen looked down their noses at the residents of the Outer Banks who hunted fowl for food and to sell for much-needed currency. In the pages of *Recreation* magazine, A.S. Doane, a Currituck County transplant who lived in the tiny community of Waterlily across the Currituck Sound from Corolla, admired their skills and work ethic (Doane 1900:197):

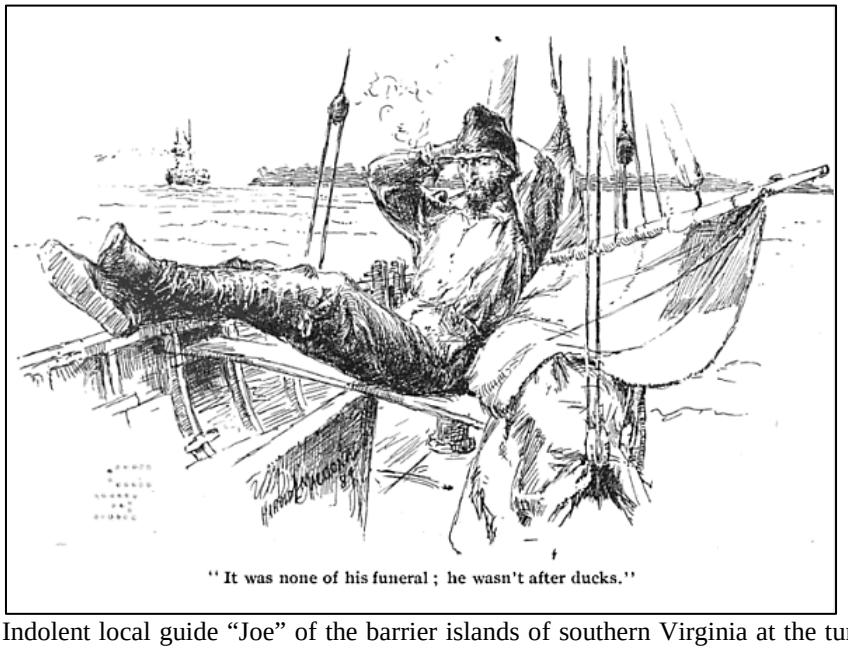
> Outside of the club owners and their guests, we have between 400 and 500 market shooters in Currituck sound. There is nothing illegal or disgraceful in being a market shooter, and it is the hardest kind of work. In fact, take them as a class, I know of no harder working nor more accommodating men than those who shoot in this sound.
>
> In spite of the decrease in the number of water fowl, a prominent buyer told me he was buying about as many as usual. This means, I presume, 40,000 birds, and there are 3 or 4 buyers. Prices are low this year, so you see that, although birds are scarce and growing more so, the gunners work much harder to meet the demand.

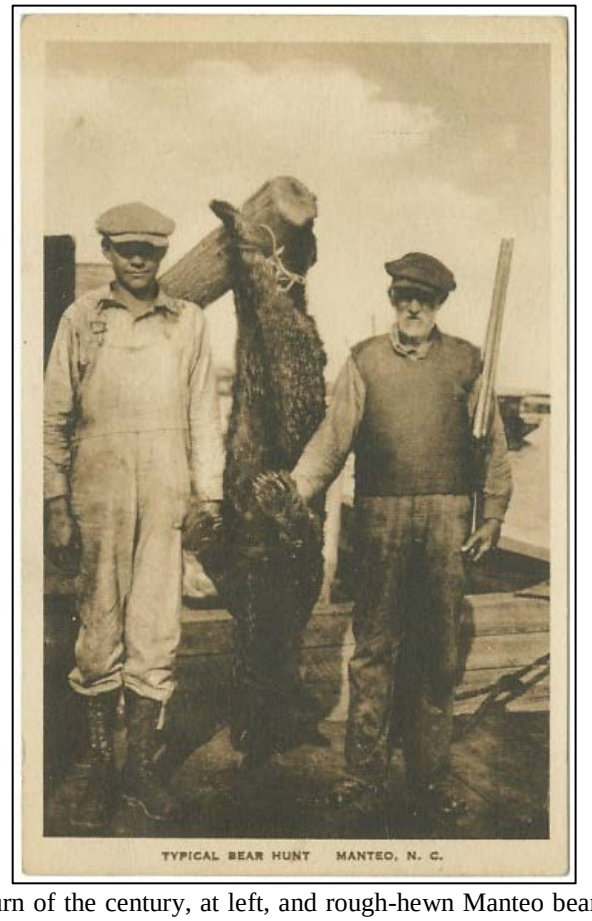
It should be noted that while A. Sidney Doane (ca.1876-1902) was a resident of Currituck County interested in the outdoors, he was far from a non-worldly man. From 1901 until his death of typhoid fever the following year, the native New Yorker was the superintendent of Currituck County's schools (Dixon 1902:101; *Tar Heel* 1902c). He argued that market forces and fashion, not legislation, could best preserve rapidly depleting stocks of local wildfowl:

> The whole question rests with the consumers. If no one ate game, except what he killed, the market would disappear, the birds would be plentiful, and a man could have a decent day's sport whenever he wanted it.
>
> Laws are no good here, as far as real game protection goes. We have enough laws in this county to protect all the game in the world, but just as long as birds and feathers sell just so long will the extermination go on.
>
> I repeat, there is but one way to protect the birds—don't buy game and don't wear feathers.

Whether one views market hunting through the lens of Alexander Hunter, A. Sidney Doane, or the turn-of-the-century local huntsman, there is no denying its devastating impact on Outer Banks' bird life. "Between 1880 and 1900," Cecelski (2000:94) sums up, "the slaughter of coastal birds was commonplace and relentless."

The market hunter Doane perceived was a fellow denizen of the sounds who was wise and persevering enough to make do with the opportunities presented to him in his watery habitat. He was more akin to the rough-hewn but exceedingly knowledgeable and adept William H. "Bear Bill" Basnight, than to the useless fellows who slouch through the coastal hunting trips of Alexander Hunter.





Indolent local guide "Joe" of the barrier islands of southern Virginia at the turn of the century, at left, and rough-hewn Manteo bear hunters, ca.1905-1915 (sources: Hunter, *The Huntsman in the South*, at left, and University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards)

Market hunting was of limited popularity south of the Currituck Banks. Almost all Banker men hunted at least occasionally for the table, but few did so commercially. Taking others, often referred to as "sports," out to hunt as a guide was also limited. The 1880 census schedules of both Dare and Currituck counties list no individuals as market hunters or guides, although this does not mean that no men engaged in it (Matchak 1978:46-47). Hunting and guiding were among the various activities that Bankers had on their plates to make a living in a difficult environment. With the tremendous slaughter and depletion of bird numbers in the late nineteenth century; the Weeks–McLean Act of 1913 and Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918, which ended plume and market hunting; and later legislation outlawing hunting from battery boxes and the use of live decoys and limiting a hunter's daily kill, wildfowling changed dramatically. These, coupled with the challenges of the Great Depression, doomed almost all of the big hunting clubs, although local hunters and occasional visitors hunted, and continue to hunt, on the Banks and the mainland near the sounds (Matchak 1978:60-61).

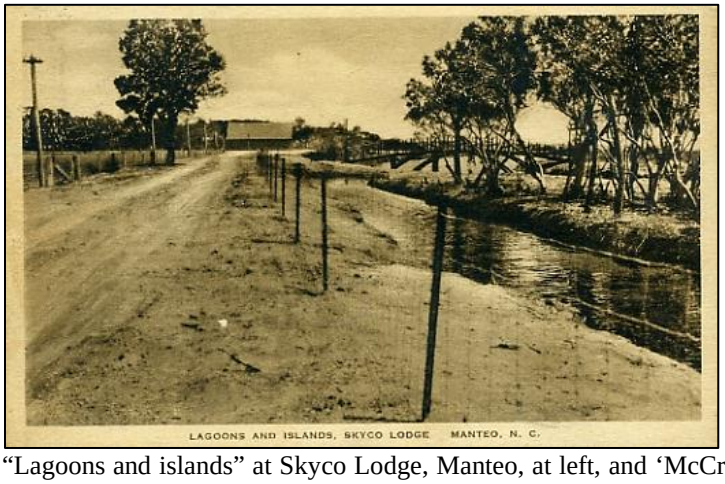
Currituck County was the not the only place on the Outer Banks with hunting clubs. Dare County had its share, too, although they were not established until a few decades after, and were less grand, than that of Dare's neighbor to the north. Dare's clubs included the Bodie Island Hunting Club, Lone Cedar Lodge, Skyco Lodge, the Goosewing Club, the Duck Island Club, and the Pea Island Club (Sandbeck 2003:66; Bigelow 1907).

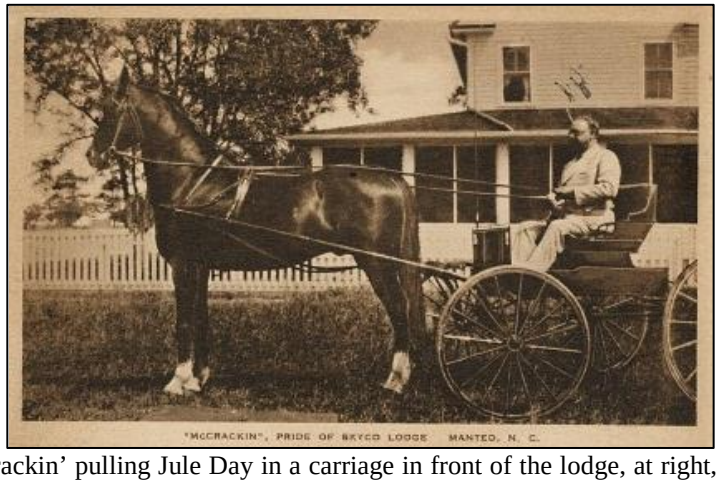
Five wealthy Bostonian sportsmen formed the Bodie Island Club in 1904. They hired fellow New Englander Nathaniel E. Gould to superintend the clubhouse, it 3,000 sandy acres, and 200 acres of ponds. Gould had been keeper of the Coast Guard Station in Chatham, Massachusetts on Cape Cod. He had also owned a hotel in Chatham that had been chased by the wind and the sea to four different locations before he demolished it in 1904. Due to his experiences in Chatham, Gould was dedicated to sand stabilization. Between 1905 and 1908 he introduced sea oats to the Outer Banks at the Bodie Island site. Gould was superintendent of the club (and also the owner of Manteo's Tranquil House Inn) until his death in 1924 (Sandbeck 2003:66; Khoury n.d.; United States Coast Guard 2013a).


Nathaniel E. Gould, superintendent of the Bodie Island Hunting club, early twentieth century, at left, and the club, with Bodie Island Lighthouse visible at left distance, ca. 1950s (sources: Khoury, "Coaxing Seeds from Sand," at left, and, at right, http://www.obxconnection.com/outer-banks-forum/forum-thread.aspx?Thread=30200)

Robert Bruce "Tull" Lennon (1893-1969) established the Lone Cedar Club on or near the current Manteo-Nags Head causeway on Bodie Island about 1920. A local builder and businessman, he mostly served Northeasterners interested in duck hunting. The club occupied a house in which he and his wife lived that held three bedrooms for guests, a living room, and a kitchen. The building stood until falling to development pressures after 2002. An adjacent one-story structure that served as a seasonal home for a cook and two guides is also no longer standing (Sandbeck 2003:66). The facilities and local ownership indicate that this was a much less grand operation than others in Dare County and certainly many on the Currituck Banks.

A well-to-do New Yorker, Jule Day, established a club on the west side of Roanoke Island in the 1920s. On this property, which had been home to the Ashbee family prior to the Civil War: "He created Skyco Lodge, dug canals and stocked them with fish and brought in caged and free-roaming animals. He built bridges over the canals, and the whole complex, where he entertained his friends and business associates, had a parklike setting. There were monkeys, peacocks and horses" (Downing 1913:101). The lodge still stood in heavily altered form in 2002 (Sandbeck 2003:67).

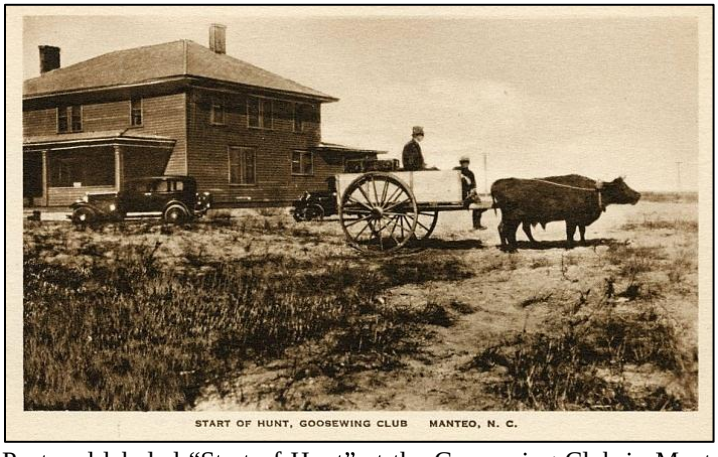




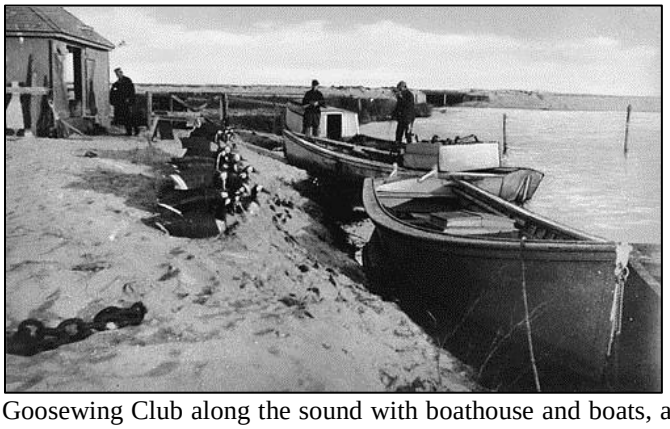
"Lagoons and islands" at Skyco Lodge, Manteo, at left, and 'McCrackin' pulling Jule Day in a carriage in front of the lodge, at right, both ca.1920s (source: http://www.obxconnection.com/outer-banks-forum/forum-thread.aspx?Thread=20731&Page=2)

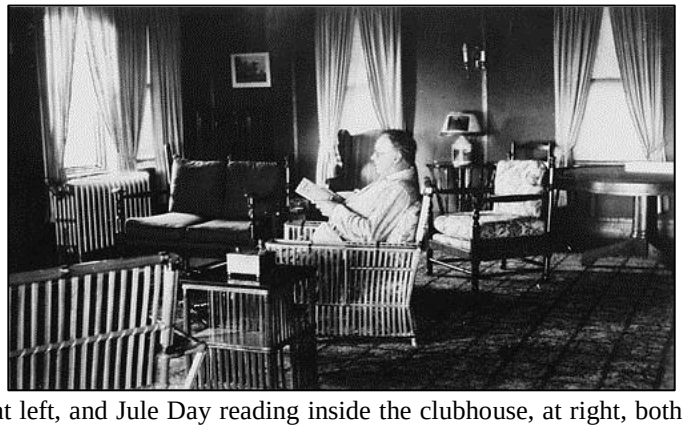
In 1926 Frank Stick—illustrator, developer, outdoorsman, and Outer Banks enthusiast and mover and shaker—rented the lodge and lived there with his family. His son, David—who absorbed his father's love of the Outer Banks and grew up to be its premier historian—fondly recalled his years there (Downing 2013:101).

The history of the Goosewing Club was connected with that of Skyco. The club was formed in 1931 in New York "to purchase and develop land in North Carolina for hunting, fishing, and other forms of recreation." In 1931 it bought 1,440 acres on Bodie Island. Two years later it purchased 46.9 acres "at the Skyco Lodge in Nag's Head." Whether this property was separate from the Skyco land on Manteo, or was actually part of that site, is unclear (Madden 2009). A rare glimpse into life at a higher-end hunting club in Dare County is offered by a series of photographs of the club taken about 1932.

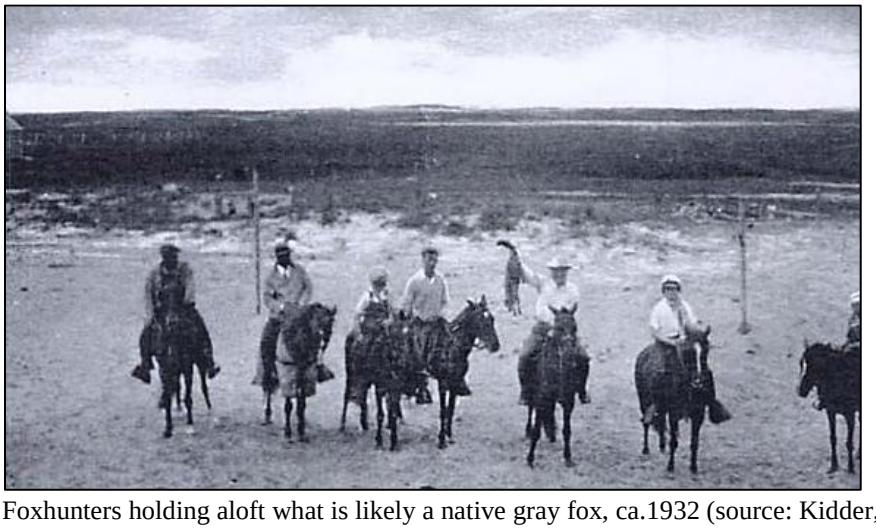


Postcard labeled "Start of Hunt" at the Goosewing Club in Manteo, at left, and the clubhouse, a boathouse, and the sound, at right, both ca.1932 (sources: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, North Carolina Collection, North Carolina Postcards, at left, and Kidder, *The Outer Banks in Vintage Postcard*s, at right)





Goosewing Club along the sound with boathouse and boats, at left, and Jule Day reading inside the clubhouse, at right, both ca.1932 (source: Madden, "The Goose Wing Club")



Foxhunters holding aloft what is likely a native gray fox, ca.1932 (source: Kidder, *The Outer Banks in Vintage Postcards*)

The Internet posting of photographs of the Goosewing and Skyco clubs in 2009 prompted some revealing comments (responses at Madden 2009). In 2011 Robert Midgett posted:

> I am the grandson of Leo Midgette who was Superintendent of the Goosewing Club. The Club is now on Park Service property and all that remains is the foundation and one chimney. The postcard with the oxen shows not hunters, but 2 men putting out feed (corn) for the duck and goose impoundments. The postcard of the man [in a carriage] (Mr. Jule Day) was in front of Skyco Lodge. Skyco Lodge was the summer resort and the Goose Wing was the winter hunt club.

He also identified the man reading inside the club as Jule Day.

Joan Collins responded in 2013 that: "My grandfather, Marshall Collins, an African American native of Manteo, North Carolina worked at the Goosewing Club in the 1920s/1930s. He was a kind, knowledgeable man, respected by whites and blacks alike."

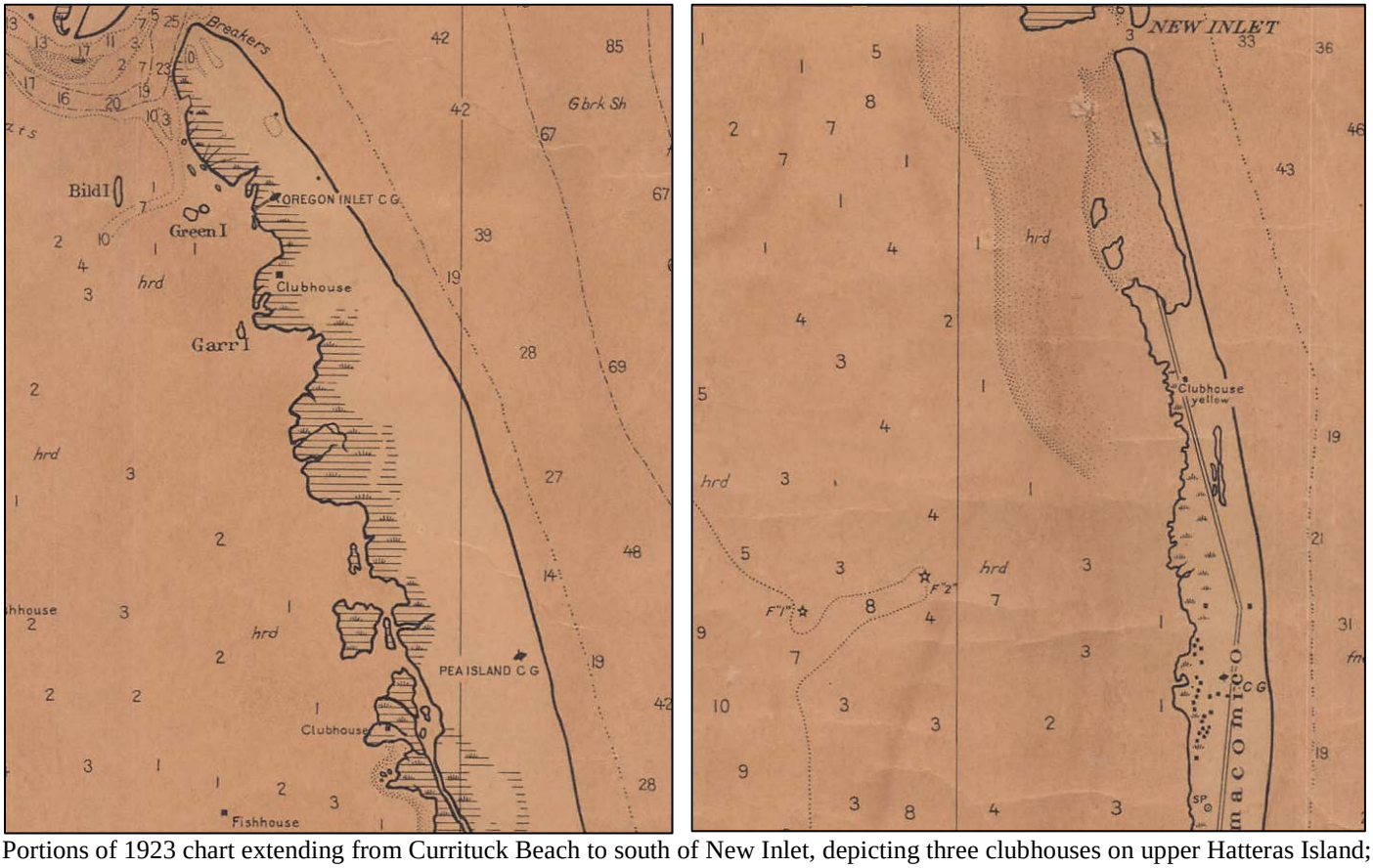
Marshall Collins may well have been one of the two black men at the left of the fox hunting photograph, which was not included in the posting his granddaughter responded to. Born in Manteo in 1898, he did as native Outer Banks did, holding multiple jobs and roles in his community. In addition to working at the Goosewing Club, he was the superintendent of the Sunday school at Haven Creek Missionary Baptist Church in Manteo and raised corn, beets, sweet potatoes, cattle, and horses—as well as seven children, including noted Pea Island surfman Herbert Collins—on his family's 280-acre farm in Skyco on Roanoke Island (Barnes 1998; Boone 2012:17; *Coastland Times* 1995; Eaton 1996).

Census schedules name additional Outer Banks residents connected with clubs. Ernest L. Austin, who likely lived in Hatteras Village, identified himself as the keeper of a club house in the 1930 census. Ruford B. Payne (1891-1964) of Rodanthe identified himself as the superintendent of a club. His obituary referred to him a retired fisherman and made no mention of clubs, but in 1930 taking care of a club may have been his primary source of income (*Coastland Times* 1964). Cantwell S. Harris of Colington also worked in 1930 as the keeper of a club house. (For its connection with lighthouses and lifesaving stations, the word "keeper" had a strongly positive connotation on the Outer Banks. It is therefore not surprising that both Austin and Harris chose it to describe their positions.)

Albert Lyon "Bert" Austin recalled in an oral history that his father, Ernest L. Austin (1898-1934), managed the Gooseville Gun Club (Garrity-Blake et al. 2005c:8). Gooseville (not to be confused with Goosewing) was located near Hatteras Village. It was founded by George Albert Lyon, for whom Bert Austin was named. (An avid outdoorsman, Lyon was an extremely successful industrialist who invented, or at least perfected, the automobile bumper (Wells 1957).) According to Austin, Gooseville brought in visitors "from all over," including "big name people" such as performer Nelson Eddie.

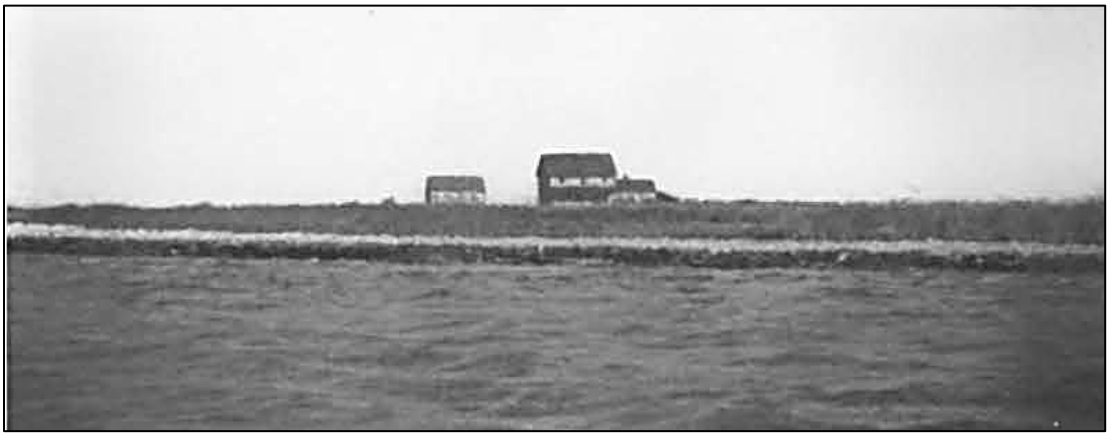
Gooseville Gun Club near Hatteras Village, n.d. (Courtesy of the State Archives of North Carolina)

Modern maps do not locate the various clubhouses on Hatteras Island or elsewhere on the Banks. Some, most without names, can be found on maps and charts from the early twentieth century, however. A 1910 chart places the "Pea I Club ho[use]" just southwest of the Pea Island Lifesaving Station on the sound. A 1923 chart includes that clubhouse and two more. One stood to the south, on the sound below the Oregon Inlet station. The other stood near the sound between New Inlet and Chicamacomico (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey Coast 1910 and 1923). The chart does not locate any clubs on Dare County's northern Banks or on Roanoke Island.

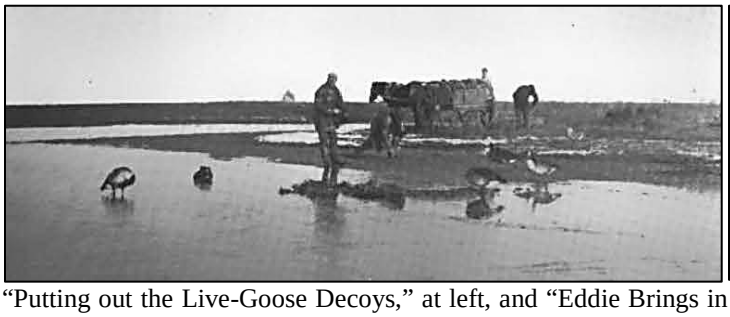
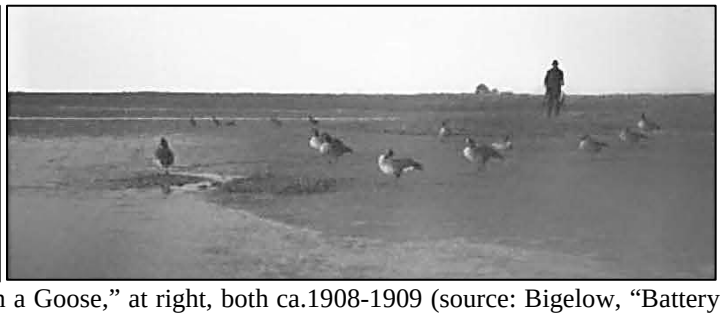


Portions of 1923 chart extending from Currituck Beach to south of New Inlet, depicting three clubhouses on upper Hatteras Island; the Pea Island Club occupied the clubhouse opposite the Pea Island Coast Guard station at the bottom of the chart at the left (U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1923—University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)

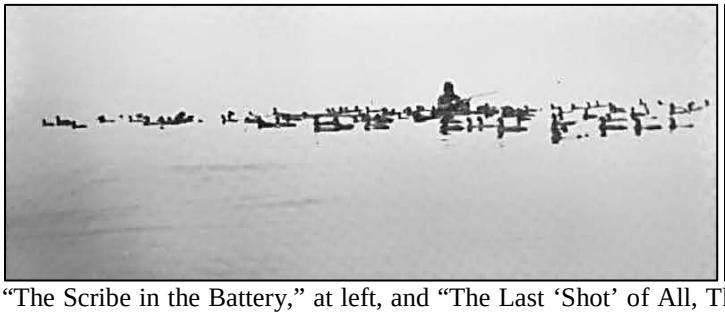
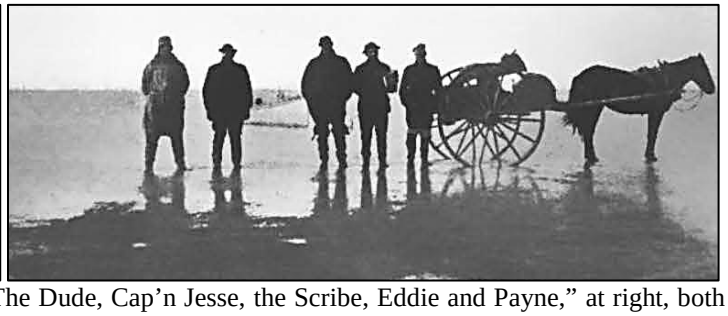
The Pea Island Club was in place by the turn of the century. Louis Bishop stayed there in February 1901 when he recorded the winter birds of the island and Horatio Bigelow visited the club for a week in the winter of 1908-1909 to shoot birds from batteries set coffin-like into the sound (Bishop 1901:261; Bigelow 1909:411-417). Bigelow and three friends traveled first from New York to Elizabeth City, where they caught a boat to Roanoke Island. They then took the club's motorboat down from Manteo with keeper Jesse Etheridge and saw their first birds, a flock of about 20 swans, at one of the fishhouses in the sound opposite the island. Bigelow wrote of the hunt in *Field and Stream* magazine, which included accounts of what they shot, what they ate—big breakfasts were the rule—and, fortunately, photographs, some of which are reproduced below.

"The Scribe" (Horatio Bigelow), at left, and "The Clubhouse, Pea Island," at right, both ca.1908-1909 (source: Bigelow, "Battery Shooting at Pea Island")

"Putting out the Live-Goose Decoys," at left, and "Eddie Brings in a Goose," at right, both ca.1908-1909 (source: Bigelow, "Battery Shooting at Pea Island")

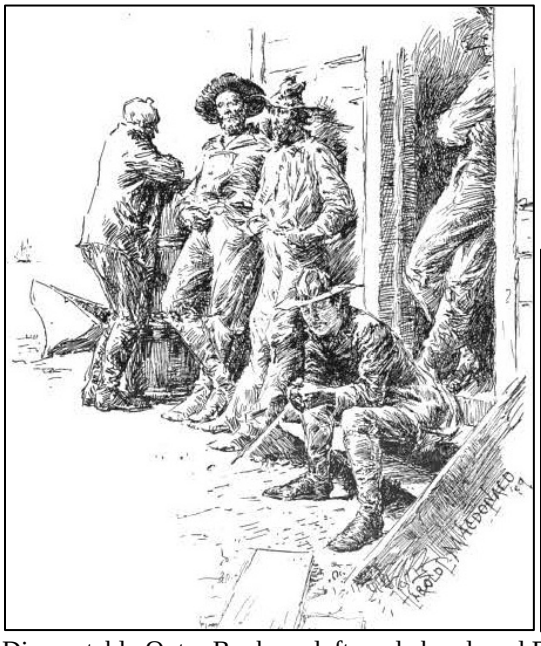



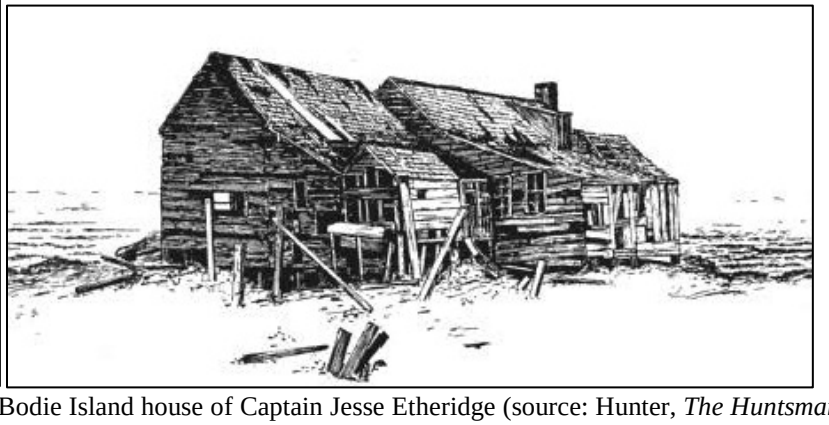
"The Scribe in the Battery," at left, and "The Last 'Shot' of All, The Dude, Cap'n Jesse, the Scribe, Eddie and Payne," at right, both ca.1908-1909 (source: Bigelow, "Battery Shooting at Pea Island")

Hunting was not limited to the extremes of market hunters or well-to-do sportsmen. Many Bankers hunted, and of course fished, to supplement their diets and perhaps to make a little ready money. And many outsiders hunted in small parties, rather than at fancy lodges, which provided them with sport and brought additional income to Bankers who served as guides. For example, in 1902 two men from Troy, New York joined two Elizabeth City friends for sporting at Cape Hatteras. After braving a rough sail from Elizabeth City to the Cape, which required the assistance of an Outer Banks' livesaving crew, they hunted deer, ducks, brant, and other geese. They stayed with Dr. J.J. Davis who, in the words of New Yorker C.E. Wilson (1902:128) "had secured for us as guides N.T. Jennett, R.W. Midget and several others whose names I do not recall. We found them to be good men and always looking after our comfort, and were more anxious for us to get game than we were."

Although hunting was common, the written record on local hunters is slight and ranges from one extreme to the other. On one hand are the numerous belittling comments of Alexander Hunter, who had little positive to say about the Outer Banks' hunters and guides or, for that matter, about any Bankers at all. In Hunter's eyes these men were indolent, filthy, and mosquito- and flea-bitten. In an account titled "A Fishing and Hunting Trip along the North Carolina Coast" he describes a "rough plank shanty" on a platform—located on Dare County's northern Banks opposite Roanoke Island—that he shared with some local fishermen and off-island friends (Hunter 1908:170-171):

> It was a mere shell, used for storing fish, although two bunks with some tattered bedclothes showed that it was a bedchamber as well. But ye gods, the odor! It was simply horrible, sickening! The bugs! Pah! We felt our blood run cold.
>
> The lantern was brought, and the details became clearer and more loathsome. Evidently no one had been in the place for months, and a barrel of weak brine which stood in one corner contained decaying fish. Jack Yates rushed outside, and we heard him having an attack of sea-sickness in its worst phase.





Disreputable Outer Bankers, left, and abandoned Bodie Island house of Captain Jesse Etheridge (source: Hunter, *The Huntsman in the South*)

Hunter's writings capture images of less-than-reputable-looking Bankers, including one that accompanied the above quotation. He did not include a depiction of the foul shanty, but did sketch an abandoned Bodie Island dwelling on the same trip that he characterized as "the house of the most noted wrecker on the coast, Captain Jesse Etheridge" (Hunter 1908:186) An obituary painted a different portrait of Capt. Jesse T. Etheridge (ca.1841-1924), who was described as a Life-Saving Station keeper and "a splendid citizen and a good man" who "lived a quiet and peaceful life" following his retirement (*Independent* 1924b)

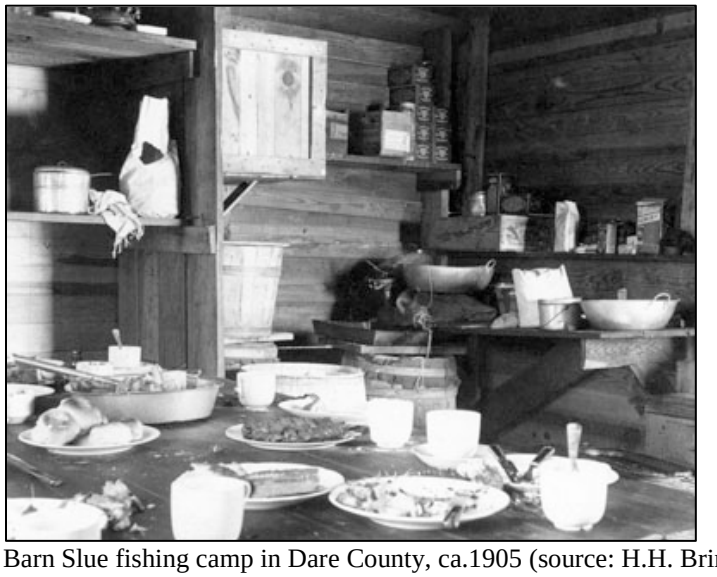
Running counter to Hunter's unflattering character sketches is the story of William H. "Bear Bill" Basnight (1841-1920), a true Dare County character. Basnight's obituary (*Independent* 1920a) dubbed him a "Veteran Nimrod and King of Bear Hunters." It noted that he was born in East Lake on the Dare County mainland at the Albemarle Sound and captured a larger-than-life persona:

> For many years just prior to his death he was keeper of [a] hunting club on Durant's Island, Dare County, belonging to Northern millionaires. … He had thousands of reminiscences replete with the perils and pleasures of his many years of hunting, from which to draw and could readily entertain for hours anyone who was fortunate enough to hear him relate them. His ability as a raconteur was readily recognized by dozens of northern sportsmen who were glad to get him up north as an after dinner speaker, and his spicy speeches invariably bought the applause of all his hearers. No hunter in this section of Carolina has become more widely known.

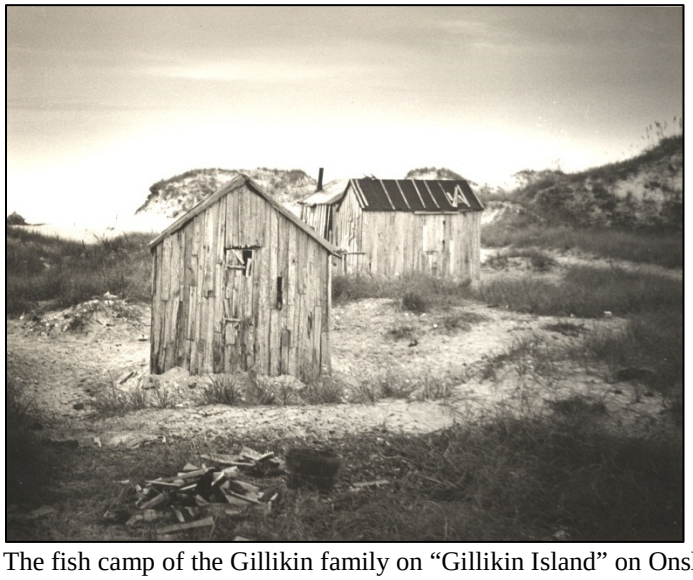
Basnight, who Hunter may have met or heard speak, was more than an outdoorsman. His death certificate identified him as a surveyor and a farmer and his will as a family man. The will suggests that Basnight, rich in experience and stories, had little personal wealth. The only items he specifically bequeathed to his son, daughter, and grandson came from the bedroom: "…each [after his wife's death shall] have one of the best feather beds, one of the best mattresses made of cotton, two pillows, two quilts and one sheet…" (Dare County Will Book 1, Page 266).

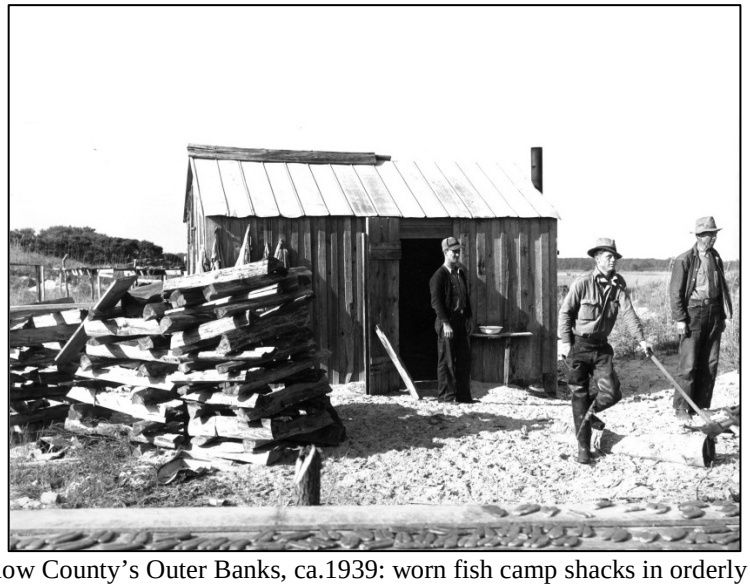
The case of Hunter's venom versus Bear Bill's near legendary prowess is an instance where the truth does not fall somewhere near the middle. Other than Hunter's accounts, there is little or no evidence that Banker outdoorsmen were lazy and indifferent. One need only consider a story that Hunter himself tells of a trip he took with two companions to Buxton and Hatteras Island to hunt ducks and raccoons. He admired the tolling skills of an "old gentleman" named Menefee and his dog who lived on the sound. Following commands, "Old Rex" enticed ducks to paddle close to Hunter's blind and take to the air above it (Hunter 1908:105-107). It was Hunter's first experience of tolling, which the old man described as a dying art in the area. Indolence did not teach Old Rex the many commands he knew. Hard work and patience did.

The visual evidence also shows care and order, rather than indifference and chaos at fishing camps. While images of an uncleared table, unmade bunks, or missing weatherboards might at first glance suggest disorder, they also show compactly constructed quarters with carefully placed storage areas and buildings on well-kept grounds. Considering the fact that fishing camps were the sites of inherently messy activities, photographs suggest they could be surprisingly neat places.

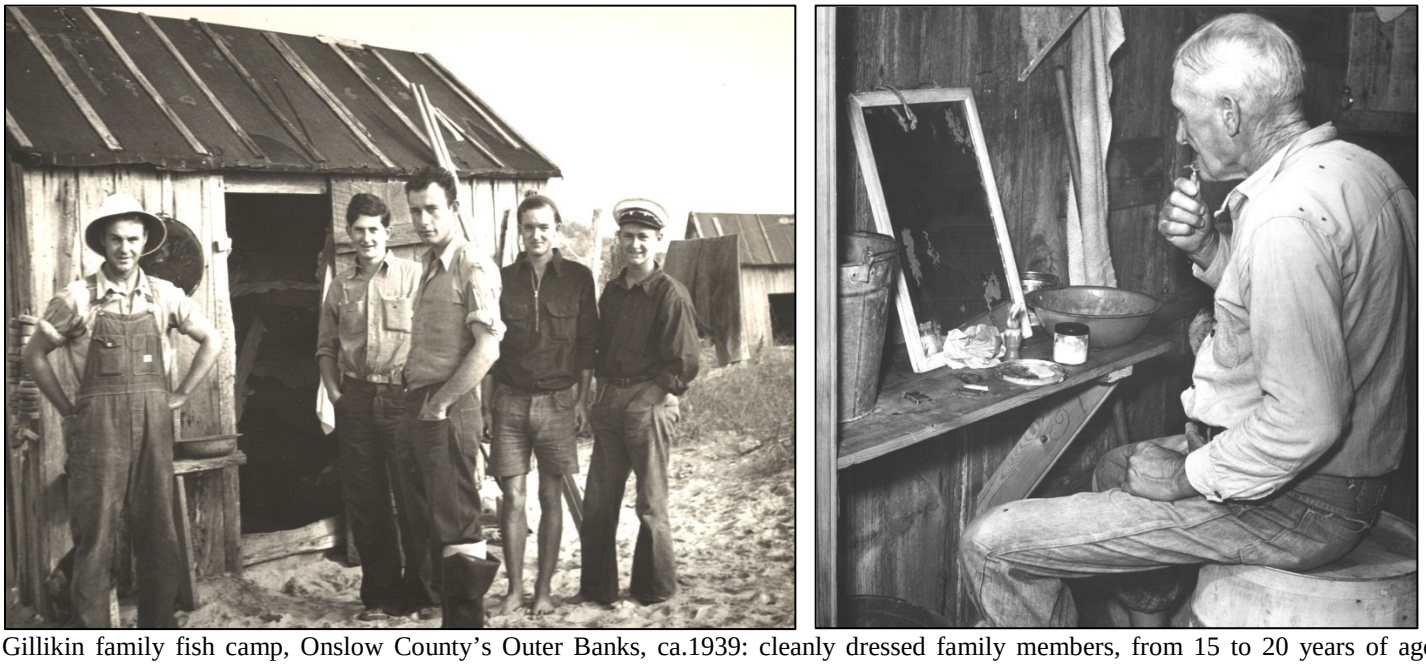


Barn Slue fishing camp in Dare County, ca.1905 (source: H.H. Brimley Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)

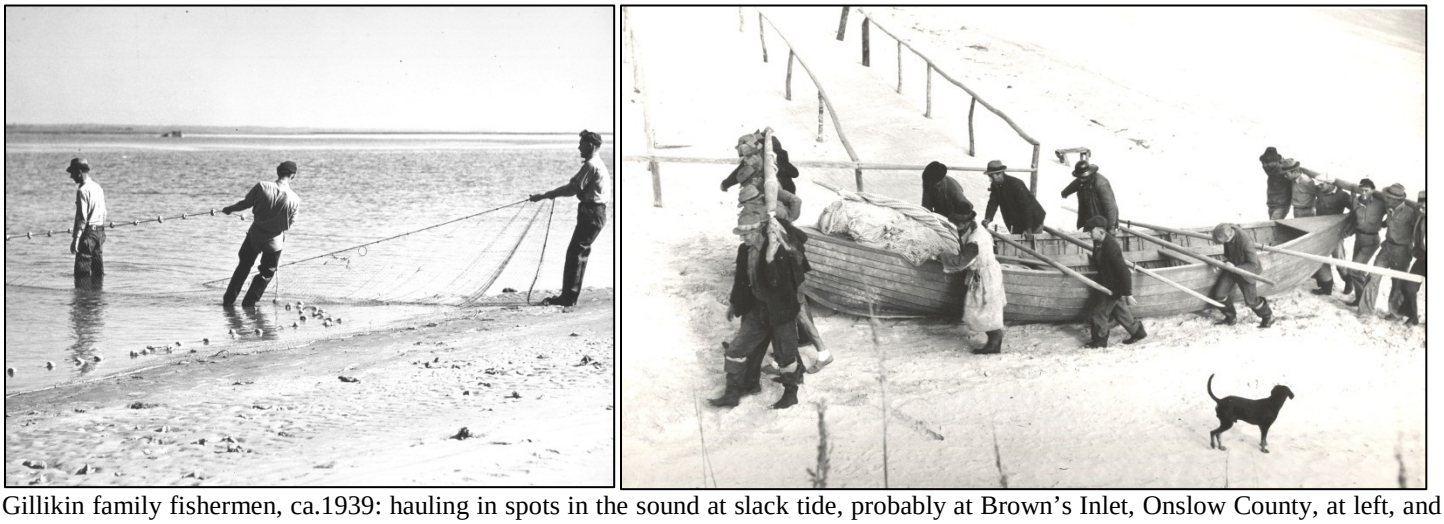




The fish camp of the Gillikin family on "Gillikin Island" on Onslow County's Outer Banks, ca.1939: worn fish camp shacks in orderly landscape, at left, and neat stacks of firewood and mullet roe looking like skipping stones drying in the foreground, at right (source: Charles A. Farrell Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)



Gillikin family fish camp, Onslow County's Outer Banks, ca.1939: cleanly dressed family members, from 15 to 20 years of age, "carry on the traditions of their fathers," at left, and an elder shaving in a cabin, at right (source: Charles A. Farrell Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)



Gillikin family fishermen, ca.1939: hauling in spots in the sound at slack tide, probably at Brown's Inlet, Onslow County, at left, and members of the Gillikin and Lawrence families bringing in a surf boat "after the haul" at Gillikin Island, Onslow County (source: Charles A. Farrell Photograph Collection, State Archives of North Carolina)

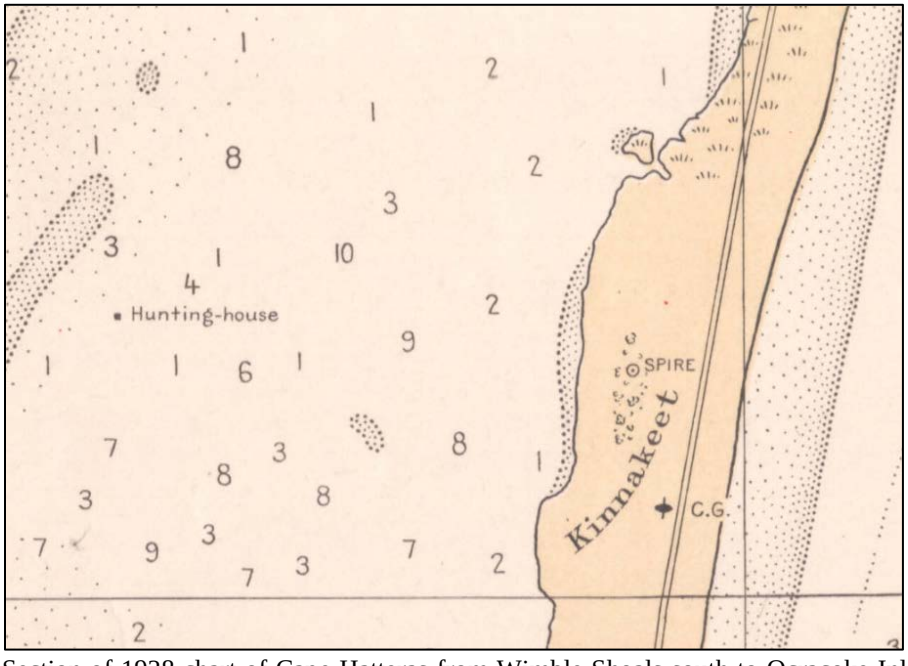
The hunt clubs Alexander Hunter visited were proper entities for well-to-do outsiders. The fish camps he discusses were more local affairs. Those at Barn Slue and Gillikin Island were also local, but for business rather than recreation. The term fish camp was apparently applied broadly to both recreational and business sites. Joyce Ersie Midgett Rucker, born in Rodanthe in 1932, described one that combined the two uses. According to Rucker in 2002, as summarized by interviewer Jennifer Miller (Garrity-Blake 2005c:1001):

> Many families of Rodanthe and Waves would gather for fish fries several times during the summer. There was a fishing camp by the New Inlet where they would catch fish and fry them on the spot. "We always called it Mr. Sinclair's fishing camp," says Joyce, but she's not sure who actually owned the land. The owner allowed the families [to] use the camp facilities, cooking equipment and such, which stayed there permanently.

The difficulties faced by Outer Banks' market hunters by the turn of the century are borne out in the census data. The 1930 census schedules identify only one game hunter along all of Dare County's Banks, William R. Perry of Kitty Hawk.

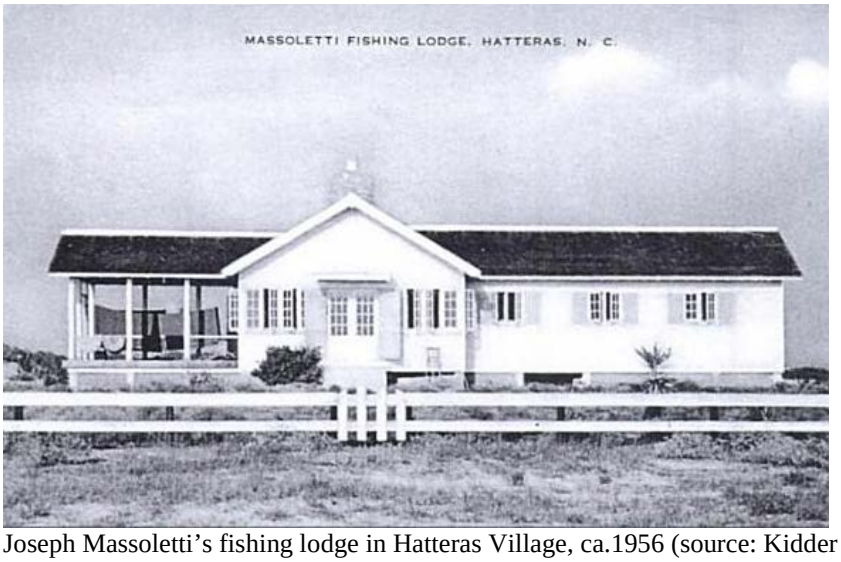
At 67, he did not have to rely on the sale of his game, for his household included three sons who also worked, two as fishermen and one as a laborer who took on odd jobs.

The status of a "hunting-house" planted in the shallows of Pamlico Sound west of Kinnakeet (Avon) in 1928 is not known. Did Bankers use it hunt waterfowl? Was it owned by one of the hunting clubs? Did it serve locals and outsiders, depending on the season? Was it abandoned? Based on the scant evidence of the chart, there is no way to know.



Section of 1928 chart of Cape Hatteras from Wimble Shoals south to Ocracoke Inlet depicting a "hunting-house" in Pamlico Sound east of Kinnakeet/Avon (source: U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, 1928—University of North Carolina, North Carolina Maps)

Not just hunting attracted sportsmen to the Banks. Fishing was even more popular. At the Massoletti Fishing Lodge in Hatteras Village, the New York restaurateur Joseph Massoletti entertained numerous guests. He also took them fishing for tarpon in the ocean on his yacht the *CoCo*, one of the first private yachts in the village (Kidder 2005c:22)



Joseph Massoletti's fishing lodge in Hatteras Village, ca.1956 (source: Kidder 1205:22)

As noted above, though, fishing was part and parcel of life on the Outer Banks, engaged in for profit, food and, occasionally, just plain fun. Not until well into the twentieth century, aided by the construction of paved roads and sound-spanning bridges, did it become a major tourist adventure.

CONCLUSION

The Dare County Outer Banker, from the earliest years until the advent of firm roads and bridges, was by inclination and upbringing both resourceful and resilient. These traits were required if one was to thrive or, perhaps, simply survive. Whether fishing or keeping house, saving lives or working a calmer government job, taking care of tourists or children, gardening or birthing babies or, in all likelihood, engaging in a combination of these activities and more, he or she was a master of a challenging environment. It took a lot to be a Banker in the old days of only a few generations ago. Outer Bankers were and are proud of their land and waters and accomplishments. As outlined above, their pride in their particular place is more than justified. They have earned it.

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