

## NEW BEACON

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 1958

Last week, in this column, we inquired about the story we'd been told, that all the willow trees in Provincetown were shoots off a willow tree brought back from the island of St. Helena by a whaling captain many years ago. We've now heard a few more ideas about these willow trees, two definitely pro-St. Helena willow trees and one, more or less deriding the idea, the three of which we pass along herewith. Laura Easley of 441 Commercial Street says that if this information isn't exactly "truth," it's certainly well established. She writes to say, "My mother and her parents spent long periods of time here from the days of her childhood. They stayed with 'Aunt Susan,' or 'Grandma Dyer' and Hannah Lou in the big house on the corner of Howland and the Front Street; and learned about the willows from them." And to back up her contention Miss Easley quotes from Nancy Paine Smith's "Provincetown Book," page 170: ". . . as the giant willows along the streets all sprang from a slip from St. Helena."

Our second informant on this point was Mrs. Harriet Adams of Kendall Lane, who phoned to tell us that she'd been told in the years before the last war, that this was a story made up by an inventive author who was writing stories on Cape Cod. His tale was of a Provincetown sea captain who cut a willow slip on St. Helena and put it in his back pocket. When he arrived home some months later, his wife discovered the twig, inquired about it, planted it, and it grew. Well, if this is a story, the story sure grew too!

Arthur Bickers gets down to real facts in his version of the Willow Mystery. He says it's definitely true; the gentleman in question having been the old whaling Capt. Winslow, and that the original sire of all the trees stood in the yard or thereabouts at 484 Commercial Street (almost the corner of Howland) where the Leo Silvas now live.

And now as they say The Plot Thickens. From willows we progress to Roses. For while talking to Mrs. Adams she asked, "Do you know anything about the yellow roses of Truro that came from China off a ship wrecked on the back shore?" Well, we said, no we didn't but we'd inquire about that, too. So we proceeded on appropriately enough to Mrs. Albert Rose of Truro, who was reputed to have the original Chinese yellow rose. Mrs. Rose didn't know anything about the yellow rose, but she'd heard some story about a red rose over in Miss Link's garden. Miss Link being away for the winter, we were stopped right there. But repeating this whole story to Mr. Bickers again, we found out that he didn't know anything about the yellow roses, but then there's this red rose that grows all over the dunes. And the seeds from that one came from an Italian wreck washed up on the shore etc. etc. . . .



*Willow from  
Napoleon's  
Grave,  
Provincetown,  
Mass.*



- About 1890 -

Barge going to the eastward, just before Howland Street. Taken opposite Freeman's General Store. Building on the right is first Consolidated Cold Storage building before the un-attractive one on preceding page.