

# PLYMOUTH **Traveler**

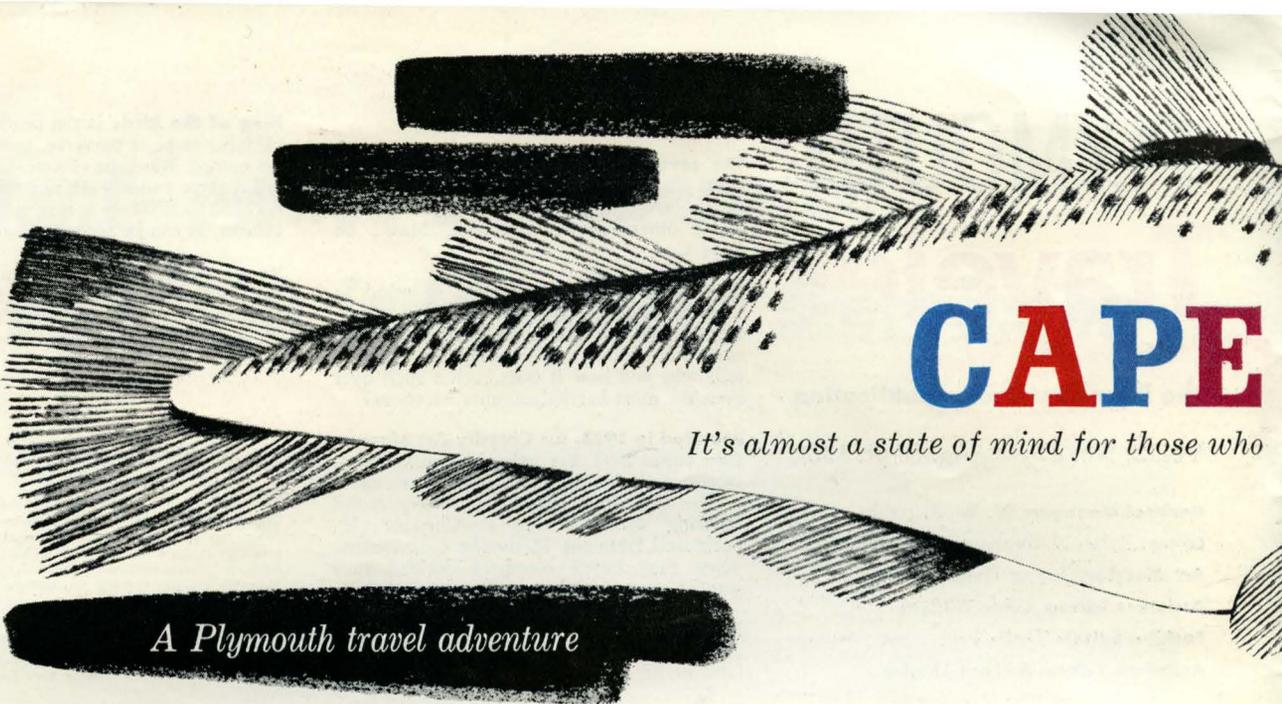
August-September 1962



CHARLOTTE G

DAISY T.

PROVINCETOWN, ON CAPE COD



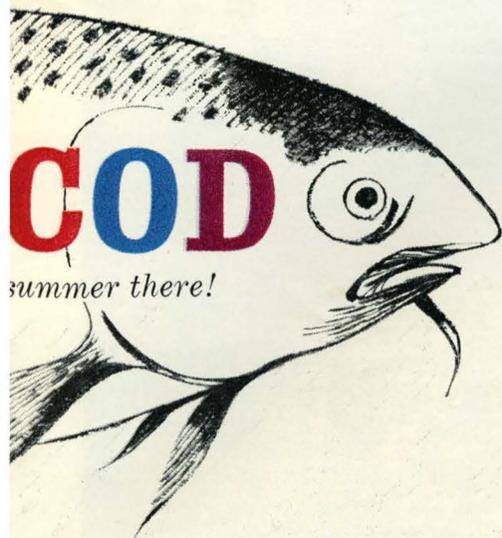
# CAPE

*It's almost a state of mind for those who*

*A Plymouth travel adventure*

**The monument** marking the place where the Pilgrims first landed in America towers over the sandy beaches and weathered houses of centuries-old Provincetown.





By the Plymouth Traveler, **Richard Dunlop**  
Photographs by Arthur Griffin

TO A CAPE CODDER, the true Arcadia lies "this side of the bridge." On the south coast looking toward Martha's Vineyard "the bridge" means the Bourne bridge, and on the north coast washed by Cape Cod Bay it means the Sagamore bridge. Both bridges cross the Cape Cod Canal which separates this peninsula of rustic contentment from the rest of Massachusetts.

On a summer day in Providence, Rhode Island, I took my own personal poll as to where in the vicinity photographer Arthur Griffin and I could spend the most relaxing week. Cape Cod appeared to be Providence's choice. One Providence man phoned Fred Rockwell, the noted horticulturist who lives on Cape Cod, and persuaded him to tell us about the Cape from the viewpoint of a year-around resident.

Art and I drove up the coast and crossed the Sagamore bridge to the Cape. Almost immediately we turned aside from the Cranberry Highway, which runs the length of the Cape, in order to explore the quiet countryside where a Christopher Wren steeple looked down on a village green, picket fences and hedges surrounded cottages silvered grey by the weather, and alewives (a herring-like fish, about 8-10 inches long) climbed up a watery ladder from a stream to an old mill pond where the mill wheel still splashes in the sun.

Along the roads, jam and antique shops attracted knots of autos. A post office and a cabinet maker shared a salt box house. Cranberry bogs lay among

*(continued)*

**Back streets** wind among gardens surrounded by picket fences and cottages silvered by the sea wind.



**The gift** of a gardening book led youthful Frederick Frye Rockwell to start a greenhouse and a market garden. Soon he began selling articles to the old Garden magazine. With the great public interest in gardening, he emerged as a nationally known garden writer and editor and the author of 25 books on gardening, some of which he wrote in collaboration with his wife, Esther, also noted as a horticultural authority.



**Regatta contestants** slip past a town dock. The Cape's 300 miles of coastline, bays, harbors and inlets give happy sailing to small boats and cruising yachts.



## Cape Cod *(continued)*

low hills, and in every harbor boats were idling about, their sun-tanned crews looking so relaxed and happy that Art and I agreed with the citizens of Providence that Cape Cod does indeed cast an Arcadian spell on even the most harried summer vacationer.

At Rock Harbor we stopped to watch the antics of a puppy-faced harbor seal. A pair of bottlenose dolphins sported just offshore. We lost track of time and were late when we finally turned in Fred and Esther Rockwell's driveway at Orleans.

Birds called. Quail skittered from the woods to nibble at cracked corn cast on the lawn.

"We also have huge hawks and eagles," said Esther. "Raccoons play on our lawn, and one night we looked out to see a buck striding out of the woods. Harbor seals come to eat the herring in the pond."

They showed their camellias, which have withstood the mild Cape winters for four years and told about the giant boulder in their woods. Cape Cod, it seems, is a young land, perhaps only 15,000 years old. When Ice Age glaciers retreated northward, they left behind huge boulders, piles of rock, sand and gravel, which geologists call terminal moraines.

"The largest of these is the ridge along the north side of the upper Cape," said Fred. "Some of the ponds are kettle holes left by the glaciers."

We learned of the 150 varieties of seaweeds which grow around the Cape—the brown rockweeds and kelp, the red Irish moss and maiden's hair, the green sea lettuce and poppers.

"Walk on any beach and you'll turn up a different variety," said Fred. "The best time to collect seaweeds is after a storm."

Fred and Esther drove with us to Rock Harbor where we watched fishermen outfitting at the town landing.

"Here's where the Orleans militia repulsed a British landing party in 1814," observed Fred. They took us to Nauset Beach on the Atlantic where, on a Sunday morning in July, 1918, other enemy raiders struck the quiet shore. A German submarine surfaced and fired shells at a tug and three coal barges for an hour and a half. This time Cape Cod's defenders were "Pearl Harbored." Word of

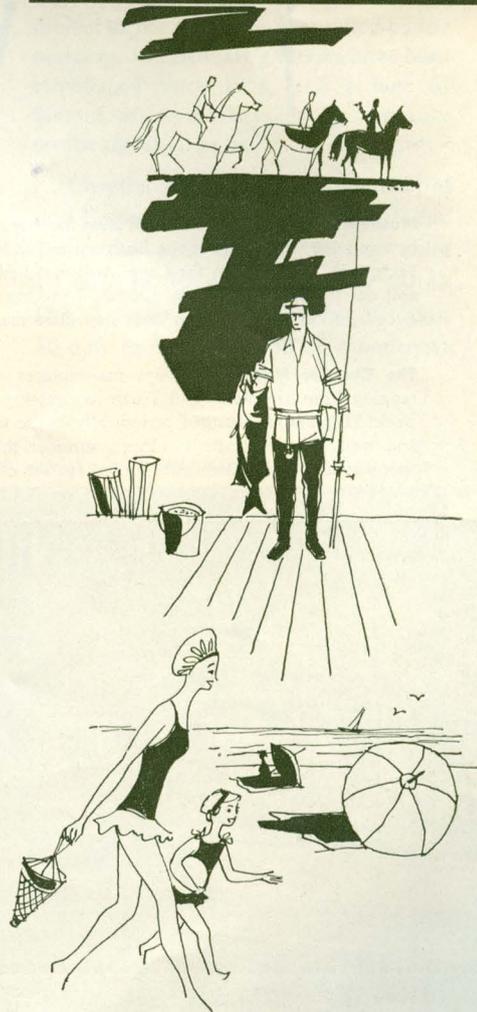
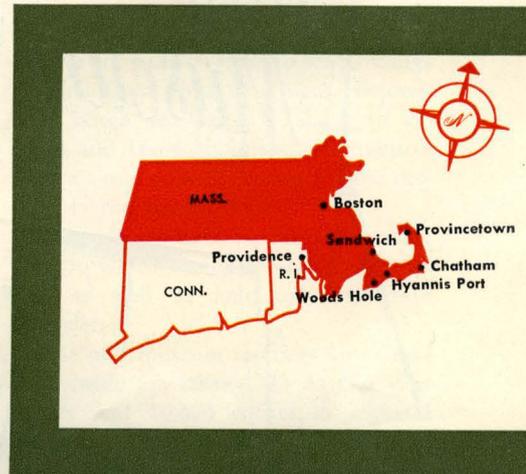
the attack was flashed to the aviation base at Chatham, but all the flyers were away playing baseball. One plane finally took to the air, flew over the by then submerged submarine and dropped monkey-wrenches because it had no bombs. We walked along the now quiet beach, where vacationers were sunning and swimming, and drove over to route 28 where just beyond the Church of the Holy Spirit we discovered a gray shingled house built about 1760 by a ship's carpenter. Surrounded by a low picket fence, marked by a lone spruce tree, the house is thought by many to be the finest full Cape Cod house on the lower Cape.

We dined with the Rockwells and stayed in Orleans for the night, but in the morning we drove on out the Cape beyond what is called "the elbow." The upper arm of the Cape is green with meadows and forests; the forearm is tawny with sand dunes, covered by coarse grass and bayberry clumps. We soon arrived at Eastham, where hostile Indians drove away the Pilgrims in 1620. Twenty-four years later, 49 settlers from Plymouth came back to establish a town at this site and found the Indians had turned friendly. Crows and blackbirds were less hospitable and devoured so much of the crops that in 1667 the town passed an ordinance requiring each householder to kill 12 blackbirds or three crows every year. In 1695 the lawmakers tightened up the ordinance to require that no bachelor be allowed to marry unless he had killed his quota of feathered varmints for the year.

Opposite the Eastham Town Hall on Samoset road is the oldest windmill on Cape Cod. Although built in 1793, the gray-shingled tower stands straight and strong and spreads its four-armed fan to the wind. The wind was blowing off the ocean, so the miller ground a couple of bags of corn for the entertainment of tourists. We turned off route six on the Nauset Light road which runs among sandy dunes and dwarf pines to a parking lot from where we were able to swim in the surf. Fishermen up the beach were surf casting through the majestic foaming waves for stripers.

Once Wellfleet was an important whaling center, and as recently as 1850 it was second only to Gloucester as a cod and mackerel port. Later its citizens lived by oystering, but now the town is dedicated to the tourist trade. Fishermen at the town landing gladly stop what

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**Museum's collection** of Sandwich glass has rare items made between 1825 and 1888 at the Boston and Sandwich Glass Factory at Sandwich on the Cape. Artists etched, engraved and cut pressed glass, made through a process first introduced into America by this early day glass manufacturer.

**The Chrysler Museum** displays masterpieces of fine art ranging from Tintoretto and Titian to contemporary Cape work. Displays are changed periodically in the well lighted and well designed galleries. Every summer the museum sponsors a Provincetown Art festival for art of our time.



## *Conserving art of the past . . . encouraging art of the present*

WHEN VIEWED from the end of Captain Jack's pier, the Chrysler Art Museum looms over Provincetown, much as the cathedral looms over an English cathedral town. As well it might for the Chrysler Museum, founded in 1958 by Walter Chrysler, Jr., is the undisputed heart of the town which it has made once more the undisputed summer art capital of the nation.

"Seeing a great artist work is like listening to God," says Chrysler, an outstanding authority on Renaissance and modern painting and sculpture and owner of one of the greatest private art collections in America. "I collect with my heart and with my mind."

Chrysler bought his first painting, a small Renoir, at the age of 14 while on vacation from school. Later, when the school proctor saw it hanging in the boy's room, he unfeelingly tore it up because of a nude figure in the landscape. This only whetted young Chrysler's zest for collecting, and in the years that followed he bought more than 4,000 of the world's greatest masterpieces. Un-

like most noted collectors, he has never dealt through an agent but does all the buying himself. It took a special mission to Europe and three years of dealings to obtain "Virgin and Child with Angels Appearing to Saints Anthony Abbot and Paul the Hermit" by 16th Century painter Paolo Veronese. Most of the Chrysler collection was kept in a large warehouse in New York City from which he sent out touring exhibits to major museums.

"I used to come to the Cape as a kid, and I always think of the Cape when I think of vacation," he says in explanation of why he decided to establish a major museum in a small town. He learned that the Methodist congregation in Provincetown was anxious to sell their century-old church building in order to build a new one. He bought the building, installed a new boiler and air-conditioning and remodeled it at the cost of \$200,000. When the first exhibition opened at the Chrysler Art Museum of Provincetown, a large crowd and museum men from Boston, Hartford, Chicago and

New York were on hand to see paintings ranging from those of Titian, Hieronymus Bosch and Lucas Cranach to Picasso and Hans Hoffmann. Tintoretto's "Flora" was publicly shown for the first time in the United States.

"We plan to have a permanent collection, to which I and others will contribute, as well as loan exhibits," says Chrysler.

The new museum sponsors an annual nationwide art festival. In its first year artists sent 10,000 entries to regional centers all over America. The 400 best were brought to Provincetown and exhibited at the museum. Stimulated by the museum, five new art galleries have been established since 1958, and a host of famous artists have taken up residence on the tip of Cape Cod. ☆☆☆

(Chrysler Art Museum at Commercial and Center streets, Provincetown, Mass. Open the year around. Hours: daily 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. from May 30 to Oct. 1. From October to May 30 open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., closed on Mondays.)

The museum is in a century-old building which dominates the waterfront of the fishing village which annually becomes America's summer art capital.



## Cape Cod *(continued)*

they're doing to tell visitors how the Pilgrims rowed around Wellfleet Harbor in the *Mayflower's* shallop before going on to settle at Plymouth. The storekeeper sold us the makings of a beach picnic and allowed that he would throw in some bananas free of charge.

"Want to know why?" he asked. We did.

"Well, sir, on account of Captain Lorenzo Dow Baker of the schooner *Telegraph*, who lived here. Once while loading bamboo in the West Indies, he decided to bring some bananas back to the States, where they'd never been seen before. The bananas got a terrific welcome, and this was the start of the United Fruit Company, which these days imports most of the bananas into our country. Here, eat one."

We each ate a banana in honor of Captain Baker of Wellfleet. Then we drove over the drumlin dunes through Truro where we picked out a spot on the beach close to the Highland Light, where the highest dunes are, for our picnic. This light, one of the most powerful beacons on the Atlantic coast, is the first one to be picked up by ships headed from Europe to Boston. Since 1797 it has warned mariners away from treacherous Peaked Hill Bar, which shares grim honors with Cape Hatteras as a graveyard of ships. Walking the beach we came to a sign that announced: "Shellfish area closed." I was mystified, but New Englander Griffin explained that this means "no clamming or oystering." This was all right with me because digging for clams is a back-breaking job, done only at the hours of low tide.

Of course, we drove up Corn Hill where the hungry Pilgrims commandeered a cache of Indian corn, and meandered over winding roads to the Old Congregational church in Truro where in the churchyard we read on an obelisk how 57 citizens of the town died in seven vessels which foundered at sea in the great gale of October 3, 1841.

"Look, each man's name can still be read," I said.

"Yes, if you can call Andrew Cordes, aged 12, Benjamin Bridgeman, 11, and Thomas C. White, 12, 'men'," said Art.

"Man goeth to his long home and the mourners go about the streets," read a terse line above the sad list. As we read, the bell rang in the Town Hall, sound-

ing today's dirge for the tragedy of yesterday, which was only one of many sea disasters which took the lives of so many Truro sailors that the town sank into a decline from which it has never recovered.

Approaching Provincetown, tiny cottages crowd the shore road for miles. Provincetown itself is only two streets wide, but it stretches for almost four miles along a sandspit. It has one way streets, for the summer traffic jam is unbelievable.

On November 11, 1620, the Pilgrims dropped anchor as the *Mayflower's* log put it in "ye Cape-harbor wher they ridd in saftie." A landing party went ashore to first set foot in New England. Provincetowners are quick to point this out to off-Capers. The Pilgrims stayed on the sandy strand for five weeks before they sailed across the bay to set foot on Plymouth Rock.

"So the Pilgrims landed here before they landed at Plymouth Rock?" I asked a gas station attendant.

"What do you mean, Plymouth Rock?" he replied. "As far as we're concerned out here on the Cape that's just the name of a chicken."

He was soothed when we asked directions on how to drive up Monument Hill to the towering Pilgrim monument which commemorates the historic visit. We also went to the Town Hall to see the things brought back from the Arctic by Provincetown's own explorer, Donald Mac-Millan, and sampled some of the excellent clam pie and broiled lobster to be had in the town.

The most fascinating thing at Provincetown is watching how a town with perhaps 3,600 year-around residents manages to survive the onslaught of 10 times that number of visitors during virtually any summer. Next in interest are the artists. Charles W. Hawthorne, who "discovered" Provincetown, established the Cape Cod School of Art there in 1901. For a time in the 1940's Provincetown was losing its supremacy as a summer art colony. Then Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., bought the abandoned Methodist Church and housed his remarkable paintings and sculpture in it.\*

\*A notable art collection is that of his sister, Bernice, and her husband, Edgar William Garbisch. A portion of their collection of some 2,000 American primitive paintings is on view in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, at all times.

## Provincetown's Oldest

The oldest house at Provincetown draws thousands of summer visitors intent on viewing an "original" Cape Cod cottage. These are trim clapboard structures of one-and-a-half stories, built low on the dunes for warmth. Usually the first floor is about seven feet high, contains kitchen, sitting room and a bedroom for the parents. The children sleep upstairs. Most Cape Cod houses include a half basement, which can be entered from the outside through a cellar trap door, which Cape Codders mask with lilac or rose bushes. The chimney is at the center. Often the builder would construct half a house, expecting to complete the rest later in life. Today these houses are called half-a-Capes. The Dillingham house, built in 1650 at Sandwich, is cherished because it is three-quarters completed. Among notable houses open to the public are: Hoxie House, built in 1637 at Sandwich and now fully restored and refurnished; Col. John Thacher House built in 1680 at Yarmouth, now a museum; salt box built in Harwich Center by John Dillingham in 1660.



**A visitor** can stand before Nobska Light (above) near Woods Hole and look across Vineyard Sound to the misty shores of Martha's Vineyard. Ferry steamers take passengers from Woods Hole to the quaint island, a summer paradise named by explorer Gosnold for his daughter in 1602.

**The town landing** at Barnstable is typical of Cape Cod water sports facilities. There are at least 11 marinas on the Cape, but boaters also may use the scores of town landings maintained by selectmen of the traditionally seafaring towns from the Cape Cod canal to Provincetown.



## Cape Cod (continued)

Now famed artists, dramatists and novelists are ordinary sights on the town's bustling streets.

(When the Pilgrims landed on the Cape, they saw huge white oaks and beeches. By the 1800's these had largely been cut to make charcoal, but virgin forest still can be seen at the Lowell Holly Reservation near Mashpee).

When we got to Chatham Port, fishermen, driven in from the sea, were gathered on the docks. We asked them about the Russians reported in the area.

"They fish about 90 miles out," a young fisherman told us. "Right now I'd say there are maybe 35 to 40 Russian boats. They are taking a lot of herring and try to crowd us out when they can."

But the fishermen agreed there had been no serious incidents. We stayed that night at Clauson's Inn at North Falmouth where a golf course was handy for 18 holes before breakfast. Arthur then guided me to Craigville Beach, which he said is the finest public beach

on the Atlantic side of the Cape. From there we went to nearby Hyannis Port, where Art pointed out the three houses of the Kennedy family behind their white picket fences.

"That's Joe Kennedy's house," he said, indicating a large white frame structure. "I've been in it, and it's very comfortable. With all his money you'd expect it to be a lot more lavish. But Joe Kennedy wanted a beach place where he could raise his eight kids without a fuss."

Arthur showed me which house was the President's and which was Robert Kennedy's.

"It's so quiet here," he remarked. "At least it was before Jack became President. Now crowds come to gape at the Kennedy houses just as we are doing."

That afternoon we visited the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service aquarium at Woods Hole. Director Charles Weaver told us that they had 210,000 visitors last year intent on a close up view of the finny denizens of the North Atlantic fishing banks. They learn about the marine biological laboratory's studies of At-

lantic currents, temperatures and weather cycles.

"Warn your readers to come on sunny days if they can," said Weaver. "On sunny days the place is deserted because everybody is out sailing, fishing or lazing on the beach. Just let it rain, and we're jammed."

We strolled around the grounds of the nearby Oceanographic Institute and inspected a candle house built of field stone in 1836. Candles were made there of waxy spermaceti taken from the heads of whales. The whaling vessels were outfitted from the building and sailed from adjacent Bar Neck Wharf.

Cape Cod is almost a state of mind to those who summer there. In the next few days, to me it came to be the Nobska light, blinking at dusk across Vineyard Sound to Martha's Vineyard; white sails scudding past black rocks; a virtually vanished stone dock, where men of Falmouth fought off British attacks in 1779 and again in 1814; little girls gathering shells on the beach; burgeoning summer colonies at the end of every beach road; white pumps on neat town greens; lunching in a variety store in Cotuit, where people bought shoe laces and flashlight batteries at our elbows as we spooned down a splendid turkey soup; the antique Indian meeting house at Mashpee; Indian children playing baseball next to the Town Hall; the resplendent Sandwich glass in the Sandwich Museum; and dinner before a fieldstone fireplace at Sandwich with Cliff Davis and his wife. Cliff, a retired Boston newspaperman, took a day to show us the fishing spots, the game farm near Sandwich, the vast beaches and cliffs which are part of the new beach national park.

Standing with Cliff on Sandy Neck Beach, we watched the wind shaping the dunes and the quiet undulation of the sea. Gulls squawked as they fished. A covey of sandpipers and a group of sun-burned, bare-legged children ran in and out at the very edge of the water, searching in the wet sand either for nourishment or for treasure. Sandpipers and children, gulls and the sea laving the beach, the sand and the warm sun on our backs were the stuff of which New England's peninsula of rustic contentment is made. ☆☆☆

*Next issue: Three presidential memorials in the midwest.*

### Traveler Fun



"I guess you just don't love me as much. Janet's father has her baby booties hanging in the windshield."