

1890

A Provincetown
"Jigger".

Only Two Cars In Provincetown

At the turn of the century, in August 1904, "Who's Who in the Auto" reported 15 cars on Cape Cod. The numbers ran up to 5,000. Practically all of the new fangled contraptions were owned by Upper Capers; none in Orleans, Eastham, Wellfleet or Truro. In Provincetown Arthur Lombard owned number 4317 while Dr. Clarence Curley owned number 4503.

Horses Still Play Important Part In Everyday Work of Provincetown

Prove Superior to Motor Power in Many Kinds of Labor
In Harbor and on Sand

By Bill Steele

The day the Fisherman's Cold Storage took a spill into the chill waters of the bay, five teams of horses were pressed into service to aid in overcoming the emergency.

Five teams—ten horses—were put to work on an hours notice in a town that is apparently as mechanized as any steel mill center!

Where did they come from and what as they do, these ten gluttons for punishment? As far as the average visitor is concerned the only horses in town are the sad old beasts that pull the coal carts, and the child-loving nag that drags the ice cream wagon around.

Well, had he been here when the weirs were being taken up, and seen the teams at work pulling the hickory poles to their winter resting places, the visitor would have had a good clue as to what the horses do for a living.

"There's nothing been invented yet," says Horace Watson, "that can take the place of horse-power for work along-shore." And Watson should know. He's run a stable at 38 Court Street that has housed eighty-six horses in the last fifteen years. At present he only has four,

but they're big babies, powerful draft horses all of them, and in on every piece of work that presents itself.

For one thing they haul government coal, each spring and fall, to the lighthouses at Race Point, Wood End and Long Point. Two hundred and fifty tons of coal over soft, shifting sands; and at the end of the day they're ready for more!

Just this week they did a little job for Pat Patrick—hauling a mighty beam that was part of a barge wrecked off the Race years ago, all the way from the back beach to the Flagship. This was in the way of a rest, however. It got them away from the monotony of grading the land for the cottage E. A. Kates is building out at Beach Point.

They were in on the Mosquito Control job, on hand at every wreck that has happened along shore, and practically built the New Beach road by themselves! Wherever power is needed off the main highways—more power than tractors can give—horses fill the bill.

Watson has always been proud

of his horses' ability on sand. When the bridle path that stretches from Provincetown to North Adams was completed, he pitted one of his draft horses, a big fellow called Major, against two army horses ridden by Majors Ryder and Berry. Watson and Major followed the path as far as Long Nook—seven miles—and had to wait thirty minutes before the Army men showed up!

All in all there are about a dozen horses left in town, and they're used for everything from farming to construction work. You don't catch sight of them very often, but they're always there; pulling until it hurts.

To tend their needs a Mr. R. E. Bithers journeys here from Sandwich every month, with what is probably the only travelling blacksmith's shop in New England.

-1900 -

Commercial Street South from Railroad Wharf,
PROVINCETOWN, Mass.

1920