

Clam Diggers, Provincetown, Mass.

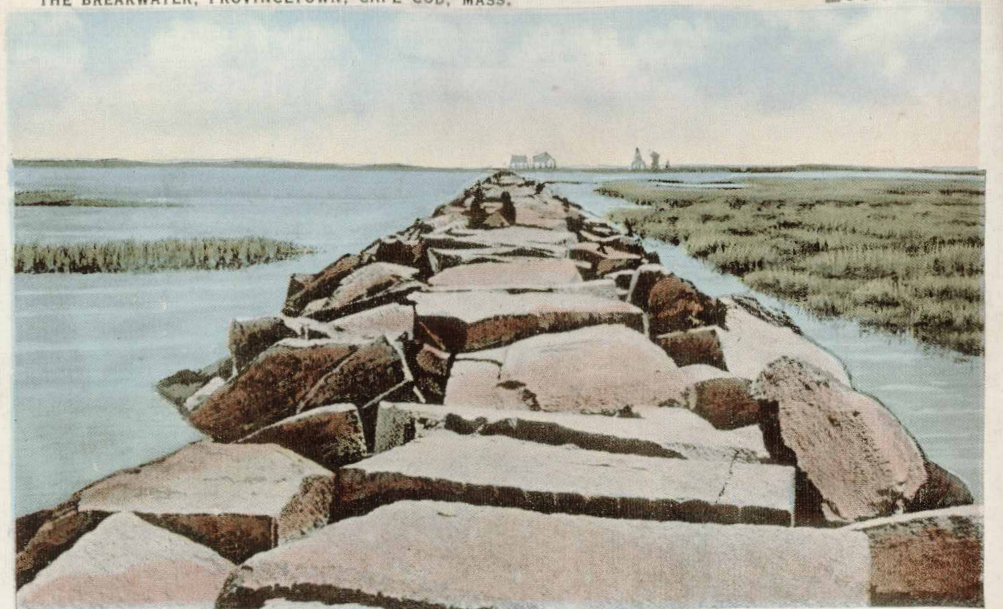
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THE BREAKWATER, PROVINCETOWN, CAPE COD, MASS.

BUILT - 1911



WOOD END LIGHT AND LIFE SAVING STATION IN THE DISTANCE

JULY 9, 1953

Do You Know ?

WHY A BREAKWATER RUNS TO LONG POINT FROM THE WEST END?

In 1620 the Pilgrims cast anchor here in a harbor "wherein a thousand sail of ships may safely ride." In 1911 the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers threw a wall of granite across the west end of the harbor to keep it intact for the tens of thousands of "sail" that have sought shelter here since then.

What the Pilgrims did not know, and what their descendants found out almost too late, is that from the high lands of North Truro to the tip of Cape Cod the rim of Provincetown Harbor is a sand bar created by wind and tide. And what the sea creates it can also destroy. Shortly before the army engineers stepped in, the sea threatened to cut off the last two miles of the Cape, leaving the lighthouses at Long Point and Wood End marooned. The harbor would have been wide open on the southwest, and each succeeding tide would have widened the gap.

The tide is still working to cut its way through. In three places, passable on foot only at low tide, the breakwater has been undermined and toppled, the huge boulders buried in sand.

J. D. B.



The Town and Harbor of Provincetown from over the breakwater.

- About 1923

S.S. Dorothy Bradford at Railroad Wharf. The Standpipe, and Monument.

A row of freight cars in the freight yard can be seen a little way to the right of the Monument.