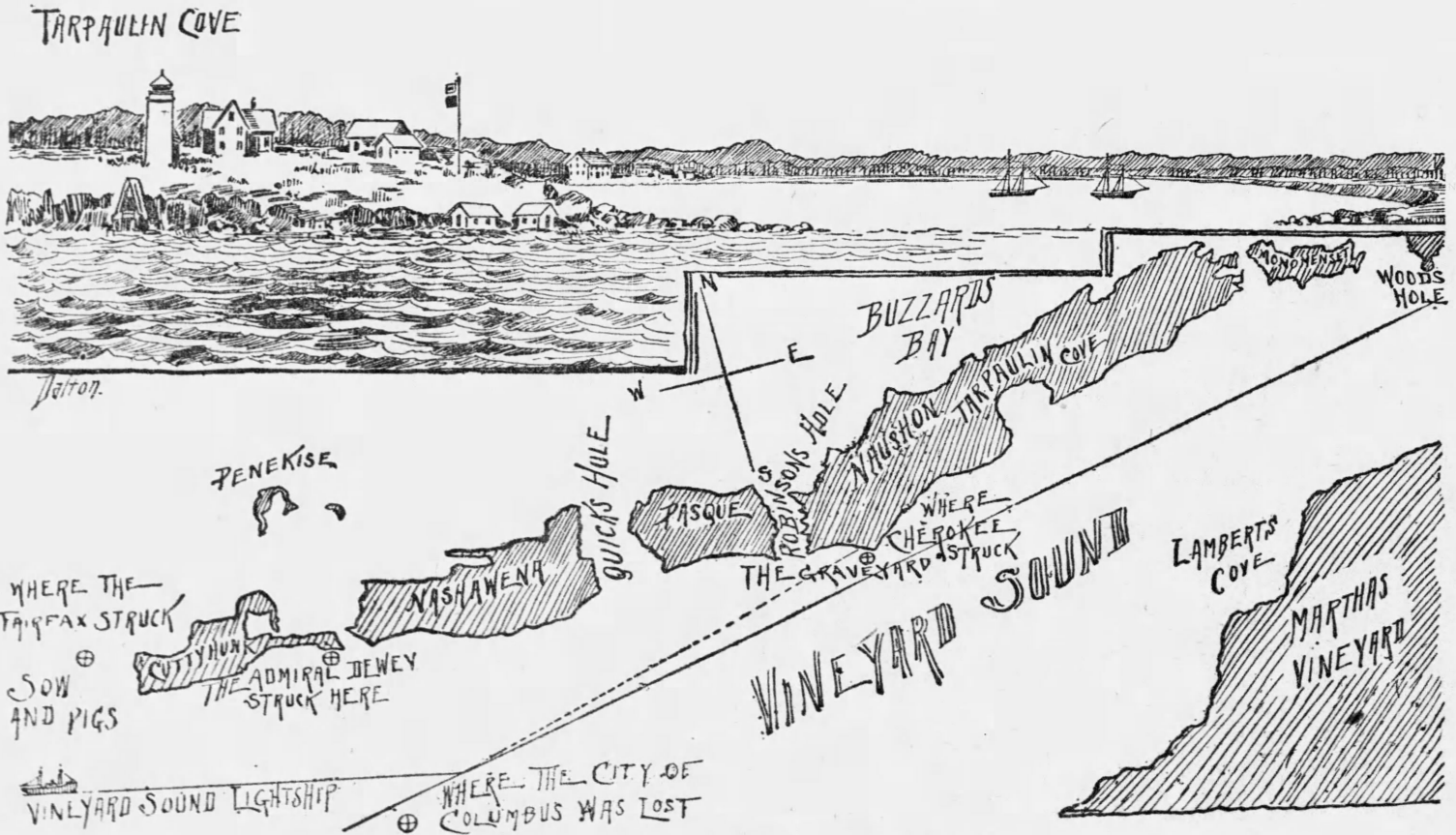


"THE GRAVEYARD'S" TERRORS TO NAVIGATION.

Scene of the Cherokee's Disaster Should be Marked With Lighthouse or Steam Fog Whistle.



TARPAULIN COVE AND VINEYARD SOUND,

Showing "The Graveyard," the Elizabeth Islands, Penekise, Cuttyhunk, Washawena, Pasque Naushon and Mononenset and Where a Few of the Memorable Wrecks Occurred.

WOODS HOLE, Sept 28—Nowhere on the Atlantic coast is a lighthouse or a steam fog whistle, or even both, so much needed as at "The Graveyard" at Robinsons hole, between Naushon and Pasque islands, in Vineyard sound. This is the verdict of the skippers who are engaged in the coastwise trade and who navigate the waters of the sound and Nantucket shoals, and they propose to impress the imperative needs of a beacon at that point upon the lighthouse department.

The stranding of the Cherokee on "The Graveyard," last week, has once more brought out the urgent necessity of some guide to the mariners at that dangerous point.

Repeated requests have been made upon the government by the mariners to locate a lighthouse at this point, yet despite the wrecks which have occurred in that vicinity, nothing was ever done towards preventing disaster to shipping on that rock bound coast.

"The Graveyard," as the coast along the southwest end of Naushon island is known to the mariners, has during the past 2 years been the scene of a large number of wrecks, many of which have been attended with a great loss of life. At no other point along the entire sound shore have so many once staunch vessels gone to destruction as on the rocks which lie submerged along the coast at Robinsons hole.

Strwn along the shore at that place

can be seen the bones of the ships that met with disaster there. The wreckage, in some instances piled high among the rocks, mutely relates the terrific fury of the storms which sweep the coast and tell of the violence of the wind and wave which drove the vessels to their doom.

The property loss during the past 25 years along the sound within easy distance of "The Graveyard" has been enormous, the merchant marine having been the greatest sufferer.

Vineyard sound is the greatest waterway along the Atlantic coast. Ships pass to and fro through it in an endless procession day and night. From Nobska light, at this place, to the lighthouse at Gay Head, the distance is about 15 miles. In width the sound varies from three to six miles. On one side long lines of shoals follow the coast from West Chop lighthouse on the Vineyard to the Devils bridge at Gay Head, their long arms stretching out under the sea, ever ready to grasp the keels of the ships that sail down upon them.

On the other side the water is quite bold, but the shore is lined with rocks from the highlands at Nobska to the Sow and Pigs at Cuttyhunk. Many of the rocks are hidden from view except at times when the tides are extremely low, while others stand out in bold relief against the colored cliffs.

The course taken by steamers going through the sound brings them within half a mile of "The Graveyard" and it was on this course that the Cherokee was sailing when she stranded.

The strong tide which was running to the westward was encountered by the steamer at the point shown in the accompanying illustration, where the heavy and dotted lines start. The dotted line shows the probable course of the Cherokee from the time that she ran

into the fog bank, until she tore her way among the rocks on Naushon island. The heavy line shows the course which would have kept the steamer clear of the rocks and brought her to a point off Nobska lighthouse at this place, where she would take her bearings for the Cross Rip lighthouse, and the other guides to navigation over the dangerous Nantucket shoals.

The only guide to navigation that it was possible for the men on the watch on the steamer to use was the bell buoy off Nashawena, about three miles astern. There is a big fog horn at Tarpaulin cove, which was about the same distance ahead, but the sound of this could not be heard, while the one across the bay at Gay head, about five miles distant, was useless so far as the Cherokee was concerned.

There is nothing at the entrance to Robinsons Hole to tell of the dangers which lurk there, not even a spar buoy, and once the ship's course was changed by the swift running tide there was no hope for her.

A fog horn at either the eastern or western side of Robinsons Hole would have been heard by those on the steamer long before the ship was in danger and time enough to have put down the mud hooks would have been given the crew before the tide could have swept the steamer close inshore.

Across the sound, less than five miles, is the spot where the City of Columbus was wrecked. Astern about the same distance lies the bones of the Fairfax, which was wrecked in the gale last November. On the shores of Pasque island, just across the channel of Robinsons Hole, are strewn the bones of the bark Isaac Jackson, which ran ashore there in a thick storm a few years ago. On the rocks where the Cherokee lies a big coal barge was lost, and a number

of other ships met their doom in the immediate vicinity.

At Tarpaulin cove, the sailors' haven, it is proposed to beach the Cherokee, in the event of her being floated. This place makes in on Naushon island, and is about four miles distant from here. The cove affords a good anchorage, and there is a depth of water sufficient to admit the passage of any craft that navigates the adjacent waters.

The coast along the cove is quite as wild as at any place along the island. With the exception of the lighthouse buildings and the postoffice there are no other dwellings at the cove. The mail arrives and departs daily, being carried to and from the place by a carrier from here.

In the event of the government placing a lighthouse at Robinsons Hole it is said that a strong effort will be made to have a life-saving station established there. Under the present condition of affairs, in the event of a wreck on any of the islands except Cuttyhunk and at Gay Head are compelled to row many miles before they can render any service.

The Cherokee is still hard and fast on her bed of rocks, and it is a question if she ever floats. Her bottom is being perforated by the rocks, and despite the efforts of the pumps the tide ebbs and flows through her compartments from stem to stern.

What action if any the government will take toward granting the demands of the skippers in erecting a lighthouse and fog whistle at Robinsons Hole is a matter of conjecture, but the fact remains that "The Graveyard" is continually causing destruction to the merchant marine, and the damages to navigation there are continually being made more apparent.