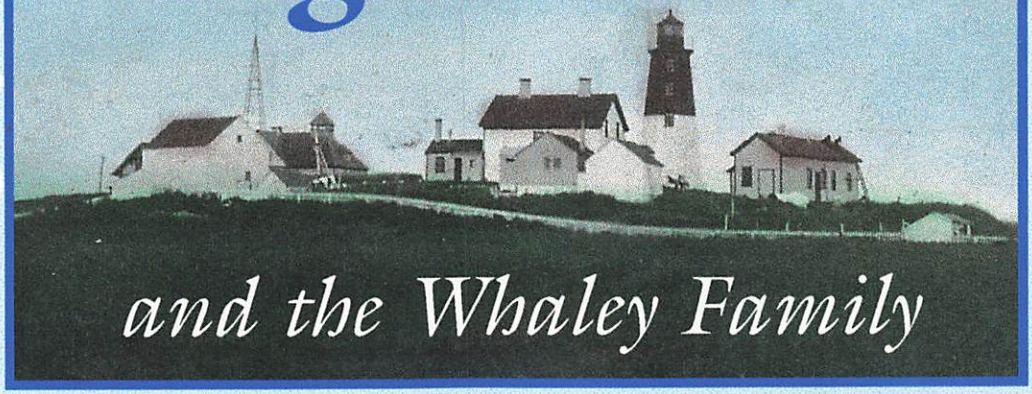
Point Judith Lighthouse



and the Whaley Family

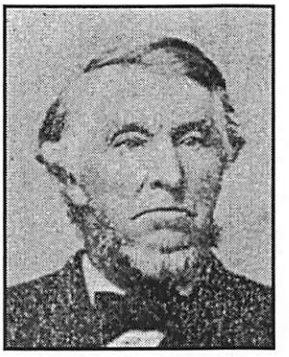
Sail on, sail on ye stately ships!
And with your floating bridge the ocean span,
Be mine to guard this light from all eclipse,
Be yours to bring man nearer unto man!

Longfellow

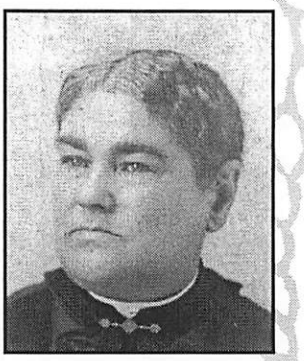
The Whaley's of Point Judith Lighthouse

A Family tree of the Whaley's who lived at Point Judith Lighthouse.

Captain Joseph was born of Ezekiel and Susan Holland Whaley. He was one of eleven children (Abby, Atmore, John, Daniel, Carder, Henry, Mary, Dorcas, Laura, and Susan).



Captain Joseph



Esther

In 1814, Captain Joseph married Esther A. Ennis. Captain Joseph and Esther had 5 children (Sarah E., Ellen E., Henry A., Abbie T., and William S.).



Captain Henry



Laura

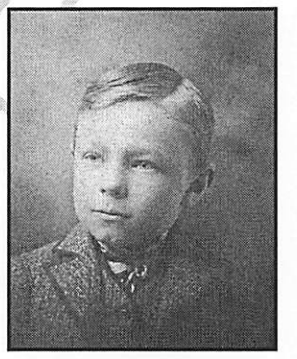
Captain Henry married Laura Stedman. Captain Henry and Laura had three children (Clifford, Louis, and Joseph).



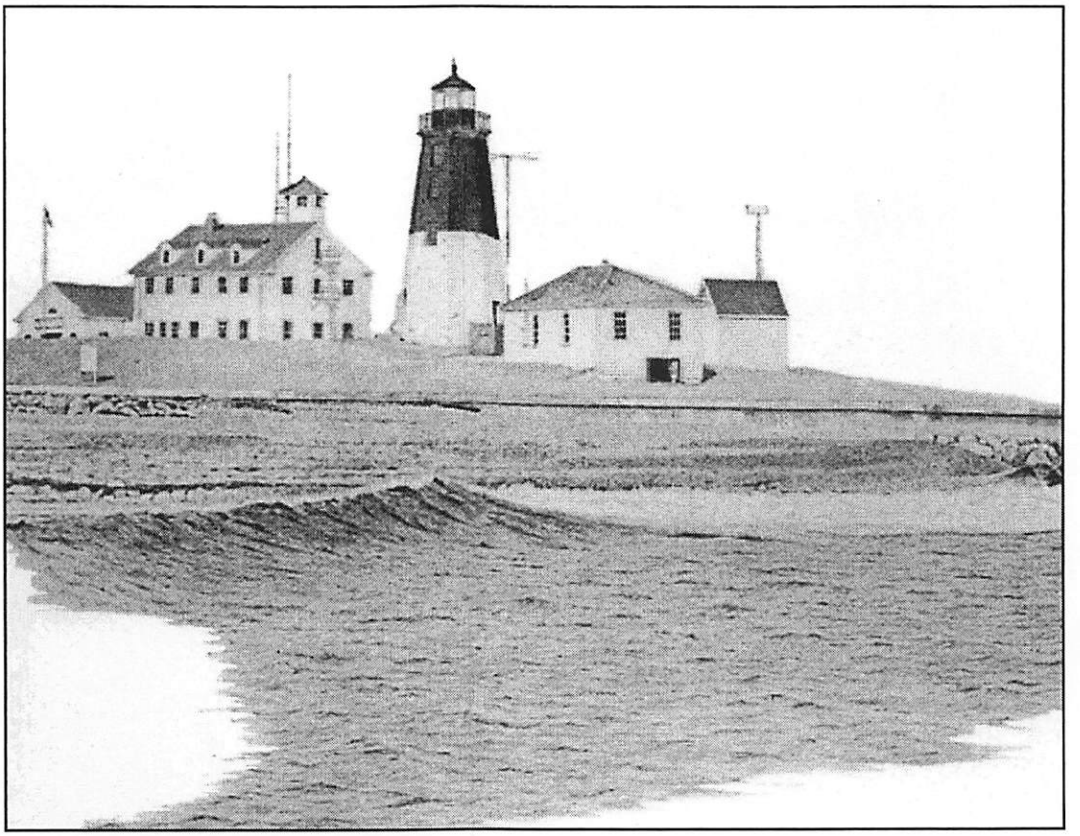
Clifford



Louis



Joseph



A Stroll Down Memory Lane with Oliver Stedman

Oliver Stedman was first cousin to the Whaley boys. His father and Laura Stedman Whaley were brother and sister. The following, written by Oliver Stedman, appeared in the Narragansett Times:

The Point Judith Lighthouse

Beavertail light at the entrance to Newport harbor was erected in 1749 (the third oldest in America) for the purpose of guiding shipping into Newport. However, it was not until much later when an important coasting trade began to develop between Providence and New York that the necessity for some beacon to guide the mariners around the frequently rough and stormy Point was given serious consideration.

On May 25, 1810, The Federal Government authorized the purchase of sufficient land for the location of a lighthouse from Hazard Knowles for the sum of three hundred dollars. A tower of rough stone was soon erected, thirty-five feet high, and whale oil lamps installed at the top which shone out seventy-five feet above the sea. The first lighthouse was completely destroyed in the severe hurricane of September, 1815.

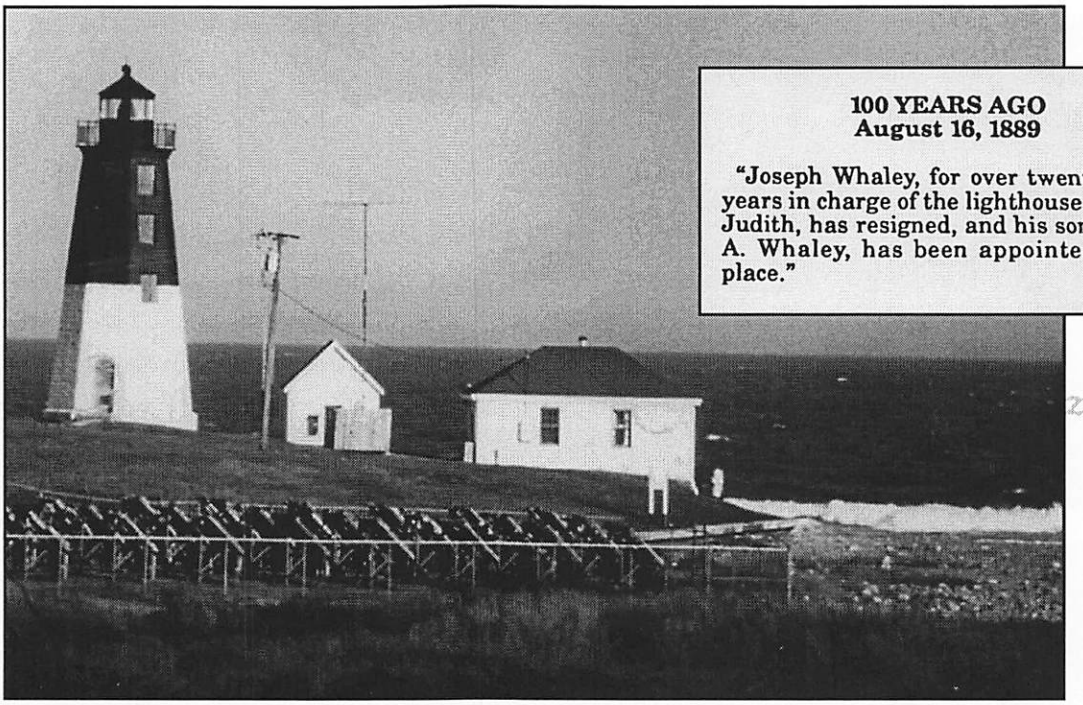
Rebuilt again in 1816 in a much sturdier manner, the octagonal tower of cut stone rose seventy-five feet above the ground and was fitted with ten whale oil lamps, each having a reflector and a rating of 2,500 candle power.

The lamps were arranged in two clusters set on a revolving table to provide for a flashing light. It took this table 144 seconds to make a complete turn and the drop of a 288 pound weight provided the power for turning the

mechanism. The channel in the stone tower down which this weight dropped still remains. It was the duty of the keeper to wind up this weight every day as well as trimming and cleaning the lamps, for which he received a salary of three hundred dollars a year.

There was no dwelling connected with the lighthouse at that time. The keeper lived in an old farmhouse, now long since gone, which stood about 300 yards northwest of the light. He probably supplemented his income by farming, although the three hundred dollars was good pay in those years. This rate of pay continued for keepers of the light until about 1835, when Keeper Gilbert Pendelton received a raise to $350 per year. This was the salary of Keeper Benjamin Hardwin and others until 1866 when the pay for all onshore light keepers was set by law at $600. This was not changed until the lighthouse service was taken over by the Navy during the first World War. However, during this period, comfortable dwellings, heating, lighting, and many prerequisites were provided for the keepers and their families.

Point Judith lighthouse was rebuilt in 1857 into the present form, the lower half painted white, and the upper half brown, and connected to a dwelling which could house the families of both the keeper and his assistant. The lighthouse still remained a revolving beacon, each revolution taking 2 1/2 minutes. The beam was visible in good weather up to seventeen miles at sea. In June, 1862, "Capt." Joseph Whaley became keeper at Point Judith and continued until 1889, at which time his son, Henry Whaley, who had served as Assistant, became keeper and remained in that capacity until 1910.



100 YEARS AGO
August 16, 1889

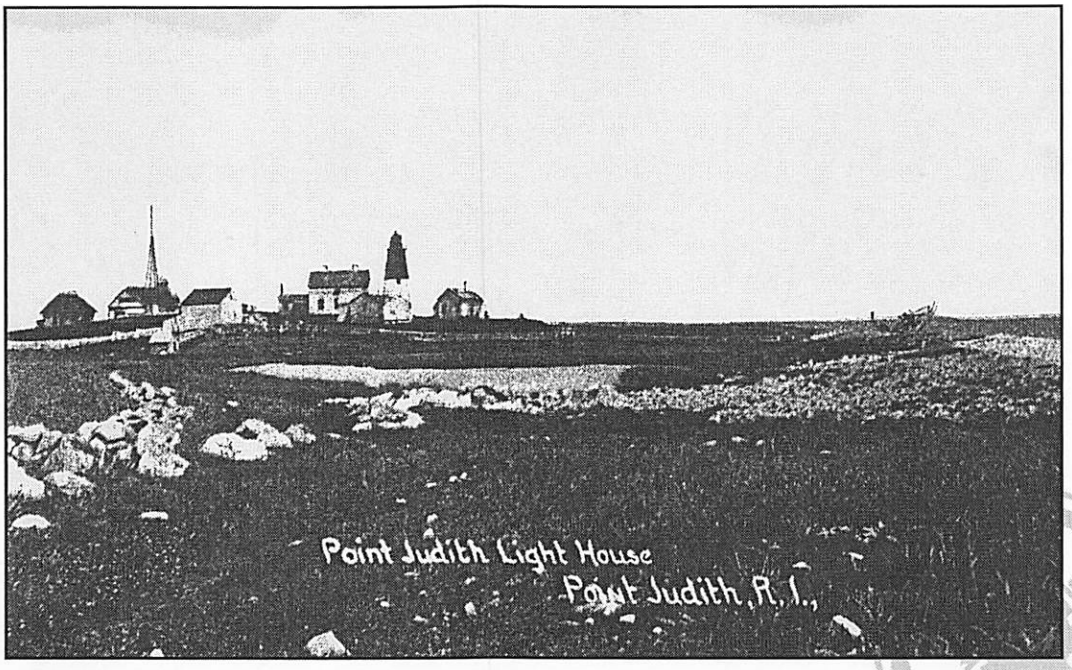
"Joseph Whaley, for over twenty seven years in charge of the lighthouse at Point Judith, has resigned, and his son, Henry A. Whaley, has been appointed in his place."

During those years, important changes in the operation of the light took place. Kerosene oil came into use and by 1890 the use of a vapor mantle increased the intensity of the light many fold. These oil mantles remained in use until electricity came to the light in 1935. The present beacon is electric, rated at 25,000 cp. and flashes intermittently, two seconds on, two seconds off, two on, two off, and repeating.

There is no record of bells having been used at the Point as they were elsewhere, but a steam whistle was installed there in 1852. This was discontinued a few years later as air horn came into general use. Over the years these seem to have met with the most favor, although the compressors were operated by many different means, first by horses on a treadmill, then by small steam engines, later by gasoline, and now by electric motors. With the coming of electricity the worries of the old time keepers about getting the engines started when fog suddenly blew in from across Long Island Sound was finally gone. Now, just a flip of a switch and the warning voice of the fog horn says to ships, "Keep Off".

The Lighthouse Service also maintains a powerful radio beacon at Point Judith, in operation night and day in conjunction with radio beacons at Montauk Point and Martha's Vineyard. These radio beacons emit a series of coded signals by use of which a vessel may determine its exact position at any time.

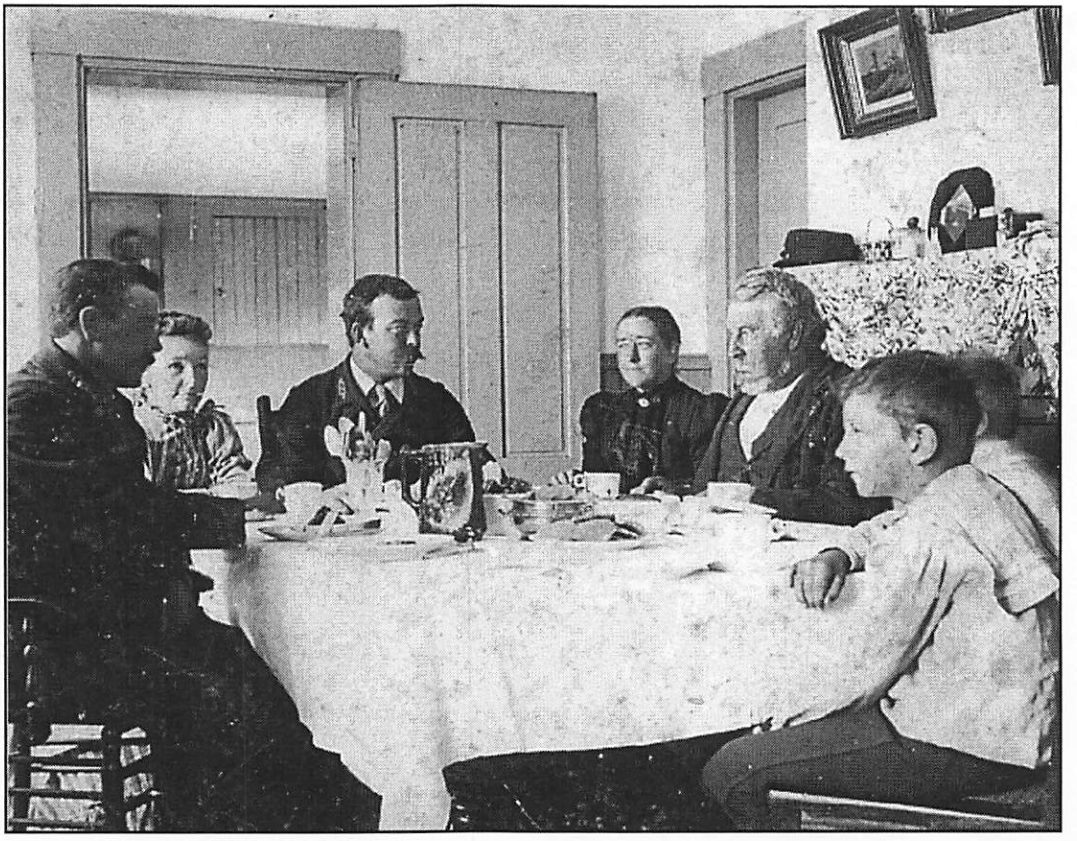
The dwelling was removed in 1954, and the light is now operated by the crew of the U.S. Coast Guard Station nearby. In 1872, a station and boathouse for the then U.S. Life-Saving Service was erected on the grounds and since then the activities of the Lighthouse and Coast Guard have been closely associated. The original station burned in 1938, and the present one was built in 1939. The boathouse was moved to Galilee at that time.



In the Dining Room at the Lighthouse

From left to right: Captain Henry and Laura; Assistant Keeper, Harry Collins; Esther and Captain Joseph; Louis; and Clifford.

The inscription on the back of this picture says "To Mrs. Henry Whaley, who makes the best fried chicken on the East Coast". I wonder if this is where she served her guests when she ran her lunch room?



Obituaries for Captain Joseph Whaley

from the Narragansett Times

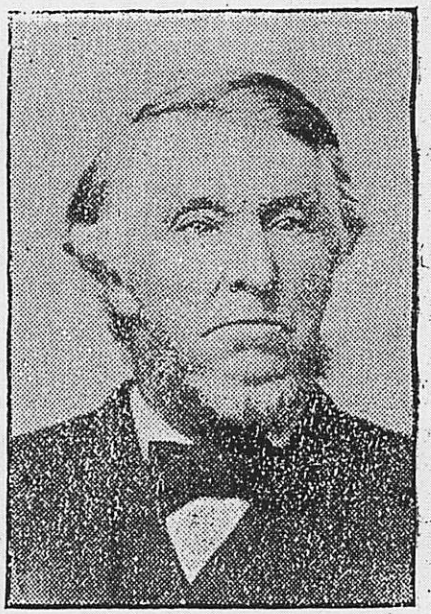
Death of Joseph Whaley.

Captain Joseph Whaley died abou four o'clock Sunday morning at hi home on Robinson street, Wakefield He was in the eighty-eighth year of hi age. He suffered a paralytic stroke about three weeks ago, which rendered his left arm and part of his left side helpless.

He was the oldest of eleven brother and sisters, children of Ezekiel and Su san Holland Whaley, and was born i this town, January second, 1818. He was a farmer and fisherman in early life, and was married, October, 6, 1844 to Esther A. Ennis. Five children were born of this marriage only two o whom survive their father.

These are Sarah, widow of captain Clark of Block Island, who since th death of her mother in 1903. has lived with her father, and Henry Whaley o Point Judith.

Captain Whaley commenced house keeping at Matunuck where he lived until 1862, when he was appointed



THE LATE JOSEPH WHALEY..

keeper of the Point Judith light, and he filled that position for nearly twenty-eight years resigning in the fall of 1889 and was at once succeeded by his son, the present keeper. Mr. Whaley has since lived in Wakefield in the house where he died.

Captain Whaley was a direct descendant of the old South county stock of Whaleys, whose ancestors came to this country in colonial days from England, and were among the earliest settlers. His death was the third among the brothers and sisters, Abby and Atmore having but a few years preceded him. Those now living are John, Daniel, Carder, Henry, Mary, Dorcas, Laura and Susan. Like their father and mother, all have lived to old ages

FORMER KEEPER OF POINT JUDITH LIGHTHOUSE DEAD.

Capt. Joseph Whaley Had Served There Nearly Twenty-eight Years.—Retired in 1889.

Capt. Joseph Whaley died at his home in Wakefield yesterday morning at 4 o'clock, in the 88th year of his age. Some three weeks ago he suffered a severe shock, which rendered his left arm and a part of his left side useless.

"Capt. Joe Whaley," as he was best known, was the eldest of 11 brothers and sisters, children of Ezekiel and Susan Holland Whaley, and was born in South Kingstown Jan. 2, 1818. In early life he was a farmer and fisherman, and as the latter was very successful. He married Oct. 6, 1844, Esther A. Ennis, by whom he had five children, Sarah E., Ellen E., Henry A., Abbie T. and William S. Capt. Whaley began keeping house at Matunuck where he followed farming and fishing until June, 1862, when he took charge of the Point Judith Lighthouse as keeper, a position he held for nearly 23 years. He resigned in the fall of 1889, and had since lived in a home he had built in Wakefield.

Capt. Whaley was a direct descendant of the old South County stock of Whaleys, whose ancestors came to this country in colonial days from England, and were among the earliest settlers. His death was the third among the brothers and sisters, Abby and Atmore having but a few years preceded him. Those now living are John, Daniel, Carder, Henry, Mary, Dorcas, Laura and Susan. Like their father and mother, all have lived to ripe old ages in South Kingstown, except Atmore, who for many years lived in Newport.

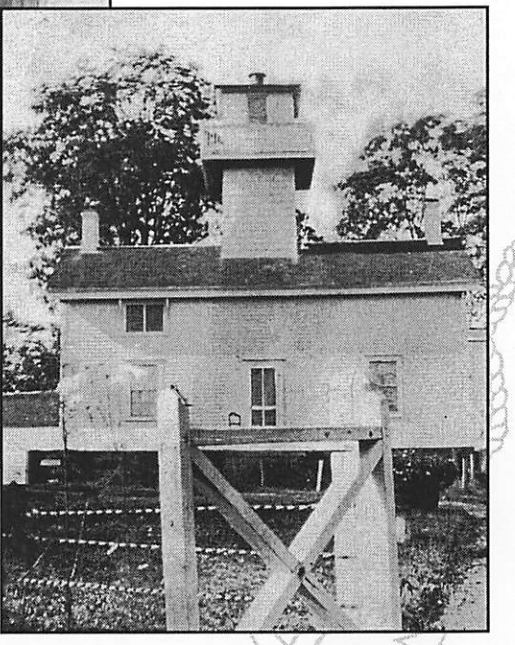
Capt. Whaley's wife died in September, 1903. Of their children, Sarah, widow of Capt. Webb Clark, and Henry, who now keeps the Point Judith Lighthouse, survive him. The funeral will be held Tuesday at 1 p. m. at his late residence.

Laura and Captain Henry Whaley

My favorite picture. I'm sure Laura made her outfit. She looks great with the double row of buttons just like his.

Notice how short Grandpa Henry is. This probably had something to do with his transfer to Staten Island. Perhaps winding the 288 pound weight which turned the lamps in the tower, or turning the fly-wheel on the engine for the horn was too strenuous for a man of his stature. He was 53 years old when he asked for a transfer. Given the choice of Warwick Neck or Staten Island, he chose the latter. The two older boys were married by this time. Joe was in his teens and he went with them. The lighthouse at Staten Island was a mile from the ocean. The keeper duties were nominal and there was none of the excitement engendered by the rough water off of Point Judith, or the proximity of the Life-Saving Service. Grandpa died at the age of 60—seven years after his transfer. Grandma Whaley returned to Rhode Island with Joe and his Staten Island bride (Lily Sohm Whaley).



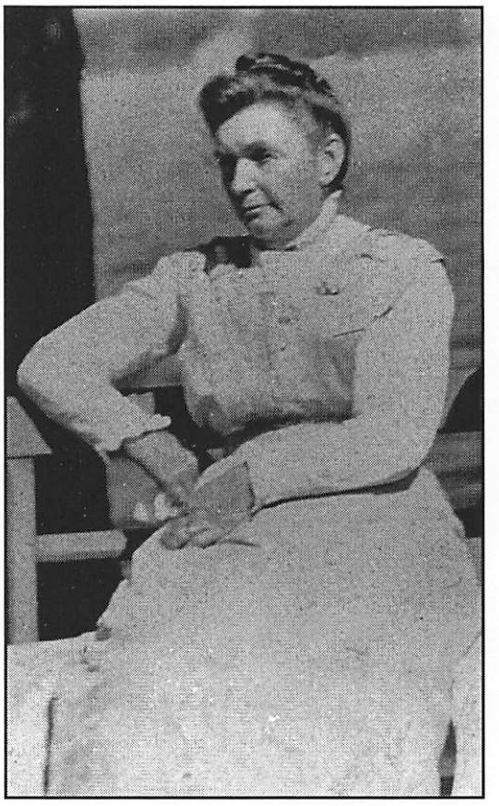


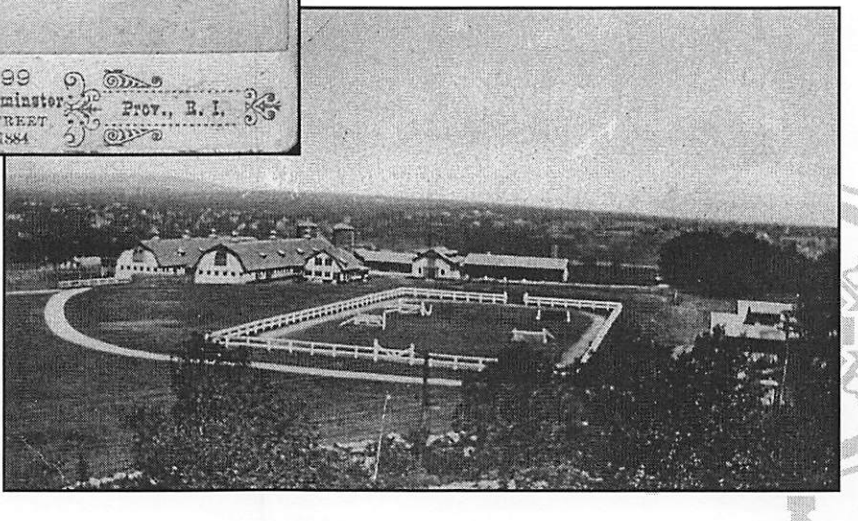
Laura Stedman Whaley

Daughter of Jane (Clarke) and William Stedman. Family recorded in South Kingston records to 1725. Laura was a very talented lady—kept up a good appearance—was a great cook and accomplished seamstress. Outgoing, she loved to entertain. It was her decision to accept post in Staten Island because she knew so many people from the Depot in New Jersey. When Henry died on Staten Island in 1917, Grandma returned to Rhode Island. She worked at Knight's Farm in Warwick as a housekeeper for a few years and then returned to Robinson Street. She lived upstairs and was cared for by Lily and Joe until her death in 1931.

John Stedman has traced laura's ancestry back to the mayflower and was kind enough to give us the genealogy back to the Soule family.

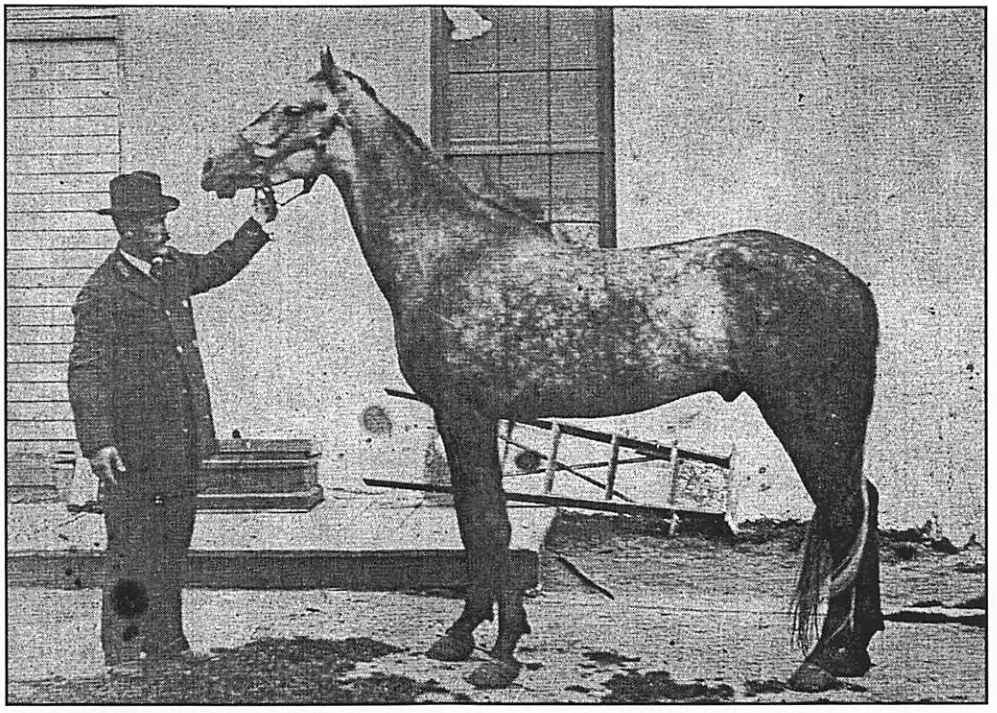






Grandpa Henry and His Horse

There was no room at the lighthouse for farming and probably no need for it, but there was a barn and Grandpa Henry was proud of his horses. They also raised chickens.



Jack the Dog

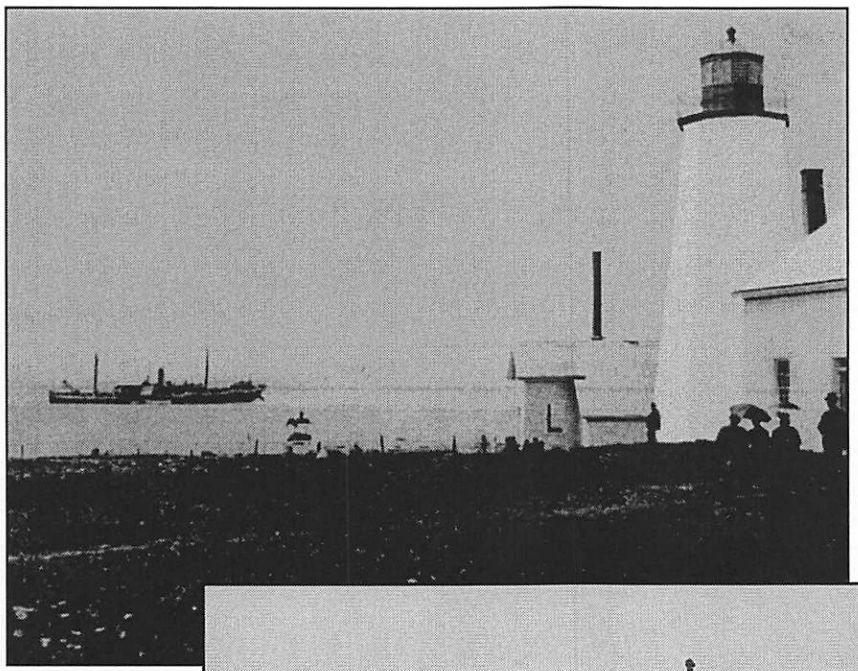
Dog "Jack" lived at the lighthouse. How did they ever get him to hold that pipe in his mouth?



A Restaurant at the Lighthouse

This clipping is from the Narragansett Times, October 12, 1988. The caption read: Old days—Way back When—The Point Judith Lighthouse, circa, 1898, often attracted umbrella-toting visitors in bowler hats to view boats passing by the shore.

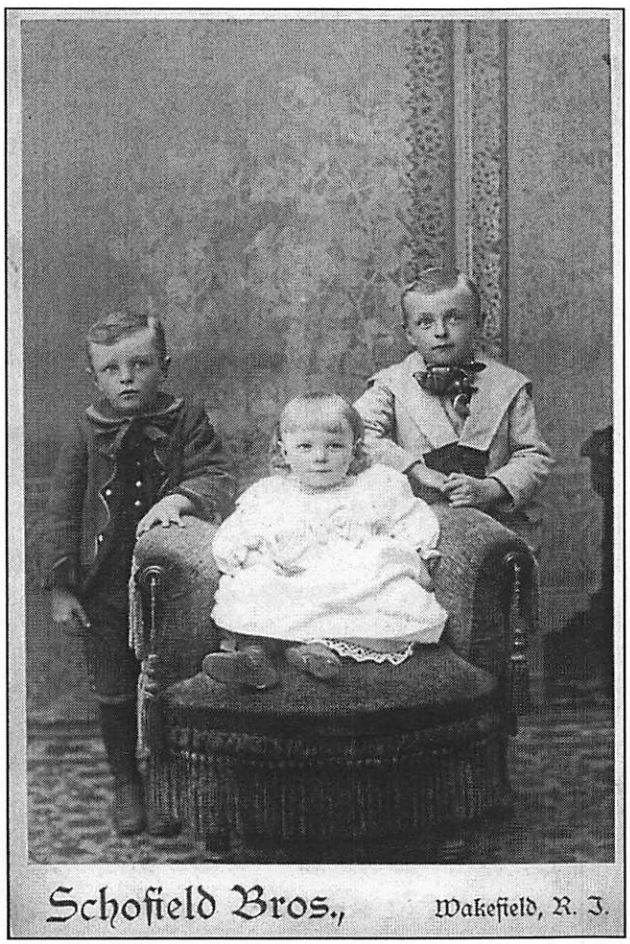
This is about the time that Grandma Laura went into the restaurant business at the lighthouse. I wonder if she took numbers like at George's Restaurant. People came on the trolley from Providence. Wonder how far the tracks came down here? Did they have horse-drawn carriages like taxi's, or busses running on a schedule? Did they make reservations?





The Whaley Boys

All three boys (Louis, Joe, and Clifford) were born at Point Judith Lighthouse. Grandma Laura was a marvelous seamstress. She made all their clothes. I still have the little dress my father (Joe) is wearing in this picture. It is 99 years old now (1993, Marise Whaley Sykes).

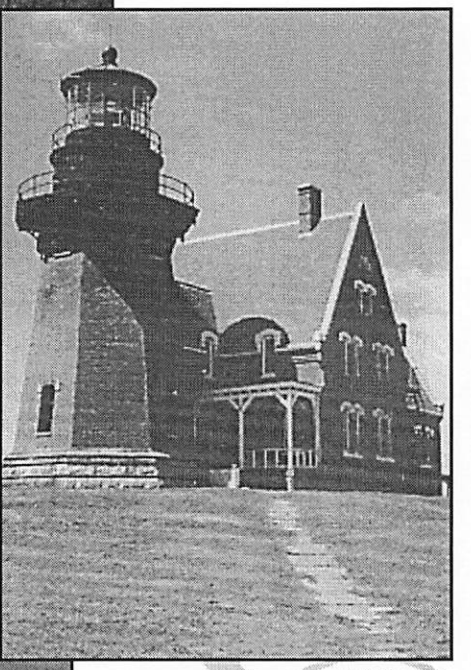


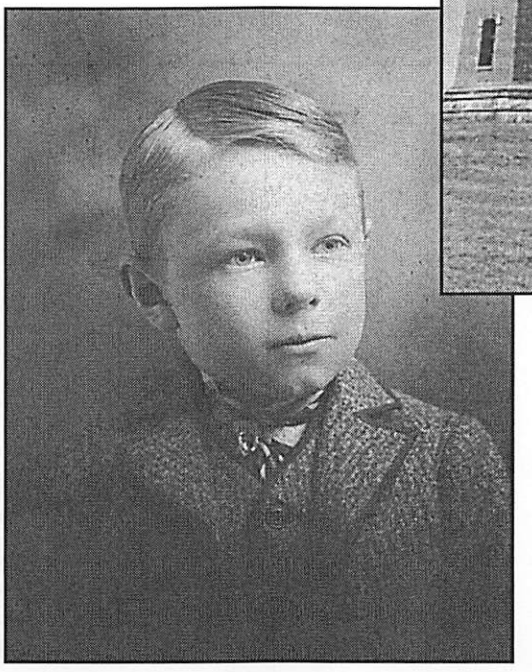


Dad (Joe Whaley) with his dog, "Skip"

When dad was about this age he had an attack of appendicitis. He was rushed from the lighthouse to Stedman Hill where his appendix was removed on his grandmother Stedman's kitchen table. Dad's Aunt Sarah was married to Assistant Keeper Web Clark at Southeast Light on Block Island. He used to go over and stay in the lighthouse with them.







The Alamo School, Class of 1900



I brought this picture out on my father's 96th birthday when "Brownie" Champlin was visiting. He was 97 at the time. Between the two of them they remembered everyone with the exception of the little girl at the end of the second row, and a girl in the last row. *First row*: Arthur Champlin, Clifford Whaley, Louis Whaley, Joe Whaley, Leon "Brownie" Champlin, Ira McKinney (no shoes), Chester Knowles, Walter Westlake, George Loughborough, Percy ?, Louise Hawkins, ?, Margaret Knowles. *Second row* (*girls*): Susie Champlin, Edith Knowles. *Second row* (*boys*): Billie Hazard, Payson Tucker, Harry Champlin, Archie Knowles, George Hazard, Pauline McNulty, Teacher, Mrs. Eaton, Mattie Knowles, Wallace Knowles, Annie McNulty, Alice Smith.

"The Alamo" still stands, now a private home, about a mile north of the lighthouse. The Champlin farm was between the lighthouse and the school. My father (Joe Whaley) and Brownie were best friends and because there weren't as many "chores" at the lighthouse as on the farm, Joe used to go early in the morning to help Brownie with his. This also gave them some time to do a little hunting before school. The day that Brownie rested his rifle on his foot and shot off his toe was the source of a good story in later years, but must have been pretty scary at the time. They also spoke of keeping an eye over their shoulders for a character named "Uncle Billy" or "Billy of the Shore" who wandered the Point barefoot no matter what the weather, snow included. He seemed to delight in showing up unexpectedly to their fear and dismay.

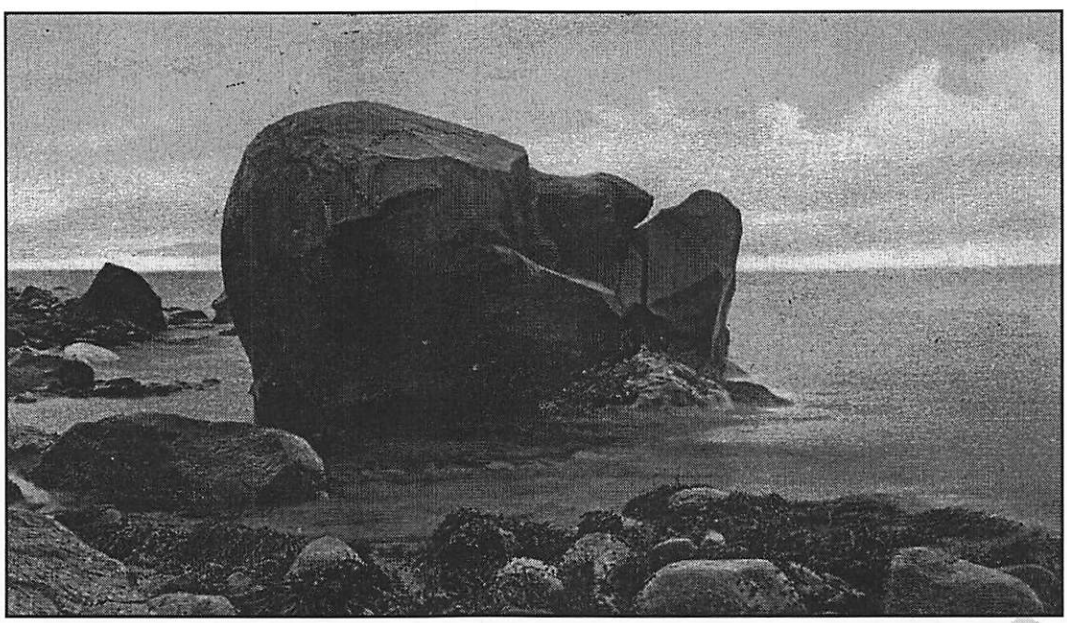
The following is from the Grace Jordan collection, written by Russell Knowles.

A special note on Point Judith; My father had a Great Uncle William Hazard Knowles, a bit eccentric (1816–1907). He must have ate right. Son of Benjamin S. Knowles. He had 10 brothers and sisters who all married.

William never did. His 5 older brothers moved to Mississippi in 1830 and bought acreage from the indians for $1.50 per acre. Their descendants still live there and are extremely wealthy. Etha and I have visited there many times. William H. stayed in Rhode Island and became a shipwreck salvager and beachcomber all of his life. He left a big estate. He was dubbed "Billy of the Shore"! Some time ago the Providence Journal ran a story about "Billy" and his exploits.

Folks in Rhode Island told me that Uncle "Billy" never wore shoes. Calluses on his feet were so thick that pieces of metal lodged in them never hurt and he could be heard coming from a distance, clank, clank, clank. "Billy" is buried in a family vault, once part of the family farm. This is now on property privately owned outside of the family, and only a few feet next door to a house, address 49 Willow Ave., Point Judith. A registered nurse lives there. Recently a child came running in the house with a bone. The mother, being a nurse, recognized it as human and gave him a good talking to. I visited this vault for the first time in October. Tried before but could never find it.

Note: The waters around Point Judith have been the scene of so many shipwrecks that it is referred to as the "Graveyard of the Atlantic"



Old Man's Face

This rock, off the shore of the lighthouse, is still there. After the 1954 hurricane it started to erode, and finally the features disappeared.

The House on Robinson Street

This is the house on Robinson Street in Wakefield built by Captain Joseph Whaley and his wife Esther when he retired from the lighthouse service in 1889, after 27 years of service. Esther died in 1903. Captain Joe was cared for by daughter Sarah Clark, the widow of Captain Webb Clark, keeper of the South East Light on Block Island, until his death in 1906. She lived in the Clark house on Meadow Avenue, built for her by Captain Joe. Captain Henry Whaley inherited the house on Robinson Street which was leased out until his death in 1917 on Staten Island. Grandma Laura returned home to live in the house with Joseph, her youngest son, and his wife, Lily. The lady in the picture is Laura with Cliff's daughter, Margaret.

The house was completely surrounded by a picket fence—large barn in the back—pear trees, apple and quince. There was a cistern with a pump just outside of the back door with a walk leading to a good-sized wood shed. There was a rock garden, a vegetable garden, and a corn field. Two large fir trees in the front yard went down in the '38 hurricane. The beech tree in the front yard was planted by Captain Joe around the time that the house was built.



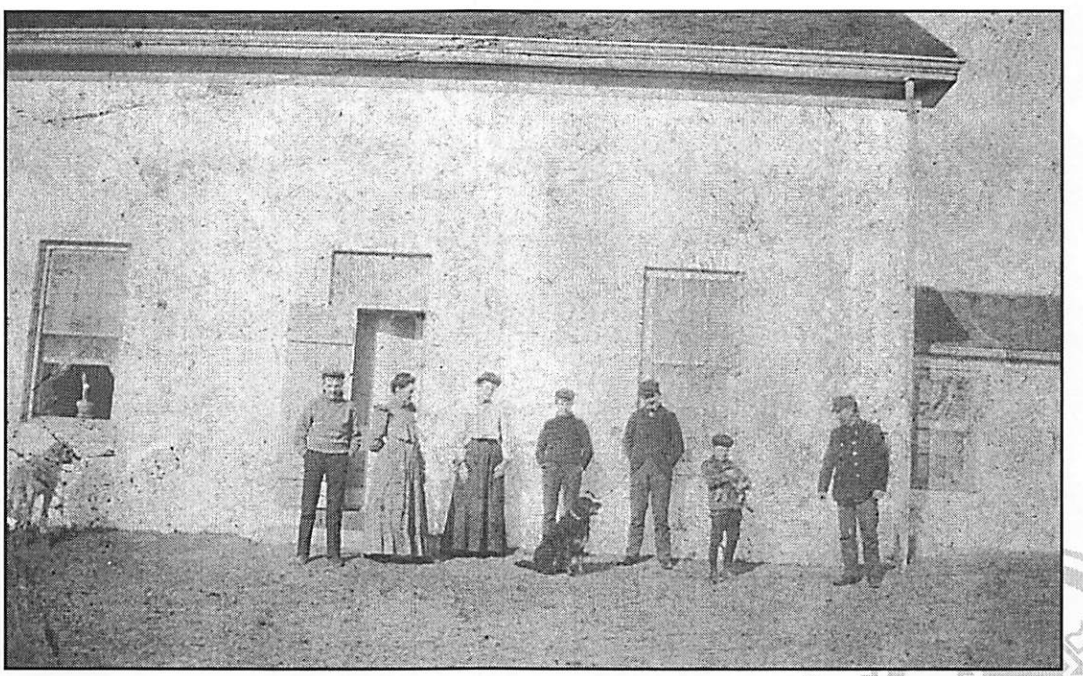


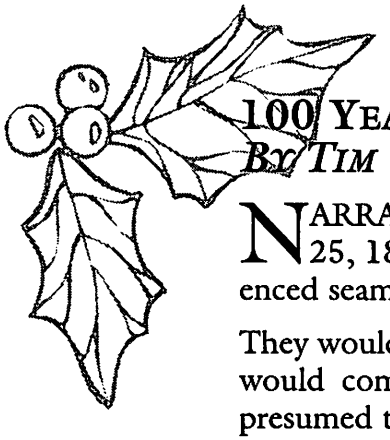
The Lighthouse

Look at the long picket fence between the barn and the chicken house. Bet the boys had Huck Finn—Tom Sawyer episodes.

This picture also shows the Life-Saving Station built in 1888 and the radio beacon tower built by the Lighthouse Service in 1931. One of the buildings to the east of the tower stored flammable liquids and another, the fog horn.







100 Years Ago, Eight Men Missed Christmas Day

By Tim Cotter

NARRAGANSETT— One hundred years ago this Christmas, December 25, 1885, eight local men—described by all as brave, hardy and experienced seamen—hurried into a 26-foot cedar lifeboat.

They would not return that day to open presents with their families. But they would come back—three days later, after some friends and relatives had presumed them lost at sea.

Two schooners had collided off Point Judith Christmas morning and the local men, members of the Point Judith Life Saving Crew, the precursor to the Coast Guard, responded quickly by throwing their breakfast of coffee and chowder into the boat and rowing off.

The men did not return that night, nor the next or the next. Friends, relatives and townspeople were left to wonder if the men, unable to return because of high seas, had been picked up by another vessel or had gone onto Block Island—or had been overtaken by the ocean.

"Have you heard from the crew," was a question heard many times during the days after Christmas, according to an account in The Narragansett Times.

Relatives of the missing men—four were married and two had young children—and other townspeople gathered at the Point Judith Light awaiting word, a Providence Journal story reported.

The men and their ages were listed in both newspapers, although residents of Point Judith and surrounding areas knew of the missing men, all of whom were born and bred in South County, long before newspaper accounts told of the disaster. The men were Capt. Herbert M. Knowles, 30; Charles H. Whaley, 33; Chauncer C. Kenyon, 26; Asa Church, 24; Stillman F. Wilson, 28; Herbert F. Adams, 25; Daniel S. Champlin, 36; and Horace H. Whaley, 22.

Rough seas made it impossible to travel to Block Island in the days after Christmas, and the telegraph cable had snapped three months earlier, making it impossible to get word to and from the island.

Two days after Christmas, on Dec. 27, The Providence Journal ran a story on the incident. Its headline read:

THE LIFE SAVING CREW.

The Gallant Point Judith Eight to the Rescue

They Encounter a Powerful Northeaster and Heavy Sea

Powerful Anxiety Over Their Disappearance in South Kingstown

The story began:

"The Life Saving Crew on duty at Point Judith Station on Christmas morning consisted of eight brave, hardy and experienced young men, all of whom were born and reared within the sound of old Ocean's ceaseless booming. Immediately upon sighting the disabled schooner at 7 o'clock, they manned

the lifeboat and plied the oars vigorously until they had ascertained by careful investigation that the crews had been either rescued or had found watery graves, and then, being unable to return to the station, owing to the increased fury of the gale and the heavy sea, they were swept seaward in the direction of Block Island. Since that time no tidings have been received of their whereabouts, and the painful uncertainty of their fate has created widespread anxiety in town owing to the unabated violence of the wind and the inability to communicate with Block Island by cable or with passing craft."

The story, listing the men's ages, marital status and children, read like an obituary. It eulogized Knowles by describing him as a "hardy and successful fisherman," and Chauncey Kenyon as "hardy, fearless and zealous in the performance of his duty."

One person, Capt. Joseph Whaley, the keeper of the light, was confident the men were safe, or at least he said so to those who gathered at the light awaiting word. "Thar kids are just as much at home on the water as you are on the land ... and in a day or two, if the wind will go down, we shall have them home again," he told a Journal reporter.

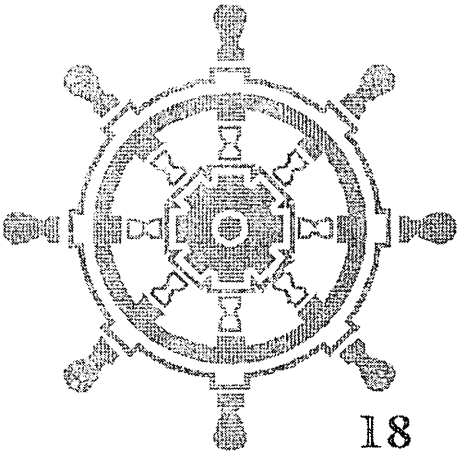
And return home they did. Capt. John Water and Capt. Tal Dodge finally were able to make their way to Block Island on Dec. 27 and found the men "safely established at the harbor lifesaving station, though exceedingly anxious to get back to their homes. All were in excellent health," The Journal reported.

The men were ferried to Newport where they were fed a hearty meal at Lawton's Restaurant and given a room at the United States Hotel. The next day, Monday, Dec. 28, they were ferried home "and were heartily congratulated on all sides on their safe arrival after their perilous experiences," The Times reported.

The men told of how they arrived at the two schooners to find them abandoned. Because of rough seas, they were unable to make it back to Point Judith so they went on to Block Island. The crews of the two schooners had been picked up by another vessel earlier.

The eight men were known to tell the story to their families each Christmas. But the tale, as they are known to do, grew over the years, leaving some to believe that the men returned to the mainland just in time for their own funerals.

That wasn't true, although the eight men earned the right to embellish their tale just a bit.



Family Picnic at Point Judith

Excerpt of a letter written to Lois Whaley Ewen, October 18, 1993, by John Stedman.

Dear Lois:

Enclosed is a photocopy of the family sunday picnic picture taken at Point Judith lighthouse. I understand this was taken in the summer of 1895. Your grandmother Laura is not in the picture. Oliver H. Stedman told me before he died a few years ago that Laura was up at the lighthouse making chowder for the group. He had tried to identify the shipwreck, but he said there were so many in that area around that time that he was never able to pinpoint the exact ship.

Olive gave Ma a list of people she knew that were in the picture and I have tried to match names with people with only limited success. The people were: Henry Whaley, Clifford Whaley, Louis Whaley, Mr. and Mrs. William Stedman, Oliver H. Stedman, Lucy Stedman, Jane Dorcas Stedman, Mr. and Mrs. Oliver E. Stedman, Louis Stedman, Mr. and Mrs. James Brown, Mr. and Mrs. John E. Stedman, B. Philbrick, Ida Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Pardon Brown, Mr. and Mrs. G. Gough, William E. Stedman, and others.



Monument to honor lighthouse

NARRAGANSETT — A monument marking the historic Point Judith Lighthouse and Coast Guard station there will take place Sunday at 2 p.m. at the lighthouse grounds.

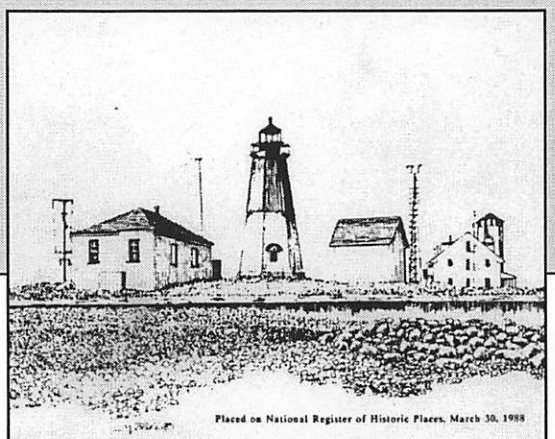
Sen. Claiborne Pell will be the guest speaker and other politicians, including Rep. Claudine Schneider, Sen. John H. Chafee and Governor DiPrete, have been invited.

A wreath will be placed in the ocean to remember those who have died.

The event, sponsored by the town's historical society, is part of the town's 100th anniversary celebration.

The monument includes old photographs of the buildings and a brief history. The existing lighthouse was built in 1857 and the current Coast Guard station in 1937.

The historical society plans to mark the four historic districts in town as well as the homes on the National Register of Historic Places. Also, a Marge Vogel print illustrating the influence of the Hazard family on the town will be unveiled later in the month.



POINT JUDITH LIGHTHOUSE AND
COAST GUARD STATION
Historic Marker Dedication
October 16, 1988
2:00 p.m.
Narragansett, Rhode Island



POINT JUDITH LIGHTHOUSE AND

COAST GUARD STATION

Historic Marker Dedication
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In Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of
Narragansett's District Incorporation
1888-1988

MUSIC
Sea Breezes, Music 2000

WELCOME
Sallie W. Latimer, President
Narragansett Historical Society

MASTER OF CEREMONIES
Leona M. Kelley, Vice President
Narragansett Historical Society

INTRODUCTION OF HONORED GUESTS
Leona M. Kelley

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL
"Salty" Brine

READING OF THE HISTORIC MARKER TEXT

Joan Bartolomeo, President
Narragansett Town Council

Captain F. M. Hamilton, Group Commander
Coast Guard Group, Woods Hole

Senator John Chaffee
Represented by Josh N. Fenton

Honorable Edward D. DiPrete
Governor, State of Rhode Island

HONORED GUEST SPEAKER
U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell

UNVEILING OF THE HISTORIC MARKER
Honorable Edward D. DiPrete
U.S. Senator Claiborne Pell

DEDICATION
"Salty" Brine

MEMORIAL PRESENTATION
Joseph Whaley

CLOSING REMARKS
and
PLACEMENT OF WREATH
Leon "Brownie" Champlin

REFRESHMENTS

TOUR OF THE COAST GUARD STATION
and
LIGHTHOUSE

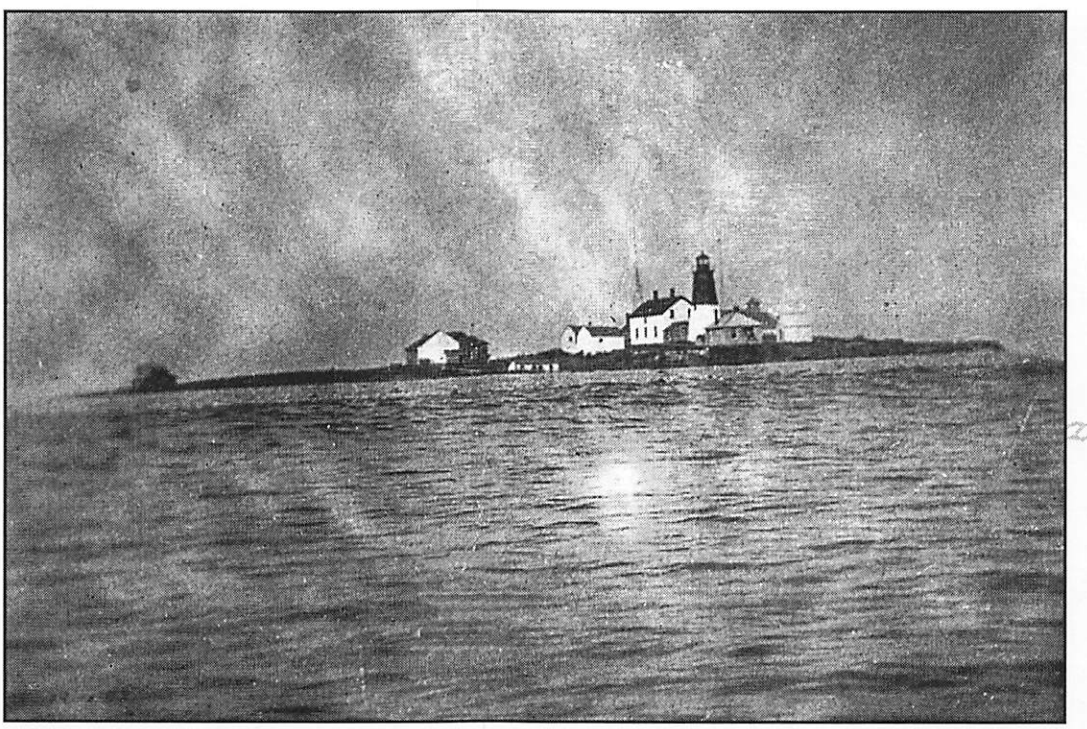
Historic Marker Dedication

The Point Judith Light House was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, March 30, 1988. The following article was published by the Narragansett Historical Society for the Historic Marker Dedication, October 16, 1988.

Point Judith

Point Judith is a part of the town of Narragansett and the famous "Pettaquamscutt Purchase". Several native Indian tribes, the Pequots, Niantics, Nipmucks, Wampanoags, and Narragansetts, lived in the Point Judith section when the English arrived. The Narragansetts were dominant.

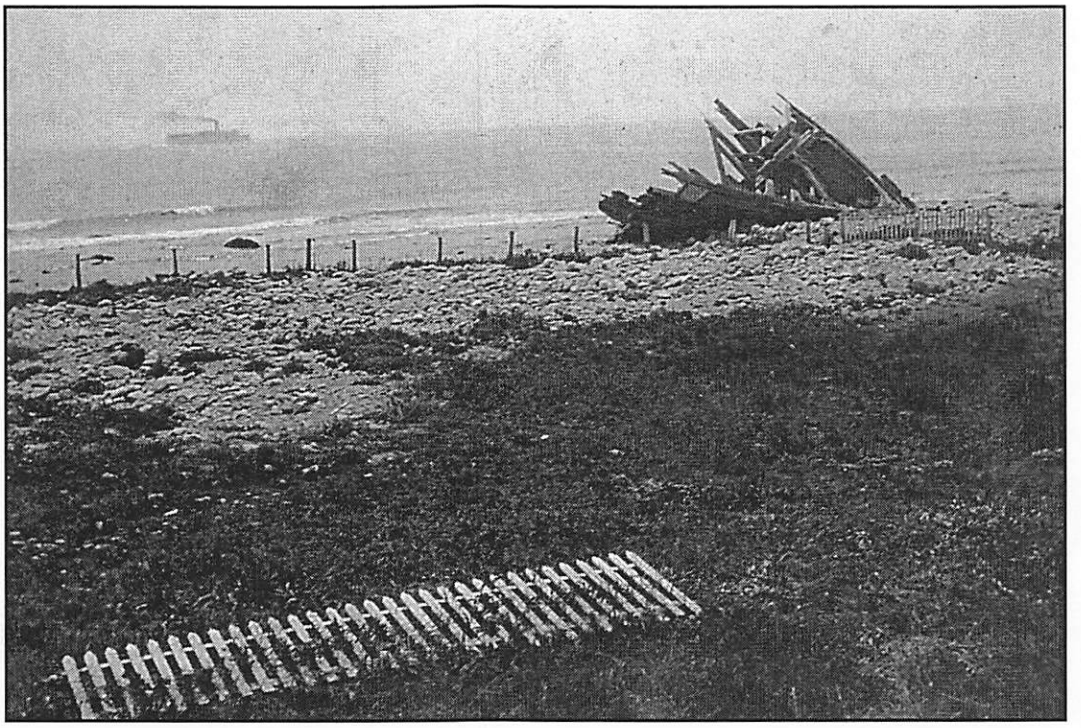
"Many men" seem to have had "many minds" in relation to the origin of the name "Point Judith". Some say the point was named for the wife of John Hull. The legend that the name was given by some churchmen from Boston who came here to deprive, by trickery, some prospective buyers of the land, also exists. The name was taken from the Bible, in which it is used to represent the southern part of Canaan allotted to the Tribe of Judah, and these men chose to call the southeastern boundary of their pretended purchase "Point Judith". Perhaps the tale is true that the name was derived from the cry of a desperate ship captain in a fog, when his companion said she heard surf breaking on the rocks and the captain exclaimed "p'int, Judy, p'int!"



Shipwrecks

Point Judith has been the scene of many shipwrecks. The following is only a partial list:

American Eagle (1870)
Acusionet (1870)
Almon Bacon (1885)
Allen Green (1886)
Amanda E. (1902)
Agnes (1898)
C. B. Hamilton (1886)
Catherine W. May (1876)
Cuckoo (1882)
Anita (1888)
Edward M. Laughlin (1898)
Henry W. Scavey (1875)
Normandy (1864)
Venus (1877)
Mars (1892)
Swallow (1900)
Harry A. Barry (1877)



The Lighthouse

Because the treacherous waters and rocky shoreline have been the scene of many a shipwreck, Point Judith is often referred to as the "Cape Hatteras of New England". In an effort to protect mariners, this site was acquired in 1809 from Hazard Knowles, and Point Judith Light was established the following year by William Ellery, a signer of the Declaration of Independence.

The first tower, a crude wooden structure that stood for only five years, was destroyed by a storm on September 17, 1815. A second tower, thirty-five feet high and made of rough stone coated with cement, was built the next year. This in turn was replaced in 1857 by the present tower along with a separate brick "keeper's" dwelling connected to the tower by an enclosed walkway.

The present lighthouse, a familiar landmark, is octagonal, the lower half white, the upper half brown. It stands 51 feet above the ground and 65 feet above the water. The light is a 15 second group oscillating white light with a visibility of fourteen miles. It has a candle power of 17,300. The keeper's dwelling was removed in 1954.

Two other buildings on the site are associated with the light. A gable roofed one-story brick oil house to the east of the tower was built in 1917 for storage of flammable liquids. A brick, one-story, hipped roof fog signal building constructed in 1923, houses the horn's air compressor. The horn itself, which gives one blast every fifteen seconds, is located along the outside of the building at the water's edge.

Although the Light is an important mark on the Rhode Island coast, much of the station's historical significance also related to the operation of its fog signal, and later, to a radio beacon. The first fog signal, a Daboll's trumpet sounded by a Wilcox hot-air engine, was established in 1867. Because of problems with the sound being lost in the noise of the surf off-shore, it was replaced in 1872 by two first class steam whistles.

On November 11, 1931, the first radio beacon at a Rhode Island light house was established at Point Judith. This marked an important event in the history of the State's lighthouses that would have a far-reaching effect on the system of aids to navigation. With the help of a radio beacon, ships could, for the first time, navigate at night and in the fog without the assistance of a light or fog horn.

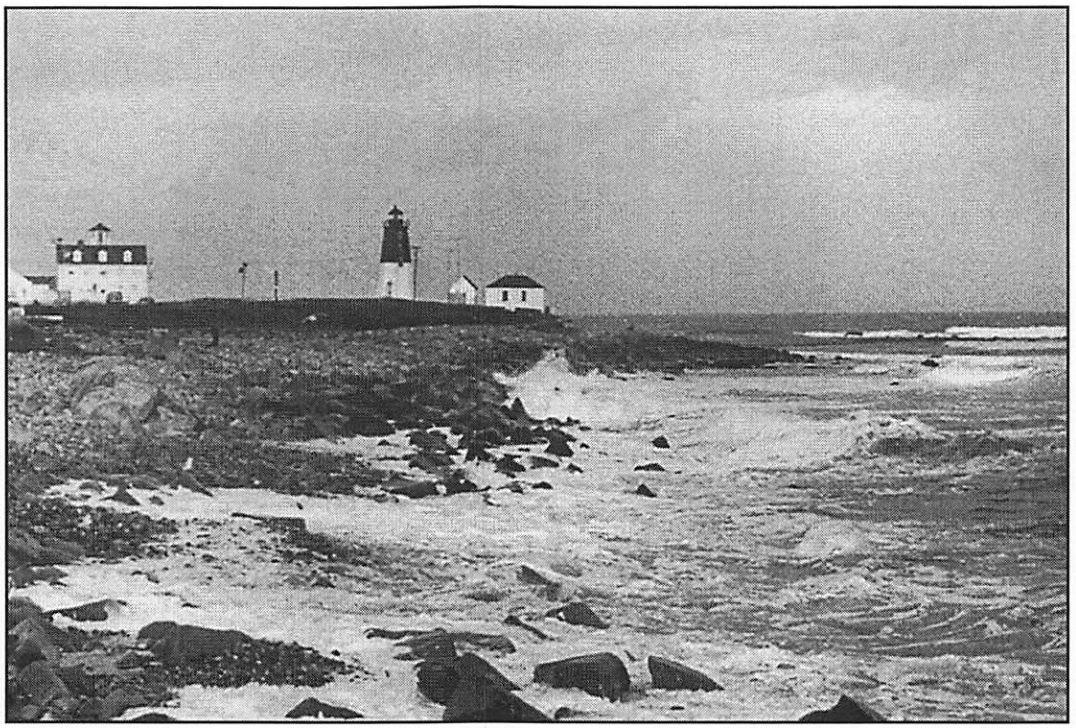
Point Judith Light house was automated in 1954, and the keeper's dwelling was torn down shortly thereafter. Since then the light and fog signal have been maintained by personnel from the U.S. Coast Guard Station.



U.S. Coast Guard Station

A U.S. Life-Saving Station was established at this site in 1876. In 1888, a large two-story wooden structure was erected. It was manned for years by local men, volunteers at first, who joined up for the winter months and stayed until fishing season opened. There was little interaction between the station's crew and the light keepers since they were administered separately. (Marise Whaley Sykes says that this statement is not true.)

The day's routine at the station was always a busy one. There were two main duties: there was a man on watch in the tower at all times, and the beach patrol was maintained all night long. The tower watchman was required to log every craft that passed the point, even local fishing boats and kids out for a sail. There was a beach patrol from sunset to sunrise and in the daytime in thick and foggy weather. The route went in two directions: from the station to Galilee and back, and from the station in the opposite direction to Scarborough Beach and back.



The Life-Saving Service joined the U.S. Coast Guard in 1915, at which time the Point Judith Life-Saving Station was renamed Point Judith Coast Guard Station.

The Station was very active during World War II, and just two days prior to the end of the war in Europe, it assisted in the rescue of the steam collier "Black Point" which had been torpedoed four miles off the point.

A fire in 1933 destroyed the station, and the present Coast Guard Station was built in 1937. Today's Point Judith Station carries on its proud history of assistance to seafarers in the same spirit and tradition of the past.



POINT JUDITH LIGHT.

THE

Narragansett Pier Agency

REAL ESTATE.

Office at Daily Times Office, Narragansett Pier, R. I.

"THE AGENCY" will transact all negotiations pertaining to Real Estate at Narragansett Pier and vicinities, in the purchase and sale of lands, the purchase, sale and rental of Cottages, surveying and laying out lands, searching titles, drawing deeds, and all matters generally in connection therewith requiring the services of an Attorney at Law, Engineer or Notary Public.

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GEORGE T. LANPHEAR,
Peace Dale, R. I.