

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

EASTHAM

Report Date: 1984

Associated Regional Report: Cape Cod and the Islands

Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

The activity that is the subject of the MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report has been financed in part with Federal funds from the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. However, the contents and opinions do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior. This program receives Federal financial assistance for identification and protection of historic properties. Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, the U.S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability or age in its federally assisted programs. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity or facility as described above, or if you desire further information please write to: Office of Equal Opportunity, National Park Service, 1849 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C., 20240.



MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Chair, Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc
mhc@sec.state.ma.us / 617-727-8470

MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1984

COMMUNITY: Eastham

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Eastham is located on outer Cape Cod, roughly midway between Chatham and Provincetown. The town is situated at 41° 51' north latitude and 69° 56' west longitude. Its distance from Boston is 94 miles by land and 66 miles by water. It is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean on the east, Orleans to the south, Wellfleet to the north, and Cape Cod Bay to the West. Geologically, nearly the entire town is made up of the Eastham plain surficial deposits. These lands are relatively flat except in the extreme southern portion of the township. Elevations generally average 60 feet or less. Dune and beach deposits are present along both shore lines. Marsh and swamp deposits are also present along rivers and harbors, particularly in the southern portion of town.

Soils in the town are generally sandy loams overlying mostly gravelly sand the pebble to cobble gravel. The eastern portion of town had traditionally been the most fertile. Overfarming, the cutting of vegetative cover and drifting sands have destroyed once profitable agricultural land. Eastham soils have traditionally been better agriculturally than other towns to the north and south. It has also been said that of the thirteen Cape towns, Eastham was the only one to produce sufficient grain for home consumption (Freeman 1869:354).

Like other outer Cape towns, Eastham was once covered with large tracts of oak and pine timber. However, timber cutting for shipbuilding and fuel reached the point that no wood remained in the township. Recent growths of young pine and oak are now present as well as scrub vegetation in many locations. Some barrier areas are also present, particularly in coastal locations.

Subsurface drainage exists throughout much of Eastham, particularly in northern areas. However, surface drainage also exists. In North Eastham most surface drainage is confined to the Hatches Creek/Sunken Meadow area along the Wellfleet/Eastham town line. Otherwise, most surface drainage in Eastham is in the southern portion of town. Drainage in this area is present in several ponds, the larger of which include Great, Herring, Depot, and Minister ponds. Surface drainage also exists in Herring Brook, the Herring and Boat Meadow rivers, and Rock Harbor Creek. The Town Cove and Nauset Marsh (including Nauset and Salt Pond Bays) are also important coastal drainage areas.

Extensive salt marshes are also present in the town of Eastham. The largest marsh is Nauset Marsh, followed by marshes in the area of Sunken Meadow, Herring River, Boat Meadow River, and Rock Harbor Creek. Billingsgate Point, once an island, was also within the Eastham town limits.

The town of Eastham also contains several harbor locations permitting anchorage for vessels of small classes. The best harbor is Nauset Harbor on the Atlantic coast, leading to the Town Cove. However, this harbor is obstructed by a bar at its mouth. Rock Harbor in the Bay shore is also present within the township, but is incapable of admitting vessels at low water. Other potential smaller harbors are present in the area of Sunken Meadow and Herring and Boat Meadow rivers.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

The area presently comprising Eastham was included in the 1640 Nauset Plantation grant of lands on the outer arm of Cape Cod from Pleasant Bay north to Truro. This territory, east of the lands of the Satucket purchasers, was incorporated as Nauset in 1646. Its name was changed to Eastham in 1651. Billingsgate Parish in the north was created in 1722, and South Parish was established in 1723. Eastham's present northern boundary at Hatches Creek was fixed with the separation of Billingsgate Parish as Wellfleet District in 1763. The southern Rock Harbor Creek boundary was set with the separation of South Parish as the town of Orleans in 1797, and adjusted in 1867.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Eastham is a coastal resort community that straddles the outer arm of Cape Cod north of Rock Harbor Creek and Town Cove. The local area was probably the site of secondary native settlement between more thickly populated areas to the north and south. Its shores were likely explored by early 17th century European expeditions. Permanent colonial settlement came in 1644 from Plymouth, with incorporation as Nauset Plantation in 1646 (name changed to Eastham in 1651), including lands from Pleasant Bay north beyond Wellfleet Harbor. A central meetinghouse site was established ca. 1644 in the southeast at Town Cove, but moved north to Herring Pond in 1720. Relatively fertile soils attracted dispersed agricultural settlement and grain production, but the absence of harbor facilities led by the early 18th century to the concentration of population in the north at Wellfleet Harbor (made Billingsgate parish in 1722) and in the south at Town Cove and Pleasant Bay (South Parish in 1723). Separation of these areas as the towns of Wellfleet and Orleans in the late 18th century left Eastham with a small, dispersed agriculture/fishing population. Early 19th century fishing and salt production declined with the rise of larger regional maritime centers. Summer resort activity was initiated with the location of the ca. 1830 Methodist Camp Meeting Ground near the northwest bay shore, active until 1863, when the site was moved to Yarmouth. Subsequent (1870) rail connections stimulated local market gardening, especially asparagus and turnip crops, and a small central depot hamlet developed. The Atlantic coast remained sparsely populated throughout, except for the construction of the Nauset lighthouses (1838), the late 19th century location there of a transatlantic cable station, and the establishment of a lifesaving station on Nauset Beach. While no local agricultural landscapes appear to survive, dispersed, 18th and 19th century dwellings remain, with

clusters along the Route 6 corridor, and the 19th century depot center remains largely intact. National Park Service land acquisitions have prevented development along much of the Atlantic shore, but the Park Service Visitor Center on Route 6 will continue to stimulate intensive commercial development along this auto corridor. In addition, intensive modern residential growth continues to transform the area west of Route 6 into a suburban landscape.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Specific Contact period native trails are unknown for Eastham during the period. However, several trails are suggested on the basis of earlier site locations, the distribution of environmental resources and sightings of natives and explorations by early European travelers. At least two major trails were probably present. One trail likely existed along the Atlantic coast; a continuation of a trail(s) that probably passed through what is now Wellfleet to the Nauset Bay/Nauset Marsh area. This trail probably followed the area of the high bluffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. This trail may have been important in connecting farmed areas and for sighting drift whales and oceangoing whales. A second trail also likely existed along the Cape Cod Bay shore extending from other trails in the Wellfleet Harbor area to the Rock Harbor Creek/Town Cove area. This trail probably skirted the eastern periphery of tidal marshes and creeks in this area. The trail was probably used for similar purposes as the previously noted trail and may have been the most important and most used trail. Secondary trails also probably existed in the areas between the two coastal trails. These trails likely led to farming, hunting, and gathering areas. Trails were also probably present around the periphery of salt marshes, ponds, and estuaries. These latter trails were probably more numerous in the southern portion of town in the area of first colonial settlement.

B. Population

Little direct evidence exists from which accurate population estimates can be made regarding native populations in the Outer Cape area. Furthermore, while individual accounts often subdivide Outer Cape native populations into subgroups such as Nauset, Pamet, Monomoyicks, etc., the term Nauset Indian generally applies throughout the Cape area. Mooney (1928:4) lists 1,200 Nauset natives before the 1617-19 epidemics. This number was reduced to ca. 500 by 1621 (Mooney and Thomas 1910:40-41). As indicated above, these statistics probably refer to the entire native population of the Outer Cape area. Furthermore, it is doubtful whether or not those estimates are entirely accurate.

The present limits of Eastham do not appear to have been as extensively settled as areas to the south (Orleans) and to the north (Wellfleet). However, evidence does exist indicting that Contact period populations were present. In most likelihood, those populations did not exceed a few hundred individuals,

possibly a much smaller group. These populations were likely settled in the Town Cove/Nauset Marsh area and along other coastal estuaries and ponds.

A European population was not present in Eastham during this period.

C. Settlement Pattern

European settlements did not exist in Eastham during this period. However, some contact between natives and Europeans in the Eastham area undoubtedly took place as European explorers and fishermen frequented the area long before settlement. For example, Gosnold may have visited the area as early as 1602 followed by Champlain in 1605. Later, in 1620 explorers from the Mayflower may also have explored the area.

Natives had settled the Eastham area for some time prior to European contact. Known Late Woodland period sites are present in the southern area of town, particularly in the vicinity of Nauset Marsh and the Town Cove. Late Woodland period artifact listings with general town provenience are also present and generally exhibit site locational preferences for coastal estuarine areas

No evidence exists at present to identify specific Contact period villages in Eastham. However, it seems probable they existed; the problem is pinpointing exact locations of larger sites. Smaller sites such as Contact period burials are present particularly in the area around Nauset Marsh (e.g. Heminway Site).

Native place names for the Eastham area also provide clues to the extent which natives either inhabited and/or used the Eastham area. For example, during the initial stages of the town's settlement the term Nauset applied until 1651. The term Nauset generally applies to all the Outer Cape natives. In Eastham, the term also applies to Nauset Bay, Nauset Marsh, Nauset Beach, Nauset Road, and much of the southeastern portion of town. Roadways also have native names such as Aspinet and Massasoit Roads.

Thus, known Late Woodland and Contact period sites, artifact listings with general town provenience, and native place names all provide evidence of settlement in the Eastham area during the Contact period. These sources of evidence also provide corroboration of regional and Cape settlement preferences for coastal areas such as estuaries, tidal rivers and ponds.

D. Subsistence Pattern

Since European settlements were not present in the Eastham area during this period, European subsistence probably followed that of the native inhabitants in the area. While some food was undoubtedly carried with early explorers, traders, and fishermen, the bulk of their subsistence was probably secured through hunting, fishing, the gathering of wild plants and shellfish and

the trade, stealing, or purchase of agricultural products (e.g., corn or turkey wheat) from the local Native Americans.

Native American subsistence during the Contact period in the Eastham area was probably similar to that practiced in other Cape areas. The combined use of wild and domesticated food resources formed the basis of the subsistence system. It is unknown at present exactly when agriculture or, more specifically, horticulture, was introduced to the natives in the Cape Cod area. However, in the Contact period sufficient quantities of corn, beans, and squash were being purchased for storage and at times for sale or trade to English settlers. Shellfishing, fishing, and hunting were also important subsistence pursuits. In Eastham, numerous tidal areas contain mixed beds of virtually every type of shellfish available in the Cape area. In particular, soft shell clams have been historically important and plentiful in the Town Cove and Nauset Harbor area. Both fresh and salt water species of fish are also available in the Eastham area. Eastham's several fresh water ponds contain numerous species of fish for consumption. In particular, alewives are present in the Herring River, Herring Brook, and numerous ponds and may have had a wider distribution in the past. Nauset Harbor, the Town Cove, Cape Cod Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean also provided a wide variety of fish for utilization. Sea mammals, such as whales and seals, were also available.

The wetlands and forested areas of Eastham provided numerous species of mammals for hunting. Wolves were present as well as deer and various furbearers. Various species of ducks were also present in fresh water wetlands and coastal estuarine areas.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

While native trails probably continued in use by both natives and Europeans, Eastham's settlement in 1644 was quickly followed by several new paths and roads connecting dispersed farmsteads and other Cape areas. However, major highways were not laid out until the Colonial period. New paths or roads were present in the southern area of town in the vicinity of the Town Cove and lands to the north and west. Dispersed farmsteads characterized early settlement. Thus, new paths and roads were important in connecting these areas.

B. Population

Native populations in the Outer Cape and Eastham area were in constant decline during this period. Some natives may have remained in the area north of Nauset Marsh or in the North Eastham area. However, no known settlements or demographic figures are present. Most native populations were likely in the Orleans area to the south.

While some transient Europeans may have been present earlier, Eastham or Nauset's settled European population began in 1644. At

that time a committee of seven men settled the new plantation. Six of the original seven settled within the present limits of Eastham. Assuming five persons per family, Eastham may have had a population of 30 individuals in 1644. Ten years after Nauset's incorporation as a township (1646), Deyo lists 23 heads of families in the township or possibly 115 individuals (1890:722). However, some of these individuals may have been living in present-day Orleans and Wellfleet. In general, the town's population was growing slowly and dispersed during this period.

C. Settlement Pattern

As Europeans began to become dissatisfied with the settlement at Plymouth, their attention turned to the Outer Cape to the territory they called Nauset. In 1643 a committee of seven Plymouth settlers was made to determine the feasibility of removing the entire church and seat of government from Plymouth to Nauset (Deyo 1890:720). This committee, like the previous one in 1640, found that the Nauset area was not extensive enough and too far from the remainder of the colony to be the center of government. The church also was reluctant to remove in total but did support those who wished to start a new plantation. As a result, in 1644 the seven-member committee and other families moved to the Cape, starting the Nauset Plantation. The original Nauset Grant included lands from Pleasant Bay to Truro or an area about 15 miles long. In addition to lands granted by the court, the seven-member committee also purchased rights from the natives. These land rights included properties at Namskaket, Pocket, and all lands extending northward and including lands of the Sachem George, successor of Aspinet. The territory included most of what is now Orleans, Eastham, and Wellfleet. Pocket Island remained an exception to this purchase for a short period of time as the sachem reserved the island for himself. The natives also reserved a small tract of land on a small neck on the harbor at the east side of the tract (Deyo 1890:721). This land was to be used for corn cultivation and may have been in present-day Orleans (Tonset or Nauset Heights area). Native rights were also retained in regard to digging shellfish at the Town Cove and shares in any blubber from whales found on the shore. Native claims were not fully cleared until 1666 when all natives were placed on a reservation at Potanumaquit in present-day South Orleans.

In 1646 the General Court incorporated Nauset as a township. Nauset remained the name for the town until 1651 when the General Court ordered that Nauset would henceforth be called Eastham, which included Wellfleet until 1763 and Orleans until 1797.

Throughout the Plantation period Nauset or Eastham was sparsely settled and distinctly agricultural in nature. Six of the original seven committee members settled in the southern portion of the town on farms of 200 acres each. This area remained the locus of most settlement during this period. Some limited settlement also occurred to the north (Wellfleet) and south (Orleans) as well. The Congregational Society representing the

first church in Eastham transferred from Plymouth in 1644. A meetinghouse was built shortly thereafter near the Town Cove.

D. Economic Base

Eastham was inhabited by Europeans and natives during this period. Nauset Indians continued to combine wild and domesticate food resources as their subsistence base. Core agriculture was important and may have been concentrated in the Town cove and Nauset Harbor area. Hunting and fishing were also still important. Shellfish and shales were still exploited by natives in the area as indicated by the fact that when the Indians sold the land rights to the proprietors they retained the privilege of digging shellfish in the Town Cove area and a share of the blubber of any drift whales (as determined by the English).

From the time of first European settlement in 1644, Europeans were primarily interested in agricultural pursuits. In fact, it was Eastham's agricultural potential that on two occasions (ca. 1640, 1643) led the Plymouth settlers to contemplate removal of the Plymouth settlement to Eastham as soils in the Plymouth area were beginning to fail. Early settlers in Eastham farmed wheat, corn, and other grains, as well as English hay. Salt marsh hay was also important for cattle. Fruit trees such as pears and apples were also planted shortly after the initial settlement. As with most other farms in the Cape area, husbandry also played an important role in Eastham's early development. Cattle, pigs, sheep, horses, and oxen were all present, as well as domesticate birds.

In keeping with the example set by local natives in the area, English settlers also processed drift whales for oil. Fishing was also pursued from an early date along both the Atlantic and bayside shores. Shellfish were exploited, primarily in the Town Cove area.

No evidence exists at present indicating mills were constructed during the period. If they were, they were likely tidal mills. One tidal mill exists on the river that connects Salt Pond with the harbor. However, no one knows exactly when the mill was built or by whom.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

The major roadway through Eastham during this period was the King's Highway, which was located in the vicinity of Route 6 as it exists today. In 1720 the County Road, a road 40 feet wide, was laid out from Harwich to Truro (Deyo 1890:723). Local secondary roads also continued to be developed in the area of initial settlement north and west of the Town Cove. As settlement developed in the coastal and northern areas of Eastham, local roads were developed there as well. However, many of these roads were probably not upgraded from cart paths until after the Colonial period as they do not appear on maps of the area.

B. Population

Little evidence exists indicating that natives were still living in the present-day Eastham area during this period. If they were, they likely were living as isolated residents and not as a group. Natives may also have been living in the area temporarily as, even though they sold the lands to the Europeans they still retained fishing rights in the area.

New settlers were settling in the Nauset Plantation at a steady but rather slow rate throughout the end of the 17th century. Deyo notes that in addition to the 23 heads of families in ca. 1656, 27 additional settlers were present in 1684 (Deyo 1890:722) at the start of the Colonial period. Thus, assuming five persons per family, a total of 250 individuals may have been present in 1684. Most of the residents were in the southern portion of town. Eastham's population grew at a steady but faster rate in the first half of the 18th century. Prior to 1800, census figures for Eastham include those for the town of Orleans as well. In 1765, 1,327 individuals are listed, followed by 1,899 individuals in 1776. At each of these census dates, a conservative estimate would place at least half of those individuals in present-day Orleans.

C. Settlement Pattern

No evidence is present indicating natives were settled in Eastham during this period. However, European populations were growing at a fast and steady rate. Concentrated village settlement was not characteristic of Eastham's early growth. Instead, dispersed farmsteads characterized the town's settlement. What village facilities (municipal buildings, etc.) there were were spread across the southern portion of the township in the area of initial settlement. Soils in this area were fertile and attracted numerous farms. The overall lack of good harbors and other commercial interests distracted from concentrated village settlement. From the area of early settlement near the Town Cove, other farms quickly grew to the north and west. Northerly, settlement also occurred west of the County Road. Settlement in North Eastham paralleled that in the southern portion of the town. Broad farms were generally characteristic of this settlement.

Fishing also began to influence settlement during the Colonial period. Small boat coasting and fishing were developed in the Nauset Harbor and Town Cove areas. Cook's Brook also supported an early fishing harbor for the town until it sanded in. Maritime activities may also have occurred at Great Meadow, Boat Meadow, and Rock Harbor rivers during the Colonial period as well.

D. Economic Base

Eastham's European settlement and agricultural history began in 1644 when the seven original proprietors settled the area, each on 200-acre farms. Additional farms were also soon established growing crops of corn, wheat, and other grains, so plentiful that

by the Colonial period large amounts of grain were available for export. The sandy tract of land now located between Great Pond and the Town Cove was once fertile farming land. English hay was also grown as well as salt marsh hay, which was cut from marshlands on the bayside and in the Nauset Marsh area. Husbandry was also important, and included cattle, pigs, oxen, and horses. Domestic fowl were also present.

As agricultural development continued to grow with settlement, so did the fisheries. The cod and later mackerel fishery developed in importance with a hiatus occurring during the Revolutionary War. Shellfishing also continued to grow. Oysters were once plentiful and important commercially. As long-lining for ground fish grew throughout the Cape, Eastham's soft shell clam fishery grew as a source for bait. Several small harbors were present, including Rock Harbor, Nauset Harbor, and Cook's Brook, which gradually sanded in. Drift whales continued to be exploited as well as herring. Coasting as well as some shipbuilding was also pursued.

Tidal mills may have still been present during the Colonial period. However, windmills were also now important. By the close of the Revolutionary War, at least two windmills were present for grinding corn. One mill was located in North Eastham, the other erected where it now stands in the southern portion of town, where it was moved from Provincetown in 1795 or earlier. Salt works were not present until late in the 18th century.

E. Architecture

Residential: With no inventory, county deeds destroyed, and little ornament surviving, it is not known whether any buildings in the town from this period survive.

Institutional: The town's first meetinghouse, 20 feet square, was built shortly after settlement; it was rebuilt in 1676, rectangular in form; a bell was added in 1695. In 1700 a 15-foot addition made it square in form; it was repaired in 1713. A new house was built in 1720 on the new site on Bridge Road; its appearance unknown. Schoolhouses were built in 1762.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

The primary local road remained the north-south, old King's Highway. This passed along the northwest shore of Town Cove, then extended north by Salt Pond and Minister Pond (essentially the Route 6 corridor to North Eastham, where the old road diverged to the northeast, north of Nauset Road). Local loops extended to the east (Nauset Road), and to the bay shore (Massasoit Road, Herring Brook Road, Bridge Road). In 1804, a canal was dug from Town Cove to Boat Meadow, establishing a shallow and narrow connector between Cape Cod Bay and the Atlantic. The Eastham and Orleans Canal Proprietors were organized in 1817, but the project of enlarging the waterway was abandoned.

B. Population

From being the most populous town on the Cape in 1760, Eastham became the smallest (but for Mashpee) by 1800, after the removal of Wellfleet in 1763 and Orleans in 1797. Epidemic in 1816. In 1830, with a population of 970, Eastham was still the only town on the Cape with less than 1,000 residents. In that year, Eastham's population reached its peak (since partition of the town), not again reaching that figure until the early 1950s.

The 1820s, however, did see a strong period of growth; the number of new residents grew by an average of over 20 persons per year -- substantially above the 1.5 persons of the earlier decade.

The town sent delegates to Boston and formed a committee of vigilance in 1773, against some opposition. During the War of 1812, followers of each party could be found in the town. The town suffered an epidemic in 1816.

The Congregational society remained the sole religious institution until the Methodists found followers after 1820; camp meetings were held here after 1828. A grammar school was established in 1785.

C. Settlement Pattern

The territory that remained of Eastham at the close of the 18th century after the incorporation of Wellfleet (1775) and Orleans (1797) as towns was probably the most thinly populated area of Colonial period Eastham. Through the Federal period, settlement in the town remained dispersed, and no local village center developed. Salt works were constructed along the bay shore and at Town Harbor in the southeast. In 1821, a Methodist church was built on the County Road north of Minister Pond. Eight years later, the Congregational society abandoned the 18th century meetinghouse site east of Herring Pond, and in 1830 they built a new edifice south of the Methodist church.

D. Economic Base

The loss of Wellfleet and Orleans was lamented by historian Freeman in tragic tones. From being the most prosperous Cape town, the separation, he wrote, "made the town, in population, wealth, and extent, the least among its compeers" (p.351). The inferiority of Eastham's harbor to those of its neighbors also meant that the fishing business was generally conducted outside of town. In 1802, in Eastham's fleet there were only three fishing vessels and three coasters.

What the town lacked in maritime trade, she made up in agriculture. Eastham was said to be the only one of the 13 towns to produce sufficient wheat, corn, and other grains both for home consumption and for export to other towns and Boston.

E. Architecture

Residential: The most common building type of this period is the 1 1/2-story, gable roofed, interior chimney, double-pile form. Most frequently these houses are five bays in length but only slightly fewer are four bays; at least one three-bay example survives. Very little surviving ornament was observed. In 1802 only seven of the town's 100 dwellings were two stories in height. At least three still survive, double-pile in depth with hip roofs; two are unusual in being three bays long with a side entry; the third, the Freeman Knowles House, has a central chimney, is bilaterally symmetrical in size, but with two openings on one side, and a single on the opposite side of the center entry.

Institutional: The Congregational Church built a new meetinghouse in 1829, but its appearance is unknown; it was taken down in 1864 after the denomination dissolved its society, used as a currier shop and later a barn. The Methodists built a church in 1821 near the First Parish, but its appearance is unknown. In 1786 the Humane Society built three huts at Nauset Beach.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes

The early 19th century roads remained in use. With the growth of the Millennial Grove Camp Meeting Grounds, packets to North Eastham on the bay shore brought increasing numbers of participants. In 1870, service on the Cape Cod Railroad was extended north through town to Wellfleet Center.

B. Population

Eastham's population declined continuously throughout the period, from its high of 970 in 1830, to 668 in 1870. Only a negligible number of the town's residents were foreign born. Of the 13 noted in 1855, 6 were English and 4 were Irish.

The Methodists cleared and formalized Millenium Grove, a ten-acre area for the camp meeting in 1838; a house was built for ministers. Lay people stayed in tents for a week; the meeting diminished in favor of Yarmouth's after 1863. The Congregationalists diminished and could not support a minister after 1859. The town's falling population can be charted in its reduction of district schools; from six in 1834 the number fell to four in 1862. A graded school was established in 1861.

C. Settlement Pattern

With local population in decline through the period, little settlement expansion occurred. The Millennial Grove Camp Meeting Ground was established in the northwest ca. 1830, and summer meetings were held until 1863, when the site was relocated to Yarmouth. The Methodist church on the County Road was replaced in 1851, and the Congregational Church was removed in 1864 after the society was disbanded. A town hall was located on the County Road

between Minister Pond and Salt Pond before 1855. Dispersed agricultural settlement persisted, but some linear residential development took place along the County Road north of the Wellfleet border near Town Harbor. At Nauset Beach in the northeast on the Atlantic Coast, three brick lighthouses were built in 1838.

D. Economic Base

Thirteen vessels were reported in 1837 engaged in the cod and mackerel fisheries (in a ratio of 1:9 based on the values of cod and mackerel reported). Within a decade, however, as nearby harbors improved, this number fell to 5 boats. The town also had a respectable salt industry until the removal of the salt tariff sent that into decline in the same period.

Agriculture, it was reported, soon became more important than the fisheries. By 1865, the town did report more acreage in salt hay than any other towns except Barnstable and Sandwich. Nevertheless, only by comparison to her neighbors on the Cape's outer arm did Eastham present any notable achievement: five other towns (including Orleans) exceeded Eastham's Indian corn production; Eastham produced neither wheat, barley, or oats; in rye she ranked fourth on the Cape, and in potatoes, tenth.

The only new industry developed in this period was a small currying shop established by Edward Clark in 1866.

E. Architecture

Residential: During this period builders in the town adopted the gable front, three-bay, interior chimney house form, popularized with Greek Revival ornament. Slightly more were constructed to 1 1/2 stories than 2 1/2; most have side ells. Most are ornamented with simple Greek Revival cornice boards and door surrounds; later examples use door hoods and bracketed cornices familiar to the Italianate.

Several exceptional houses are known from the town. The house known as Whalewalk is a large, 2 1/2-story, double-pile, five-bay house with double interior chimneys and hip roof; its ornamentation includes a Greek Revival door surround, pilasters, wide cornice board, roof balustrade, and square cupola. An interesting modification of the gable front house is the Putnam (20th century owners) House, 2 1/2 stories in height, four bays in width with a fanlit door in the third bay, pilasters and wide cornice boards. One gable front house is elaborately ornamented with Gothic trim on bargeboards, bay windows on front and side, turned porch elements and later ornamental shingles. An important Italianate example, the Doane Summer House, is gable front, 2 1/2 stories, three bays with ell, full front porch with spindlework, cresting, and screen at gable apex. The Penniman is two stories in height, including its mansard roof. It is three bays in width with center entry, double interior chimneys; it is heavily ornamented with an entry porch and deck supported by Corinthian

columns, block cornice on dormers, porch, windows, and cupola. Its mansard roofed barn also survives.

Industrial: The town's Methodists built a new church in 1851; it is a gable front structure with its meeting area over a first floor vestry. It had tall windows on front and side, center entry, square tower, wide cornice board and corner pilasters. It burned in 1920. A schoolhouse survives in the National Seashore, single-story in height, gable front, double entries. The town hall of 1851 was of unknown appearance. At the camp meeting, a frame house was constructed for the ministers, but its appearance is unknown.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

The road and rail network of the mid 19th century remained in use.

B. Population

But for Mashpee, Eastham continued to show the smallest population of any town on the Cape. Between 1870 and 1895, the population continued to decline, from 668 to 476 in the latter year. Small gains by the end of the period did relatively little to reduce the net loss, and the period closed with a resident count of 545, 23 of whom were foreign born.

C. Settlement Pattern

Dispersed agricultural settlement continued to predominate, but the location of a railroad depot on Somoset Road stimulated the development of a small hamlet in the center of town. A Universalist church (1890), a library (1897), and a small cluster of Victorian houses were built east of the tracks. In 1879 service on the French transatlantic cable was begun, with the North American terminus at the Nauset Lighthouses. A new cable house was built in 1891, and the three brick lighthouses were replaced the next year by three wooden structures.

D. Economic Base

Measured by per capita property valuation, Eastham was one of the poorest towns on the Cape with a valuation of \$292.48 in 1875, exceeded only by Truro (\$258). Fishing had diminished to almost nothing. The only fish caught in any quantity was bluefish, whose numbers, in 1875, exceeded all others on the Cape. The poverty of the town was also reflected in the lack of any commercial center; the village of Eastham, Deyo wrote, was

scattered across the southern portion of the town ... due to the fact that the excellent quality of the soil has rendered rural pursuits the leading industry, in absence of good harbors and commerce that would tend to develop a more compact business center.

Eastham and Orleans were the most agriculturally successful towns on the outer arm of the Cape in 1875. With an agricultural product value of \$45,393, Eastham ranked seventh among the 15 Cape towns; measured on a per capita basis, it ranked first.

The most significant event of the period was the 1879 landing of the French Atlantic Cable at North Eastham. However, the very emptiness and devastation of the place caused the company to move to Orleans in 1892.

Many towns on the Cape has small butchering establishments. In Eastham one was operated, c.1870, by Gustavus Swift, founder of the great Chicago meat-packing house. Five years after the railroad came to Eastham, Swift moved to Chicago.

In 1890 Deyo wrote that of the new agricultural industry that had arisen since the decline of fishing, the culture of cranberries "was the most prominent." The state census of 1895 reported \$271 worth of cranberries from Eastham, the lowest value of any of the fifteen towns of Barnstable County. Of vegetables, asparagus had become an important crop in Eastham's sandy soil. By 1905 Eastham led the rest of the study unit in the sale of vegetables, valued at \$26,819 -- probably in large part led by this new interest in asparagus.

According to Lowe's Nauset on Cape Cod (), the first experiments with a road surface of tar and sand were made in Eastham (date not given).

E. Architecture

Residential: With the drop in the town's population it appears that the town added little to its building stock. An isolated Queen Anne house is a 1 1/2-story, gable block with multiple dormers, projecting bays and a tower, with ornamental shingles and some surviving stained glass; it survives in a complex that includes a barn and two smaller outbuildings. The familiar gable front forms were covered in ornament shingles.

Institutional: The newly formed Universalist church built its "Chapel in the Pines" in 1889; its basic form is a gable roofed nave with a lower perpendicular gabled section with entry into the gable end, and belfry overhead; it is ornamented by cresting on the roof ridges, spindle and turned entry porch, and ornamental shingles.

The town built its public library in 1897; this tiny building is five bays in width with a center entry, a single story in height with a pyramidal roof. It has later extensions in the rear.

The keeper's house adjacent to the lighthouses was built in 1875; it is an L-plan, 2 1/2-story structure trimmed with bargeboards. The Nauset Lifesaving Station was built in 1872; a long gable roofed building with entry in the gable end, cupola, and shingle wall cover. It was replaced by the Coast Guard Station in 1936.

The town hall was rebuilt in 1912. It is Colonial Revival in style, built of brick, one story under a high hip roof, seven bays long; its center entry is enclosed under a pedimented portico with four Doric columns, the windows are roundheaded and set in recessed arches. A high cupola rests on the ridge with six columns supporting a dome.

Railroad depots were constructed in 1870, frame structures with hip roofs and wide overhangs.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

In 1920, the old King's Highway route was upgraded and paved as U.S. Route 6, with a new roadway north of North Eastham to Wellfleet. In 1938, this road was widened to a four-lane highway. By the late 1930s the Nauset Road loop was also paved, with Cable Road and Beach Road connectors east to Nauset Beach.

B. Population

Between 1915 and 1940, Eastham made modest gains, growing by 6.7%, probably reflecting the loss of population by the towns to the north, and the 24.4% rise of Orleans to the south. By 1935, the population had climbed to 606.

C. Settlement Pattern

Little new residential development occurred along the period. The Methodist church burned in 1920, and was replaced in 1926. In 1923, the Chatham tower was moved to Nauset Beach to replace the three lights. Transatlantic cable service ended in 1935. In 1937, a Coast Guard Station was located at the Life Saving Station site on Nauset Beach to the south.

D. Economic Base

The "rust" fungus swept away the asparagus crop in the late 'teens, but the development of a rust-resistant asparagus strain restored the crop to the leading place in the local economy. "The principal business [reported the Mass. Dept. of Labor & Industries in 1922] is farming. Asparagus ranks first, turnips hold second place, and then follow carrots, cranberries, and other farm products in about equal amounts. The soil is particularly well adapted to asparagus and turnip growing."

E. Architecture

The town's small year-round population still required few new buildings. Several examples of the pyramidal roofed type were constructed, 2 1/2 stories in height, three bays in width, with center entry. Later, Dutch Colonials were constructed. Smaller houses were constructed in the bungalow vocabulary with wide eaved tiled roofs. Most numerous, however, were small beach cottages,

most often single-story, single-pile, gable roofed simple structures, primarily on the bayside's beaches.

In 1926 the Methodists rebuilt the meetinghouse which had burned in 1920; its form is of a wide gable front nave with a low gable roofed ell; the entry porch is located near their intersection; the building is simple, with small amounts of stained glass in the front windows, which have plain surrounds.

The Coast Guard Station of 1936 replaced the Lifesaving Station; it employs the same form as others in the region: 2 1/2 stories in height under a gable roof, five bays, center entry, first floor porch over the central three bays with a deck, two dormers, and belvedere. That same year the town built a new elementary school; it resembles an extended "Cape Cod cottage," nine bays in width with large center chimney and entry.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

Only a very small number of buildings have been surveyed, primarily around Nauset Lights. The forms rarely have photographs attached.

XII. SOURCES

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