

MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

TRURO

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.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY REPORT

DATE: 1984

COMMUNITY: Truro

I. TOPOGRAPHY

The town of Truro is located near the end of the Cape Cod peninsula between $41^{\circ} 57'$ and $42^{\circ} 4'$ north latitude and between $70^{\circ} 4'$ and $70^{\circ} 13'$ west longitude. The township is approximately 57 miles from Boston by direct line and 112 miles by land. It is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean on the east, south by Wellfleet, west by Cape Cod Bay, and north by Provincetown and the Atlantic Ocean.

Geologically, the Truro area is composed of the North Truro Plain and the northern portion of town with the Wellfleet Plain in the southern areas. General surfaces are very uneven with hills and depressions common. Ground surface elevations are the highest along the eastern shore of the town and slope westerly to the bay. Marine scarps along most of Truro's shoreline result in elevations of up to 170 feet on the eastern shore and 120 feet on the western bay shoreline. In general, however, elevations average 100 feet or less.

Soils in the town of Truro are mainly sandy loams throughout the town. Rockier soils tend to be found in the southern portion of town in the area of the Wellfleet Plain. The richest agricultural soils in the town are in the old Tashmuit area in the middle eastern portion of the township.

Drainage in Truro is through both surface and subsurface deposits. Truro's sandy soils permit considerable subsurface flow. Surface drainage is also common, and characterized by several swamps, kettle ponds, and rivers. Pilgrim Lake, located on the Truro/Provincetown line, is the largest lake in the township and was formerly open to the sea and known as East Harbor until its opening was closed in 1869. South of Pilgrim Lake are several small ponds, streams, and swamps as well as old drainage channels which cut the North Truro and Wellfleet Plains from east to west. Major rivers are the Little Pamet and Pamet rivers, the latter river forming a harbor on the bay shoreline. Major ponds include the Village, Great, Snow, Ryder, Round, Horseleech, and Slough ponds.

Truro was once covered with valuable woodlands. However, cutting for shipbuilding and fuel have reduced most of Truro's forest to scrub oak and pine as well as scrubs and dune deposits (grasses).

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

The original purchases from natives in the Pamet region took place by 1696, and municipal privileges were granted to the plantation under the name of Dangerfield in 1705, including all lands north of the Eastham boundary. This territory was incorporated as the

town of Truro in 1709. Northern lands were set off as the precinct of Cape Cod in 1714, and incorporated as Provincetown in 1727. Further annexations of Truro territory to Provincetown occurred in 1813, 1829, and 1836, establishing the present boundary.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Truro is a resort community located near the outer end of the Cape Cod peninsula. Intensive native bay shore settlement, including planting fields, was highly probable. Early 17th century European exploration and visitation was also likely, with reported Pilgrim corn pilfering expedition. Colonial use of seasonal fishing stations at East Harbor by mid 17th century was possible. Pre-1700, permanent colonial settlement followed late 17th century purchase of Pamet area by Nauset proprietors to the south, with early 18th century central meetinghouse site established north of Great Hollow. Dispersed 18th century settlement was oriented toward bay shore harbors, with local whaling and fishing economy, and relatively little agricultural development. While the town suffered from its vulnerable position during the Revolution, cod and mackerel fishing resumed after the war, and the Cape's first lighthouse was built on the eastern Atlantic shore highlands in 1798. Local prosperity stimulated late 18th century development at East Harbor, Pond Village (North Truro), Great Hollow, and Pamet River. By mid 19th century, a mackerel fishing and shipbuilding focus had developed at the Pamet River wharves at Truro Center, as secondary centers persisted at North and South Truro. Inadequate and deteriorating harbor facilities subsequently led to removal of fishing activity north to Provincetown.

With the decline of local fishing and agriculture in the late 19th century, overall population fell, while the Portuguese community grew, and two Catholic churches were established. Weir fishing, and fish canning and freezing plants remained the only significant late 19th and early 20th century industries. With increased auto tourism to Provincetown to the north, motel and cottage development extended south along the Pilgrim Beach/Route 6A corridor to North Truro. The town's striking landscape was increasingly sought as a setting for studios by artists from the Provincetown colony. At present, the 19th century centers at North Truro and Truro remain largely intact, and dispersed 18th and 19th century farmhouses survive, particularly in several local hollows (Long Neck Road, Higgins Hollow Road, and North and South Pamet Roads). National Park Service land acquisitions on the Atlantic shore have prevented development east of Route 6. However, the scenic hills of the bay shore have attracted extensive exurban, summer residential development.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes

Little direct evidence is present regarding native trails in Truro during this period. However, some trails did exist as the area was inhabited by natives. Inferred trails probably existed along both the Atlantic and Bay shores as coastal trails are common in all Cape towns where a native presence can be documented. Along the Atlantic shore a trail probably existed on the top of the marine escarpment overlooking the beach. A trail in this area would have been important in locating drift whales, seals, and for transportation as well. A trail also probably existed along the Bay shore for similar purposes as the Atlantic shore. In this area the trail probably skirted the eastern periphery of wetlands, rivers, and beach dunes. Interior trails also probably existed along rivers, ponds, and possibly to planted fields. Interior trails may also have connected the Atlantic and Bay trails in some areas.

B. Population

Little direct evidence is present on which an actual numerical native population figure can be made for this period. However, it does appear the Truro area was intensively settled during the Contact period, particularly along the bay shore. Late Woodland sites are common in the Truro area. In addition, historic accounts also note several forms of evidence (actual natives, wigwams, cornfields, groves) indicating a Native American presence in this area. Thus, it appears safe to assume settlement in the intervening Contact Period.

Transient Europeans (explorers, early colonists) may also have passed through the Truro area. However, no lasting population developed.

C. Settlement Pattern

European settlements did not exist in Truro during this period. However, some contact between natives and Europeans in the Truro area undoubtedly took place as European explorers, fishermen, and settlers frequented the area long before settlement. For example, Gosnold may have encountered Truro natives in his voyage of 1602 as he landed in Provincetown Harbor. Later, in 1620, the Mayflower passengers explored portions of the Truro area as well.

Native Americans had settled the Truro area for some time prior to European contact. Artifacts found within the town in general and known Late Woodland Period sites indicate the town area was extensively settled during this period. On the basis of known sites, the North Truro area appears to be a particularly intensive land use area during the Late Woodland period. Of course, this concentration may also result from a bias in reporting in the North Truro area. Late Woodland period sites may be present in equal numbers in southern Truro as well. Contact period sites and artifacts representing Contact period components are also present

in the Truro area. In 1620 during explorations by the Mayflower passengers, cleared fields indicating corn cultivation, graves, and cornstalks were found in the Pamet River area. Apparently a Contact period village existed in the Corn Hill area.

Known Late Woodland and Contact period sites in the Truro area follow other regional trends of preferences for coastal areas such as tidal rivers, estuaries, and ponds. Inland sites should also exist, particularly along rivers and ponds. Shell midden sites along the bay coastline are also present.

D. Subsistence Pattern

Since European settlements were not present in the Truro area during this period, European subsistence probably followed that of the Native American inhabitants in the area. While some food was undoubtedly carried with early explorers, traders, fishermen, and colonists, the bulk of their subsistence was probably secured through hunting, fishing, and the gathering of wild plants and shellfish; as well as the trade, stealing, or purchase of agricultural products (corn, beans, etc.) from the local natives. In 1620 Myles Standish and other Mayflower explorers did take corn from storage pits in the Corn Hill area while exploring the Truro and Provincetown lands.

Native subsistence during the Contact period in the Truro 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, as the above Corn Hill example illustrates, by the Contact period sufficient quantities of corn, beans, and squash were being produced for storage and at times for sale or trade to English settlers. Shellfishing, fishing, and hunting were also important subsistence pursuits. In Truro, quahaugs are now found in the Pamet Harbor area with surf clams being found in beds in the ocean and in the bay. Oyster, soft shelled clam, and bay scallop may also have been found in the past. An alewife run is currently present in Pilgrim Lake. The Truro area also provided numerous species of fish and sea mammals available to natives in the area. In fresh water, trout, bass, and pickerel would have been available. In the ocean and bay, bass, bluefish, mackerel, cod, haddock, tuna, shark, swordfish, bluefish, and others were present on a seasonal basis. Sea mammals available included seals and numerous species of whales. Coastal flats on the bay side of Truro may have provided an excellent location for native weir fishing much the same as it did for later colonial fishermen.

The wetlands and wooded areas of Truro provided numerous species of mammals for hunting. Deer, fox, raccoon, wolf, and other furbearers were available. Waterfowl would also have been available along both ocean and bay shores as well as in wetlands.

V. PLANTATION PERIOD (1620-1675)

A. Transportation Routes

Inferred Contact period trails probably continued in use throughout this period by both natives and whites. Additional new trails may also have been made by whites as they prepared the area for settlement in the Colonial period.

B. Population

A substantial native population may have been present in the Truro area during the period. However, little new information is present regarding their population over that noted for the Contact period.

Europeans were also present in Truro during this period. However, their presence was again of a transient or temporary nature. Explorers and early settlers often anchored vessels in the protected Cape Cod Bay area off North Truro and Provincetown for short period of time, but no population developed. Fishermen may also have stayed temporarily in the area while fishing on a seasonal basis. Fishing stations may have existed along the bay shore in the East Harbor and Pamet Harbor areas. However, no lasting population developed.

C. Settlement Pattern

Native settlement of the Truro area during the period was probably similar to that of the Contact period. Myles Standish and other men from the Mayflower explored several areas of Truro in 1620. These areas included the vicinity of Stout's Creek, East Harbor, Head of the Meadow, and the Pamet River. During these explorations, living natives were seen as well as native graves, corn storage areas, cleared agricultural fields, and potential village areas. Natives were clearly present in Truro during this period. In addition, prior to settlement in the Colonial period, Truro proprietors purchased land from the natives, indicating at the least a native interest in Truro during the period as well.

While permanent European settlements did not exist in the Truro area, temporary or seasonal fishing stations may have been present along the Cape Cod Bay shore, particularly near Pilgrim Lake (East Harbor), Pond Village, and Pamet Harbor. No evidence has yet been found to corroborate this hypothesis.

D. Economic Base

Little evidence exists describing native subsistence activities during the Plantation period. However, both natives and any whites in the area likely continued to combine wild and domesticate food resources as a basis for subsistence. Natives likely continued to grow corn, as Myles Standish found corn storage areas and cleared fields during his 1620 exploration of the area. Natives also probably fished in the area, although no evidence exists to support this hypothesis.

Europeans did not establish permanent settlements in the Provincetown area during this period. They may have, however, established temporary or seasonal fishing stations along the Cape Cod Bay shore during the 17th century. This area was highly valued by all colonial towns as a prime fishing area. The bass and mackerel fishery were important quite early. Other important fisheries included cod, haddock, whales, pollock, and sharks.

VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

A. Transportation Routes

Contact period native trails were probably still in use by both natives and whites. The first road in Truro, known as the Drift Highway, was laid out from the head of the pond (Village Pond?) to the head of Pamet in ca. 1700 (Deyo 1890: 925). In 1715 the King's Highway was laid out through Truro to connect Eastham with the Provincelands. This roadway was really a continuation of the Old County Road running along the back side of the town around the heads of piers. The route probably followed older native trails in many areas. Other roads were also laid out during this same period (ca. 1711) connecting various settlements throughout the town and probably connecting with the Old County Road and later King's Highway. On or before ca. 1727 Long Street (Commercial Street?) was extended into Truro.

B. Population

Natives were still present in the Truro area during the period. However, little information exists regarding their actual population over that noted for the preceding periods. Some transient natives may have been present as crew on fishing vessels in the area.

While some European settlement was made prior to ca. 1700, it was of limited scope. Following initial settlement around that date Truro's population grew slowly to a total of 42 males (possibly 210 or more individuals, 5 x 42) at the date of incorporation in 1709 (Deyo 1890: 925). Two years later, in 1711, 20 additional males were listed. In 1732, 36 freemen are listed in Truro, a possible decrease from 1711. During the first census in 1765, 924 individuals are listed in Truro, followed by 1,227 in 1776. Either Deyo's 1732 figure is incorrect, or population rose considerably from 1733 to 1765.

C. Settlement Pattern

The Truro or Pamet area was first permanently settled during this period. Initially, Truro was under the dominion of Eastham and the Provincetown and Wellfleet areas were settled by residents of that town. In 1684, the proprietors of Nauset (Eastham) purchased much of the Truro area from the Pamet Indians. Some purchases were made by individuals as early as 1644, but no evidence is present of an attempted settlement. Following the purchase in 1696, ten homelots were divided in the Pamet area. All lots extended from the bay easterly. On July 24, 1697, the proprietors

held a meeting for renewal of the territory (Pamet) and settlement of the lands of their purchases in the Pamet area from Eastham. Bounds for Pamet were set from Bound Brook to Eastern Harbor (Pilgrim Lake). At that time, a compact was also made with the natives that the proprietors should have one-eighth of all drift whales of both shores. On June 4, 1700, the proprietors made the first declaration to remove to Pamet. At this date Truro records also became distinct from those of Eastham. Prior to this date, there were residents of Pamet, or Truro, but they were primarily fishermen. It was the Eastham purchasers who gave the Truro area its first municipal government. The proprietors themselves provide evidence of pre-1700 settlement of the Truro area, for at the date of removal (settlement) in 1700 they voted to pay any residents in the area funds to erect fences to keep the sands from filling Eastern Harbor.

On October 10, 1705, the General Court voted to allow the territory of Pamet the privilege of choosing its own officers, calling the territory Dangerfield. On July 16, 1709, Pamet was incorporated as the town of Truro. The Eastham/Truro boundary was reset once again in 1714. The Provincelands (Provincetown) were under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Truro until 1717, when the Provincelands were constituted as the Precinct of Cape Cod. In 1727 the Provincelands were incorporated as the town of Provincetown and finally separated from Truro.

Settlement in the Truro area was spread out among several small rural communities. Early settlements were present at High Head, East Harbor, and later Pond Village, Great Hollow, Truro Village, and South Truro.

D. Economic Base

Little evidence exists describing native subsistence activities in Truro during the period. However, some native populations still remaining probably continued to hunt, fish, gather wild plants and shellfish, and plant corn to survive. Natives may also have served as crew members aboard colonial fishing vessels throughout the period.

Both agriculture and the fisheries were important to the early settlers of Truro. Regarding agriculture, corn was the major crop followed by rye, oats, barley, and wheat. Husbandry was the important. Cattle, pigs, and sheep were raised for food and profit with horses and oxen present as beasts of burden.

Salt marsh hay was also important as animal food and found along the bay shoreline, Pamet Meadows, and at the Provincetown/Truro border. Truro's forests were also exploited quite early for cordwood and timber. In fact, the cutting of wood became so great by Truro nonresidents that in 1696 the proprietors of Pamet lands ordered that no cordwood or timber could be cut in Pamet lands and carried off from said lands.

The fisheries were also important to Truro's residents. Cod and mackerel fisheries were developed during this period, primarily

based in the East Harbor and Pamet Harbor areas. The whale fishery was also important. Truro boasted its own deep water whalers as early as 1720. In fact, some authors have said that Truro was the first and most prominent colonial town in the whaling industry. This fame was, however, short-lived. Shipbuilding in Truro was also important and tied to the whaling industry. As late as ca. 1800 the town of Truro had nine large whaling vessels, some of which were built in Truro on the Pamet River. Wharves were also built during the Colonial period as a result of the fisheries and coastwise industries. In 1754 a large wharf was built on the shore of Indian Neck. Other wharves were also built at the mouth of the Pamet River.

The manufacture of lime was also pursued in Truro at an early date. Whether or not lime was sold or used as fertilizer is unknown at this time. However, its manufacture was so important that in 1705 the proprietors enacted an act that no shellfish could be dug by any person who was not a resident of Pamet. This act was not necessarily to protect shellfish per se, but since the shells of shellfish were important in the manufacture of lime. Lime manufacture was so widespread that in 1711 the proprietors also voted that no wood could be cut within the limits of common land for the burning of lime except by rightful owners.

Taverns were also important, as the Old King's Highway which passed through town was the main highway route from Eastham to Provincetown.

Four wind-powered grist mills were also constructed in Truro during the 18th century. Thomas Paine of Eastham built the first in ca. 1711. Three other mills were also built; one on the hill where the town hall stands, one in South Truro, and one on the Highlands.

E. Architecture

Residential: Although the destruction of the county's deeds makes accurate dating difficult, a number of the town's structures are attributed to this period. Most common are the 1 1/2-story, double-pile, interior chimney, gable roof structures of four or five bays. At least one 2 1/2-story double-pile house survives, with center chimney and entry and five bays in width (ca. 1760).

Institutional: The town's first meetinghouse was built in 1711; a second was constructed in 1720, enlarged in 1765. Possible appearance indicates a 2 1/2-story gable roof structure with two-story entry porch on the long side, as illustrated in Barber; it was taken down ca. 1840 after the town's municipal focus shifted from Pond Village.

VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

A. Transportation Routes

The principal route through the town remained the old "King's Highway." In the late 18th century, this entered town in the

southeast, passed east of Great Pond and Pamet River (following parts of Pamet Road south and north). The highway then continued south of Smalls Hill and along Higgins Hollow, crossed Little Pamet River, and continued north through Great Hollow, past the meetinghouse center, and through North Truro. It then followed Head of the Meadow Road and passed east through Salt Meadow and the dunes area into Provincetown. By the early 19th century, local routes were well established to the bay and ocean coasts, and an alternate southern road (Old County Road) had become the principal route from Truro Village to Wellfleet Center. Freeman (1794: 197) commented that "the roads are universally bad," no doubt due to the town's deep, sandy soil. After 1812, packet service to Boston was established from Pamet River harbor.

B. Population

From a high of 1227 in 1776, Truro made negligible population gains until after the War of 1812, when the success of the fishing fleets attracted large numbers of people to the town. Truro's greatest -- and only -- boom period occurred in the two decades 1820-1840 when her population rose by nearly 55%. In the decade 1820-30 alone, the town averaged a rise of 30.6 persons per year (up from 3.2 the previous decade).

The town's growth was diminished by an epidemic in 1816 that swept the outer Cape.

Like Provincetown, this area became an early center of Methodism; it is not known when an independent society was formed. By period's end a second society was formed for residents of South Truro. Camp meetings were held here in 1826.

C. Settlement Pattern

By the late 18th century, three settlement clusters had developed in the town, all on the bay shore. The largest of these was Pond Village (later North Truro), with 40 houses in 1794. To the north, a hamlet of 14 houses was located at East Harbor. A third, loose cluster was grouped south of the meetinghouse center, at Great Hollow and southeast at Pamet River, where 28 houses were grouped. A Methodist Episcopal Church was built north of the Pamet River in 1826, and in 1827 the new Congregational meetinghouse was relocated nearby on a hill near the growing settlement concentration on the Pamet River. To the east of Pond Village, the first lighthouse on Cape Cod was put into operation in 1798.

D. Economic Base

The vulnerability of Provincetown to war and the cessations of the fishing industry was also true of Truro, albeit to a lesser extent. There is little hard evidence of the size of Truro's fishing fleet until 1837, when it was the second largest in the county. Because of the town's proximity to Provincetown, the industry may well share its growth with that town, with substantial increases in the number of vessels and men in the 1820s. (In 1794

Freeman wrote at length of the value of harbor improvements for Truro, but little seems to have been done.) As in Provincetown, some whaling was continued from Truro after the Revolution. Rich noted a whaler from South Truro in 1810. Some salt making also carried on, but far less than in Truro's neighbor to the north.

In 1794, there was one water mill and 3 windmills. Of native agriculture, however, the town was nearly destitute. Most of the town's food stuffs, as well as flax, cotton, and wool were procured from Boston.

The eastern shore of Truro was the most treacherous of any part of the coast for seamen. "More vessels are cast away here," Freeman wrote in 1794, "than in any other part of the county of Barnstable." The first lighthouse on Cape Cod, the Highland Light (NR, #20), was erected four years later. Freeman himself in the 1790s was instrumental in the placement of huts by the Humane Society for the relief of shipwrecked sailors (described in his "A Description of the Eastern Coast...").

E. Architecture

Residential: The most popular house form remained the 1 1/2-story, double-pile, interior chimney, gable roof type. Most of the ca. 70 of this type date from this period, equal numbers of four- and five-bay widths, plus about two examples of three bays. A small number were constructed with extended stud height (ca. 7'). An early period source (Freeman 1794) claims only one house was over a single story. Two and a half story houses were built in small numbers, primarily center chimney and center entry houses, five bays in width with hip roofs; one end chimney hip roofed example also survives.

Institutional: The Congregationalists built a new meetinghouse in its present location in 1827; this structure is composed of a large gabled block with a pedimented projecting pavilion lit by three windows on the first floor, two above, and a single at its apex. Entries are into the main block; a square tower is topped by an open belfry. The Methodists built a small house ca. 1795; a new house built in 1826 in the center was a simple gable front structure, 1 1/2 stories with paired entry in the gable front, and a single window between them and two in the long side. It was remodelled in 1845 and 1875, but its appearance is unknown. It was taken down in 1926.

VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

A. Transportation Routes

The early 19th century roads continued in use, with little improvement. Cart bridges were built over the Pamet and Little Pamet rivers in 1840. Harbor facilities were improved at Pamet River (Truro Village), as wharves were built in the 1830s. However, attempts to prevent the harbor from filling failed, and by 1860 it was clogged with sand.

B. Population

The period was the turning point for Truro's prosperity, reflected starkly in the population figures. In the 1830s, the town averaged 37.3 new persons per year, the highest figure reported for any historic time period in Truro; in the following decade this figure fell to 13.1; and after 1850 the census figures show a continuous decline until the 20th century.

Three percent of the population were foreign-born in 1855 -- below the 4.7% county average; well below Provincetown's 12.3% but above Eastham's 1.6%. Small numbers from England, Ireland, and Canada were reported. A decade later, the census reported the first Portuguese in Truro (14), then making up slightly more than a third of the town's immigrants. This, however, was a larger number than anywhere else in the county except Provincetown and probably reflects the influence of the larger town.

With the expansion of population, a Union Society of Congregationalists and Methodists was formed in North Truro, 1840. At the center, an attempt was made to form a Universalist Society, but when the building was destroyed by a storm the plan was abandoned. In 1835 a Benevolent Society was formed to provide assistance in times of sickness and death. An Academy was formed in 1840. A poor house was in operation during the 1840s.

C. Settlement Pattern

With the prosperity of the fishing industry, Truro Center on the Pamet River continued to grow as the town's main settlement focus. Stores and sheds clustered along the riverside wharves. On the north side of the river, an academy and poor house were built in 1840, and an Odd Fellows Hall (later the town hall) was constructed before 1850. However, with the filling of Pamet Harbor by 1860, growth of Truro Center came to a halt.

Pond Village (North Truro) continued to grow as a secondary center in the first decades of the period, and a Union Meetinghouse was built here ca. 1840. A Methodist church was built in the southeast in 1831, and replaced in 1851. A small hamlet developed here (South Truro) along the bay shore. On the Atlantic shore, the Cape Cod Lighthouse was rebuilt in 1853, and replaced in 1857.

D. Economic Base

The Early Industrial period was Truro's boom period. "The most prosperous days," town historian Shebna Rich wrote, "were in about 1836, when the mackerel fishery was carried on largely by small vessels well accommodated by the harbor to do all their business at home." That year, 63 boats and 512 men went after the cod and mackerel, whose catches were valued at \$50,850 and \$94,500 respectively. These were the second highest figures reported in the study unit (after Provincetown). The fishing fleet used over 42,000 bushels of salt that year -- over twice the production of the Truro salt works, which numbered 39 that year (a relatively small number, placing the town 9th out of 13 in the county).

Union,

North, and Lower wharves, all built in the 1830s, were crowded with fishing vessels. A shipyard at the mouth of the Pamet River produced 15 brigs and schooners between 1837 and 1851. Three packets carried fish to Boston, returning with supplies for outfitters. In 1849 the Government constructed a lighthouse at Snow's Beach.

As the business grew, however, at the same time it required better accommodations. Repeated attempts -- in 1839 and 1848 -- were made to solicit Government aid for the construction of a breakwater. In 1854 a local subscription succeeded in sinking a pile structure only to find it grossly inadequate. As a result much of Truro's fishing industry probably shifted to Provincetown in the 1850s. Although there were still 49 vessels in 1855, by 1865, there were only ten.

Rich notes that "the final blow from which the town never recovered, was the breaking up of the Union Company's store" -- a 'day of reckoning' probably brought on by the Panic of 1857.

E. Architecture

Residential: The 1 1/2-story, double-pile, interior chimney, gable roofed house type continues to be built during this period, though in small numbers. About 15 survive: most are five bays in width with extended stud height; one has a flushboard facade. Small numbers of gable front houses are built during the period, far fewer than in other region towns. Most are 1 1/2 stories, three bays in width, double pile, interior chimney, with side ell (ca. 8); two are known to employ the small side fixed sash windows common on the side gable elevations in the region. One four-bay example is known in this height, and a 2 1/2-story example survives. These houses are simply ornamented with wide cornice boards and door surrounds. Later in the period both 1 1/2-story and 2 1/2-story examples are built with Italianate ornament but in very small numbers (ca. 3). This is probably related to the drop in the town's population after 1850, which reduced new housing needs.

Institutional: The town's second Methodist society built a meetinghouse in South Truro in 1831; a second, larger structure built in 1851 was a 1 1/2-story gable front structure with a pedimented projecting entry two-tiered square belfry, corner pilasters, and wide cornice board; it stood until 1940, when it was struck by lightning. In 1840 a Union Society was built for use by the area's Methodists and Congregationalists; this gable front structure has a square entry tower with crenellation and an extended entry area spanning the first floor front, ornamentation came from lancet windows. The town purchased a meeting hall for use as a town hall, gable front with center entry, wide cornice boards and pilasters, small belfry on the front roof ridge.

IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

A. Transportation Routes

In 1873, service on the Cape Cod division of the Old Colony Railroad was extended north from Wellfleet through Truro to Provincetown. The line passed along the east, bay side of town, and an embankment was built across Pamet River at Truro Village.

B. Population

Between 1870 and 1915, Truro lost half of her population, falling from 1269 to 663 persons. The Portuguese were the dominant foreign-born ethnic group throughout the period. As late as 1885, Truro had the second-highest number of Portuguese (after Provincetown) in the study unit. As Truro's Portuguese colony remained relatively constant numerically, it soon lost this rank to other towns, by 1915 falling to 10th, with 84 Portuguese-born residents.

C. Settlement Pattern

With the late 19th century population decline, little settlement expansion occurred. However, with the growing number of Portuguese, two Roman Catholic churches were built: Sacred Heart (1895) at Truro Center, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help (1911) at North Truro. Cobb Memorial Library was built at Truro Center in 1912.

Summer tourism increased in the 1890s, and summer resort clusters developed on the Atlantic shore bluffs in the east at the Highlands near Cape Cod Lighthouse, where a hotel and golf course were also built, and Ballston Beach off Pamet Road. By period's end, lots were being laid out for summer houses on Pilgrim Beach on the bay shore in the northwest. A cold storage plant was built at the railroad depot at North Truro in 1910.

D. Economic Base

With neither an agricultural nor strong maritime trade to turn to, Truro's economic activity dropped sharply. Despite her proximity to Provincetown (or perhaps because of it?), her fishing was only a pale shadow of the town to the north. After the silting up of the harbor, weir fishing was begun about 1880.

In 1915, Truro reported a mackerel catch valued at \$20,984 -- second highest in the study unit after Provincetown. About the only land-based industry was a fish-canning plant.

E. Architecture

Residential: The continuation of the rapid drop in the town's total population after 1850 kept new housing needs to a minimum in the town. Two-and-a-half-story gable front houses were still built, with porches and ornamental shingles. At least two Queen Anne examples are known, each composed of a primary 2 1/2-story gable roofed block; the more elaborate house added a projecting

gable section on its facade, and a tower composed of four increasingly smaller elements. The other had a clipped gable and porch. The Shingle Style houses in the town area few, both using the large gambrel form. Later a Craftsman house was built, employing a high hip roof overhanging a full surrounding porch supported by fieldstone supports.

Institutional: A second Roman Catholic Church was built in North Truro in 1890; it is a small, shingled, gable front structure with belfry, transepts, and a pedimented entry porch and palladian window on its facade.

Commercial: A hotel, the Highland House, was built during this period, 2 1/2 stories in height with a three-bay center gable entry with porch.

X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

A. Transportation Routes

By the mid 1920s, a hard-surfaced highway, U.S. Route 6, had been built through town. This followed a new route north to the Little Pamet River. It then continued along the Old King's Highway corridor to North Truro. From there the auto route extended north to Provincetown along the bay shore on what is now 6A. By the late 1930s, local roads to the Highland Lighthouse and the Pond Village fish freezing plant had also been paved.

B. Population

Truro's population continued to decline until 1925, when, at 504, it was the lower than at any time since the 18th century. Small gains were made in the following fifteen years, and by 1940 the town reported 585 people. The number of foreign-born residents, in the meantime, continued to decline. By 1940, Truro's total immigrant population amounted to 9.4% -- a point below the county average and five points below Truro's own figure in 1915.

C. Settlement Pattern

While the year-round population continued to decline, summer resort development expanded, particularly after the opening of U.S. Route 6 through town in the 1920s. Summer house and cottage development concentrated along Pilgrim Beach in the northwest, and continued southeast as far as North Truro on Route 6 (now 6A). Other clusters of summer cottages developed at Pilgrim Heights (High Head Road) and at Great Hollow along Route 6.

D. Economic Base

About the only identified industry was a fish-freezing plant. Weir fishing continued to provide profitable employment for many of the townspeople. Although Truro shared some of the artists' colony atmosphere of Provincetown, Truro also saw a large increase in the number of summer visitors.

E. Architecture

Residential: The town's population maintained itself, but still little new housing was constructed; only ca. 4 year-round houses are known, including a saltbox, bungalow, three-bay, 2 1/2-story pyramidal, and one-story tile roofed pyramidal. However, a number of the uninventoried cottages along Pilgrim Beach date from this period. These simple structures are nearly square with gable roofs, and single story in height. Some present their gable end to the street with center entry; others have entry into the long side.

Institutional and Commercial: None is known.

XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS

Recent activity on this survey has resulted in reasonably complete coverage of the town's resources.

XII. SOURCES

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