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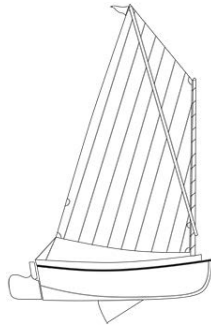
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On the Front Cover: This illustration of Bloodroot and foal was painted by Wesley Dennis and appeared in *Esquire Magazine* in 1941. Courtesy Abby Beall of wesleydennis.com

On the Back Cover: George Moses published *Slightly Salty: Columns of Old and New Cape Cod* in 1960. This book is a compilation of his witty and perceptive newspaper columns.

Contents

From the Editors	2
Renowned Illustrator Wesley Dennis <i>By Linda Collins</i>	3
George L. Moses: Journalist, Educator, Community Leader <i>By Deborah Griffin Scanlon</i>	7
From the Archives: Tarpaulin Cove <i>By Deborah Griffin Scanlon and Colleen Hurter</i>	14



The spritsail is a small boat rig of respectable antiquity used around the world. Its name comes from the sprit, a spar comparable to a gaff, but attached much lower on the mast.

The sprit crosses diagonally to the uppermost corner of the sail, which it extends and elevates. The Woods Hole Spritsail Boat was originally used for fishing and later became popular among local and summer residents for racing and sailing. —Mary Lou Smith

From the Editors

This winter issue of *Spritsail* features the brief biographies of two prominent men who lived on Davisville Road in East Falmouth. Consequently, the houses they lived in were next to each other: Wesley Dennis lived at number 452 from 1907 and George L. Moses built and lived at number 364 beginning in 1953.

Linda Collins has written an enlightening essay about Wesley Dennis, an internationally known illustrator who became famous illustrating the children's books of Marguerite Henry and John Steinbeck. Ms. Collins discusses his early childhood adventures with friends living in the lower Davisville neighborhood as well as his successful career as a major equine illustrator.

Deborah Scanlon describes George L. Moses as one of her early mentors. He was a respected journalism teacher at Lawrence High School in Falmouth and a popular journalist on Cape Cod. He was also a visible community leader, serving the town of Falmouth as Town Moderator for 20 years. Ms. Scanlon recalls his wisdom and good humor as a student in his journalism class and from her interviews with him later in life.

"From the Archives: Tarpaulin Cove" is an essay written by Deborah Griffin Scanlon and Colleen Hurter that first appeared in *The Dispatch* in 2020, an in-house publication of the Woods Hole Historical Museum. Tarpaulin Cove is located on Naushon Island, just off the coast of Woods Hole, MA and was visited by such notables as the infamous Cap'n Kidd, John Paul Jones, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Wonderful historic photos are a highlight of the essay.

Tarpaulin Cove as preserved by its current owners. Courtesy Woods Hole Historical Museum.



Renowned Illustrator Wesley Dennis

By Linda Collins

Falmouth has been home to many talented people over the years. Wesley Dennis was an illustrator who became famous when he partnered with children's novelist Marguerite Henry on her *Misty of Chincoteague* series. Wesley had a life-long appreciation of horses and an ability to draw them from memory.



Wesley Dennis at his drawing board. Courtesy Abby Beall.

Dennis was born in Boston on May 16, 1903, and moved to Falmouth in 1907 when his family bought a small farm at the end of Davisville Road. Dennis grew up on the farm and attended Falmouth schools. The family maintained a house in the city, where his father worked at the *Boston Globe* for over forty years, traveling

to Falmouth by train on the weekends. Wesley hitched up their horse, Tony, to pick his father up at the station.

He loved hunting and fishing and anything outdoors. For many years afterwards he recalled a wonderful day of hunting from a blind on Green Pond with his friend Shelley Pierce. He and Shelley shot down four brant when the older more seasoned hunters in the same area were not able to do so.

Dennis was a huge fan of fireworks and once said, "There were never enough Fourth-of-July's to suit me." While there is no mention in the *Falmouth Enterprise* of a town fireworks display at the Heights, private displays were popular. Local businesses would advertise the limited availability of fireworks at certain times of the year. *The Book of Falmouth* mentions a time when "Wesley Dennis had his whole collection of fireworks go off at once, sending everyone scurrying for cover."

In the fall of 1918, the influenza arrived in Massachusetts. As in 2020, statewide quarantines both stranded people on the Cape and drove people to the Cape looking for a safe haven. At age fifteen, Dennis came down with the flu, but he was treated by Dr. L.C. Jones and fortunately was able to make a full recovery.

The Dennis home was located next door to Andrew Lovell's Ten Acre Farm. Wesley and Hollis Lovell were the best of friends and got into a lot of mischief together. Dennis tells the story of when they were caught getting into trouble at school. As it was during World War I, they were made to stand at attention with wooden rifles guarding the front doors as the other students boarded the buses for home. He said the far greater punishment was having to walk from the Lawrence High School to his home in Davisville. As teenagers, they worked together at the Ten Acre Store on Main Street in Falmouth selling fruits, vegetables and ice cream. At the passing of his father, Hollis Lovell became the proprietor of the Ten Acre Store.

Wesley Dennis's love of horses led him to bring the game of polo to the Cape. In the early 30s, he proposed establishing a polo field in Falmouth. After seeing a newsreel of the sport, he had become enamored. He imagined summer residents bringing their polo ponies and housing them in stables provided by the town. The Coonamessett Polo Grounds were established the following year on land off Ranch Road. Playing against the Coonamessett Team were other Cape Teams including Green Acres, Tower Hill and Buzzards Bay. It wasn't until 1973 that the US Polo Association officially allowed women to play, but a *Falmouth Enterprise* article notes an Alice Dupont playing all four chukkers for the Buzzards Bay Team in 1936. In 1939 the Newport Polo Team came to the Coonamessett Polo Grounds and beat the home team seven to four.

While his mother encouraged him to take a job as the Assistant Postmaster, Wesley and his brother Morgan both made their living as illustrators, Morgan specializing in dogs and Wesley in horses. Wesley studied illustration in Boston at the New School of Design. He worked for a while doing fashion sketches for both Filenes and Jordan Marsh. These were not his favorite years, and he is quoted as saying he hoped God would not include them when totaling up the span of his life. Dennis also traveled to Paris to study drawing with Lowes Dalbiac Luard, a British artist who had been a student at the Slate School of Fine Art in London.

Returning to Boston, Dennis continued his study of the anatomy of the horse by sketching horses at Suffolk Downs, which opened in 1935. He developed a reputation for producing fine portraits of thoroughbred racehorses and traveled across the country from Suffolk Downs to Hialeah in Florida and on to Santa Anita in California. He attended the Kentucky Derby and other large races, doing portraits of prized racehorses. Besides the formal portraits, he would rise early in the morning to do sketches of all the activities on the backside of the tracks where the horses were trained.

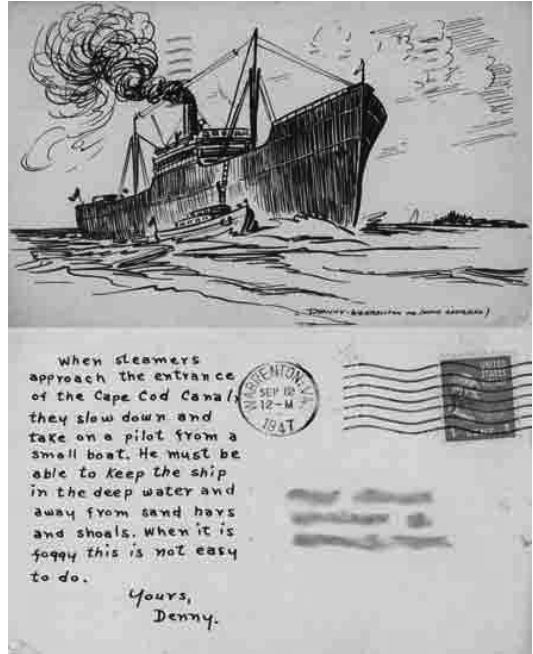
In late 1937, Dennis was staying with his brother in New York while working on two commissioned paintings. One was a portrait of two horses for a client in Bourne, and the other was of a horse being led from a barn for a magazine cover. He had just completed one portrait painting and was just finishing the other.



Wesley Dennis designed many equine greeting cards. This seasonal card is a collectable work of art. Courtesy Abby Beall.

He brought them along on a trip to Falmouth to visit his mother. Upon arriving in Davisville, he placed the two canvases on the roof of the car while he retrieved his things. His mother suggested they go to see Katharine Hepburn and Ginger Rogers in the movie *Stage Door*, which was playing at the Elizabeth Theater on Main Street. It was not until they arrived back home that Dennis remembered the two paintings and was not surprised to find they were gone. He retraced his route but found neither painting nor mangled canvas on the road.

The following week his brother-in-law, William Howard, happened to mention the two missing paintings to Paul Dillingham, the Superintendent of Schools. Dillingham knew where



Wesley Dennis created a series of postcards with illustrations and text for his many fans. Children paid a small subscription to receive a card each week from the popular illustrator. This card from 1947 describes a steamer as it enters the Cape Cod Canal. Courtesy Abby Beall.

one of the paintings was. Howard Barrows, principal of the Teaticket School, had found a painting of two horses lying in the road by the Green Pond Bridge. He was happy to return it to Dennis. As there was no damage to the painting, Dennis was able to deliver it to his client, who paid the sum of \$200, the equivalent of \$3,800 in today's dollars. As for the second painting, Dennis felt it must have gone into the water. He had a very relaxed attitude saying, "It was too much to expect to get them both back" while thinking he should have taken better care of his work.

Dennis was most interested in illustration but was not finding his break into that field. While on his honeymoon in New Mexico, he met a junior editor for Viking Press. With her encouragement, he decided to write and illustrate his own book. *Flip* was published by Viking and provided Dennis with just the entry he was looking for. Children's book author Marguerite Henry was looking for an illustrator for her book, *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*, the story of the Morgan Horse breed that began in Vermont. She did not care for the illustrations provided by the publisher and went to her local library to look at children's books. It was there she came across a copy of *Flip*. Selecting Dennis as her illustrator, Marguerite Henry said, "This artist saw beyond hide and hair and bone. You could see that he understood and loved animals, that he was trying to capture their spirit, personality and expression." In his first interview with Mrs. Henry, he told her he would happily illustrate her book at no charge. It was agreed he would be paid a flat fee, but as the sales of the book skyrocketed, he realized his mistake. From then on, they shared all royalties fifty-fifty. The partnership with Henry lasted twenty years, leading to the publication of over twenty books and to Wesley Dennis's success. In 1948 John Steinbeck asked Wesley Dennis to illustrate his book *The Red Pony*.



Marceau was a Grand Champion stallion in 1939 and 1940. This beautiful illustration by Wesley Dennis appeared in *Esquire Magazine* in 1946. Courtesy Abby Beall.

Wesley Dennis's interest in horses eventually led him away from Falmouth. He purchased a farm in the horse country of Warrenton, Virginia, where he enjoyed foxhunting. However, he did not forget Cape Cod and returned each summer. It was on one of those return visits to Falmouth, in the summer of 1966, that Wesley Dennis at age 63 had a fatal heart attack.

Wesley Dennis will live on in the imagination of children and adults who enjoy his illustrations in the books of Marguerite Henry and particularly *Misty of Chincoteague*. This story is based on the life of an actual pony that was purchased by Maureen and Paul Beebe who lived on Beebe Ranch on the island of Chincoteague off the coast of Virginia. They were not related to the philanthropic Beebe family of Falmouth.

About the Author: Linda Collins is the Director of the Falmouth Public Library. Previously, she was the Access Services Librarian at Harvard University and the Head Access Librarian at Wheaton College. Sources for this essay are the *Falmouth Enterprise*, *The Book of Falmouth*, and the wesleydennis.com. website.

George L. Moses: Journalist, Educator, Community Leader

By Deborah Griffin Scanlon

George L. Moses made considerable contributions to the town of Falmouth. Active in town government, he served as town meeting moderator for 20 years. He taught journalism for two decades, influencing and inspiring his students as a writer and teacher. His newspaper columns and books were widely read and enjoyed. And earlier in his career, he was a New York City advertising executive in charge of one of the country's largest accounts. He lived until a month shy of his 101st birthday on March 4, 2015.

On his 100th birthday, I interviewed Mr. Moses for a story in the *Falmouth Enterprise* at his residence at Atria Woodbriar. He was born in Everett, Massachusetts, and graduated from Medford High School in 1932 and from Boston University in 1936, majoring in journalism. He was editor of the *BU News*.

Mr. Moses came to Falmouth because George A. Hough, editor and publisher of the *Falmouth Enterprise*, had written to BU asking for suggestions for a Falmouth reporter. He told me that,



George L. Moses was a wise and witty journalist and influential presence in the Falmouth community. Courtesy *Falmouth Enterprise Archives*

"George Hough had majored in journalism at Columbia University and was a believer in journalism schools."

BU recommended Mr. Moses, and he made his first-ever trip to Cape Cod. "Everyone who lived north of Boston went to northern New England on vacation, not Cape Cod," he explained, because "the city was murder to cross" to go south. Mr. Moses spent every childhood summer at his grandparents' home in Nova Scotia.

He accepted the *Falmouth Enterprise* job and stayed three years. During his time as a reporter, Mr. Moses covered the Hurricane of 1938, "the greatest news story in the history of the *Falmouth Enterprise*," he wrote in an article in the *Falmouth Enterprise* six years later where he shared the details of that dramatic day. The morning of September 21, he had talked to Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Director Columbus Iselin, who told him there was a hurricane coming. Mr. Moses wasn't so sure: "The sun was shining over Woods Hole harbor, the sky

was clear blue, the air a bit crisp but still balmy. It was a glorious day."

But by that afternoon, "the sky grew very black. The wind howled like crazy." He drove down Main Street, where the steeple had blown off the Methodist Church. Heading along Surf Drive, where "breakers ten to 12 feet high were rolling across the drive," he saw a woman, Alice Maurer of the Fells, sitting in her car. He asked if he could give her a ride. She said no and thanked him, but she said the car was out of gas and her nephew had gone to get some. "I had almost reached the Moors road when my car too seemed to be out of gas. Fortunately, there was a crowd at the end of the road and they all helped push my car off Surf Drive to higher ground. Then I found out it was not out of gas. Water had got to the wiring and battery." He was able to get it fixed. Later he learned that Alice Maurer had been swept by the "raging, rising water" to her death and that her car was probably not out of gas but "stalled by the whipping water."

Mr. Moses spent the rest of the day "sitting in [Police] Chief Baker's office...copying the terse and dramatic entries in the log. Rescue parties kept piling in and out—cold, wet and tired, but they kept going. I took notes as fast as I could write and stuffed them into pockets already crammed with damp, gummy pieces of paper." The next day, he sat at his typewriter from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and the paper "finally went to bed." He believed that the *Falmouth Enterprise* was the "first paper distributed in the Cape after the storm with a really complete hurricane story."

In June 1939 Mr. Moses married Margaret Vanneman, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. J. S. Vanneman of Falmouth's Davisville neighborhood and Princeton, New Jersey. The Vannemans were a family long associated with Falmouth.

By October 1939 Mr. Moses had left the *Falmouth Enterprise* and joined Batten, Barton, Dursantine and Osborn in New York City where he ultimately became a vice president. One of his accounts was Lucky Strike, at the time one of the largest advertising accounts in the country. He worked on accounts such as DuPont chemicals, and then became head of a group specializing in large consumer package accounts including Royal Crown Cola, Raleigh and Kool cigarettes, Ethyl Cleaner, and Continental Can Company. In 1948, when his agency obtained the Lucky Strike account, Mr. Moses was placed in charge of creative work for the account. He became the copy chief for Holiday Magazine, Carr-Consolidated Biscuit company and the Union News company.

Mr. Moses kept in touch with the *Falmouth Enterprise*, though, and maintained his Falmouth contacts through long summer vacations. He told me that he loved the ad business and enjoyed meeting people in entertainment like Dorothy Collins of "Lucky Strike Hit Parade." But, he said, "I was not getting any writing in, and I missed it, so I wrote George Hough a letter - by the way, we wrote letters in those days - and asked if I could write a column for the *Falmouth Enterprise*." Once a week for several years, his "Sound Breezes" column appeared in the *Falmouth Enterprise* while he was at BBDO.

Journalism Students Recall Mr. Moses

"I took George Moses's journalism class at Lawrence High School when we wrote and published a full page in the *Enterprise* called the *Student Intelligencer*. Highlight of the year was our trip by train to the Columbia University Journalism conference, and George taking us around New York City, where he had a prior career at the BBDO advertising agency. He was quite proud to have come up with the ad slogan, 'be happy, go lucky,' for Lucky Strike cigarettes, and was dismayed when it was replaced by 'LSMFT (Lucky Strike means fine tobacco)' which he thought was much inferior. George was town moderator for quite a few years, his tenure distinguished by occasional snappy and always humorous one liners that put loquacious or under informed members in their place. When he retired as town moderator he was succeeded by George Lebherz, who ran for the post with the campaign slogan, 'Lebherz L-E-B-H-E-R-Z.' Apparently a string of letters worked for him like it did for Lucky Strike: he won." —*Eric Turkington, former State Representative*

"I learned a good deal from his lesson about the layout of a story, and that there were only so many spaces to write the headline, which should be 'catchy.' It made me concentrate harder to pick the right/best words for the headline to fit in the space. When I had my French students do formal writing, we worked on picking better words even though it took longer. Like 'bon' and 'tres' can be substituted with better words if you concentrate." —*Terri Medeiros, retired French teacher at Falmouth High School*



George Moses supervised the production of the *Student Intelligencer* at Lawrence High School, as seen in the 1963 *Lawrencian* yearbook. Courtesy Eric Turkington.

He remembers his first column was about the Falmouth highway department and its engineer, Herbert W. Whipple.

Poor health forced Mr. Moses to leave the stressful ad business, and he and his family returned to Falmouth in 1953. George and Peggy and their children, Brad and Sally, settled into a new house that they built in Davisville. In the mid 50s he began writing "Slightly Salty," a column that appeared three times a week in the *Cape Cod Standard Times* and Sundays in the *New Bedford Standard Times*. He also taught advertising at his alma mater, Boston University, for a couple of years.

Mr. Moses published a collection of his "Slightly Salty" columns in 1960. The book was reviewed in the *Falmouth Enterprise* Book Corner column. "The pieces tell where the Cape is and what the Cape Codder is like. ... Natives who have laughed before with these columns will find the humor still fresh." Acknowledging that "Mr. Moses writes to entertain," the columnist said that "His tips on how to participate in and enjoy the Cape's variety of pastimes should not be overlooked because he sometimes writes with tongue-in-cheek."

Mr. Moses also quickly became part of the Falmouth community, serving in town government and in the public schools. After serving a three-year term on the Falmouth Finance Committee, he became town moderator in 1959, running Falmouth's representative town meeting for 20 years. As town moderator, he advocated for the purchase of Washburn's Island by the town. It was the first time he

had left the platform to address the meeting "as a partisan in the debate." "The issue is so very important to the future well-being of the town, perhaps not so much our generation but for our children, our children's children and their children."

Mr. Moses said this about serving as town moderator until 1979: "It was a challenge sometimes because the town was booming then, especially in the late 1960s" he told me. Upon his retirement, the *Falmouth Enterprise* wrote, "Mr. Moses has added the often saving grace of humor, knowing just when the light touch will ease the pressures of debate."

In 1960 Mr. Moses started teaching journalism at Lawrence High School and supervising preparation of the student newspaper, the *Student Intelligencer*. The paper sponsored a contest that provided the LHS athletic team with a new nickname: the "Clippers." He taught for 15 years. "I enjoyed it, and when I quit, I missed the kids. They kept me young."

Each year, the *Student Intelligencer* was entered in the Columbia Scholastic Press Association competition for student newspapers, and it always won a top award. Mr. Moses would organize the trip to the awards ceremony in New York City for the student editors. When I interviewed him in 2014, I finally asked him how he felt about taking eight or ten students a year to the CSPA awards. It was a highlight of my high school years, but I was not sure he remembered it as a highlight of his teaching years. He said simply, "You were all good kids."



Members of the Lawrence High School journalism class of 1968 attended the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Convention in New York City with their advisor George Moses. The author of this article is the first student on the left in the second row. Terri (Waugaman) Medeiros, who also contributed to this piece, is at top left. Photo from 1968 *Lawrencian* yearbook.

In 1973, he received the Columbia Scholastic Press Association Gold Key award on the dais of the Imperial Ballroom of the Hotel Americana in New York City.

When Mr. Moses retired in 1974, his students wrote this editorial appreciation: "Mr. Moses has an unusual type of determination, sincerity and concern about what happens to an institution as well as to the individual. Losing people like him is unfortunate for education because teachers of Mr. Moses's caliber are few and far between.... In 14 years the Intelligencer has never placed other than first in the stiff C.S.P.A. competition, and in four of those years, won the medalist award for extra-special distinction..."

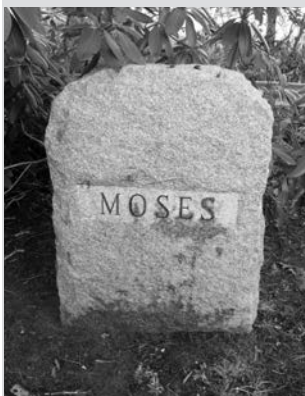
Mr. Moses was elected director of the Massachusetts Moderators Association in 1972, and became a member of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's Corporation that year. He also served as faculty manager of athletics at Lawrence High School and JV basketball coach until 1974.

In 1976, he wrote the book, *Ring Around the Punch Bowl*, which he said, "took only a month to write but six months to get the facts." The book tells the story of the 1972 gift to the town of the 386-acre parcel of land, Beebe Woods, to the town by the Josiah K. Lilly II family, sparing it from development. Mr. Moses describes the land as a "locally well known but otherwise unsung tract of land, almost in the

In the mid 1950s, George Moses began writing his "Slightly Salty" columns that appeared three times a week in the *Cape Cod Standard Times* and Sundays in the *New Bedford Standard Times*. In 1960, he published a collection of these columns in *Slightly Salty: Columns of Old and New Cape Cod*. As the author's notes on the book cover states, "An adopted Cape Codder of long standing, he (Mr. Moses) loves what he calls 'the practically peerless peninsula' for its faults and foibles as well as its famed and fabled attributes, and doesn't hesitate to comment frankly on them all." Here are some excerpts from a column about the Davisville Cemetery, which abutted the Moses property and is, in fact, where he is buried.

An Ancient Burying Ground

"Hidden away behind my house, exactly 600 feet as the hearse rides, is a small, old cemetery, much like many other serene and windswept graveyards on Cape Cod. Although this is an ancient burying ground, few people know of its existence—particularly epitaph hunters.



The Moses gravestone is now a part of the Davisville Cemetery. Photo by Leonard Miele

"It's located in a pine grove well back from and out of sight of road traffic, its modest headstones overlooking a lovely salt pond. Many of the gray slate stones are green with moss and some of the bright white ones are covered with a strange orange-colored fungus, both of which make the inscriptions difficult to read. Growing all around them, accenting the grays and whites, are the greens and whites of wild roses, Queen Anne's lace, beach plum and bayberry bushes, cedars and quaking aspens."

He writes that the cemetery began as a family burial plot for the family of James Davis, who founded the "tiny saltwater farm community." Its oldest headstone is dated 1843. In his witty manner, he reports on the epitaphs used in the cemetery.

"I have a hunch that H.K. Swift of Sandwich, who seems to have engraved most of the headstones in our cemetery, operated considerably like the greeting card people today. He offered a choice of verses to fit every exigency and personality..."

He lists common Cape Cod names found on the gravestones, then adds, "There's another rather familiar name in our cemetery on the very first stone as you enter. You're right, it's Moses. (Moses Davis that is) Ah ha, you almost made a grave mistake that time."



Brief biography of George L. Moses as it appears in his book *Slightly Salty: Columns of Old and New Cape Cod*.

center of the Cape's largest town, a close to 400-acre area of wild, wide-open space, unusual mainly because it has remained in its natural, unspoiled state since Falmouth was settled by 14 families from Barnstable in 1660."

And, that same year, after 19 years of writing "Slightly Salty," which he said he enjoyed but "three columns a week became a grind," he went back to writing a weekly column for the *Falmouth Enterprise*, this one about Cape Cod humor and called "Dry on the Rocks." He continued writing the column until 1984, when he was 80.

Mr. Moses was also a fishing party boat captain, with his son Brad as crew, when they had a 30-foot Egg Harbor boat. "He went from that boat to a 21-foot Bristol to an 18-foot Boston Whaler to a home swimming pool and no more boats," his son recalled. "A solid golfer, hunter, and fisherman, he even owned an AKC beagle kennel at our Davisville home, raising dogs for rabbit hunting and field trials."

By 1984, Mr. Moses and his wife were spending fall and winter in the Florida Keys, returning to Falmouth in early spring each year.

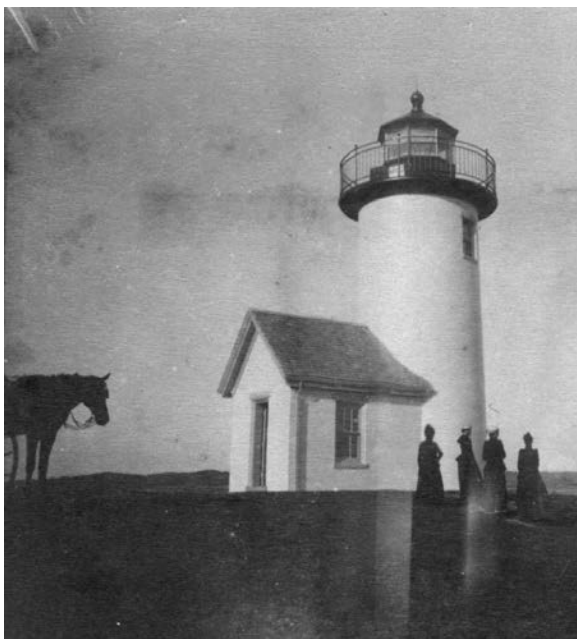
When he left the ad business in 1953, Mr. Moses wrote, "Statistics show that the advertising man does not live as long as most men. His life expectancy is only 57 years, compared to 64 for the average businessman and almost 74 for the average man in the street." It appears Mr. Moses made the right career choices, and Falmouth and its residents were the beneficiaries.

About the Author: Deborah Griffin Scanlon is the Executive Director of the Woods Hole Historical Museum. She was a student in George Moses's journalism class at Lawrence High School, which inspired her to major in journalism at Syracuse University. Material for this essay comes from her interviews with Mr. Moses and the *Falmouth Enterprise* archives.

From the Archives: Tarpaulin Cove

By Deborah Griffin Scanlon and Colleen Hurter

This article first appeared in *The Dispatch*, a publication of the Woods Hole Historical Museum.



Four women at Tarpaulin Cove Lighthouse, horse drawing buggy on left, c. 1890

Woods Hole has many connections to Tarpaulin Cove, where British Navy vessels anchored before attacking Falmouth shores, and pirates plundered passing ships. In more recent years, MBL students collected invertebrates on this Naushon Island beach, while many of us have enjoyed picnics there.

The lighthouse at Tarpaulin Cove on this privately owned island was built in 1759. Ame-

lia Forbes Emerson writes in *Early History of Naushon Island* that "Vineyard Sound and its approaches have always been places that mariners treated with great respect and caution because of their shoals and strong tidal currents." In 1759 Zaccheus Lambert (or Lumbert) of Nantucket built a lighthouse at the west end of the cove, the first one in the area. He built it with his own funds and the people of Nantucket supplied the oil.

It was only the fourth lighthouse built off the New England coast, after Boston Light in 1716; Beaver Tail (Newport), 1740; Brant Point, 1746. Gay Head Light was not built until 1799 and Nobska in 1829.

In the 19th century, Vineyard Sound was considered the "world's second busiest shipping passage (after the English Channel) and one of the most dangerous," according to the Cuttyhunk Historical Society. "The complexity of the currents and the intensity of the commercial traffic led young George Eldridge Jr. to create charts in the 1870s showing the direction and speed of the tidal currents in Vineyard Sound. These charts he sold to captains entering the waters; from them grew *The Eldridge Tide and Pilot Book*, published annually to this day."

With all the ships passing through the Sound, "with valuable cargo from the West Indies, it was inevitable that pirates and privateers would attempt to attack and seize them," Amelia Forbes Emerson wrote, among them William Kidd and Thomas Pound.

In 1689 Thomas Pound used Tarpaulin Cove as an anchorage, terrorizing small boats and towns up and down the sound. The governor of Boston sent Captain Pease aboard the sloop, *Mary*, to pursue Pound. Historian Edward Rowe Snow wrote that "It was one of the fiercest and bloodiest duels in the entire history of piracy." Captain Pease was killed in the battle; Pound survived and returned to England.

Ten years later, Tarpaulin Cove was the last port of call for Cap'n Kidd before his capture in Boston and subsequent hanging in England. He may have buried some treasures there but nothing has ever been found.

Woods Hole artist Franklin L. Gifford wrote about the British wartime landings at Tarpaulin in the catalog of his paintings, "Historic Woods Hole."

"On April 2, 1779, a fleet of 10 British men-of-war sailed over from Tarpaulin Cove to raid and burn the town of Falmouth. They had anchored for the night in Tarpaulin Cove, and some of the officers had gone ashore to the tavern kept by a John Slocum. Their host overheard them discussing their plan to attack Falmouth, and though a Tory, Slocum could not see Falmouth burned without giving warn-

ing. So he sent his son down to the island, and across to Woods Hole to spread the news.

"At daybreak, when the British fleet appeared off Falmouth, they were surprised to find



The lighthouse and keeper's house, 1890s. Baldwin Coolidge Collection

trenches dug on the shore near the Old Stone Dock, (on the present Surf Drive,) and a force of two hundred men ready and waiting.

"Finding this determined body of defenders led by Colonel Dimmick, ready to put up a formidable argument, the British decided not to even try to land. From their ships they carried on a cannonade from about eleven in the morning until dark. However, owing to the weather, their fire was very ineffective, as it was the period of an April thaw and the cannon balls did not rebound. Several houses were hit but comparatively little damage was done. The following morning the British fleet sailed away."



Ship's store and post office in the 1880s.

And during the War of 1812, the British naval vessel *Retaliation* was most active in harassing trade along the Massachusetts coast. It was anchored at Tarpaulin, so on October 21, 1814, Captain Weston Jenkins of Falmouth sailed out in the sloop *Two Friends*, with a well-armed volunteer crew of 31 men. When Jenkins's sloop came within hailing distance, Captain Porter of the *Retaliation* shouted out to the *Two Friends* to "Heave to."

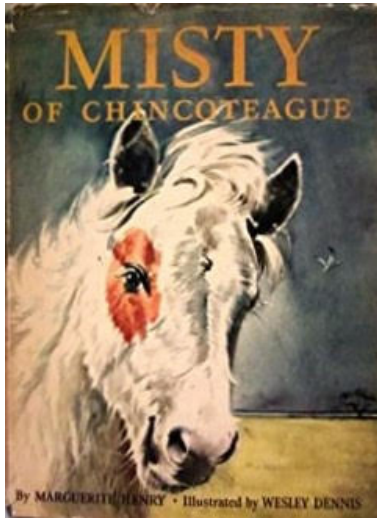
"Feigning meek obedience, Jenkins 'hove to' in the sloop, ordering all but two of his men to conceal themselves and remain quiet. Captain Porter put out from the privateer in a small boat with five armed men, and rowed to the sloop. When they came alongside the sloop, Captain Jenkins stamped his foot and up jumped all of his men armed for immediate action. Jenkins ordered the captain of the privateer to surrender, by lowering his flag, which he promptly did.... The *Two Friends* then went alongside the *Retaliation* and took her and her crew, prisoners."

Among other legends who stopped by Tarpaulin were Naval Commander (and former pirate) John Paul Jones (1775), and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who spent a night at Tarpaulin in 1941 aboard the presidential yacht, "Potomac." The *Falmouth Enterprise* reported that "He then transferred to the cruiser *Augusta* and with naval escort, steamed to his meeting with Winston Churchill, which brought proclamation of the Atlantic Charter."

In the cove there was an inn, a tavern, ship's store and post office. The Tarpaulin Inn, later Cove House, was "much frequented by the crews of passing vessels and also by the local farm families of the Robinsons, Weekses and Nyes. It is reported that many were the frolics and gay times there," according to Amelia Forbes Emerson.

The post office closed in 1916. *The Enterprise* reported that "in the last year of its existence, it took about \$800 to pay the messenger to carry the mail to and from Woods Hole and the receipts were about \$13."

The present lighthouse was built in 1891. The last keeper left in 1941, when the lighthouse was automated by the Coast Guard. In 2001, Cuttyhunk Historical Society became caretaker of the Tarpaulin Cove Lighthouse site and structure. It is a registered National Historic Site. The beach at Tarpaulin is open to the public April 1 to October 31, dawn to dusk, courtesy of Naushon Island Trust. The lighthouse is not accessible to the public.

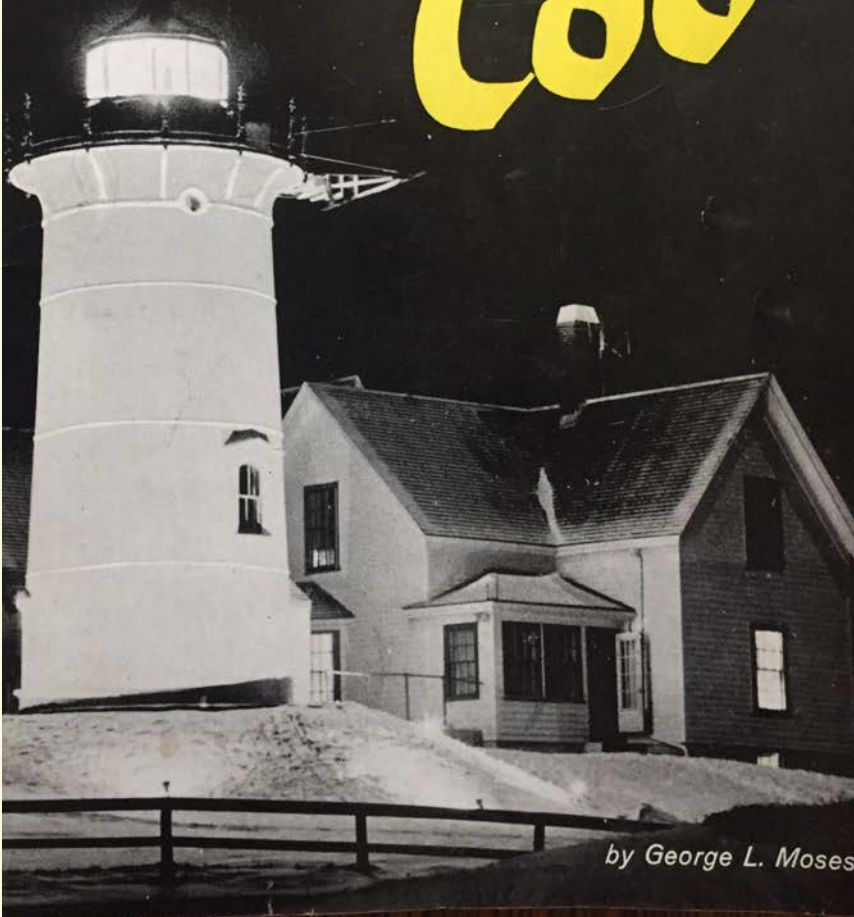


Photos, clockwise: This *Misty of Chincoteague* cover illustration by Wesley Dennis was published by Rand McNally and Company in 1947. Courtesy Linda Collins;
The Davis family plot in the Davisville Cemetery. Photo by Leonard Miele;
Painting by F. L. Gifford of the bloody battle in 1689 between pirate Thomas Pound's privateer and the colony's sloop Mary. Courtesy Woods Hole Historical Museum.

Slightly Salty

Columns of old and new

Cape Cod



by George L. Moses