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PART III--A LITTLE LIQUID CRIME

In my early years crime was of a rather benign nature. The only people who seemed to get locked up were the few (usually one or two in a village who had a strong need for strong drink. These people were generally looked upon with pity, distaste, or humor. In Dennis Port one of the more notable characters with this weakness was one Henry Chase, known locally as "Henry Ding". No one knows where the nickname came from but many people went for years without knowing his right name. Henry had been a mule skinner for the United States Army in the Mexican Campaign of 1916 under General John J. Pershing and in World War I and received a small government pension. Henry's military bearing came to light when he had been imbibing. My mother used to say "The more Henry has to drink, the straighter he stands. Sometimes it's a wonder he doesn't fall over backward." Henry was married to a long-suffering wife, Belle, -- who divorced her first husband because he drank! Unfortunately Belle was never able to accept or deal with Henry's problem. When he came home after having a drink or two she would harangue at him until he became exasperated and would retaliate.That would send Belle to a neighbor's house to call Constable Benjamin Kendrick, who would come after Henry and take him to Barnstable County Jail, and he always went willingly. Early the next morning Belle would be back at the neighbor's to call Eddie Higgins Taxi to take her to Barnstable to see Henry because he would need cigarettes and candy! Selectman Owen B. Murray asked Belle one time why she stayed with Henry when he was so much trouble to her, and she replied, "Why, Mr. Murray, I love him right down to his shoestrings." The old adage about the course of true love not being smooth certainly applied to Belle and Henry.

Henry's schemes for getting extra money were quite ingenious. He did work at odd jobs from time to time and went fishing with Than Wixon, but at times when he was unable to work Belle's radio came into play. He sold that radio, at one time or another, to half the people in Dennis Port. He'd use the money for liquor and Belle would have to go the next day and redeem her radio with her house cleaning money. Another scheme was when he "picked up" an Easter ham at the grocery store supposedly for a local businessman, to be charged to that man's account, then went to the man's home and sold it to his wife.

Henry's many trips to Barnstable made it seem like his second home. The county jail in those days was quite agricultural (and I guess it still is today). They had a large herd of cows, a couple of bulls, and all manner of other livestock, all of which were tended by the inmates. In fact, if you had a farm on Cape Cod the jail was a regular stopping place on Sunday afternoon drives to check out the condition of the herd. If you raised a cow or pig for home consumption you could take it to the jail to be slaughtered, smoked, and packaged by the inmates. A lot of Cape Cod breeding stock came from the County Farm. If Henry happened to be "in residence" during one of your visits he would show you around "his" barn, "his" cows, "his" bulls, and so on. It seems that he had an extrememly good way with animals and one time Sheriff Lauchlan Crocker came to get Henry to take him to the farm because one of the cows was ill and didn't respond to the veterinarian's care. Henry stayed for a week--on his own time--and didn't leave until "his" cow was well and able to be outside....and the Sheriff brought him home again with a sincere thanks.

stayed for a week--on his own time--and didn't feave until "his" cow was well and able to be outside....and the Sheriff brought him home again with a sincere thanks. Henry was "saved" on a regular basis. There was a church near his home and if they were singing when Henry passed by while "in his cups" he would go in to join in and stay to be "saved from his sins". Of course, he would go home, sleep it off, and by morning had forgotten the whole thing. The church people did allow that Henry had a wonderful voice and knew all the hymns by heart and they were sure that someday he would be saved forever. There are lots of other "Henry stories" but we msut give equal time to the north side....

... to one Lester Hallett---honest, hard working, fastidious, but with a strong taste for the fermented grape. Lester worked for years as a handiman for a number of people and more notably for C. Lovell Goodspeed of Dennis Village. Lester lived for a while in Luther Hall's cranberry house and in several other places during warm weather, but usually spent his winters "on the hill" in Barnstable. He kept his living quarters immaculately "eat off the floor" clean, and kept his personal habits to the same degree. He was ever the gentleman and whipped his cap off to the ladies he met. It sounds as if he would have been quite the catch for some young woman except that he already had a great love--muscatel. Mr. Goodspeed appreciated the fine work Lester did on his jobs but would complain that he wished Lester would be "more careful" with his wine bottles. In later years when the Goodspeed barn was cleaned out they found muscatel bottles in the harness rack, behind the grain bin, stuffed in an old love seat and various other places--some empty, $\frac{1}{2}$ full, or even full. It seems that Lester stored them away against a dry time and then couldn't remember where they were hidden. Joshua L. (Jay) Crowell remembers a time that he was taking of Grandfather Goodspeeds storm windows. He took off one and laid it down--took off the second one, stepped back and put his foot right through the first one. Postmaster Fred Maher remarked, "Luther's been doing that dead drunk for 20 years and never broke a one!" Continued on other side. Continued on other side...

CALENDAK			
May	3	7:00 P.M.	Annual Town Meeting. Nathaniel Wixon School.
May	11	7:30 P.M.	DHS Board meeting at Jericho.
May	15	2-4 P.M.	Maritime Day at the Manse. Shiverick Ship show at 2:15 and 3:15.
			Cape Cod Maritime Week in celebration of National Preservation Week.
May	16,	17, 19, 20,	Ezra Baker school program at the Manse. If you can give a couple of
•	23,	24, 25, 26.	hours to this worthwhile program please call 385-3528.
			Lady_Slipper Walk (see below)

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Just as Henry had a special way with the livestock, Lester had gardening talents that endeared him to Sheriff Crocker, and he was in Barnstable often onough to keep things in pretty good shape. One year in particular the judge sentenced Lester to 90 days which ended in late spring. Poor Lester backslid a bit and landed back in Barnstable in July. On one particularly hot afternoon he told Sheriff Crocker, "I planted these damn cucumbers but I didn't know I'd have to pick 'em too!" Barnstable County House of Correction was noted for its showcase gardens. Mrs. Ida Howes of Dennis remarked while driving through Barnstable that she was glad that Lester was there because now the place would look right. Her husband, I. Grafton Howes remarked once to Sheriff Crocker, "I could have a good looking place too if I had all the convict labor of Barnstable County working for me." For the most part Cape Codders didn't think of the inmates as convicts. they were just people you had always known who couldn't seem to stay sober very long--and all were what we now call colorful characters.

BIRTHDAY DINNER--1994

On June 17th DHS will have a birthday party to celebrate our 201st year of incorporation or the first year towards our tricentennial. Only 99 more to go! We will meet at Lighthouse Inn at 5:00 P.M. for a little sociability on the Lower Deck with LHI's famous hors d'oeuvres. The Stone Family do their best to make us feel welcome and we always have a delightful time being together, enjoying a fine meal, and watching the sun go down on Nantucket Sound. Gertrude Lailey has arranged for the Classical Kids, a chamber group, to entertain us after dinner. This group was recently invited to perform at the Massachusetts Music Education Association conference. I believe we're in for a real treat.

INDIANS AND ARTIFACTS

The Indian program on April was well attended. 65 people gave up being outside in one of our first really nice warm days to join us at Carleton Hall and they were well rewarded. Dr. Gloria Brundage gave a very informative talk on the Indian experience in America and especially regarding the Cape Indians. Henry Kelley II put together an excellent exhibit of arrowheads and other artifacts, some from the Pauline Derick Collection at the Jericho Barn and others from private collections, all found within Dennis. He detailed a map showing the Indian sites in town and also displayed copies of the Indian "marks" or names found on some of the early Dennis deeds, and a list of men, including many Indians, who went to fight in one of the episodes of the French and Indian War. Henry's map and other information is so educational he agreed to donate them to the Ezra Baker 3rd grade school program. Learning about early Dennis Indians is part of the program, and these items will make great teaching tools. Many thanks to Dr. Brundage, Henry, the DHS Board for baking and serving some delicious refreshments, and to Program Chairman Gertrude Lailey for putting it all together.

IT'S LADY SLIPPER TIME

This has been such a lo-o-ong winter--most of us are glad to see it gone--and suddenly our "Cape spring" is here. Daffodils are in profusion everywhere, PJM rhododendrons and forsythia are making colorful statements in our drab landscape, and there is a feeling of excitement that comes with each new spring. The early peas should be in, the seedlings have a good start in the cold frame, and by now we should have reconciled ourselves with everything that winter-killed. It's time to turn our thoughts to our annual walk with Norton Nickerson over the Indian Lands to view Dennis' spectacular display of lady slippers. This is one of the most splendid showings of this native flower on the Cape. Dr. Nickerson gives a very interesting lecture and some of the people on the walk will be doing it for the umteenth time. Anyone who has never seen this display should make the effort. For years this was one of Dennis' best kept secrets.Bring a friend and enjoy the beauty of this native American orchid in all its glory on Saturday, June 4 at 9:00 and 10:30 A.M. Please make reservations with the Natural Resources Office at Town Hall. We will meet at the Town Hall parking lot.

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