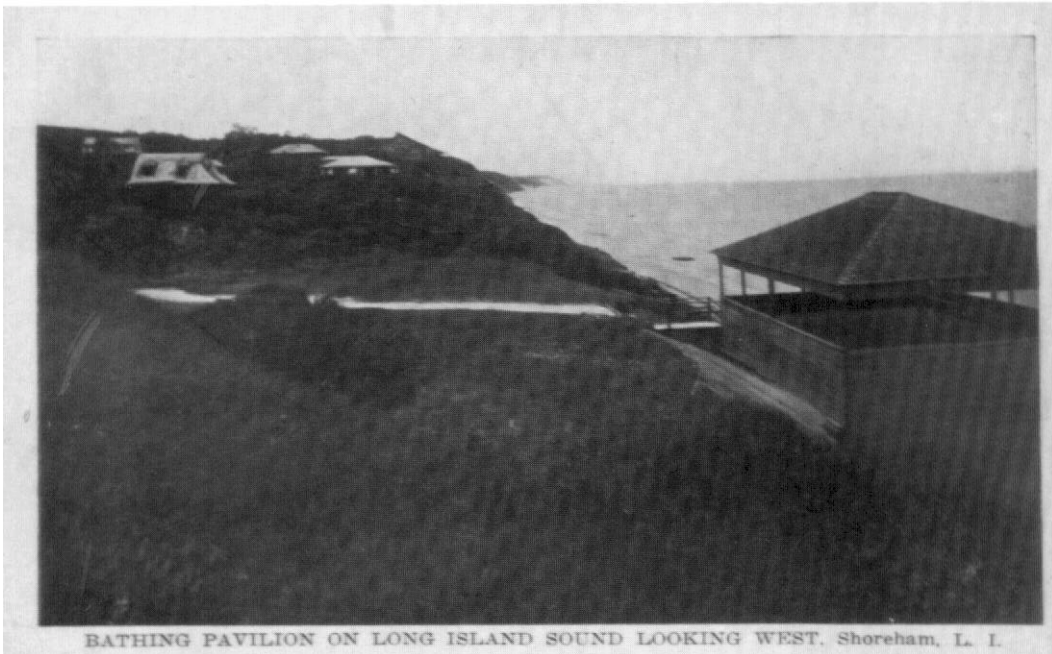


A HISTORY
of
The Incorporated Village
of
SHOREHAM
in the
TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN



BATHING PAVILION ON LONG ISLAND SOUND LOOKING WEST. Shoreham, L. I.

by
MERVIN G. PALLISTER



Mervin Gerald Pallister

1908 - 1986

A HISTORY
Of
The Incorporated Village
Of
SHOREHAM

On the cover: postcard from c. 1910
Copyright © 1995 Kathryn M. Pallister

A HISTORY
of
The Incorporated Village
of
SHOREHAM
in the
TOWN OF BROOKHAVEN
County of
SUFFOLK
State of
NEW YORK

Compiled to Commemorate the
BICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY
of
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

by
Mervin G. Pallister
Village Historian

July 4, 1976

IN MEMORIAM

My father, Mervin Gerard Pallister, came to Shoreham in 1908 at the age of six months with his parents Hortense and Claude V. Pallister. The family lived in New Jersey and summered in Shoreham until 1945.

Mervin Pallister graduated cum laude from Dartmouth College '29 and from the Brooklyn Law School. He and his father were partners in the law firm Pallister & Pallister in Manhattan before he became the General Counsel and Secretary for the J.J. Newberry CO. He was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and was in Who's Who in America.

Claude V. Pallister handled the incorporation of the Village of Shoreham in 1913, and became its first Mayor, then called President, from 1913-15 and again from 1924-25. Under his direction the concrete roads were built and the Shoreham Country Club was organized. Both he and my father were presidents of the S.C.C.

It was in Shoreham my father met his wife of fifty-five years, Kathryn M. Kohlmann, daughter of Phoebe E. and Henry J. Kohlmann ' M.D. Her family lived in Brooklyn and summered in Shoreham until 1944. My mother graduated from the Packer Collegiate institute in '29. Her mother was a Skidmore whose family dates back to the 1700's in Shoreham.

Upon my father's retirement in 1972, my parents moved from Manhasset to the home they built in Shoreham where my mother still lives. It was then he became the Village Historian and remained so until his passing in 1986. He greatly enjoyed writing this interesting history, but never typed a final copy of his manuscript. I am very happy to have finally done it, because I am sure it will be enjoyed by many.

In addition to the seven old photos and one drawing done by him which were with the original text, I have taken the liberty of adding an informal picture taken of him in 1984 by my husband who became Village Historian after my father's passing. I also added the cover's postcard.

Kathryn M. (Pallister) Spier '95

TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE ANTECEDENTS: A PRE-HISTORY	Page 1
THE ANTECEDENTS: A PROTO-HISTORY	Page 2
THE ANTECEDENTS: PRE-COLONIAL	Page 5
THE ANTECEDENTS: THE COLONIAL PERIOD	Page 7
THE AGE OF TRANSITION: 1776-1876	Page 12
THE YEARS OF AWAKENING: 1876-1913	Page 14
ROADS AND INCORPORATION	Page 21
THE ENERGY CRUNCH	Page 23
COMING OF AGE	Page 24
THE GLORIOUS FOURTH	Page 35
WHAT'S IN A NAME?	Page 41
EXPANSION AND GROWTH	Page 43
PRINCIPAL OFFICERS	
IN MEMORIAM	

THE ANTECEDENTS: PRE-HISTORY

Several hundred feet below the jumbled welter of gravel beds, sand banks and boulders which underlie the land surface now known as Shoreham, there is a stratum of bedrock dating back some 50,000,000 years to a time known in geological parlance as the Cretaceous Period. This bed of rock is of an age equal to that of the White Cliffs of Dover. When it was being formed, dinosaurs still roamed the face of the earth, and while the Cretaceous is identified as the last phase of the Age of Reptiles, primitive mammals had evolved to a point where they were well on their way toward supplanting reptiles as the principal life form.

Our Cretaceous bedrock takes the form of a somewhat rusty-colored shale. Due to its inaccessibility, its probably has never been observed by the human eye in Shoreham. Near the Glen Cove beaches, however, it comes to the surface sparingly and discloses, astonishingly, a spectrum of fossil records which prove beyond doubt that at one time, the forerunners of exotic tropical trees such as camphor, cinnamon, eucalyptus and sequoia once flourished here, side by side with the ancestors of the common trees of the eastern hardwood forest we know so well today.

The presence of this ancient rock layer, and the relics of ancient life it contains, point out two intriguing aspects of our pre-history: firstly, this formation, now so deep below our land surface as to actually lie below sea level, was at one time above water and consequently able to support terrestrial life: secondly, the species of flora contained in the fossil records tend to prove that our climate was once tropical. It can be said with confidence that the level of the ocean has not always been the same as it is today. During the great Ice Ages, vast amounts of water were locked up in the polar ice caps and in-

evitably lowered the levels of the oceans. Furthermore, rocks tend to rise and fall in response to geologic forces; witness the presence of fossil sea shells in the rocks on the rim of the Grand Canyon, a mile or so above today's sea level.

Thus this ancient bedrock, at one time above water and sustaining a biosystem of life forms recognizable today, may be said to be the primordial and original foundation of Shoreham.

THE ANTECEDENTS : PROTO-HISTORY

To introduce the second chapter of our history, we must jump across some 48,000,000 years which have elapsed since the close of the Cretaceous. During that incredibly long period of time, forces in the earth were at work elevating and depressing continents and raising and leveling mountains. No doubt other layers of rock were deposited on top of our Cretaceous shale; they were, however, destined to be destroyed and erased by later events. About 2,000,000 years ago, a new series of events commenced to mould and shape our land. This was a sequence of perhaps as many as four profound climatological changes which gave rise to what we now call "Ice Ages".

Numerous reasons for these climate changes have been cited: fluctuations in ground temperature attributable to turbulence in the molten volcanic rocks in the earth's mantle; variations in the output of solar energy; shifts in the orientation of the earth's axis (witness the Antarctic coal seams and fossils of tropical vegetation); and pollution of the atmosphere by volcanic dust. Certain it is

however, that each Ice Age was preceded by a cooling trend of several thousand years duration, which caused the formation and accumulation of staggering amounts of ice over the polar regions. These accumulations, the Ice Caps, spread slowly but relentlessly toward the south in the fashion of viscid tar, until their progress was countered by the warmer climates of the lower latitudes.

It was the last of these Ice Ages - variously estimated to have commenced between 1,000,000 and 1,500,000 years ago and to have ended 15,000 to 20,000 years ago - that created what is now Long Island. In North America one of the three focal points of the Ice Age was in Labrador, where the ice built up to a depth of many thousands of feet. Of necessity, the locking up of so much of the earth's surface water in ice caps significantly lowered sea levels around the world. Spreading outward from its Labrador center, the ice oozed southwardly. It engulfed southern Canada and proceeded across New England, gouging, plucking off and transporting the topsoil, surface material and boulders of the ancient "Canadian Shield." Using this loot much in the fashion of the teeth of a file, it pressed ever southward, submerging even the highest of New England's mountains to their very tops and scouring, grinding and assimilating the Upper soils of the land it crossed. In its relentless drive south, the glacier, for such in fact it had become, no longer retained the characteristics of pure ice, but had become a frozen plastic mush of intermingled sands, clays, boulders and ice. In effect, it was an enormous conveyor belt, moving untold millions of tons of debris southward.

Eventually the leading edge of the ice reached the latitude of southern Connecticut, only to meet counterforces in the form of a global warming trend which slowed, but did not completely halt, its southward march. With decreasing pace, the leading edge of the ice moved offshore and stalled

at what is now Long Island's north coast. Though the pressures impelling forward movement continued, meltback resulting from the warmer influences to the south gave rise to a state of equilibrium some 15,000 years ago.

This combination of circumstances gave birth to Long Island. The glacier, with its inclusions of rocks, minerals and debris, continued to press onward, but the meltback of its leading edge prevented it from extending further south. The result was a pile-up, as at the leading edge of a conveyor belt, of all the debris, refuse and boulders scraped off Canada and New England, forming a long, unstratified dump known to geologists as a "terminal moraine. This constitutes the primordial North Shore of today.

At the outset, the crest of the moraine was considerably higher than the land surface of today, but meltwater, flowing southward from the retreating glacier, washed the deposited material toward the South Shore. Hence, the South Shore is low and level, while the North Shore is high and hilly. The entire island, consequently, slopes from north to south.

On the North Shore, localized areas of banded or stratified clays, silts and sands mark the courses of old glacier-fed streams which transported the deposits toward the south. The banding results from seasonal changes in temperature much in the same fashion that trees show annual growth rings: during warmer months, the meltwater was abundant and the glacier-fed streams, running high, could transport coarser materials; in colder months, streams ran low and could move only the finer silts and clays. As the face of the glacier retreated, the conveyor-belt effect was lost, and Long Island Sound was left between the moraine and the Connecticut bedrock. Subsequent weathering carved the ravines, gullies and valleys so characteristic of today's

North Shore, and these forces are still at work, inexorably cutting the land down toward sea level.

Upon the surface of the moraine, plants and animals established themselves. We can only speculate as to precisely how life came to these shores. Wind and water-borne seeds account for some of the plant life, and animals may have arrived either as unwilling passengers on driftwood or by swimming across from the mainland. By 5000 B.C., the biosystem, which would later be observed by the first European visitors, was in all likelihood fully established.

THE ANTECEDENTS : PRE-COLONIAL

In 986 A.D., Bjarni Herjolfsson and his crew of Norsemen, having lost their way on a voyage to Greenland, sailed on westward and were probably the first Europeans to see North America. Although they are reputed to have sailed along the northern coasts for a number of days, there is no report that they ever actually came ashore in the New World. The honor of being the first European to set foot in America fell to Leif Ericson in 1000 A.D. While the Norsemen settled for a time no further away than Martha's Vineyard, there is no evidence that they explored to the west of that point. They probably were not aware of the existence of Long Island or Long Island Sound.

The first serious exploration of the Middle Atlantic coast was undertaken in 1524 by Giovanni da Verrazano, who sailed up the coast from the Carolinas, discovered New York Harbor and then sailed along the south shore of Long Island, reputedly putting in at Narragansett Bay before returning to

Europe. It is of interest to note the parallel between Columbus and Verrazano: the former a Genoan, sailing in the service of Queen Isabella of Spain; the latter a Florentine, sailing for King Francis I of France.

In 1610 Hendrik Hudson explored the river which bears his name, and he, as Verrazano before him, observed the City end of our Island. The honor, however, of being the first to explore Long Island Sound and of being the first European to see Shoreham, fell to a Dutchman, Adrien Block. Having lost his ship, Block built a new one in New York in 1614, the "Onrust", and sailed the East River and the Sound. He reputedly discovered Block Island.

Had Block chosen to make a landing at Shoreham, he would have found a land supporting a forest of mixed hardwoods, pines, brush and scrub. Game was available, but not necessarily abundant. Deer, foxes, rabbits, woodchucks, squirrels and chipmunks were here. There may have been a sprinkling of raccoons and opossums. There were skunks also, but they cannot properly be classified as game. Birds were plentiful: quail, pheasant, partridge, woodcock and snipe. The migratory waterfowl and the usual panoply of shorebirds appeared in their seasons. Among the snakes, he would have found blacksnakes, garter snakes, hog-nosed snakes, milk snakes and racers. Nuts, fruits and berries were abundant.

There is little or no evidence that the Indians ever set up villages or camps in Shoreham, although their artifacts have been found on the LILCO property in Wading River. There have been reported findings of arrowhead-like objects here, but if they are in fact arrowheads, the chances are that they are the relics of arrows lost by Indian hunters. Since Shoreham did not have springs or streams convenient for Indians, there would have been little incentive for them to set up camps or villages here. Such of

the Indians as did roam our woods and beaches in search of fish and game were most probably members of the Seatalcoot (today we spell it "Setauket") tribe.

It has been said that the tetanus bacillus present in some of Shoreham's soil is attributable to horses pastured here by the Indians. It seems more likely, however, that those horses belonged to the wood-Choppers who came at a later date.

THE ANTECEDENTS : THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Somewhere around 1645, English colonists from Rhode Island founded settlements on the east end of Long Island, and over the ensuing years their foothold was extended as far west as Wading River. In 1655 Setauket was settled by English colonists from Connecticut; their landholdings eventually spread as far east as Rocky Point. The ports and harbors at the eastern end of the Island, and the harbors at "Ashford", the original name of Setauket, were the focal Points for the development of those areas. Shoreham, lacking ports and harbors and lying on the fringes of the two polarized sub-colonies as a sort of "no-man's-land", was sometimes referred to as being at Rocky Point and sometimes as in Wading River.

In the 1600's we encounter the first colonial governments in the area. In 1664 Charles II of England combined all the lands from the west side of the Connecticut River to the Delaware Bay, together with all of Long Island, as a province, and put it under the rule of his brother, James, Duke of York. In 1655 Long Island, Staten

Island and Westchester were organized as a county under the name of "Yorkshire," and Colonel Richard Nichols was appointed its governor.

At approximately the same time, the Town of Brookhaven was established as a trusteesd form of government by virtue of the so-called "Nichols Charter," granted under the authority of the Duke of York. In the same year, 1655, Richard Woodhull, Sr. secured from the Sachem, chief of the Seatalcoot Indians, a "confirmation" whereunder the Indians gave to the Town of Brookhaven the entire northern section of the Town. In gratitude for his efforts, the Town made a gift to Woodhull of a tract of some 80 acres believed to lie in the eastern part of Shoreham. Evidently there was some doubt as to the validity or effectiveness of this gift, for under date of September 29, 1677 Edward Andros, the then Governor of "Yorkshire, gave to Richard Woodhull, Jr. and Nathaniel. Woodhull, a "patent" confirming the title to those 80 acres which had descended to them from their father, Richard Woodhull, Sr. The language of this confirmatory patent is of extreme interest since it describes this land as:

"lying westward from ye afor said Fresh Brook near a mile at a place called ye "Long Chestnuts."

"Fresh Brook" has been identified as the most westerly of the several small brooks entering Wading River Creek. The description would seem to place the easterly boundary of these lands in the vicinity of Valentine Road, and the lands themselves could have spilled over into what today is the portion of Shoreham lying east of Woodville Road. The old house on the east side of Briarcliff Road, about a half mile north of North Country Road, was at one time owned by a Woodhull and may stand on the site of the original homestead of this Colonial grant. Just how the name "Long Chestnuts" was coined is not certain, but up until the arrival of the

chestnut bark disease in 1910, tall chestnut trees were abundant here, and many of their old stumps are still to be found.

Over the ensuing sixty years there is a hiatus during which little of significance took place. A few smallish homesteads and farms were carved out of the woods. North Country Road and Middle Country Road came into existence; it cannot properly be said that they were built, for they were more in the nature of trails or cart tracks, suitable for passage by cart or on horseback but too primitive to serve even the needs of coaches. It is recorded that as recently as the time of our Revolutionary War, the peripatetic George Washington, on a journey from New York to Boston, found the most acceptable way to go was by horseback to the east end of the Island and thence by boat to Rhode Island. Wading River claims George spent a night there in the course of that journey; Shoreham seems unable to match that claim. Thanks, however, to even these rudimentary roads and the Sound, some commerce was possible: farms and orchards were developing and the woods were yielding to demands for timber and cordwood. A goodly amount of high grade hardwood timber - oak, hickory, walnut and chestnut - was cut, but the supply of wood of this quality was soon exhausted. In the years ahead, second-grade wood in the form of cordwood was to be Shoreham's most exportable commodity.

Around 1720, some of the more foresighted inhabitants of Brookhaven began to recognize the need to clear up title problems which had arisen in regard to the exact boundaries of individual landholdings. In 1723, the Trustees of the Town ordered that the common lands of the Town lying north of Middle Country Road (today's Route 25) be made into "Great Lots." The affected land was supposed to extend from the east line of the town (at Wading River) as far west as

Miller's Place. The limits are vague by today's standards, but probably were sufficient in the context of the times. The survey work needed to perform this directive was never completed, if undertaken at all, and in 1725 it was again ordered by the Trustees. In 1729 the work was completed and the land was laid out in 54 "Great Lots".

It is not the purpose of this Village History to belabor the technicalities of land titles in Shoreham, but some of the matters which are traceable back to the colonial period are worthy of inclusion as matters of general interest.

No sooner had the 54 "Great Lots" been laid out than problems began to arise. As early as 1668 a series of 50-acre "Great Lots" had been laid out by earlier surveyors. Those earlier lots extended along the Sound all or most of the way from Mount Misery to Wading River. For reasons not entirely clear, the 1678 "Great Lots", supposed to contain 50 acres each, did not extend all the way north to the Sound nor all the way south to Middle Country Road. In an attempt to resolve this inconsistency, the Town Trustees in 1735 declared that:

"The common land that lyeth between ye bounds of
ye 50 aker lots and ye Clifts belongeth
to ye lots afor sayd."

This only led to more confusion: what did the 'Trustees mean by the "Clifts"?

In 1753, the 'Town Trustees went after the problem again and declared that the base of the bluffs was the controlling line. But this too had a snag. It seems that in 1686 the then governor, Dongan, had issued a "patent" to the Town Trustees which confirmed their custody and control of all the lands the Town had acquired from the Indians. Under the Dongan Patent, the town might be deemed to own all lands out to low water line, whereas under the 1753 Declaration, the

great lots ran to the foot of the bluffs and under the 1735 Declaration might have been regarded as being bounded by the top line of the bluffs. These early inconsistencies did for many years plague title companies and landholders alike, but now seem to have passed on as interesting historical anomalies.

By 1765 the lands comprising Shoreham were owned by two families - the Sells and the Skidmores. In 1731, the old 80 acre Woodhull parcel at "Long Chestnuts" had been quitclaimed to one Elizabeth Wessells, who in turn in 1733 quitclaimed it to her grandson, James Sells (Sills?). It is probable that all of Shoreham east of Woodville Road was at one time owned by the Sells family.

As to the portion of Shoreham west of Woodville Road, at one time it was owned in large part by the Miller family of Miller's Place. In 1765, however, Richard Miller sold the large farm which he owned there to Peter Skidmore. The consequence was that the Sells and the Skidmores were the only two families in the vicinity for much of the 18th and part of the 19th centuries.

One of the gullies running down to the Shoreham beach was at one time known as "Skidmore's Landing". This landing may have been at or near the Village Hall, or perhaps a short distance to the west. Our Village records disclose, as an incident of a title search of lands near the Village Hall that a deed in the land title records in Riverhead mentions, in 1842, the existence of a right-of-way across the Village lands held by "Peter Skidmore"; the year the right-of-way was established is not reported. While we attempt to push back the frontiers of time by saying that the first name for Shoreham was Long Chestnuts, it can be argued that that name was not applied to lands within the limits of the Incorporated Village, and that the first identifiable name was "Skidmore's Landing".

The Sells interests apparently passed to a related member of the Woodhull family. This Woodhull was a nephew of James Sells. In the early 1800's the Swezeys purchased a major portion of the Skidmore interests, but the Skidmore farm homestead on North Country Road, in the general vicinity of Mc Carrick's today, stayed in the family for some time longer.

There is little recorded data as to participation by Shoreham residents in the Revolutionary War. Our village, caught as it was between the East and West, and being sparsely settled, had little to record. It must be noted that one of the Sellses is reputed to have been an ardent patriot, but other than that there is little to be said.

THE AGE OF TRANSITION : 1776 to 1876

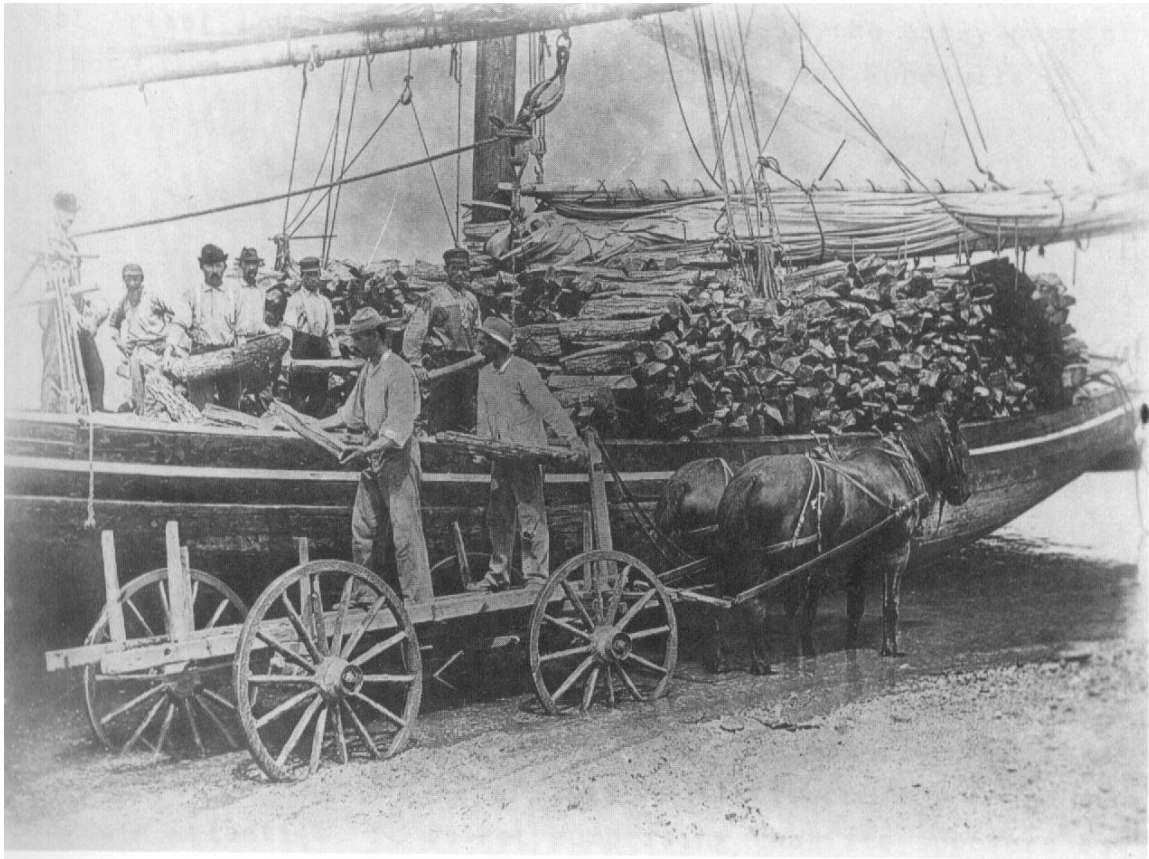
During the century which elapsed between the close of the colonial period and the dawn of what may be called modern Limes, Shoreham was quietly changing from forestlands to an agricultural area. The wood-choppers first directed their attention to the fine timber trees. When that supply was exhausted, their axes fell upon second-grade trees, reducing them to cordwood. Farms were established. Orchards were set out. Roads were built. In 1840, the main line of the Long Island Railroad was opened beyond Yaphank as far as Manorville. Four years later, in 1844, that line was completed to Greenport. The reason behind this enterprise is of interest because it had a bearing, albeit somewhat remote, on the origin of Shoreham.

The first practical steam locomotive to operate in the United States had been imported from England in 1829. It

immediately caught the eye of those interested in the transportation of passengers and goods, and the possibility of developing a railway from New York to Boston was carefully explored. However, the rocky ridges running north and south along the Connecticut shore were felt to pose a problem for roadbed construction, which could not be dealt with in terms of the economics and technology of the times. 'the flat and unchallenging nature of Long Island afforded an alternative: run a line down the middle of the Island to Greenport, whence a short sail would bring the traveller and his goods to New London or Providence for further rail transport to Boston.

That line never realized its original objective, but it did serve as the prime mover of goods, agricultural products and other produce required by or generated by the area. in so doing, it stimulated the growth of the Island to such a degree that the North Shore Branch was eventually opened.

Prior to 1876, the sailing vessel was the prime mover of Long Island's passengers and goods. Scheduled passages were offered between Setauket and New York; sailing vessels were beached at Shoreham to land general cargo and depart with timber and cordwood. A few families settled along North Country Road and Woodville Road. In the early 1800s, a schoolhouse was opened on Woodville Road. Although no trace of it survives, legend has it that it stood close to the northwest corner of Woodville and Fitzgerald roads. It is a matter of record that in 1818 there were twenty-six children in attendance. Primitive roads - trails might be a more appropriate term - fanned out to the east, south and west from Woodville Road to serve the needs of the woodcutters, whose huts and cabins dotted the landscape. Two of those roads, Randall and Ridge, still survive. A third, for the most part abandoned and forgotten, was known as Curran's or Corwin's Road, and cut through the pine



THE "EMMA SOUTHARD" LOADING CORDWOOD

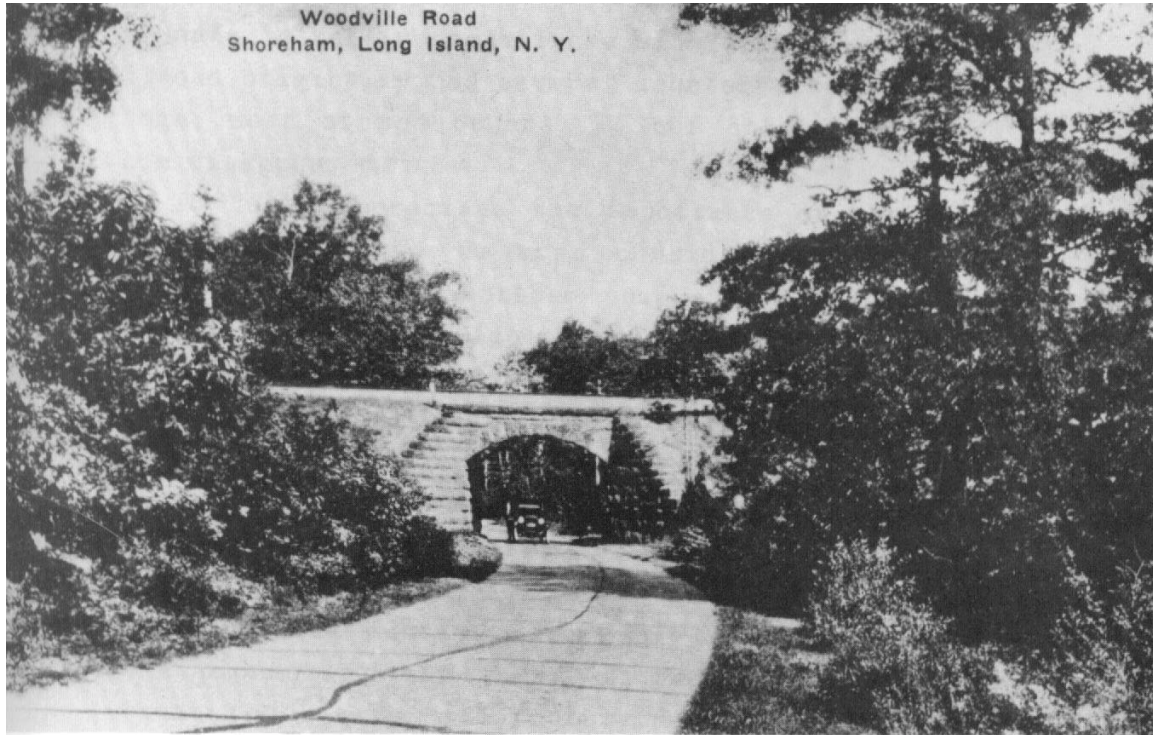
This scene, recorded about 1880 in the closing days of the 11 woodchopper era", shows the typical beaching of a vessel engaged in the cordwood industry. While this scene was probably recorded in Miller Place, it is equally illustrative of what went on at Shoreham's beach. Through the 1920's, when the shoreline was still eroding rapidly, it was common to find old anchors and ships' ironware along the beach between high and low tide lines.

barrens from the south end of Woodville Road to the vicinity of Artist Lake. The dominant families in the early part of those years were the Swezeys, Dickersons and Woodhulls.

THE YEARS OF AWAKENING

At times we malign the Long Island Railroad, but it is most unlikely that Shoreham, as we know it today, could have come into being had it not been for that railroad. Its main line to Greenport, although a disappointment to its builders for having failed to live up to its potential as a link in the New York to Boston run, was a profitable carrier of agricultural produce and cordwood to the city and of the necessities of life to the Islanders. Here was a bulk carrier no longer subject to the uncertainties of water transport or the perils of fogs and storms on the Sound and in the Atlantic. It is not surprising that its sponsors saw the virtue of additional lines to service the ports and bays along the North Shore more adequately. In response to those visions, plans were devised for a line to run from head-of-harbor to head-of-harbor along the Sound.

A branch line was taken off the main line at Hicksville; in 1854 it had been completed to Huntington. By 1873 it had been opened as far as Port Jefferson. In 1895 it was extended to its last station in Wading River, with intermediate stations at Miller Place, Rocky Point and Shoreham. The route of the road from Port Jefferson to Wading River is now marked by the line of LILCO's high tension wires. The only visible features which have endured here are the old brownstone bridge spanning Woodville Road, and one of the old trackside mileposts. Shoreham is indeed



THE TUNNEL

This " recent" photo (late teens or early twenties) looking toward the north is easily recognized. The original concrete road, laid down in 1913, is evident. When the funnel was built in 1894-95, Woodville Road meandered considerably, and was realigned to run squarely through the Tunnel. This way, horse drawn wagons and horses and buggies, the only important means of conveyance, could pass through more easily. Some of the meanders of the old bed of Woodville Road can still be detected in the woods within a few hundred feet of either side of the Tunnel.

fortunate to retain these links with its historic past. The railroad originally had several counterparts of the Shoreham bridge; most of the others, if not all of them, have long since disappeared.

To fully appreciate the importance of the railroad in Shoreham's history, we must consider a subtle magnetism which perhaps makes Shoreham unique in the Electronic Age, namely the coming of Nicola Tesla. Throughout the twentieth century, some elusive factor has, like the Sirens of old, drawn to its environs no less than five generations of electronics.

Tesla was the first of our electronic giants. Not only did he crack the secret of generating high-frequency electric currents and the rotating magnetic field on which all alternating current motors of today are based, but he was a pioneer in the field of radio-controlled torpedoes and, at the turn of the century, described a device which, in the context of today's technology, was plainly the precursor of the electron microscope.

The second generation in electronics is represented by Lee DeForest, who brought the old "Fleming Valve" type of vacuum tube to the degree of perfection needed to open the art of radio telephony. The third generation was the Rocky Point long-wave transmitting station of R.C.A. with its spectacular line of 415 foot steel transmitting towers visible from most parts of the Sound. The fourth generation is the Brookhaven National Laboratory. The fifth, still aborning, is the LILCO nuclear energy plant on the Shoreham Wading River line.

Of these five, Tesla played the most significant role in getting Shoreham off the ground. He was a flamboyant and oftentimes controversial figure. Tesla was born in 1856 in the part of Yugoslavia then known as Serbia. His father was a pastor; his mother, although illiterate, was reputed to have



SHOREHAM STATION

This picture, dating from around 1910, shows the "afternoon Train" (the 3:00 P.M.) pulling in from Wading River en route to New York. The station mistress, Sadie Robinson, had her office at the nearest corner (just behind the telegraph pole) and the sound of her telegraph recorder echoing through the station is one never to be forgotten. The express and baggage office was at the east end of the platform but is obscured by the locomotive. Note the baggage chute on the near side of the stairway.

been an intellectual genius. Following his education at the Polytechnic Institute in Gratz, Austria, and at the University of Prague, he came to this country in 1884. He was armed with a letter of introduction addressed to no less a personage than Thomas Edison. With uncanny insight into the subtleties of mechanics and physics, and with an enormous sense of showmanship, he rapidly progressed to a point where his imagination and skills drew him worldwide acclaim. By the mid-90's his talents had snowballed to such a degree that he could propound with conviction the principle of transmitting electric power over radio waves. Coincidentally, this was about the same time the railroad came to Shoreham, and these two events fortuitously combined to set the stage for the Shoreham of today.

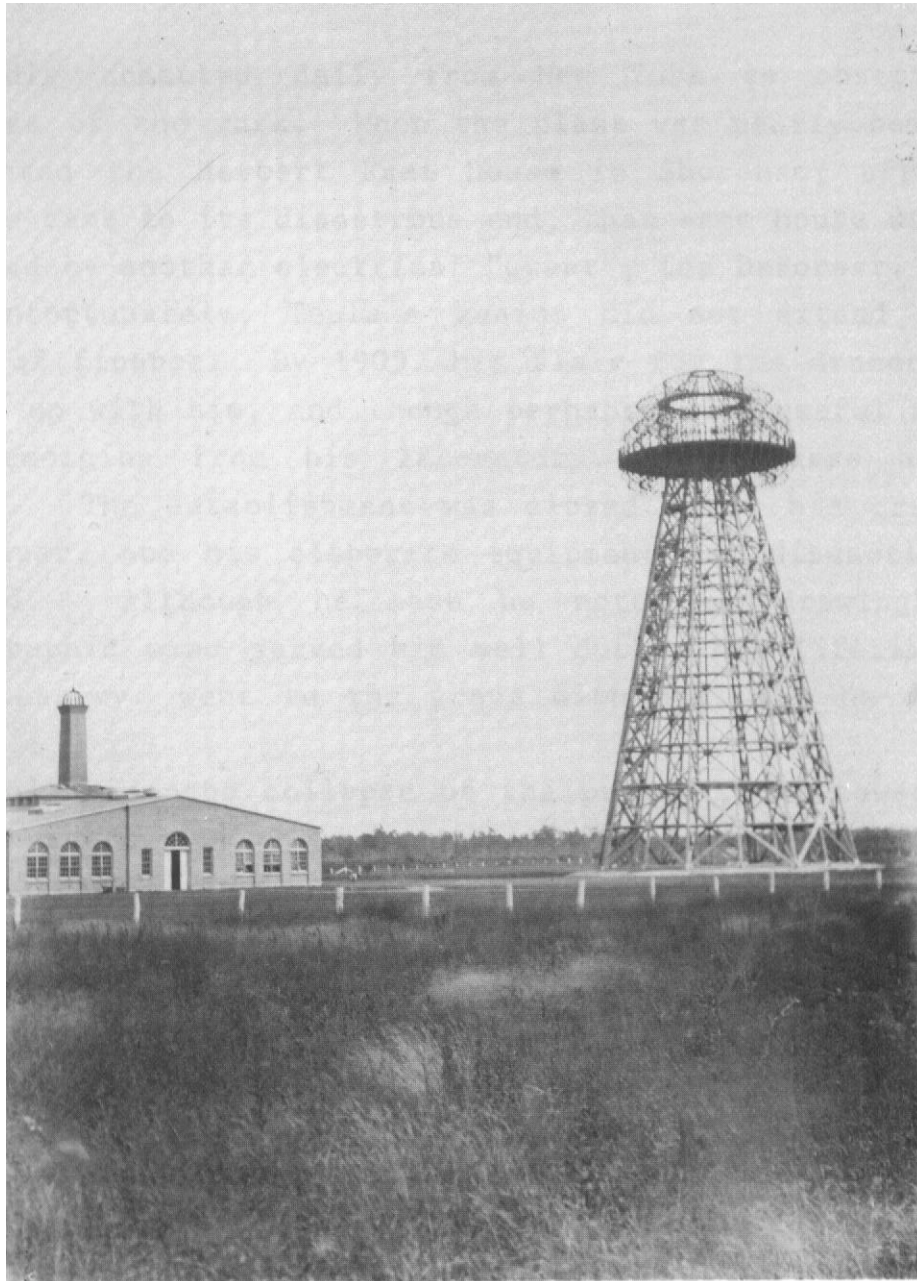
Through his connection with Edison, and despite the fact that Edison believed in the future of direct current vis-a-vis Tesla's overwhelming affection for alternating current, Tesla succeeded in interesting a group of financiers in New York City in backing an experimental laboratory where he could test his theory of transmitting electric power through the air waves. The Shoreham locale seemed ideal for his venture: land was cheap, the railroad was in a position to bring in the needed materials, supplies and equipment, the plant would be reasonably accessible from New York, and he would be close enough to his backers to maintain a constant liaison with them as his work progressed. With a pledge of \$150,000 cash support from J.P. Morgan himself, the stage was set, although he probably realized that the money would not take him all the way to his goal.

To place matters in proper perspective for the entry of Tesla upon the Shoreham scene, a brief Journey back in time is necessary. Somewhere around 1870, the residents of Shoreham Village included at least four families of

Woodhulls, and the names Dickerson, Bush, Reeves, Edwards, White and Skidmore are listed on contemporary maps as homeowners. Most of the old Swezey family holdings had passed to a William B. Dickerson, and upon the death of the latter, they descended to his son, John R. Dickerson, who reportedly died in 1893.

At this juncture James S. Warden appeared on the scene. He was a lawyer and banker from Ohio who, perhaps envisioning a land boom that could result from a proposed extension of the railroad to Wading River, purchased some two thousand acres of land in the vicinity of Shoreham. Much of this land lay to the east of Woodville Road, but part of it was in Shoreham Village. Warden envisioned a development to be built under the name of "Wardenclyffe". Through his connections in banking and financial circles, Warden learned of the current interest in finding a site for Tesla, and appreciating Tesla's genius, was quick to see that if Tesla's dreams were realized, a whole city might spring up to support the hoped-for power plant. Accordingly, Warden set aside some 200 acres of land for Tesla's use, and undertook the construction of a few houses in the Village which, though not as old as some of the earliest, were built some ten years before the "bungalows".

Returning to Tesla, it is recorded that the services of Stanford White, that architectural giant, were engaged to design the laboratory which still stands and now serves as the plant of Peerless Photo Products on Route 25A. In contrast to the grace and beauty of the laboratory building itself, the most spectacular structure in the complex was the bizarre and unprecedented mushroom-shaped transmission tower which Tesla had envisioned. The tower itself was designed and constructed by White's associate, W.D. Crowe of East Orange, New Jersey. Construction work commenced around the turn of the century. While it was in progress, Tesla



TESLA'S TOWER AND LABORATORY

This view, circa 1910, looks southeast from the vicinity of the Shoreham railroad station, and clearly shows the "Man from Mars" aspect of the Tower. Note particularly the floor in the "Dome": it was an enormous copper llcake pan" trapping rainwater which froze in winter, providing the local schoolboys with the best and loftiest skating rink to be found anywhere. In those times, the Schoolhouse was on North Country Road about where Norman Drive comes in today.

dated 1908, suggests that the name "Wardenclyffe" was shortlived, having been superseded in 1906 by the present name "Shoreham".

The person responsible for adopting the present village name is not identifiable. The name itself was most likely brought over from England, since a town by this name is situated some twenty miles southeast of the heart of London, and a seaside town called "Shoreham by the Sea" is located on the shore of the English Channel a short distance to the west of Brighton. Furthermore, a map of the Long Island Railroad dating back to about 1884 contains a reference to "Woodville Landing at Shoreham Beach".

With these observations the background of the Village has been outlined, and we may proceed to view its growth and development. We can identify the three major components of today's Village as follows:

- A) the "Old Village", referring to the original Village on the west side of Woodville Road and north of the Store
- B) the "Estates", the lands within the incorporated limits but lying east of Woodville Road
- C) the "Slopes", west of Woodville Road and south of the Store

Although the name "Shoreham" is not confined to the Incorporated Village today, we find it necessary to limit the scope of the name to the Village proper, and to mention the environs only to the extent that they moulded and influenced the Village's past.

By 1910 Shoreham had, for the most part, acquired the unique qualities it possesses today. We had a General Store. We had a well-known Inn, accessorized by such features as a tennis court and a bathing pavilion. We had a school house. We had water and ice service supplied by a pumping station and refrigeration plant operated by the

Suffolk Land Company. We had a railroad station with two

eastbound and two westbound trains daily. There was a horse-drawn stage line from the station to the Inn. The railroad had two side tracks, a baggage station and a freight station. For the most part, however, the Village was mainly a summer community and vacation resort, inhabited in the winter primarily by those who supported the needs of the summer folks. Roads were primitive. Electric and telephone services were still a few years away, although in 1909, the Town had granted a franchise to a local electric company to provide service to the Village. Cooking was done mainly on kerosene stoves and coal ranges; kerosene lanterns and candles were the principal sources of illumination. Heating was mostly by fireplaces in the cooler periods of spring and fall. With the departure of the summer folks, the Village settled down for the winter months. Snow removal, except perhaps on Woodville Road, was unheard of.

By this time, the Village was on the threshold of a new era the Age of the Automobile. This revolutionary and flexible means of transportation was to shape and mould the character of Shoreham in ways never dreamed of by its founders. No longer totally dependent on the Woodville Store, villagers shopped as far afield as Port Jefferson and Riverhead. Primitive gasoline stations made their appearance, at first dispensing gasoline from five-gallon cans filled from steel drums. The more sophisticated "service stations" sold it from hand-cranked pumps which dispensed one gallon at a time. A chamois-lined funnel was invariably inserted into the auto's tank, in order that the water and other contaminants in the crude fuel then available might be strained out. After having serviced a car, it was not unusual for the station owner to go back to his principal occupations blacksmithing and horseshoeing. There were plenty of horses around, and many a car came to

grief when its tires were punctured by horseshoe nails, or even calks, lying on the highways. Some of the old-timers will recall the village blacksmith, Jim Robinson, who had his shop on North Country Road (25A) just west of the Firestone plant in Rocky Point. Although Jim's primary training was in blacksmithing, it was not long before he was practically a genius in repairing automobiles, even going so far as to weld a broken front axle back into perfect condition.

The automobile, however, demanded a road surface which the old dirt roads in the Village could not provide. Even in summer the roads, because of their steep grades, were mercilessly eroded and gullied by every heavy rain, and horse-drawn graders were endlessly at work filling the washouts. With the narrow tires of the times, cars were frequently mired down in mudholes along the low spots in the streets. The solution was not long in appearing: surface the streets; preferably with concrete.

ROADS AND INCORPORATION

By 1913 the need for a street improvement program was obvious to all. concerned. it is not clear just when or by whom the first significant step in that direction was taken, but apparently in the summer of that year, the 'Town was persuaded to concrete Woodville Road. At the same time Robert Smith, an engineering contractor who then owned the John Bellport house on Tagliabue Road, and whose work in the Huntington area had given him prior experience with the potentials of concrete, got together with A.O. Smith, a former owner of the A. Barnhart house, and between them were

instrumental in inducing the Town to undertake the work, probably on an experimental basis. At about the same time, several of the more affluent property owners in the northern reaches of the Old Village banded together to concrete the roads in their vicinity, which are now known as Gridley Road, Barnhart Place, Tagliabue Road and Thompson Street. It is not clear whether all the work was privately financed or whether the Town absorbed some part of the cost.

In any event, the work was undertaken and a gang of laborers from Italy, Sicily and Sardinia appeared on the scene to build the roads with the relatively crude machinery available in those days. After completing the work, many of them remained in the area and found employment that would take care of them and their families. Many of their descendents continue to live hereabouts. Incidental to the building of those first streets, we also had our first storm drain. It was only a short drain, running from the low point in Gridley Road a short distance to the north and west of Village Building #2 and the west parking lot.

What about the rest of the roads in the Old Village? The work on Woodville Road and the northerly streets was impressive, and a clamor arose to have the rest of the streets similarly improved. Unfortunately, it seemed that the Town felt it had lent enough assistance, and other means for financing the improvements had to be devised. The answer turned out to be simple: incorporate, and thereby create a municipal authority which, through its power to tax, would have the credit standing necessary for the borrowing of the needed funds.

In the summer of 1913, the initial steps to incorporate were taken, and at an election held September 6, the proposal to incorporate the Village was approved. On October 4, 1913, the first village officers were elected: a President, two Trustees, a Treasurer, and a Tax Collector.

A complete list of the principal officers from 1913 to date appears in later pages of this history.

Some of the older reports on Shoreham's history intimate that the purpose of incorporation was to be "exclusive". Your historian takes exception to this version and expresses the view that the real purpose of that action was to provide the Village with the streets it so desperately needed.

Considering the cost of road construction today it may come as a surprise to note how little our roads cost when first built. In 1913-14, an expenditure of \$500 was all that was needed to extend the storm drain south from Gridley Road to Sturgis Road, and an \$18,000 bond issue sufficed to pave the remaining streets. We may note, however, that the concreting of Beach Lane was financed out of current funds. The storm drain under the Siegel and Spier properties, and the storm drain extension from Sturgis Road to Overhill Road were likewise financed out of current funds.

THE ENERGY CRUNCH

On March 11, 1909 the Town granted the North Shore Electric Light and Power Company a franchise to supply electricity in the Shoreham area. In 1910 that company made application to the Public Service Commission for authority to implement the franchise but was turned down. Early in 1911 it renewed its application, which was granted. However there was a second power company - Port Jefferson Electric Light Company - which was also interested in a franchise. Apparently North Shore Electric did not immediately extend its service into Shoreham, and it seems that in the interim.

someone had given Port Jefferson Electric a franchise. There ensued a period of doubt as to which of the companies should cover the Village's requirements, but service was established in 1914. Unfortunately there was considerable trouble with the early wires due to falling trees and branches, and after a severe thunderstorm in July of 1915, an elderly gentleman (ironically a relative-in-law of Lee De Forest) was electrocuted in consequence of touching a downed live wire on Wardencliff Road north of Gridley Road.

Shortly after electricity came in , we also had telephone service. The first exchange was located in the small house still standing on Woodville Road opposite Ashley Lane . The switchboard was manned (today we would probably say l'womaned") by Miss Overton. The first phones were of the sort that had to be hand-cranked to get through to the operator. In humid summer months the service was precarious because the magnetic "drop indicators" on the central switchboard failed to function, and one could ring all day without contacting "central". Nevertheless, the system was not without it compensating benefits: the subscribers to telephone service were so few at the outset that Miss Overton memorized all the local numbers, and you could place a call by name instead of by number.

The electric company - the telephone company the water company - the iceman - the garbage collector the stage coach - the railroad: those were the utilities of the clay . Their total energy requirements for the entire summer season were probably less than what is needed to feed today's automobile population for twenty-four hours.

COMING OF AGE

Having survived the birthpangs of incorporation and the building of concrete roads, the Village fell victim to

the severe epidemic of poliomyelitis which struck in the summer of 1916. Activities ground to a halt. Elaborate preventive measures were adopted: children under sixteen years of age were quarantined for twenty-one days after their arrival in the Village, and also were required to have a health clearance certificate from the communities whence they came. Even these measures did not control the problem, and some children contracted the disease - some seriously but none fatally. By mid-August even sterner measures were adopted: children were prohibited from going to the store, attending church or parties, congregating on the beach or leaving the confines of the Village. With the advent of cooler weather the disease subsided and the controls were lifted.

1917 marked the Country's entry into World War 1. That year and the following constituted a period of marking time, although ripples of excitement arose on rumors that German submarines were operating in the Sound. With the signing of the Armistice in November of 1918, the Village resumed its progress and significant steps in its development came thick and fast.

A spectacle long remembered in Shoreham, and perhaps long regretted in Port Jefferson, was the visit of the Atlantic Fleet to Long Island Sound at about the time of the War. Battleships, heavy and light cruisers, torpedo boats, destroyers, submarines, supply ships and colliers (coal was a principal fuel of the times) steamed up the Sound, deployed and anchored, with Port Jefferson as the chief port of entry for the visit. During a few turbulent weeks of that summer, thousands of "bluejackets" shuttled back and forth between their ships and such of the delights ashore as Port Jefferson was able to provide. From Shoreham's bluffs one could look out on an unbroken dim line of great gray ships and the welter of launches and small boats, ferrying

crews and supplies from ship to ship and between the ships and the shore.

Another memorable event in the Village's life occurred early one morning not long after the Fourth of July in 1919, when the British dirigible R-34 passed over Shoreham on the last leg of the first transatlantic passage by a lighter-than-air craft which had originated in Scotland on July 2. Although larger dirigibles would be built in the years to follow, the old R-34 was indeed an impressive sight as it flew noiselessly and majestically over Shoreham on its way to Mineola.

Just about the time the Village was getting organized, a group of public-minded summer residents founded the Shoreham Country Club. The first clubhouse was the old but solid Log Cabin which stood just South Of the present clubhouse; in fact, it would nearly touch the southwest corner of the present building had it not been taken down at a later date. Little thought was given to youth activities at the outset; the Log Cabin was a haven of refuge for the older residents. There was a gully to the east of it through which the north end of Woodville Road ran down to the beach. To its west was a second gully through which rainwater run-off found its way down to the shore; our present storm drain passes down its former course. Both of these gullies were spanned by footbridges. In 1916 the Log Cabin was made available to the Village for use as a hall, to be used jointly with the Club. That arrangement marked the first link of a long chain which would be forged in future years.

In the winter of 1918-1919 there occurred an event which led to the construction of the first portion of the Village Hall. For many years a feature of the old Shoreham Inn (which was at the site of today's basketball court) was

its related "bathing pavilion" which stood under the edge of the bluff at the north end of what is now the Village parking lot. The pavilion was supported on piles. On its lower level there were dressing rooms, lockers and places for the storage of beach gear; the upper deck was roofed over but open to the breezes on all four sides. It was demolished by a severe storm during that winter. The prime 1-actor in its loss was the battering-ram effect of heavy timbers awash in the flood tides and raging seas which scoured the beaches and eroded the bluffs. During this century our bluff line has receded at least twenty five feet.

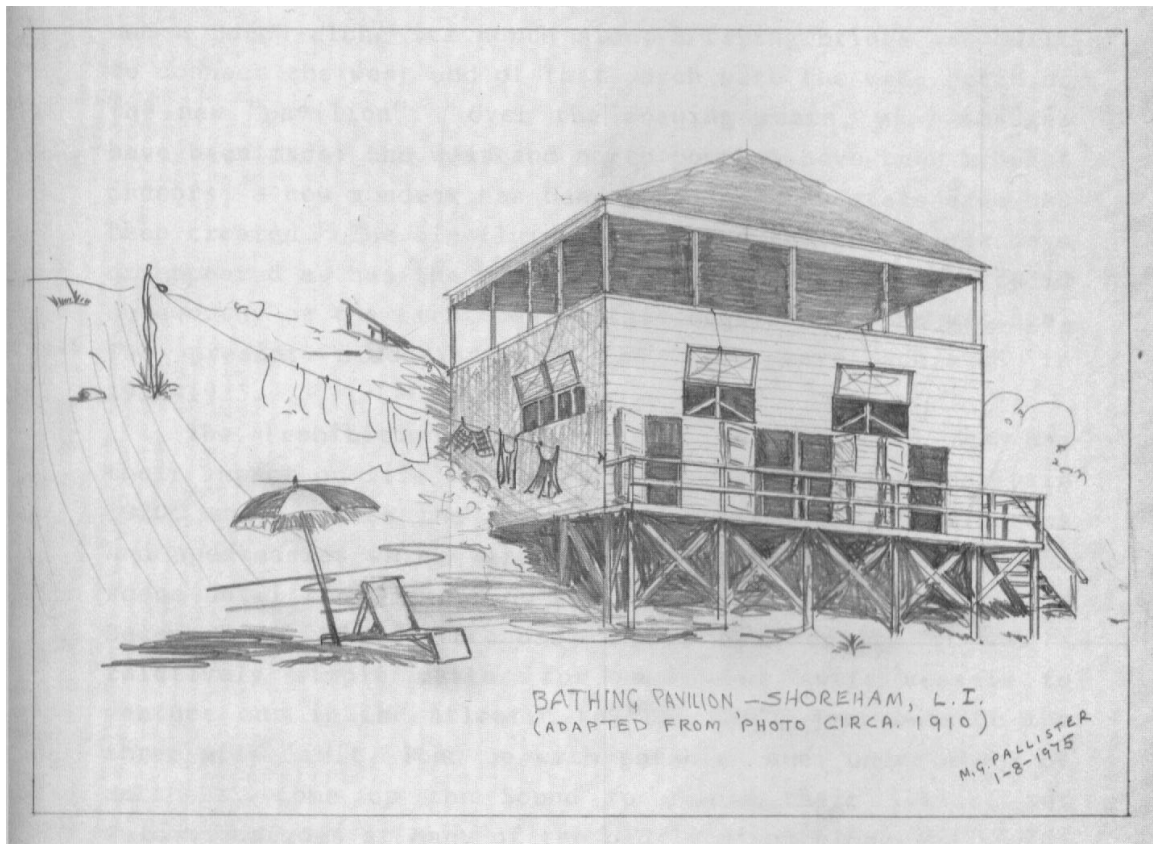
Digressing briefly from the present theme, the story of Shoreham's shore erosion and efforts to contain it are noteworthy.

On the bluff lot where Tagliabue Road reaches its northern terminus, there was in 1908 a smallish bungalow situated perhaps twenty-five feet back from the crest of the bluff . There was also a small gazebo on the lot to the west, likewise near the crest. Both are recognizable in a picture presented elsewhere in this book. Unfortunately, the bluff at this location was an unstable sandslide where erosion worked faster than the regenerative powers of vegetation. By 1924 the porch of the bungalow, the "Barnes Cottage", was hanging over the edge. To salvage it, it was raised, moved back, turned and enlarged at its present location. Eventually the gazebo was lost when the bluff collapsed.

Many solutions to the erosion problem were proposed and tested. Locust posts were set in the sand at the base of the bluffs and backed up by heavy log cribworks. The winter storms demolished them. Cement "pancakes" were cast and

stacked along the base of the bluff . The seas scattered them. At the Madigan property, shielding was attempted in the form of large blocks of rock brought in by barge and unloaded by crane. The source of this material was New York City where the Eighth Avenue Subway was being blasted through the Manhattan schist. The first blocks sank in the shifting sands. More were added in later years which proved effectual. The present sheet-steel piling west of the Village beach was installed by Claude V. Pallister and his neighbor Channing Pollock in or about 1931. and has proven a maintenance-free and effective means of control. For many years the durability of this sheet-steel piling was periodically tested by the U.S. Corps of Army Engineers, who were very much interested in its effectiveness.

Returning to the main stream of the narrative, the other significant event of 1918-1919 was the growing realization that the Log Cabin had outlived its usefulness and had become too small to adequately fill the requirements of either the Village or the Club, both of which were assuming increasingly important roles in the affairs of the residents. In the summer of 1919, preliminary arrangements were worked out for the transfer of the Club property to the Village and the construction of a new "pavilion" to fill the needs of both, with an equitable sharing of costs. Arrangements were finalized in 1920, and the new building went up in 1920-1921. The structure then erected - it will hereafter, for convenience, be designated the "Club" to distinguish it from other Village-owned buildings - was composed of the central portion of the building which stands today. It had screened porches along its west and north sides. The footbridge to Beach Lane was elevated to the level of the present floor, and the old footbridge to the bluff on the east was demolished. The old Log Cabin



BEACH PAVILION

Lacking a definitive photo, this drawing from a snapshot is a faithful reconstruction of what the original Pavilion looked like. It was a part of the Inn's operation, and stood just under the Village parking lot bluff. Note the characteristic beach chair, made of shelving boards and practically indestructible, which for many years was a familiar feature of the beach scene.

had a porch along its north side; a flying bridge was built to connect the west end of that porch with the west porch of the new "pavilion". Over the ensuing years, many changes have been made: the west and north porches have been brought indoors, a new sundeck has been added and the stage area has been created. The old flying bridge and the footbridge have disappeared as has the old Log Cabin. The Club property is noteworthy as the first real estate acquired by the Village. The present dimensions of the Club were achieved in 1934-1935.

The Prohibition Amendment and the Volstead Act had their impact on life in the Village. Taking effect early in 1920, they led to the rumrunners, moonshiners, bootleggers and speakeasies which were a prominent part of the American scene until the Great Drought came to an end with Repeal in December of 1933. Because of our open coast, it was a relatively simple matter for small but swift vessels to venture out in the Atlantic to "Rum Row", just outside the three-mile limit, load up with potables and, under cover of darkness, come up the Sound to unload their illicit but welcome cargoes at many of the old landings along the Sound.

Shoreham did not escape this. Many were the reports of covert night landings at Sills Gully. The old Log Cabin (under the aegis of the "Club") was the spigot at the end of the supply line that catered to thirsty villagers. Its steward and his bird-like assistant produced a broad assortment of potables both imported and domestic. Because of the Village's heritage of orchards and arbors, homemade applejack, brandies and wine were plentiful, as were the only slightly less lethal imports "right off the boat" (some cynics said "scraped off"). To liven things up a bit, the Log Cabin sported a wind-up gramophone and a slot machine or two. The potables and paraphernalia were, however, carefully

stowed away when (under Village auspices) voting took place on election days.

For several summers around the time of World War 1, we were treated to the spectacle of large sailing yachts owned by residents of the Village, their friends and their relatives. These vessels engaged in frequent match races manned by crews recruited from among those of the villagers who had seagoing inclinations and, perhaps, some talents. Herbert Stone, for many years Editor of "Yachting" magazine, was a Village resident in those days, living in the small house on the south side of Overhill Road up behind the store. A keen rivalry sprang up between Stone and his yachting cronies on the one hand, and Richard Upham and his coterie on the other. Among the more notable and spectacular boats participating in those races were Upham's "Sea Fox" and the Stone group's "Santana" and "Bagheera".

For the less affluent., canoes were abundant, rowboats abounded and there was an assortment of dories, catboats and other small craft lying at moorings off the beach. The offshore moorings were precarious at best, and it was a rare vessel - whether raft, dory or catboat - that stayed off the beach in the northeasters which seemed inevitably to follow August's full moon.

Beach life was much different in those days. Bathing costumes were elaborate and cumbersome. Cork "water balls" and wooden pails and shovels, plus toy sailboats, were about the only playthings seen on the beach. Inflatable white canvas "water wings" were the universally accepted life jackets. Beach chairs were homemade affairs constructed of shelving boards. Beach umbrellas have changed little. For a number of years "sun shelters" were popular; they were composed of a framework covered over with a roof of boughs. The dried leaves would last through the summer. The shade afforded by these shelters was of



SHOREHAM BEACH: 1905-1910

The carriages in the foreground have arrived on the beach via the ravine which ran north from the Oval to the Sound. That was the same ravine through which the cordwood was brought down to waiting sloops and schooners in bygone years. Beyond this ravine you can see the site of Beach Lane and today's storm drain. The typical post-and-brush beach shelter appears. Note particularly the "Barnes Cottage" and the "Gazebo" on the skyline"; the shoreline has receded so much that the top of the bluff is now about where the cottage chimney appears.

critical importance in those days when beach apparel was nearly as warm as today's winter garments.

Tennis anyone? Throughout this century Shoreham has had a tradition of being tennis-minded. The first tennis court was just north of the Inn; between it and the Bluff Lot . There have been at least six privately owned tennis courts in the Village: one on the "Gridley" lot at the southwest corner of Gridley and Wardencliff roads; another on the Mazzei lot on Sturgis Road just to the south of the Garvins; a third on the Crane property at Sturgis and Overhill; a fourth on the Stevens property on Briarcliff Road; a fifth on the Reid tract on lower Hill Road, and a sixth on the Pisacano lot on Thompson Street. The Club had one court, and later two, which were located where the Club parking lot is today. When the Clubhouse was enlarged in 1934-35~ those two courts were built at the southeast corner of Briarcliff and Woodville roads on land taken under long-term lease from the Suffolk County Land Company. The two upper-level courts in the same complex are of later vintage.

Squeezed in between the old Log Cabin and its two tennis courts was a house which for many years was occupied by the Jantzer family. When the Club was enlarged and the Log Cabin demolished, that house was jacked up, moved down Woodville Road and planted at the corner of Woodville and Fitzgerald, where it still stands as the residence of the Baisches.

1934 was. a notable year in Village affairs. In addition to the Club improvement, it marked the first of a number of acquisitions and annexations whereunder the Village expanded to its present limits. In the early 1920's the Daily News had acquired lands which now comprise North Shore Beach, and to improve its circulation, was offering small lots at bargain prices to its subscribers. It was not

long before the woodlands west of the Village, which had reverted to an open forest after the departure of the woodchoppers, were giving way to small cottages and full-scale development. This occurrence was not without its advantages. Shoreham for years had feared forest fires, which broke out from time to time in those woods, threatening homes along the west side of the Village. The opening of North Shore Beach quieted those fears, but gave rise to a new problem: vandalism. Furthermore, concern was expressed that the streets of North Shore Beach might be extended to connect with Shoreham's roads and subject them to a traffic burden they were not designed to accommodate. In 1934, a group of citizens raised a fund with which they acquired a strip of some 11 acres along the entire west side of the Village, and deeded it to the Village for park purposes. This strip served as an effective buffer zone along our western boundary.

Fires? We have had our share of them - some trivial, some serious - but fortunately all without loss of life.

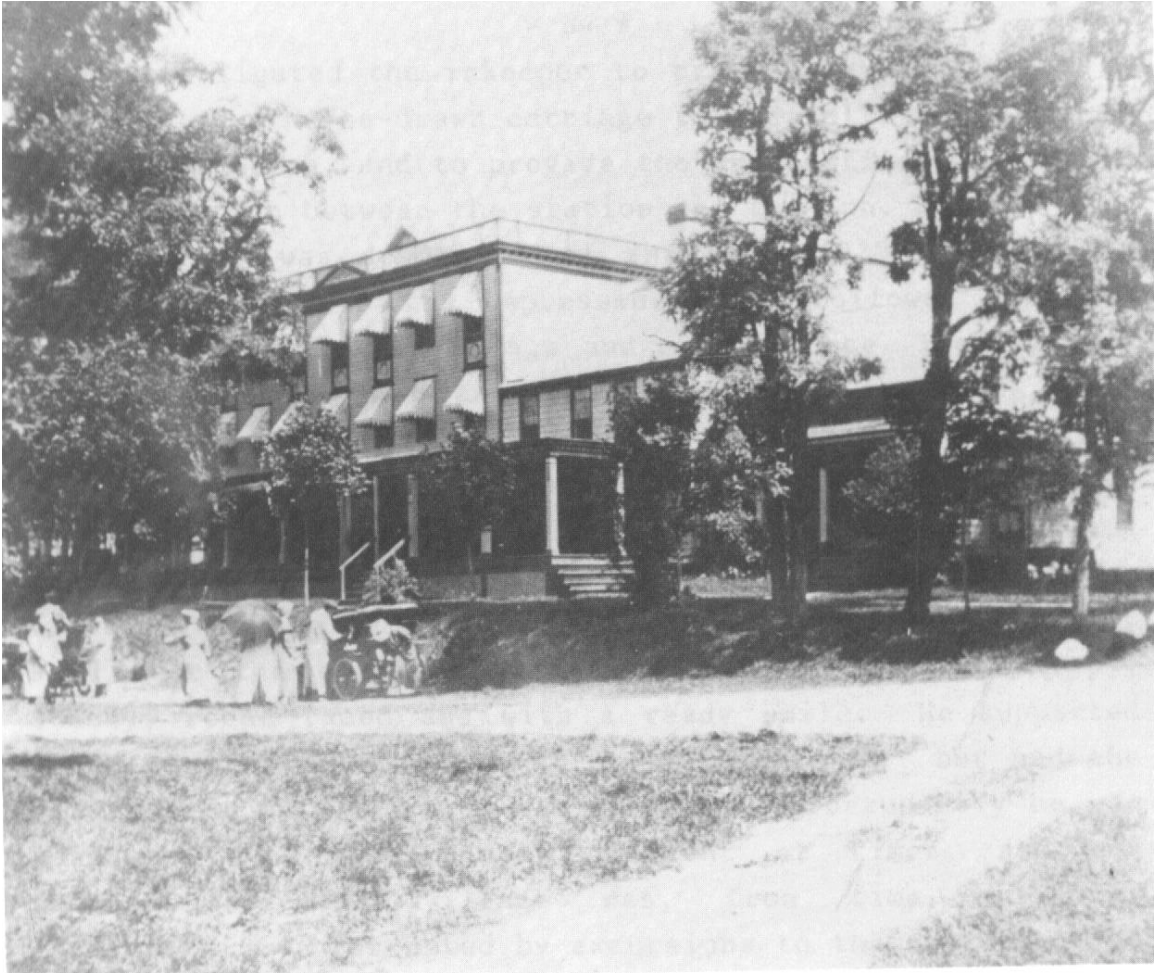
The first major fire totally destroyed the "Millard" house, sometimes referred to as the "Chapman" house, which stood near the bluff line just to the east of the Village's Bluff Lot. Another totally razed the "Burlingame" house, sometimes called the "Murdoch" house, which stood on the site now occupied by the Curtis house. The former "Nye" house on Overhill Road went in the 1930's. A spectacular fire at the height of the summer season in 1928 totally consumed the "Hanan" house which was on the Pisacano lot on Thompson Street. After the fire, the foundation was removed and a tennis court was constructed in its place. The destruction of the old Zenke house in 1967 when it was owned and occupied by G.E. Beatty Jr. and his family, is well remembered. In the days before we had hydrants, about the only tools at hand to combat fires were a hand-drawn hose

cart, some portable extinguishers and a pump. A respectable fire engine operated out of Rocky Point after the North Shore Beach development matured. It was first called in to fight the "Hanan" fire, but because of a breakdown in communications, could not arrive on the scene in time to be effective.

I want to thank Robert R. Oliver for giving me this interesting insert for my father's Shoreham History to augment the information about Shoreham's fire-fighting experiences and capabilities. He and my father were among the original residents of Shoreham's summer community beginning in 1908, and were lifelong friends.

"Our fire losses were indeed substantial and usually total. However, it must have been during those years when Merv was away from Shoreham, when we had our own young volunteer group of fire fighters. A serious attic fire in the old Gilbert Frei house was extinguished while a dinner party was in progress below. A major fire in the Roger Adams house on Overhill Road was successfully contained until the arrival of the Rocky Point company. The Herbert Frei home was saved from probable total loss by our young boys. A number of building and brush fire calls were answered, as well, in the greater Shoreham area. It was during those years that we had our own two antique fire engines which proved themselves on such occasions to be practical as well as ornamental."

The Shoreham Inn (pictured elsewhere herein) deserves mention in this history. It was for many years owned by the Suffolk Land Company, which hoped that patrons of the Inn would become prospective buyers of home sites both in the Village and in the Estates. The first proprietor your historian can recall was a Mr. Chapman. He was followed by the Lynn family, which later ran the store. The Lynns were followed by the Flaveils. Under both the Lynns and the Flavells, the Inn gained Island-wide acclaim and was noted for the excellence of its food. A copy of one of the old proprietor's leases survives, and it is of interest to note



THE SHOREHAM INN

From the design of the automobile, it can safely be said that this scene dates from around 1910. The view is toward the northwest as seen from the southwest corner of Gridley front of the figures to the left.

that it obligated the inkeeper to provide "taxi service" in the form of a horse-drawn carriage to meet all trains at the railroad station, and to provide the prospective guests with transportation between the station and the Inn.

The Inn was demolished in the early 1930's. a victim, no doubt, of both the Depression which followed the 1929 market crash and its own age and obsolescence. The story of its passing from the scene is a curious one, involving as it does a perhaps obscure but colorful character - "Crazy Joe". Born in Italy, he appeared here when the concrete roads were being laid, and was one of the crew of laborers performing the work. After the roads were down, he stayed on in the vicinity, living in one of the small houses on North Country Road near the church. He was a likeable chap; swarthy, stocky, round faced and with a ready smile. He supported himself with gardening work for the most part, but had the versatility of a Jack-of-all-trades. Unfortunately he was possessed of "the vapors", violent at times, and his presence in the Village was, from time to time, involuntarily interrupted by excursions to the west where he was a guest at Kings Park. When the time for the demolition of the Inn arrived, he was in one of his better intervals; at least lucid enough to offer his services to demolish the Inn for "salvage" Accordingly he, together with some associates" commenced the work, but before it was completed they hit a snag. A letter from the State Labor Department arrived, touching upon the need for insuring his employees engaged in the project. Joe saw trouble ahead. This touched off another spell of "the vapors", and one morning, after he had been observed in his usual activities for several days, he was found dead in one of the Inn's remaining buildings. He had hanged himself.

'THE GLORIOUS FOURTH

No history of our Village would be complete without a review of one of its most unique and durable institutions: the Fourth of July celebrations. For no less than sixty years, Independence Day has marked the Grand Opening for our summer season, and Labor Day (proclaimed in 1894) has signaled the close of the halcyon "days of wine and roses".

Yearly since time began, meaning thereby at least as far back as 1916, the late sleepers of the Village, perhaps aroused from the torpor of sleep induced by overindulgence in the potables offered at the Log Cabin the previous evening, would be awakened by the call "ALL OUT FOR THE BIG PARADE", and announcements of the day's feasts and galas.

For those of us who were younger, however, the Great Day had commenced at the crack of dawn. When we recall that in the earliest days the concept of "daylight-saving time" did not exist (having first been proclaimed in 1918 as a World War I measure), .so the "crack of dawn" meant something like 4:00 A.M. standard time. The denizens of the Log Cabin would barely have had time to crawl under their sheets before the cacaphony of the "Day of Days" began. To be honest, the day for children had begun many days earlier, sometimes as much as three weeks earlier, with the collection and organization of the paraphernalia and impedimenta requisite to the performance of the day's "fire ritual". Among the sine.qua non of the times, we may mention:

cap pistols and caps

firecrackers of assorted sizes, initially two-, four- and six-inch salutes being most acceptable, followed by packeted multiple-firing "Chinese" firecrackers

carbide cannons (mostly for the timorous)

"Torpedoes" (miniature paper "baggies" filled with fine gravel and containing a percussion-type cap which detonated when thrown with youthful vigor on the cement road)

"Devil Walkers" (smallish discs which, when ground under the heel, crackled venomously and emitted malodorous vapors)

"Snakes" (small whitish pills which, when ignited by punk or match, writhed and expanded obscenely into twisted brownish worms), and perhaps not well known outside Shoreham

the "Apple Cannons" (about which, the less said the better)

These, together with a requisite supply of punks and matches, were all that were required to properly greet "The Morning's First Gleam". For the end of the day there would be Roman Candies, Sparklers, Colored Fire, Skyrockets (only a few because they were expensive), Star Mines, Vesuvius Fountains and an occasional Pinwheel.

To return to our story, honors for the day probably went to the child who first detonated his firecracker on that Great Morning. One crash was enough; all the children were promptly up, dressed and out on the streets. The racket of firecrackers, cannons and cap pistols rose in a crescendo which only the dead, the deaf and the very ancient could ignore. By seven in the morning, the less

provident of the children would already be running out of their hoards of ammunition. They were being reduced to the ignominy of unravelling the fuses of their little Chinese firecracker packets and firing, individually, their rather miserable little components. Many of these either merely Sputtered or failed completely because, instead of gunpowder, they were adulterated with Chinese clay which, in the view of many parents, was infused with tetanus bacilli. At this time of day, bold measures were taken to attain the most spectacular firecracker explosions: tin cans were blown rocket-fashion high in the air. One regrettable incident occurred when one of our venturesome youths tried the inadvisable experiment of exploding a six-inch salute in a glass milk bottle, and spent the day having glass splinters removed from various parts of his anatomy with a pair of tweezers. After greeting the dawn, a spell of relative calm prevailed while breakfast was being consumed and spirits were being refreshed for the next round.

Except for the evolution of the firecrackers into cherry bombs and the latter into whatever more fiendish devices still persist, these opening hours of the Fourth, and the closing hours to come much later, are the aspects of the day's festivities which have undergone the least change over the years. They are the hours of the day which belong primarily to the children, and who wants to change Santa Claus?

In trying to look back through the mist of years your historian has found it difficult to set forth in proper sequence the various evolutionary stages that this Village went through in developing today's accepted rituals. Characteristically we have always had a parade, followed by a ball game, and in the afternoon, races, track and field events.

The town criers' summonses were answered by the



THE OVAL

This is scene looking north, probably dates from around 1910. Part of the Inn may be seen under the trees at the extreme right. Just to the right of the buggy is part of the backstop of the Inn's tennis court. Woodville Road went to the beach through the ravine hidden by trees and shrubs in the Oval. The old "Log Cabin" can be made out under the trees to the left. The old Pavilion is hidden under the rim of the bluff.

assemblage of all citizens at the Oval in early years; more recently on Wardencliff Road, Sometimes we had a band, sometimes not. At first we paraded (struggled might be the more appropriate word) up Woodville Road, all the way through the tunnel to the old "ball field" which lay between Woodville Road and today's N. Y. Telephone building. The recipe for the parade was equal parts of small children on foot or bicycle and grown-ups in automobiles.

Our so-called ball park was, in fact, no more than a hay lot which had been cleared the previous day by a horse-drawn mowing machine to provide a stubbly but acceptable playing field. There was no backstop. Behind home plate there was a thicket of poison ivy, luxuriant and virulent enough to discourage most of us from entering to search out foul ticks, passed balls and wild pitches. As the innings wore on and the remaining supply of baseballs diminished, rewards of 5q per ball (a princely sum in those day) were offered for retrievals. One of those games nearly ended at the half-way point when the entire supply of twelve balls had disappeared in the ivy, and even though the bounty was raised to a dime, only one was retrieved to permit a precarious completion of the game. The outfield was shallow, and many a ball was lost in the woods to the northwest. A loss of a ball in that area spelled trouble for the spectators. To relieve the tedium of waiting for the ball to be retrieved, the occupants of the spectator cars lined up along the first-base line - were subjected to a merciless bombardment of firecrackers tossed into their midst by the slightly older and therefore (presumptively) more provident boys who had not recklessly squandered their carefully collected treasures in the ecstasies of "The Dawn's Early Light".

For many of those early years, the competition was between the Marrieds and the Singles (men, of course; no one

had thought of Women's Lib at that time). Later, the rivalry was between Shoreham and Wading River. This, however, was not an entirely happy arrangement from Shoreham's point of view, since the latter more often than not came out on top and, regardless of who lost, the winner was invariably accused of having recruited "ringers" who shouldn't have been allowed to play in the first place. The games at the old ballpark were invariably "hardball games", not the softball contests that prevail today. Injuries, none serious, were common. Somewhere around the time of World War II the ballgame pattern changed. Instead of being, played on our field, at least one was played in Wading River on a field near their present elementary school, and at least one was played on "Siegel's" front yard. When the ballfield on Woodville Road near the tennis courts was opened, or perhaps even before that, the parade was shortened and the old ballpark south of the Tunnel went into eclipse.

By afternoon in those early days, matters became rather involved. Some of our older residents, who today might be on the golf links, had signed up for a bit of sailing and were out on the Sound on the yachts (the Santana or the Bagheera mentioned earlier). Others stayed ashore for the field events on the bluff lot north of the Inn. The activities included the tug-of-war, the three-legged race, the sack race, and for the youngsters a potato race. Of course all of these were to the accompaniment of firecrackers and cap pistols.

Eventually the bluff property was deemed unacceptable, and the afternoon field events were cut down to children's competitions, staged on the northerly end of Woodville Road. There were foot races. 'There were bicycle races from the store to the tennis courts. For those old in years but young in spirit, there were firehose races, the losers wind-

ing up thoroughly soaked. The races for the children were invariably on a handicap basis, and the arguments as to whether or not the handicappers were being biased were loud and vociferous. Later still, water events were added to the day's program.

By evening the survivors among us, bruised, abraded, contused, lacerated, linimented and bandaged, assembled on the beach for the fireworks. The hour's advantage that Mother Nature had gained in the morning was now repaid; darkness fell at 8:00 P.M. Shortly before that, the celebration started in a far more diverse and spectacular fashion than today. Come 7:30 in the evening, 8:30 by our present standards, the cooling southwesterly wind had steadied down, and the time had arrived to start launching the balloons. Ordinarily about eight or ten would be on hand. They were tissue-paper affairs with a hot-air generator consisting of a wad of excelsior soaked in paraffin wax, capable of burning perhaps ten or fifteen minutes. The smaller of them, four or five feet high and shaped like pigs or elephants, were reasonably tractable, but while relatively easily launched, lost their character when aloft. The large candy-striped ones, however, were as much as eight to ten feet tall and hard to inflate. They were released from the foot of Beach Lane, where they were mostly protected from the fitful gusts of the dying southwester, and where willing hands along the steps could hold the fragile tissue clear of the sputtering hot-air generators. Even so, casualties were frequent; the breezes would blow the tissue within the reach of the flaring paraffin and the balloons disappeared in a burst of flame. Those that became airborne soared majestically upwards and outwards over the Sound, and rose steadily until, invariably, an air current from the northwest was reached. Then they turned sharply and flew southeast until their fuel was

exhausted and they fell into the scrub pines of the inner reaches of the Island. There is an authenticated record of one such balloon having been launched in Bayshore one summer day and found in Shoreham near the Sarkany house the following morning.

As darkness fell, Roman Candles stabbed at the darkness, Star Mines and Vesuvius Fountains appeared like miniature volcanoes, colored fire gave a garish glare to the scene, and sparklers, like small nests of fireflies, lived their brief lives and expired. In the early years the spectaculars were the skyrockets. Launched from their cradles on the beach, they roared skyward ahead of a trail of sparks, only to end in a display of crashes, sparks and strings of parachuting lights, changing colors before perishing in a watery grave in the Sound. While the balloons have left the scene, and the rockets have departed before the inroad of aerial torpedoes and "bombs", the fireworks still retain their early appeal. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who so unselfishly paid for those fireworks, and who risked life and limb to set them off.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In Shoreham we have prime examples of a popular American pastime - name changing. Not only have the street names all been changed, but the area has had a bewildering number of names during the relatively brief span of its settlement and development.

The first name, as mentioned earlier, was "Long Chestnuts". This was followed by "Skidmore's Landing", then in succession by "Swezey's Landing", "Woodville", "Woodville Landing", "Woodville Farms", "Shoreham Beach", "Wardenclyffe", "Oak Ridge" and finally "Shoreham".

Not one of the roads in the Old Village retains its original name; some have had their names changed twice. Elsewhere the street names have held, except for Ashley Lane which, at the turn of the century was called "New Road". Woodville Road, still sometimes called "Woodville Landing Road", was formerly "Swezey's Landing Road". The original street names in the Old Village were assigned by the developer, the Oak Ridge Company.

In July of 1927, the Trustees of the Village decreed that the then prevailing street names were "significantly to nothing connected with the history or development of the community", and proceeded to change them all. Some of the new names assigned in 1927 were again changed in later years to accommodate changing times and to honor prominent citizens.

Thompson Street was originally "Campbell Street". The former name was that of an early abutting owner; the new name that of an early owner of the Madigan property. Since neither Campbell nor Thompson was a resident in 1927, the reason behind this change is not apparent. Although not memorialized on any map or street sign, the minutes of a 'trustees' meeting in 1947 record their vote to change the name of the portion of Thompson Street lying west of Tagliabue Road to "Finale": a bit of whimsy to honor Mrs. Florence Finn, a former owner of the Madigan property.

Wardencliff Road and Beach Lane originally comprised "Flint Street"; the derivation of the early name is unknown. Wardencliff honors one of the early families of the Village.

Tagliabue Road was formerly known as "Perkins Street" the old name being of unascertained origin. The new name honored Charles J. Tagliabue, a prominent figure in the early days of the Village.

Fitzgerald Road was formerly "Walker Street"; again, the origin of the old name is unknown.

The present name honors a long-time resident who lived in the house where the Mc Cables are today. Officially the new name was Fitzgerald "Street", but "Road" found more popular acceptance.

Sturgis Road was originally "Holton Road", the old name honoring the developer's chief architect. The new name honors Dr. Sturgis, a former owner of the Beatty Sr. property.

Overhill Road was originally "Oak Ridge Road". Oliver Road was originally Oak Lane; between those names it was called "Oak Road". The present name honors E.W. Oliver, another prominent citizen.

The most complex name-changing situation has been reserved for last. Gridley Road, Barnhart Place and Prospect Street were originally named, collectively, as "Barton Road", honoring one of the developer's construction engineers and contractors. Prior to acquiring the present name, Barnhart Place was known as High Street under the 1927 resolutions. The present name was adopted in 1975 to honor Albert W. Barnhart, for many years mayor of the Village. The old name "Gridley Road" honors an old-time resident who owned lands on the south side of the street between Wardencliff and Tagliabue. The short stretch of Prospect between Tagliabue Road and Barnhart Place was apparently regarded as a portion of old Barton Road, although the logic of such a circumstance is far from obvious.

EXPANSION AND GROWTH - 1934 to 1966

The Village boundaries as laid out at the time of incorporation in 1913 persisted until 1934, a span of twenty-one years, and underwent their first change when the west buffer strip was added in the latter year. This expansion

was followed in 1937 by the annexation of the old bed of Woodville Road north of the Oval. In that year, the Town relinquished whatever vestiges of right it still might have asserted to its long-abandoned right-of-way over those lands.

A major item of growth came in 1951 with the annexation of Shoreham Estates the lands east of Woodville Road, which had been part of the old James Warden property anticipating Tesla. In simplest terms, the acquisition (annexation) which nearly trebled the Village's acreage, embraced the tract bounded westerly by the old east line of the Village and Woodville Road, northerly by the Sound, easterly by Briarcliff Road, and southerly by an irregular line conveniently characterized as the north line of Suffolk Downs lands designated as "Shoreham Beach Section L".

In 1959 the "Shoreham Slopes", between Woodville Road and North Shore Beach, and between Overhill Road and the LILCO power line, were added. The final step was the admission of the lands between the Slopes and North Country Road (25A) where the LILCO lines, the new Episcopal Church and the Telephone building are now located.

During those years of growth, not only was the Village expanding its limits but it was also acquiring property within its limits for various municipal purposes. As late as 1920, when the Village was seven years old, it possessed no real estate and had no Village Hall or other public buildings. Meetings and elections were being held (by sufferance) in the old Log Cabin which, at that stage, belonged to the Club. The Village's acquisition of the Club lands and the erection of the "Pavilion" to serve as a Village Hall have been reviewed elsewhere.

When the western buffer strip was deeded to the Village age in 1934, it was designated for park purposes. A similar treatment was accorded the north end of Woodville Road when

released from highway easements in 1937. In 1946 a small triangle of land on the south side of Overhill Road near Oliver Road was deeded to the Village for "park or cemetary purposes". in an intricate series of unrelated transactions extending over many years, the boundaries of the Village Hall I (Club) property were adjusted. In 1950 the bluff parking lot became Village property. Early in 1954 Julie Sackett, in memory of her father, gave the Village the lands which now bear his name, Major Hopkins Park, on Woodville Road opposite the Store. Later that year, the Village added the ballpark lot on Woodville Road. Thereafter the lands of the tennis courts, basketball court and paddle tennis courts were acquired. Late in 1961 the house west of the oval was donated to the Village by the Mullers. When the lands comprisling the "Slopes" were annexed, various strips along its margins were acquired, some being appropriated for park purposes and others as recharge basins to accommodate surface water runoff along Woodville Road.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS
OF
THE VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM
1913 – 1976

VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM, NEW YORK
(Incorporated 1913)

MAYORS

Note: Prior to 1927 the office was designated "President".

1913-1915	Claude V. Pallister
1915-1916	Charles J. Tagliabue
1916-1917	William J. Thompson
1917-1918	Alfred W. Varian
1918-1919	Robert W. Smith
1919-1920	Elmer W. Oliver
1920-1922	Frank W. Gridley
1922-1923	Charles J. Tagliabue (Dec'd)
	Alfred W. Varian
1923-1924	Julian A. Acosta
1924-1925	Claude V. Pallister
1925-1926	DeWitt Bailey
1926-1927	Cary D. Waters
1927-1930	Edward F. Stevens
1930-1932	Cary D. Waters
1932-1938	Arthur J. Sackett
1938-1940	Cary D. Waters
1940-1942	Sheldon DuCret
1942-1946	Henry J. Laurencot
1946-1950	Albert W. Barnhart
1950-1951	Frederick W. Finn
1951-1954	Gilbert F. Frei
1954-1957	John F. Varian
1957-1966	George E. Beatty Sr.
1966-1970	Howard J. Curtis
1970-	Frank J. Connolly

VILLAGE TRUSTEES

J.A.Acosta	1922, 1925, 1928-30
T.J.Adams	1950-52
DeW.Bailey	1923-24, 1926-27
E.A.Baisch	1971-74
A.W.Barnhart	1943-45
E.A.Barnhart	1965-66
J.Baylis	1957-63
G.E.Beatty	1953-56
G.E.Beatty Jr.	1968-
E.D.Belknap	1929, 1934
J.R.Brandon	1924-26
C.R.Conkling	1970-
F.J.Connolly	1966-69
W.O.Cook	1961-64
H.J.Curtis	1960-65
S.DuCret	1935-38, 1942-48
L.A.Eddy	1925-28
T.K.Elliott	1934-41
Jas.Ewing	1955-56
A.G.Fradenburgh	1913-14, 1916
F.W.Finn	1942-49
R.L.Giffen	1934-35
J.C.Jehle	1972-
H.Jewett	1952-55
Chas.Keenan	1956-57
J.M.Knox	1951-52
F.A.Koch	1937-44
H.J.Laurencot	1940-41, 1946-49
M.H.Lewis	1931-32
J.I.Madigan	1956-65, 1967
J.T.McCrystal	1966-71
G.F.Muller	1958-60
E.W.Oliver	1914, 1921-26
R.R.Oliver	1950-51, 1953-54, 1964-67
C.V.PallisLer	1915-16
S.Palm	1945-50
A.J.Sackett	1931, 1938-39
E.T.Siegel	1957-59
C.J.Sigmund	1968-70
R.W.Smith	1917
J.Stangby	1954-55
E.F.Stevens	1930, 1936
W.J.Thompson	1915, 1917-22
C.J.Tagliabue	1916-21
A.W.Varian	1913-16, 1918-24, 1930-33
J.F.Varian	1949, 1952-53
L.L.Wallace	1950-51
R.D.Warden	1914-15, 1917-19
C.D.Waters	1927-29, 1932-33, 1935-37
	1940-42
E.J.Weiss	1975-
F.O.Zenke	1926-35, 1939

VILLAGE TREASURER

1913-1917	Frank W. Gridley
1917-1920	Thomas Blodgett
1920-1921	Edward F. Stevens
1921-1922	Jules DeLagerborg
1922-1923	H. Lyles Zabriskie
1923-1925	John R. Brandon
1925-1927	William H. Rudolph
1927-1929	B.E. Smythe
1929-1931	Herbert W. Todd
1931-1935	John W. Haslett
1935-1939	Montgomery H. Lewis
1939-1940	Henry J. Laurencot
1940-1943	Albert W. Barnhart
1943-1947	Gilbert F. Frei
1947-1949	L.L. Wallace
1949-1951	J.M. Knox
1951-1954	James G. Stangby
1954-1957	E.T. Siegel
1957-1960	A. Handal
1960-1961	Walter O. Cook
1961-1962	Harold H. Smith
1962-1963	Kimball P. Hall
1963-1964	Dorothy Cook
1964-1966	Frank J. Connolly
1966-1970	James G. Stangby
1970-1971	Mildred Cippolina, C.T. Erickson
1971-1972	C.T. Erickson, Laura Schmidt
1972-1974	Daniel T. Sweeney
1974-1976	Frances A. Sweeney

VILLAGE CLERK

1913-1927	John R. Melville
1927-1949	Wesley J. Sherman
1949-1950	Herbert G. Frei
1950-1952	Alfred Kelleher
1952-1953	J.Thomas Miles
1953-1957	E.T.Siegel
1957-1958	Haskell Frei
1958-1961	Walter O. Cook
1961-1962	Harold K. Smith
1962-1963	Kimball P. Hall
1963-1964	Dorothy Cook
1964-1966	Frank J. Connolly
1966-1970	James G. Stangby
1970-1971	Mildred Cippolina
	C.T. Erickson
1971-1972	C.T. Erickson
1972-1974	Daniel T. Sweeney
1974-1975	Frances A. Sweeney
1975-1976	Frances A. Sweeney
	Mary M. McCabe

THE END