

DESCRIPTION of the BARNSTABLE COUNTY, of the County of Barnstable, from Race Point, in latitude 42 degrees 45 minutes, to Cape Cod Harbour, or Sandy Point, in latitude 41 degrees 45 minutes, pointing out the spots on which the Trustees of the Humane Society have erected huts, and other places where shipwrecked seamen may look for shelter. By a Member of the Humane Society. — 1804.

The first hut of the above, is on the west side of Provincetown, and south of Race Point, is called "Herring Cove," which is 3 miles in length. There is good anchoring ground here, and vessels may ride safely in 4 or 5 fathoms of water, when the wind is from north-east to south-east.

On Race Point stand about a dozen fishing-huts, containing fire-places and other conveniences. The distance from these huts to Provincetown, which lies on Cape Cod Harbour, is 6 miles. The passage is over a sandy beach, without grass or any other vegetable growing on it; and the woods, through which is a winding road to the town. It would be difficult, if not impossible, for a stranger, to find his way thither in the dark; and the woods are so full of ponds and entangling swamps, that if the road was missed, destruction would probably be the consequence of attempting to penetrate them in the night.

To ride far from Race Point commences a ridge, which extends to the head of Stout's Creek. From this ridge to the east, on the left hand of the ridge is the sandy shore; on the right is a narrow sandy valley, beyond which is naked sand, reaching to the hills and woods of Provincetown. This ridge is well covered with beach-grass, and appears to owe existence to that vegetable.

Beach-grass, during the spring and summer, grows about 2½ feet. If surrounded by naked beach, the sprouts of autumn and winter heap up the sand on all sides, and causes it to rise nearly to the top of the plant. In the ensuing spring the grass sprouts anew; it is again covered with sand in the winter, and thus a hill or ridge continues to ascend, so long as there is a sufficient beach to support it, or all the circumscribing sand, being also covered with beach-grass, will no longer yield to the force of the winds.

On this ridge, half way between Race Point and the head of Stout's Creek, the trustees of the Humane Society have erected a hut. It stands a mile from Peaked Hill, a land-mark well known to seamen, and is about two and a half miles from Race Point. Seamen, cast away on this part of the coast, will find a shelter here; and, in north-east storms, should they strike to the westward of it, and be unable to turn their faces to the windward, by passing on to Race Point, they will save time to the fishing-huts before mentioned.

At the head of Stout's Creek, the trustees have built a second hut. Stout's Creek is a small branch of East Harbour, in Truro. Many years ago there was a body of salt-marsh on it, and it then deserved the name of a creek. But the marsh was long since destroyed; and the creek now secretly exists, appearing only like a small depression in the sand; and being entirely dry at low tide. The creek runs from north-west to south-east, and is nearly parallel with the shore on the beach, from which it is at no great distance. Not far from it the hills of Provincetown, which should not be found, by walking round the head of the creek, with the tide to the west, the hills on the right hand, and keeping close to the shore on the harbour, for less than an hour the shipwrecked seaman would come to Provincetown.

The Humane Society, several years ago, erected a hut at the head of Stout's Creek, on a bare, barren, and improper situation, having a chimney in it, and was placed on a spot where no beach-grass grew. The strong winds blew the sand from its foundation, and the weight of the chimney brought it to the ground; so that, in January, 1802, it was entirely demolished. This event took place about six weeks before the *Brutus* was cast away. If it had remained, it is probable that the wreck of the *Brutus* and the crew of that ship would have been saved, as they grided the shore very near to the spot where the hut had stood.

The hut now erected stands on a place covered with beach-grass. To prevent any accident from befalling it, on the other hand near Peaked Hill, the trustees have secured the attention of several gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Dr. Thaddeus Brown, and Capt. Thomas Smiley, of Provincetown, have engaged to inspect both huts, to see that they are supplied with stores of every kind, and that the doors and windows are kept shut, and that the huts are repaired when necessary. The Rev. Mr. Dabney, of Truro, has also promised to visit the hut at Stout's Creek twice or thrice a year; and the Rev. Mr. Whitman, of Wellfleet, distinguished through the country for his activity and benevolence, has undertaken, though remote from the place, the maintenance of the huts.

From the head of Stout's Creek to the termination of the salt-marsh, which lies on both sides, and at the head of East Harbour River, the distance is about three miles and a half. A narrow beach separated this river from the ocean. It is not so regular a ridge as that before described, as there are on it one or two hills, which the neighbouring inhabitants call islands. It may, without much difficulty, be crossed every where, except over these elevations. By these hills, even during the night,