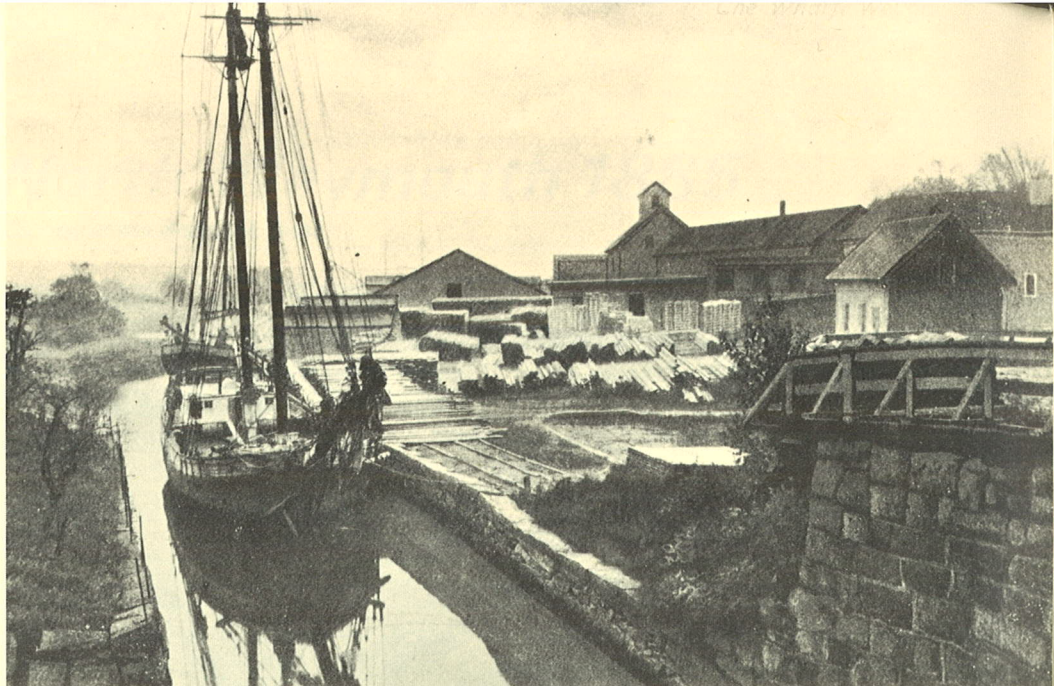


Maritime Commerce and History

By
Robert F. Sullivan



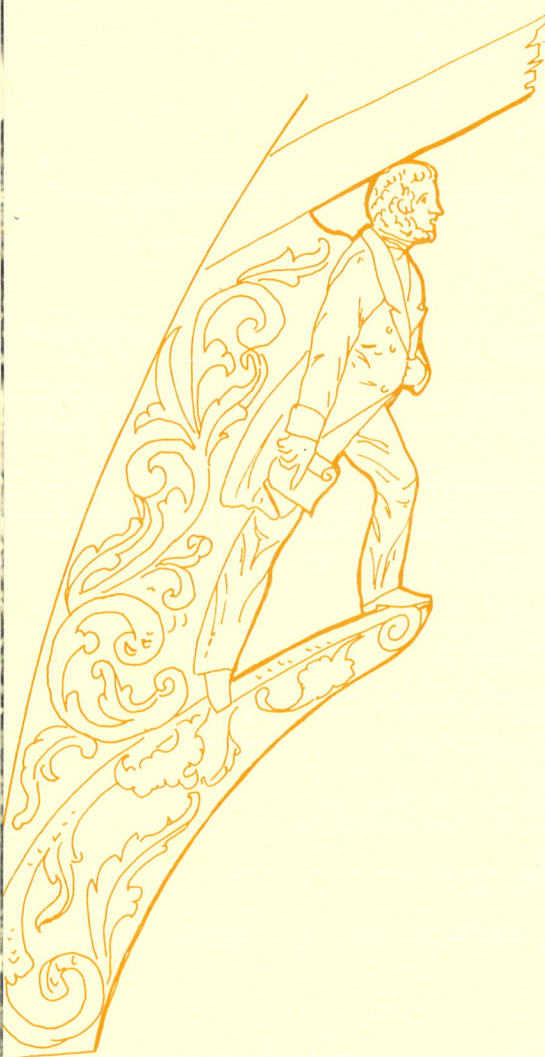
Schooner at Rhines Lumber Yard

Photo Courtesy V. Leslie Hebert

Weymouth was a bustling place back during the “days of sail” and it was not unusual to see the tall masts of ships penetrating the waterfront skyline. Sweating men and clanking machinery strained to load or unload cargo in order to supply the needs of a growing nation. At Weymouth Landing, a substantial number of wharves lined the shore of the Monaquot River, the area now generally called the Fore River. To illustrate an example of the shipping in this particular locale, between 1861 and 1887, a total of 2,698 cargoes of lumber, coal, brick, water pipe, sand, ice, hay, bark, corn, and lime were landed. When the amount of vessels loaded with goods are also considered, Weymouth could certainly be called an active port for her size.

Other parts of the Town were also frequented by cargo vessels, examples being the facilities at the Weymouth Iron Works wharf and Bradley Fertilizer Plant on the Back River, North Weymouth. As late as 1938, the five-masted schooner “Edna Hoyt” had the occasion to deliver 900 tons of guano from Venezuela at the Fertilizer Plant. The vessel was the largest existing schooner in the world at that time, and weighed a whopping 1,512 tons. An interesting fact regarding Plant operations during 1882, is that the steamer “City of Bangor”, towed a 50 foot whale from Northern New England waters to Weymouth’s Grape Island, where the “denizen of the deep” was cut-up for conversion into oil and fertilizer products.

Several Weymouth business firms maintained ships to ply the trade routes, and packets regularly sailed to and from Boston with passengers or mail. Another unusual sidelight is that the two-masted schooner “Clara B. Kennard”, built at Weymouth in 1886, was wrecked at old Fort Point, on the same beach and only a short distance from where she was launched at Hunt’s Hill. The schooner was on the way to Rhines Lumber Yard, Weymouth Landing, with a cargo of 60,000 bricks, when she was caught in the infamous 1898 “Portland Gale”, causing her to be forced ashore and stoving in the bow. Indeed, the Town is rich in marine lore. Her sons have been shipbuilders, sea captains, lighthouse keepers, commercial fishermen, and privateers, to mention but a few nautical professions. Edmund S. Hunt, a well known Weymouth manufacturer, developed a life saving cannon and projectile for reaching shipwrecks with a “breeches buoy”. This was instrumental in rescuing scores of mariners from vessels wrecked while plying the commercial sea lanes.



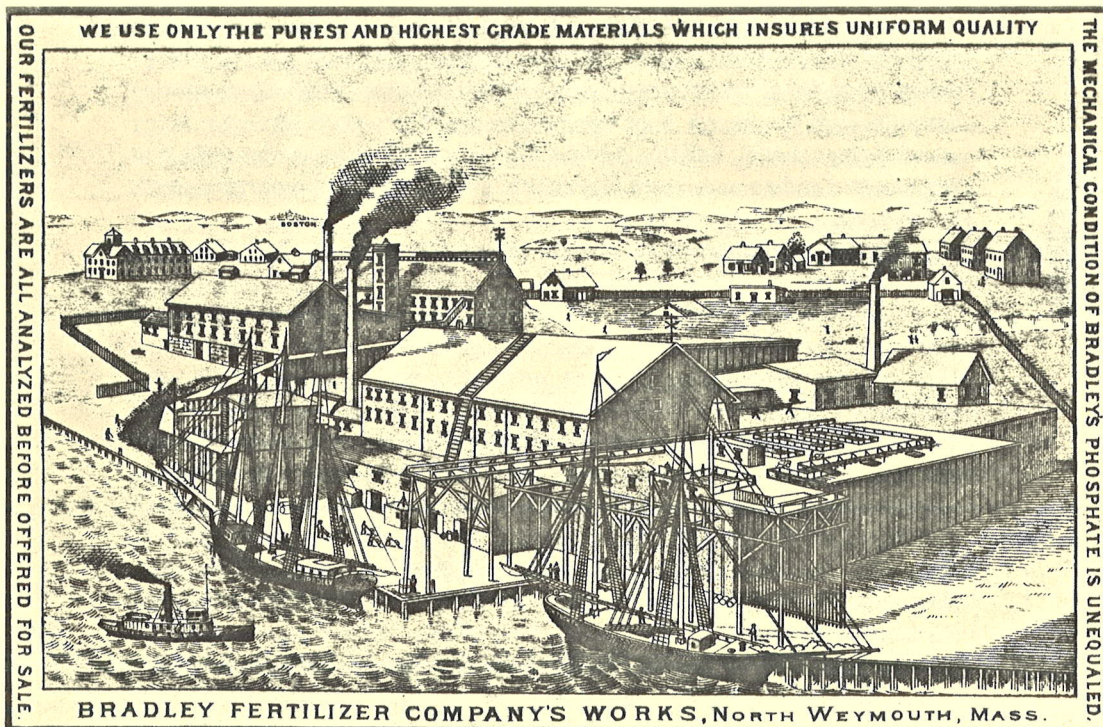
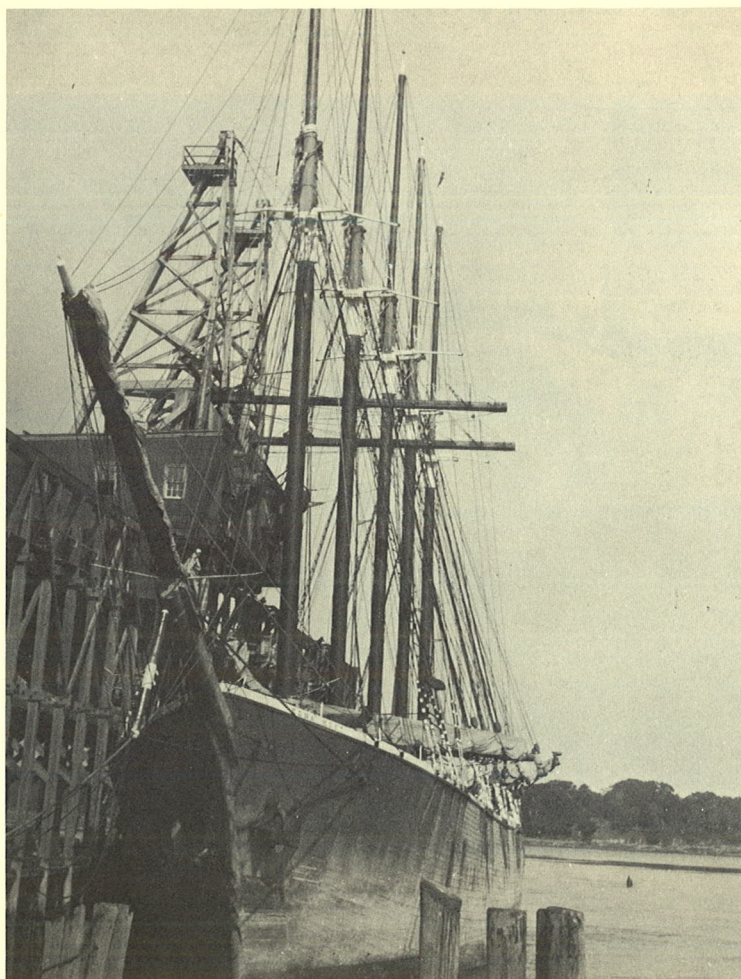


Illustration Courtesy V. Leslie Hebert



Schooner "Edna Hoyt" at Bradleys

Photo Courtesy Herbert Keene

Photo Courtesy Mass. Humane Society



Hunt's Life-Saving Gun