

## Deal Island History

Laws Thoroughfare a small channel that separates Chance and Deal Island was named in honor of John Laws. John Laws came from Scotland and settled on Island about 1676. He was the first to receive a land grant.

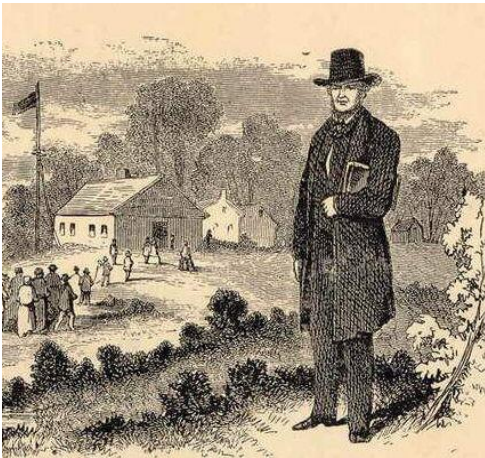
On March 21, 1783 William Paca order Capt. John Lynn to Devil's Island to capture three enemy vessels who had plunder the bay. Capt Lynn was place in command of the expedition with the Schooner Venus. Capt. Solomon Frazier, Capt Bryan, Capt Delisle [ French Gentleman] would also follow in their vessels [ Approx. 60 sailors] Lt. Murdock and Lt. Fickle would have command of a detachment of about 20 soldiers. They were order to rendezvous at place near John Deal's on the Herring Bay. From this point they were to proceed to Devil's Island and capture the enemy's. [ Archives of Maryland volume 48, pages 387-389 ]

Travis Daniel a wealthy planter from North Carolina on October 24,1824 purchased from Col Robert King a tract of land on the lower end of Devil's Island known as Self Preservation for sum one hundred twenty-five dollars.

David Wallace was island's first local preacher ordained as Elder.

On July 17, 1828 Joshua Thomas held the first Camp Meeting on Deal Island. The first meeting held at "Old Hill" or "Evans Hill. " The property was own by Denard Evans.

Captain Jacob Parks donated the land known as "Parks Grove" for a new tabernacle [ Thomas Chapel] in 1848. Camp Meeting were held here until 1922. The Board of Managers for first camp meeting was : Joshua Thomas, Travers Daniel, Gabriel Webster, John Parks, Charles Parks, Severn Mister, George Rowe, John Webster, William Wallace, Capt. William White, Hamilton Webster, John Waters, Lewis Phoebus, Denard Evans, and Aaron Bradshaw.



Joshua Thomas on his way to church



Joshua Thomas Canoe, Methodist



Joshua Thomas Chapel

Deal Island Bank est 1908 and closed 1929. Mr. Arthur Andrews was cashier and Mr. Edelen Webster was assistant cashier. The bank was later used for a telephone control center.



Deal Island Bank

In 1879 a new church [ St. John's Methodist Church] was built in front of the Joshua Thomas Chapel



St. John's Methodist Church



St. John's Church and Joshua Thomas Chapel

Deal Island Academy was built in 1850.



Deal Island School 1920's

Deal Island High School 1930's



Deal Island High School 1940's to 1970'S

Deal Island first post office was open May 1, 1856. Noah Webster was the first postmaster.

Capt John Stubbs operated sail loft before the Civil War. In 1870 Henry Brown bought sail making business from Mr. Stubbs. Mr. Brown was the owner of the island first auto. Mr Brown, son Albert took over the sail loft business in 1919.





Brown Sail Loft in 1930's

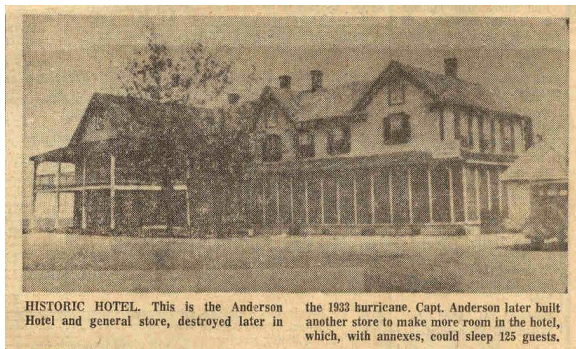


Albert Brown making sails



Henry Brown making sails.

Captain Levin Anderson gave the Baltimore Chesapeake & Atlantic Steamship Company the land for the building of a 1420' wharf at the north end of the Island. The Steamboat service began operating in 1878 and operated until March 1, 1932. Steamboat wharf was built about 1881 and was destroyed by a hurricane on August 23, 1933. It was rebuilt and resumed service with the Baltimore, Crisfield and Onancock Line for a time until trucking forced its closure. One-way passage between Deal Island and Baltimore was \$3.50, stateroom was \$1.50 extra. At the end of the wharf was a warehouse, waiting room, office and at one time an oyster packing house. Taxi service for people arriving by steamboat was Capt. Johnnie Bennett's horse-drawn Dayton wagon. Later Capt. Charles Northam and Capt. Johnny Webster provided taxi service by auto. Anderson Hotel was at the entrance to the wharf, it was owned and operated by May Anderson and family. It was a stopping place for commercial travelers and tourists. There was the main hotel and two smaller buildings that could accommodate 85 guests.



Anderson Hotel , Deal Island, MD.



Deal Island Steamboat Wharf



Deal Island Steamboat Wharf looking at hotel

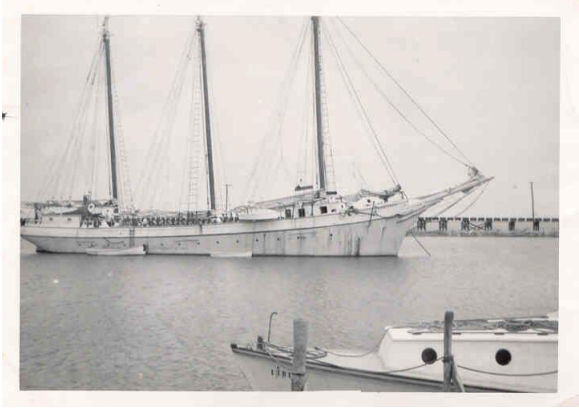


Mrs. May Anderson

Noah Webster own and operated a canning plant between Old Hill and Hunts Creek. Thompson Wallace also operated canning plant near the site of Harry Wilson oyster house.

In 1914 Diamond State Telephone Company open the first telephone office with Exchange operator Mrs Eva Shores.

First wooden bridge connecting Deal Island with Rock Creek was open in 1870. The ferry service was stop in the same year. The first bridge was destroyed in the storm of 1933 and replaced with a new wooden bridge in 1938. Today the island is served with a new concrete bridge.



Deal Island Wooden Bridge in 1940's



Deal Island Bridge 2003

Map of island in 1870 shows seafood houses of Vetra & Wallace and Edgerton Wilson on Little Deal Island. Five general stores were on island: James T Daniel, J. C. S. Vetra & Son, at Wenona and J.T. Bennett, Levin Anderson and John W Kelly at Deal Island.

Capt. Levin Collier at Wenona and Capt. William Webster at Deal Island were owners and operators of blacksmiths shops. Levin Collier's son Melvin carried on Blacksmith business in the 1930's and 1940'S.

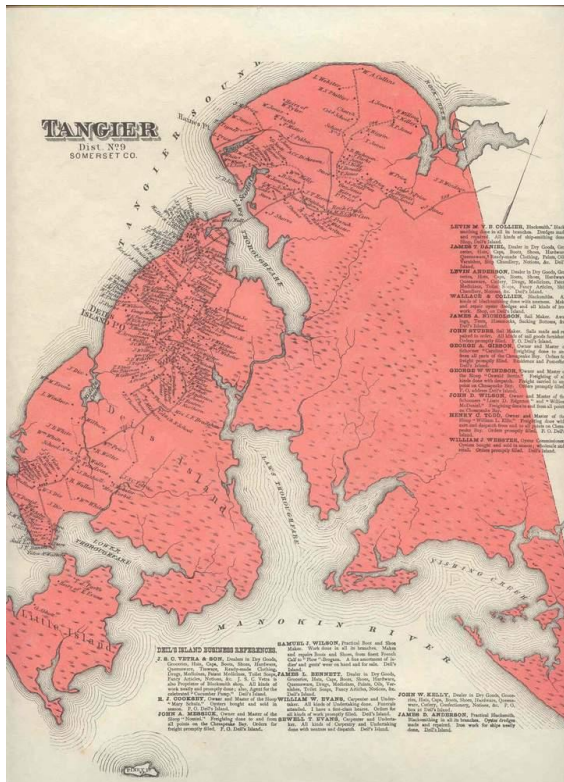


Melvin Collier at work  
In his Blacksmith Shop

The map shows William Evans advertises all kinds of undertaking needs done with a first class hearse.



And Sewell Evans did undertaking with neatness and dispatch. They were both also carpenters.



Map of Deal Island and Rock Creek Area

Silas T. Webster operated a dairy on his farm near Kings Creek. He supplied fresh milk and butter for most of the island residents. Later a dairy operated in Wenona by the Hollaway's. This is the same property that Roland and Edwina Parkinson owned for many year.

Adolphus G. Brown had an orchard near the Kings Creek area. Main crops were corn, potatoes, and tobacco and later strawberries and tomatoes.

Salisbury Advertiser in issue Feb. 15, 1876 reports the death of Dr. E. R. Waller of Deal Island. Other doctors on island were Dr. Monmonier Rowe son George T. Rowe, Dr. Harvey Alexander, Dr. Henry served the island many years as their dentist. Dr. Rowe graduated from West Point and College of Physicians and Surgeons in Baltimore, MD. In 1881. He served the island from 1881-1899 and moved to Baltimore because of health reasons. Dr. Harvey Alexander moved to Deal Island from Holland Island and lived in Dr. Rowe's home. Dr. Jones and Dr. D. M. Shevitz were also doctors in the 1930's and 1940's. Dr. Daniel W Jones also served as doctor in the later 1800's, and Dr Edward P Simpson and Dr. Samuel L. Windsor were doctor's in area around 1900.

Thompson Wallace Ice Plant was open in 1916 and Harry Wilson open the first garage near the plant. in the 1920's He later open a new garage and Ford salesroom, which is now the Deal Island Fire House.

In 1929 Mr. Thomas H. Price began operating bus line from Wenona - Princess Anne - Salisbury. The first bus was a old model T Ford .

Recreation took many forms on the island. Skating rink and pool hall were located to the right of the home

of Mrs. Kate Anderson, the owner and operator were W. O. Brown and John Bennett, Wenona had two movie houses, a skating rink and merry-go-round. A Red Men's Hall with a large auditorium had social events. In the early 1900's an amateur theatrical group gave plays in the sail loft at Wenona. There was ice skating and taffy pulls in the winter time and lawn parties in the summer. Lawns were elaborately decorated with Japanese lanterns and homemade ice cream was served for refreshments. Life was pleasant and few young people wanted to leave their island homes for metropolitan living.

Most of the material was taken from the following sources:

- \* The Deal Island Story by Myra Thomas Long
- \* Memories of Steamboats, Camp Meetings, Skipjacks and Islands of the Chesapeake by Ben Evans.
- \* Parson of the Islands by Adam Wallace.
- \* Somerset An Architectural History by Paul Baker Touart

By William Gordon Wheatley