

Scarborough Issue 03.22.42

Beach Property Offered To Town For \$150,000

By LORRAINE ALLEN

SCARBOROUGH — Two proposals by which the town could acquire Scarborough Beach at Prout's Neck were revealed at last night's Town Council meeting.

The first came from Miss Gladys I. Jordan, who owns access to the beach plus 66 feet of the frontage there.

She offered the town the opportunity to purchase her property and all rights to it for \$150,000. She asked municipal officers for a decision by noon tomorrow.

The second proposal was presented as a petition by 47 Scarborough residents asking that the town take by eminent domain Miss Jordan's property plus a portion of adjacent land owned by the Sprague Corp.

THE COUNCIL TOOK no action on either proposal, although it did accept the petition. But the panel voted to meet again tonight on the beach question.

Miss Jordan's letter to the town, dated Feb. 1, outlined six terms and conditions that would have to be met if the town moves to purchase her property.

She listed these details:

— The property would have to be forever maintained for use by the public for outside recreation purposes under the supervision and control of the town.

— The purchase payment would be in equal monthly or quarterly installments over a 15-year period from date of closing.

— **AS SECURITY** for payment, the town would have to mortgage the real estate to Miss Jordan, to be discharged on payment in full.

— The acceptance of the offer and arrangements for payment by the town would be concluded in such a manner as to guarantee their ability of Scarborough to maintain the payments for 15 years.

— If the town accept shte offer, it would pay Miss Jordan \$15,000 in cash, to be credited against the purchase price upon consummation of the sale. In the event the town fails to close the sale, the money would be forfeited to Miss Jordan.

— If the town accepts the offer, conveyance of the property would be made by a warranty deed and closing of the transaction would occur no later than 30 days after acceptance.

TOWN MANAGER ROBERT

D. STEELE and Town Attorney F. Paul Frinsko will contact Miss Jordan today and propose some modifications in her terms.

One would relate to the \$15,000 forfeit clause. Another would seek for time for a town decision on the purchase.

Frinsko advised the council last night that it could as fast as tomorrow's deadline on an outright purchase but if the land were to be acquired by eminent domain it would have to be appraised and a public hearing would be required. This could never be accomplished within the before the deadline.

Steele said he anticipated that the return to Miss Jordan either way would be "fair". He said he considered her price to be reasonable.

As for the position of the state in the matter, Steele said he had conferred with the Sprague Corp. officials in Boston, who are willing to sell an unspecified amount of their beachfront either to the town or the state and it is up to the town or the state "to work it out."

There was no mention made of how much land would be involved here or what the price might be.

Safety plays major role

By BILL NEMITZ
Staff Writer

SCARBOROUGH — Running a place like Scarborough Beach is more than just a matter of taking pride in one's work.

There are lives on the line — a fact to which four people who have been rescued from rip currents so far this summer will gratefully attest.

"Just the other day, our lifeguard supervisor (Joseph Doane) had a double save," said park manager Greg Wilfert. "That means he got two people out at the same time."

For Wilfert, 30, and his nine-person crew, the challenge of ensuring people's safety, coupled with the beauty of the surroundings, are what make a summer job at Scarborough Beach so enticing.

Wilfert, who works during the off-season as an elementary school physical education teacher in Westbrook, has worked every summer at Scarborough Beach since the state took it over 11 years ago.

A certified lifeguard, he had tried to land a job at Crescent Beach but was turned down because he was only 17.

But when Scarborough Beach opened late in the summer of 1973, he said, "They came knocking on my door."

Wilfert was promoted to park manager last summer and is one of the beach's biggest promoters.

"We've sold over 600 season passes so far this year," he said. "Not bad for a park that has 300 parking spaces."

He has high praise for his crew of six lifeguards, two reception-

ists and one laborer. Like him, several of them are teachers; other occupations include college student, stockbroker and retired insurance agent.

"A lot of us have been here a long time," Wilfert said. "You won't see a big turnover at this place — mostly because of the beauty of the beach. The water conditions here are really good."

Sometimes they are too good. To keep his crew ready for anything, Wilfert has initiated a rigorous training program that far exceeds the weekly workouts required by the state.

"Our workouts are unbelievable," he said. "The lifeguards have time trials on a weekly basis for both running and swimming."

The trials foster a healthy spirit: all of the lifeguards bought matching bathing suits at their own expense "to look more professional" and the beach is equipped with "all the latest rescue equipment," Wilfert said.

But the concept of safety does not end with the lifeguards.

"Our receptionists at the gate have to know as much about rescue procedures as the people down on the beach. They're the ones who make the calls, so they have to know whether we need more help, whether to call the Coast Guard — things like that," he said.

And even Wilfert, who still has his lifeguard certification, occasionally trades his park ranger's uniform for the swimming trunks.

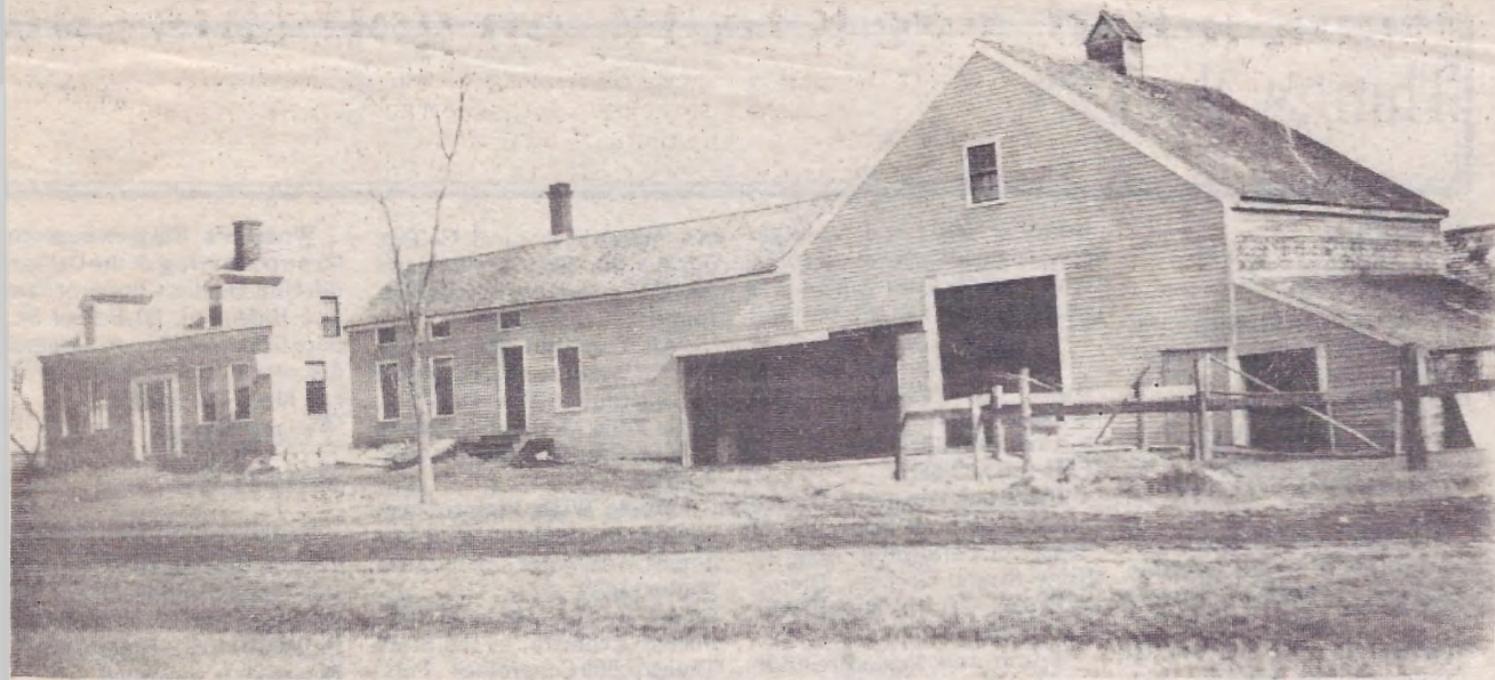
"I still do some (lifeguard duty). I'll fill in during lunch breaks, or work on the beach on days when we're shorthanded."

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This house at Scarborough Beach was built in 1743. It has been home to several families and a number of businesses. Al Seavey lived here at the turn of the century and ran a blacksmith shop from a small building near the barn. As telephone service expanded, the telephone exchange for Prouts Neck was located in one of the front rooms. In later years, it has been home to the Lindholm family and their greenhouse business. (Photo courtesy of Cecelia Lindholm, information provided by Rodney Laughton)

2017. 77. 20



History Notes

Harris Seavey owned this coach which he used as a taxi at the turn of the century. Harris transported passengers to and from Scarborough Beach Station. He also took groups on outings to places such as Two Lights in Cape Elizabeth or Mitchell's, a shore dinner house on the Spurwink River.

The classic Concord Coach was built in 1879 by Abbot and Downing for the Farrago House, a hotel in Rye Beach, New Hampshire. In the 1880's these coaches were in vogue as rapid transit in Rye Beach.

At the time, most hotels were ordering standard coaches at a cost of about \$1,000, the Farrago ordered the "Talley-Ho" model at a cost of

\$2,000. The coach was bottle green and had yellow wheels. The body was suspended on leather straps instead of leaf springs like most carriages of the day. When the trolley cars came to Rye at the turn of the century as they did to Scarborough, it signaled an end to coaching.

Harris purchased the coach and had it shipped to Scarborough on a flat bed railroad car. It suited his needs as he found plenty of business south of Route 1 and the trolley line. The coach finally made its way to Hollywood, California to be used as a movie prop. I intend to investigate this and write the next chapter in the story of "Talley-Ho." *Information and photo provided by Rodney Laughton.*

Scarborough Council Votes To Buy Prout's Neck Beach

By LORRAINE ALLEN

SCARBOROUGH — The Town Council voted last night to buy a large section of Scarborough Beach for a public park and playground.

The council voted 4 to 2 to accept the offer of Gladys I. Jordan to sell her 6 feet of beach frontage and a right-of-way to the town for \$150,000.

The council also voted unanimously to initiate eminent domain proceedings against the Sprague Corp. for about 950 feet of beach front it owns abutting Miss Jordan's land.

COUNCIL CHAIRMAN H. Davison Osgood said the Sprague Corp. is aware of the eminent domain situation and is hoping to negotiate a purchase price so that this action won't be necessary.

Last night's council meeting was a continuation of a Wednesday night session at which Miss Jordan's sale proposal was made public.

Also at this time, the council accepted a petition for acquiring both the Jordan property and the Sprague property by eminent domain.

A total of 1,117 feet of some of the best ocean beach in the area is involved. There was no indication as to the total cost to the town of acquiring the Sprague land.

The council indicated it wants to keep the beach primarily for the use of Scarborough residents and doesn't plan to apply for federal or state funds to help with the cost because if they were received the park would have to be opened to "the world."

The State Parks and Recreation Commission has been negotiating with both Miss Jordan and the Sprague Corp. for a

number of years in an effort to secure the beach for a state park.

Last September, the state received a grant from the federal Department of Outdoor Recreation for \$267,500 in matching funds for the acquisition of about 36 acres with 2,000 feet of Scarborough Beach frontage.

VOTING FOR the Jordan purchase were Councilors George B. Frederick Jr., Oscar F. Teravainen, Thomas E. Gagnon, Robert D. Platt and Chairman Osgood. Voting against it were Councilors Dr. Marshall L. Goodwin and Ralph P. Lorfano.

Councilor Platt, who wasn't present due to a death in his

family, asked to be recorded in favor of both the Jordan purchase and the eminent domain proceedings.

Osgood told the council that the Sprague Corp. with headquarters in Boston, will be holding a stockholders' meeting in three weeks, at which time the beach action will be discussed.

He also said that under eminent domain, the land has to be appraised and public hearings must be held.

Scarborough Beach lies just north of Prout's Neck. The proposed new park is off Black Point Road. Miss Jordan has used her beach access property many years as a private operation.

ys.

In addition, planning and finance officials of the Indian government have been busy dealing vast other programs to

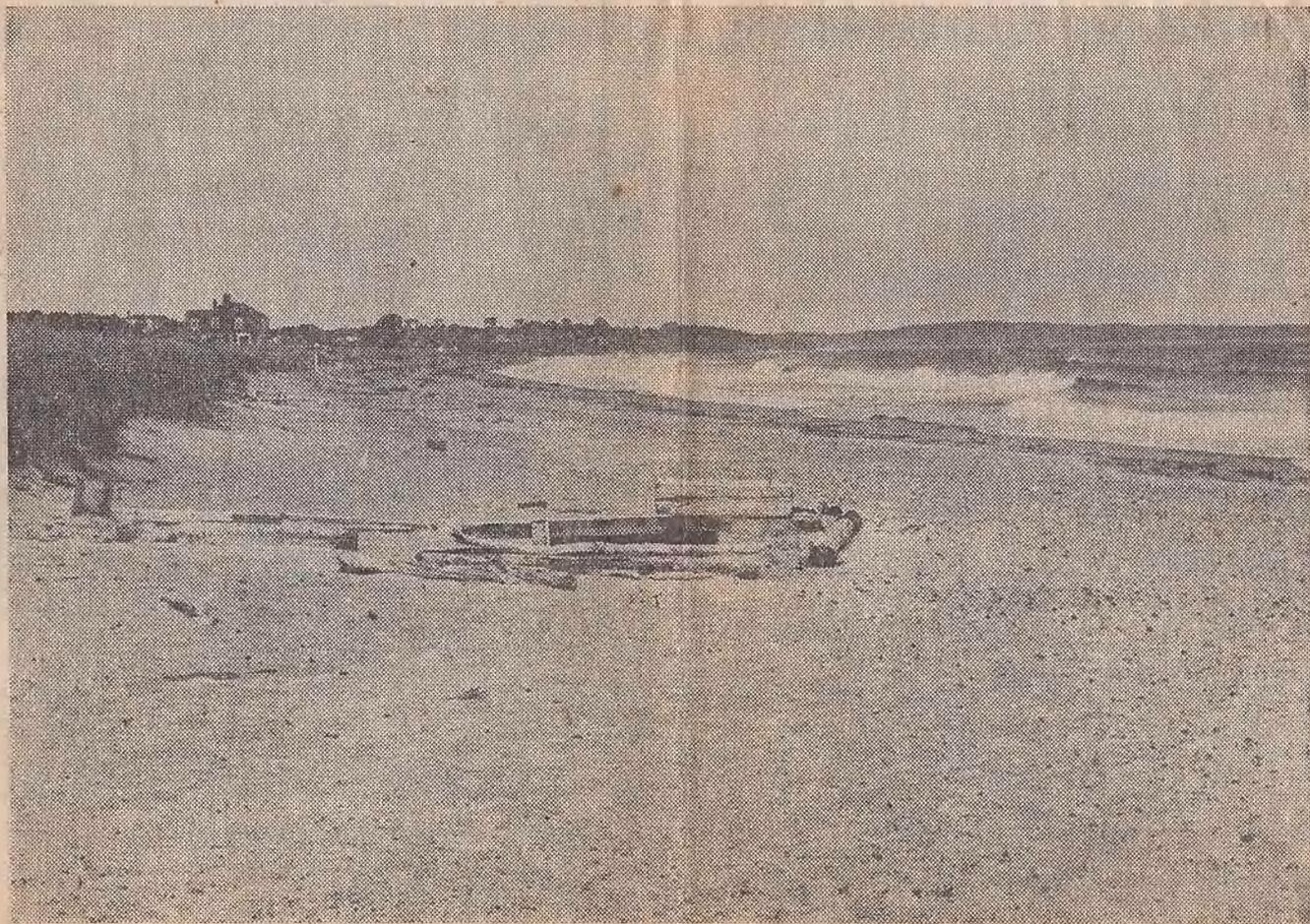
OH, YES, HE HAD SOME BANANAS
Larry Tavenor managed to get some bananas before he lost his job. But his achievement

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Beach Property

This is a section of the large Scarborough beach off Black Point Road that the town of Scarborough has moved to acquire. It's considered one of the finest beaches on the Maine coast and one of the few still undeveloped. This view looks away from Prout's Neck.





Staff photo by Jack Milton

An aerial view of Scarborough Beach.



File photo

A young girl and her pet find Scarborough Beach's delicious sun an ideal place to spend an afternoon.

Scarborough Beach

RE: 56/26/86

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Small package offers big fun

This is the second in a series of articles on area beaches.

By **BILL NEMITZ**
Staff Writer

SCARBOROUGH — Scarborough Beach is by far the smallest state park in Maine — so small that state officials are reluctant to even call it a state park.

But its roaring surf and relatively warm waters also make it one of the most popular summer spots on the Maine coast.

The result: a great idea whose growth has been stunted since birth.

Had the state's original plan become a reality back in 1972, the park would now boast a new entrance, a 1,000-car parking lot and 2,000 feet of publicly owned beach.

But because the planned purchase of 1,935 feet of the beach from the Sprague Corp. never

The beaches

happened, the state has had to settle for the 66-foot strip accompanying right of way that it bought from Gladys I. Jan in 1972.

And, according to Maine Parks and Recreation Director Bert Hartman, we can only be that the Sprague family members won't mind too much when the crowds spill over onto the beach — assuming that it is the beach.

"I would like to think that the public has the right to see (the beach directly in front of Sprague property), but that something that can only be dreamed by the courts," Hartman said.

The spillover is inevitable as

See Fun
Back Page This Season

Scarborough Beach

Operator: Maine Department of Conservation

Location: Black Point Road, Prout's Neck, Scarborough

Length: 350 yards (protected by lifeguards)

Description: Sand, backed by dunes, some rocks

Parking: 300 vehicles, \$2 per day; season pass to all state parks, \$15; 70-car private parking lot across Black Point Road, \$2 per day.

Hours: 9 a.m. to sunset

Amenities: Restrooms

Lifeguards: 4 on weekdays, 5 on weekends

Restrictions: No camping, open fires, flotation devices or alcohol. Dogs on leashes allowed in park, but not on beach.

Average surf: 2-4 feet

Beach exposure: southeast

the beach's reputation spreads.



In 1972, the year the state bought Jordan's Beach from Gladys Jordan and renamed it Scarborough Beach, 29,732 people passed through the gate. Last year, the annual figure mushroomed to 225,038.

It is mostly a young crowd, drawn by the wide-open surroundings and the excitement of the surf.

"This beach is gorgeous," said Manager Greg Wilfert. "The water temperature averages 64 degrees, the water is always clear, there's not a lot of seaweed and the waves average 2 to 4 feet on a calm day."

But it is the blustery days, when the surf can run as high as 8 feet, that have given Scarborough Beach a reputation as a good spot for both body surfing, which is allowed anywhere, and windsurfing and board surfing, allowed by permit in a restricted area at the northern end of the beach.

Such conditions are not without risk, however.

"We have a lot of rip currents, too," Wilfert said. "Nobody's ever drowned, but we've pulled a lot of people out. We know where to watch, where the hot spots are."

Located on the eastern side of Prout's Neck, the beach was for years accessible to the public only by way of Miss Jordan's small road. It begins opposite her house on the Black Point Road, traverses a small bridge over Massacre Pond and ends at a 150-car parking lot at the beach.

Miss Jordan could be found each summer day sitting in her station wagon collecting parking fees from the beachgoers who met her approval. Potential troublemakers were routinely turned away.

In the early 1970's, she decided to sell. The town at first offered to buy the beach for \$150,000, but that move was overturned in a referendum.

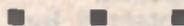
Enter the Maine Department of Parks and Recreation, which bought the Jordan property for \$150,000 and began its modest Scarborough Beach operation.

But the state's long-range plan to negotiate a fair price for the

much larger Sprague property — extending 885 feet to the north of the Jordan plot and 1,050 feet to the south — soon ran aground.

Signs of disagreement among members of the Sprague family surfaced and negotiations with the state stalled in the mid-1970s. They have never resumed.

"My assumption has always been that if there is any interest on the part of the Spragues (to sell), they will come to us," Hartman said. "There certainly is a standing interest on the state's part."



Meanwhile, the relationship is one of peaceful coexistence.

Sprague Corp. manager Lester Jordan, a distant relative of Gladys Jordan, said beachgoers are welcome to fan out — provided that the state keeps them out of the dunes and picks up any litter.

Hartman said that while the legal issues surrounding public-versus-private control of Maine's beaches have yet to be clarified by the courts, the state is happy to comply with the Sprague Corp.'s wishes.

All of Scarborough Beach is patrolled for litter, he said, and people are prevented from strolling through the dunes by storm fences and signs.

But as long as the state's slice of the beach remains so small, it will never reach the potential once envisioned, Hartman said.

The two parking lots inside the park filled up in a record 61 minutes two Saturdays ago, forcing manager Wilfert to close the gate at 10 a.m.

And while Miss Jordan and a few other nearby property owners have been known to turn their front yards into parking lots at \$2 per car on busy days, Hartman said the real answer would be to scrap the Massacre Pond entrance and construct a new, larger lot on what is now Sprague property.

"Clearly, it would be desirable for the state to own more property down there," he said.

But, advises Sprague Corp.'s Jordan, don't hold your breath for any sale agreements.

"The Spragues certainly intend to maintain ownership at this time," he said.

Scarborough Negotiations Involve State, Town

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Sprague Corp. May Sell Choice Beach Property

April 28, 1971



By FRANK SLEEPER

SCARBOROUGH — The Sprague Corporation has opened negotiations with both the state and the town for possible sale of part of its Scarborough Beach property here.

At the same time, both state and town have shown interest in property owned by Miss Gladys I. Jordan which includes an access causeway across Massacre Pond and some 66 feet of beach, commonly known as Jordan's Beach and enclosed at either end by the Sprague property.

Mrs. Millicent Monks, Sprague Corporation president, said today that the proposals are still quite general and have just begun. A survey of the Sprague beach property has been made to determine its exact limits. An appraisal also has been made, with the value of the entire property set at about \$1 million, according to Robert A. G. Monks, Mrs. Monks' husband.

The Sprague Corp. and subsidiary corporations sold and had much of the land for Scarborough Beach, Cape Elizabeth, and the state.

It has been expected that

its Scarborough Beach property would eventually be given up, even through sale. At one time, the corporation had various plans for development of that property.

Now, possible use of eminent domain by the town or possibly eventually by the state has brought the desire to sell at least part of the beach. The fact that Miss Jordan's property divides the Sprague property has hindered plans for development.

It's understood that the state is willing to pay Miss Jordan \$100,000 for her property. However, a Montreal man has made her a higher offer dependent on his also buying some of the Sprague property.

This is all part of the current negotiations.

It's understood that Lawrence Stuart, director of the state park commission, will present a proposal from Sprague Corp. to the commission Friday. At present, terms of that proposal are confidential.

With public beaches relatively rare in Maine, the state continues to look for any available beach property for future state parks.

The town also has recognized

for some time that it needs more public beach area.

There's the possibility that if the state purchased the beach property, it might lease all or part of it to the town.

As much as 1,000 feet of beach is involved. Stuart said he and Frederick Taylor, Boston, treasurer of the Sprague Corp., have been in "constant communication" since last fall.

But the first proposal from Sprague only arrived last week, since time had to be taken for the survey and appraisal.

Stuart will shortly meet with representatives of the Sprague Corp. at the boundary of Crescent Beach bordering on the existing Sprague property.

There have been complaints of trespassing on that property.

Under terms of the agreement turning over the Crescent Beach property to the state, the state was supposed to keep people off the adjoining Sprague area.

Stuart said he didn't know of any trespassing and that men

were assigned to prevent it while Crescent Beach State Park was opened.

In Boston, Taylor suggested that a barrier of rocks might be created to ward off the overflow from the state park.

Or a system of "friendly signs" might be set up, he said. There's also the possibility in the long run of a test case for the courts on the matter.

This could come if Sprague people decided to build a fence out into the water to separate their property from the state park.

Scarborough

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State May Buy Scarborough Beach Area

The state will make an offer to the Sprague Corp. for a large portion of Scarborough Beach within two months, C. Norman Manwell, chief of the state Bureau of Parks and Recreation's acquisitions and development division, said today.

The state has now laid out a map of the property for the Sprague Corporation's lawyers, Manwell said.

The appraisal should be completed in about a month, Manwell said. It will then be reviewed and the offer made in another month.

The state seeks beach front on either side of the 66 feet it purchased in 1972 from Miss Gladys I. Jordan. That purchase included five acres inland and the access route to the beach. Total price was \$160,000.

Negotiations have been going on with the Sprague Corp. since 1971. Some state money has been set aside for that purchase.

Manwell reported that the state is seeking to purchase from the Sprague Corp. 1,113 feet of beachfront on the west side of the Jordan property plus 840.6 feet on the east side and another 674 feet on that side separated by two privately owned cottages.

It's also trying to buy the two cottages which would give it another 340 feet of shore frontage.

In all, if the state buys all the beachfront it seeks, putting it with the 66 feet already bought from Miss Jordan, it would have 3,033.6 feet of ocean frontage on one of Maine's most beautiful beaches.



Scarborough Beach:

Awaiting State Offer

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Remembered Moments . . . By Dudley Lunt

Thoughts In A Day Of Rain

03.82.27

A gray day and a gray sea. From the small open fire there comes a low fluttering that is intermittently interspersed with a faint chuckling. Through the partition I hear in the wet pine needles of the little scrub pine that grows outside the door the soft rustle of the southerly of the sea. The light rain that it brings patters on the roof. A few moments of this and the lassitude of the sea and the seaside overtakes me, and I fall asleep in my chair by the fire.

Later I put on a poncho and walk the beach in the rain. As I emerge from the dunes three great black crows that have been feeding on the husks and shells of last night's clambake, arise silently and depart flapping. The sea is steel gray, and broad off in front I see a short white gash that, appearing, disappearing and reappearing, makes known that the ledge long known in these parts as the Old Proprietor is awash. As I walk slowly by the side of the sea, its small surf gives off, in muted key, a low wet wash of sound.

SUDDENLY I AM the lone witness to an event of the foreshore on this gray afternoon. Close inshore and just beyond the cresting of the waves, a hell-diver is swimming. I observe the oval rounding back, the thin reedy neck, and the small head that comes to a sharp point at the end of the beak, a singularly unattractive bird. Of a sudden he dives, in a quick rolling motion. Glimpsing this a gull, hurrying, flies in. It dives and, resting on the surface, gulps down a sand eel. In its turn this event attracts another gull that gull-like, instead of fishing on its own, goes after the prey of the first gull. A shag, scaling just above the water in long, low, curving flight, drops in. Then out of the nowhere three more gulls fly in.

All this time the smooth surface of the glassy sea is roiled by the passage here and there of the school of fish that is the center of all this avian attention, and the little hell-diver unconcernedly goes on diving and fishing. Then the school disappears. The gulls fly off on long errands, the shag departs and the hell-diver disappears into the volute of the next wave and is no

more to be seen. The gray sea is again calm and deserted, and I walk on.

A MILE UP THE BEACH I leave it, passing in over the dunes. Here in the shelter from the sea, the pale pink and blue blossoms of the beach pea are still in evidence. At the edge of the dune a small stand of scrub pine marks the

commencement of the upland, and beyond it there lies a large fresh cattail pond.

This pond—this Massacre Pond—is a storied place, its name deriving from the fateful day in the late seventeenth century when the Indians, incited by the French out of Canada, caused its waters to run red (which they still do,

though not for the same cause) with the blood of the Englishmen who were then the inhabitants of the town of Scarborough.

Creeping through the cattails I come to the edge of the open water and there find swimming placidly a pair of young black ducks. In four months this pond will be full of migrating ducks.



On Massacre Pond

Remembered Moments . . . By Dudley Lunt

Virtue Of An Idle Afternoon

03,82.26

A painted ship upon a painted ocean—the phrase, if memory serves aright is from “The Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This bit of description has everything—an absolute economy of expression with the emphasis of repetition enhancing its effect and spinning instantly in the consciousness the warp and woof of a mood.

I am mindful of this, this August afternoon as I stand on the dunes of Scarborough Beach. The surface of the sea is a great flat floor, motionless and serene. It is like a vast stage set with scattered props. To the eastward the line of the horizon that is shrouded with haze, is broken by the low curving of Richmond's Island, and in its turn this is broken only by a single house that stands against the sky midway and a grove of dark pine at its southerly end. Broad off in front the brown weed-covered bones of the Old Proprietor lie bare and bleaching in the sun. Over in the western quarter another longer and larger ledge rises just above the surface fronting eastward. This is known as Shooting Rock, forming as it does a natural blind for coot gunners in the fall of the year. On the line of its edge against the sky stand the silent forms and still, long necks of the cormorants that are its constant denizens.

GRAY-WHITE MARES' TAILS decorate the sky. There is no sound save the recurrent seep on the sand made by the ebbing tide. The waves are so reduced in size as not to be noticeable. On this broad painted set there are evidences of activity—the scattered white stakes of the buoys of the lobstermen, the still forms of silent gulls floating, scattered catspaws that with the long smooth slicks of still water winding between them, remain in the same places. Here and there on the surface of the bay there are small boats, idle and unmoving.

My companion who is an old-timer, speaks up:

“I kin smell them mackerel risin'.”



A Pond And Rushes

INSHORE AND STARTING OFF the long low ledge that runs out from the easterly end of the beach, are the only active actors on this painted stage. These are the black coots that in a disorderly array are swimming slowly out in front of the beach. When they reach a certain point, they turn about

and swim as slowly back to the point, then turn again.

Now a small drama of action takes place out among these coots. A group of five of them well bunched are proceeding slowly. All of a sudden they split apart as if erupting from some explosion, scattering in different direc-

tions on wings and feet that flail the water with small violence. I do not see what causes this. Then in the next instant they are as they were before—black forms swimming slowly.

For a long time I sit in the warm sun, lazing and idly watching this idle scene.