

TANGIER ISLAND SOON TO BOAST PAVED HIGHWAY

Quaint Spot On Lower Chesapeake Bay Will Resurface Only Thoroughfare—Has Historic Basis.

WASHINGTON, D. C. — (SpI) — Quaint Tangier Island, in lower Chesapeake bay, is to have a paved street. Federal funds have been provided for resurfacing the little island's only thoroughfare, which is now a sandy road 10 feet wide and about a mile long.

"Ordinarily such an event would be news only to the inhabitants of the island," says a bulletin from the Washington, D. C. headquarters of the National Geographic society, "but Tangier holds the interest of its neighbors on the mainland because of unique customs, the outgrowth of nearly three centuries of isolation.

Found by Captain John Smith "Discovered in 1609 by Captain John Smith," continues the bulletin, "Tangier was inhabited only by Indians until 1696. In that year the first white men settled there.

"The island, within a day's journey from the nation's capital, is about three miles long and two miles wide. Situated 12 miles southwest of Crisfield, Maryland, Tangier lies just south of the line marking the Maryland-Virginia boundary, which cuts across Chesapeake bay from east to west. Surrounded on all sides by shallow water, it is inaccessible except to small craft. Some years ago steamers from Baltimore landed passengers and freight at a pier off the southern tip of the island, but this service has been discontinued. Small mail and passenger boats from Crisfield enter daily through a channel dredged from the northern end of Tangier.

"Approaching Tangier, the visitor sees a low, marshy island, bare of trees except along two sparsely wooded ridges that extend down the center of the island like twin bottle-necks. A tall church spire tops the roofs of the quiet town of Tangier, a community of about 1,600 persons.

Fishing Craft Fill Harbor "After a difficult passage along a tortuous channel the visiting boat enters a harbor filled with fishing craft of the 'bugeye' type—sailboats characterized by two tall, slanting masts. In these and smaller boats the hardy islanders gather fish, oysters, crabs, and clams from the surrounding waters.

"The sightseer is forced to rely upon his own legs for transportation. As in Bermuda, automobiles are unknown and there is only one horse on the island. Wheelbarrows, handcarts, and a few bicycles are the sole conveyances. Several canals, aiding intra-island commerce, suggest The Netherlands.

"Walking down Tangier's main street might well be a spooky excursion at night, for most of the residents' front yards are family burying grounds. By day, however, the shade cast by the cool green arch of trees makes a stroll along the narrow road a pleasant outing. Tangier women wear exceptionally large sunbonnets and some even protect their arms with cut-out stockings.

Family Names Limited "In one of the few large burying plots on the island only three family names are found among three or four dozen tombstones. It has long been the custom to affix numbers after surnames, so that various branches of the same family can be distinguished. Names found on Tangier recall those of the people on the Cornwall coast, from

whom the natives of the Virginia island are directly descended. "Fishing, oystering, and crabbing provide means of support for nearly everyone on Tangier. There are several sea food packing plants which employ many of the inhabitants. The captain of the mail boat, the postmaster, the minister, and an occasional visitor are the only persons on the island who do not make their livings from the fishing industry.

"Neat, white-picketed cottages are bordered by tiny vegetable gardens in which the island's 'truck' is raised. A small dairy provides necessary milk products and the bay yields the main courses on the islanders' dinner tables. Imported fruits, meats, and vegetables displayed in the grocery stores are regarded more as curiosities than as articles of food.

"Sunday brings a stop to all activities on Tangier. Every islander is a member of the church and all either attend services or remain indoors in order not to disturb the Sabbath peace. Such religious zeal on the part of the islanders dates from the beginning of the 19th century, when Tangier became a noted religious center. In 1800 the first of the island's famous mid-summer camp meetings was held on the beach. In succeeding years these meetings have attracted visitors from hundreds of miles around and they are still annual events.

"Of special interest to the visitor on Tangier are the church, 1850 Tangier lighthouse, built in 1890 on the southern tip of the island Tangier Light, together with Watts Island lighthouse, guard the southern entrance to Tangier sound."

THE GRANGE

Live Oak Grange Live Oak Grange observed Grange Church Sunday by attending the Presbyterian church at Rogue River Sunday, November 24. Following the services a basket dinner was enjoyed in the community hall, 27 being present.

At our next regular meeting, December 2, we will put on the third and fourth degree work. The H. E. C. club will meet at the Badley home November 28 to discuss different projects to be taken up soon.

Five of our members attended the national convention at Sacramento last week. Those attending were Mr. and Mrs. P. L. Watt, Otto Furman, Millie Walker and Letey Miller.

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