

Several months ago I was visiting cousin Blanche and she brought out an old photo album for me to look at. I made copies of a few of the pictures and I share them this month, along with brief captions. I hope this eclectic glimpse into Ocracoke's past brings a bit of our history into sharper focus. Unfortunately the photos are small, so much of the detail is lost.

Aftermath of the 1944 Hurricane:



On September 14, 1944 a fierce storm pummeled Ocracoke Island. Winds were estimated at over 100 mph, and tides were running at fourteen feet. The entire island was under water as powerful waves crashed into boats, homes and businesses. Six houses were completely destroyed.

Boats Ashore after the '44 Storm:



The mailboat *Aleta* and another boat are left high and dry near the Island Inn. Note the lighthouse behind the *Aleta's* bow.

Another Victim of the '44 Storm:



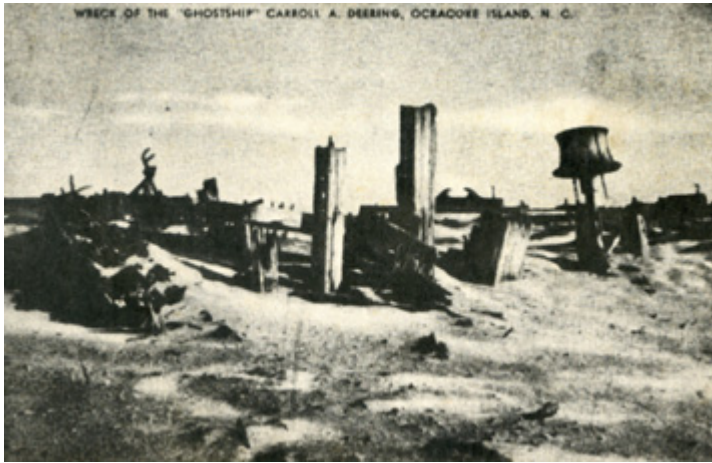
One resident's first-hand account relates that there was "three feet of water pounding through this cottage," that the porch was "blown off and front windows shattered, and front door blown in." "Practically all furniture [was] upturned and much of it washed into [the] kitchen."

The Old Post Office:



The Post Office (notice the sign above the door) was located in Big Ike's store (located where Captain's Landing Motel sits today). Even with the windows shuttered the building sustained considerable damage from the 1944 hurricane. The front porch was blown away and portions of the siding were torn loose.

The Ghost Ship of the Outer Banks:



The five-masted schooner, *Carroll A. Deering*, wrecked on Diamond Shoals in January of 1921. All sails were set, the tables were prepared for dinner, and there was food in the galley stove, but no one was aboard when the Coast Guard approached the wreck. Only a six-toed cat was found. Speculation about the disappearance of the crew focused on mutiny, piracy, and mysteries of the Bermuda Triangle. The *Carroll A. Deering* soon came to be referred to as the *Ghost Ship of the Outer Banks*. In the early 1950s a storm washed much of the wreckage onto the north end of Ocracoke Island. The capstan (visible on the right hand side of this vintage post card) became the iconic image of this unfortunate vessel.

The Island Inn:



Called the Silver Lake Inn in the 1940s, the Island Inn is the oldest operating hotel on

Ocracoke. This building (the center section of the current structure) was built in 1901 as the Oddfellow's Lodge (they met on the second floor; school was held on the ground floor). A one-story wing was added on the southern side of the building (toward the lighthouse) after WWII, and was originally part of the WWII Navy Base. Some years later a two-story addition was built onto the other side (the side visible in this picture). This photo was taken from somewhere near Lawton Lane, after spoil from the dredging of Cockle Creek (Silver Lake Harbor) was pumped up and deposited in front of the building. Today this view is obscured by a number of cedars and other buildings.

The Ocracoke United Methodist Church:



This photo was taken soon after the dedication of this new church in 1943. This building replaced the Southern Methodist Church (located on Howard Street) and the Northern Methodist Church (located on the Back Road) after the two national bodies reunited and the two local buildings were demolished. Again, notice the soft sand in front of the church, where the paved School Road is today.

The Wreck of the Nomis:



On August 16, 1935 the Schooner "Nomis" ran ashore at Hatteras Inlet. James and Charlie Williams were among those islanders who hauled home a significant quantity of lumber from the wreck. The Williamses donated part of the lumber, and several men worked at building crude benches for the outdoor congregation of the newly organized Assembly of God Church.

The Wahab Village Hotel in the 1940s:



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Now called Blackbeard's Lodge, this was Ocracoke's first truly modern hotel, built by R. Stanley Wahab in 1936. At that time it sat on the edge of the bald beach (the hotel has not been moved; but vegetation has colonized the area in front of the hotel that was once

nothing by sand, shells, and bird's nests). Old Jake Alligood operated a four-wheel-drive taxi (a converted army vehicle) that would transport visitors across the adjacent tidal flats to the Atlantic Ocean. Today the hotel is operated by Stanley "Chip" Stevens, the great grand-nephew of Stanley Wahab.

We hope you have enjoyed this virtual "photo album" showing a few scenes from Ocracoke's past.