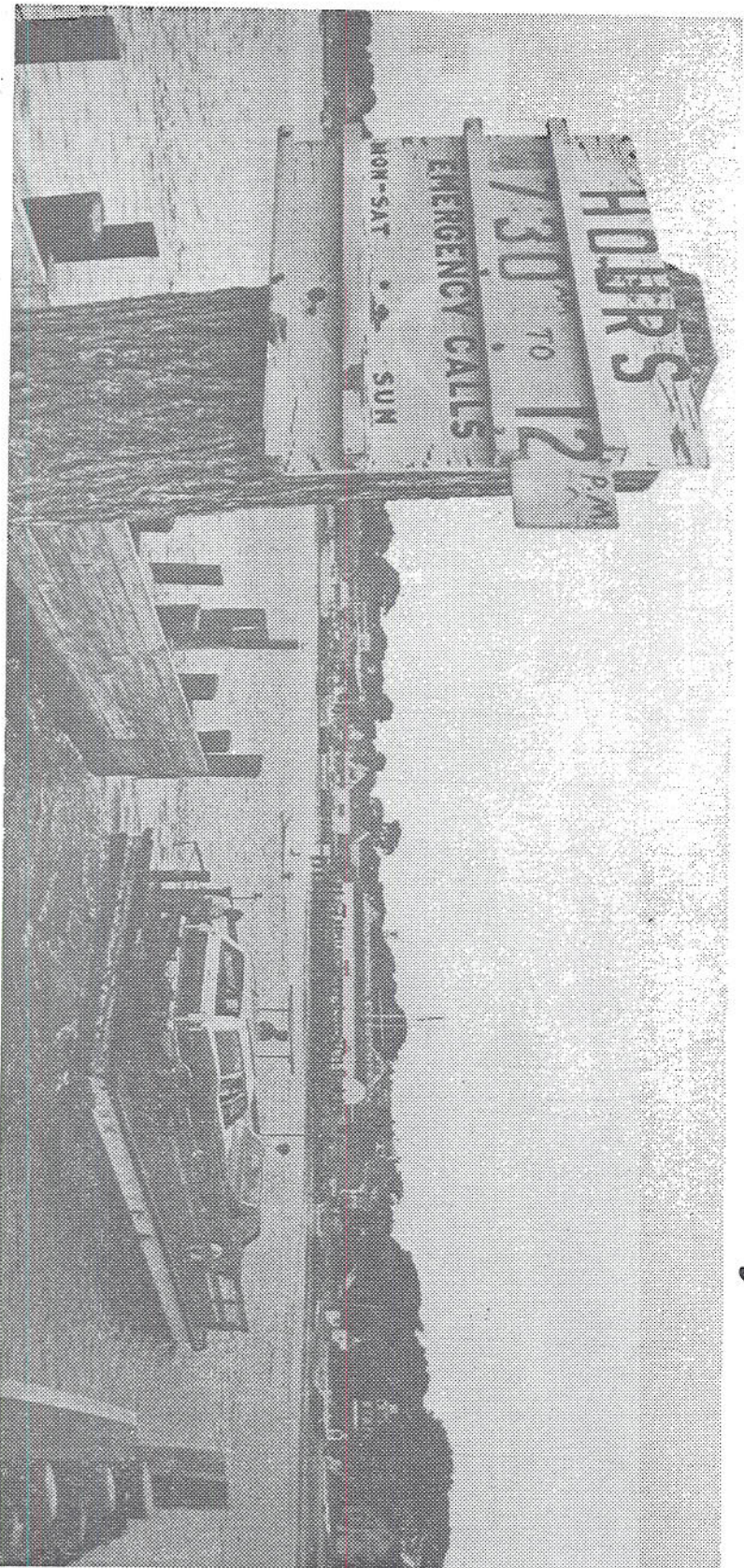


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## Tourists on Ferry Flock to Scene of Kennedy Accident



Photographs for The New York Times by LEE ROMERO

The "On Time" ferry crossing the channel between Chappaquiddick Island and Edgartown, rear. Since the fatal accident involving Senator Edward M. Kennedy, thousands of sight-seers with autos have jammed the two-car ferry to reach the island. This photo was taken from the Chappaquiddick side.

By NAN ROBERTSON  
Special to The New York Times

EDGARTOWN, Mass., Aug. 22—The "on time" ferry does not run on time any more.

The crowds of camera-toting tourists in shorts and bright summer shifts begin coming in the morning to the tiny two-car ferry that plies the 150-yard channel between Martha's Vineyard and its sleepy satellite island, Chappaquiddick.

They flock across the water and down the dirt road and finally to the humpback Dyke Bridge, from which Senator Edward M. Kennedy's car plunged last month in an accident that killed a young secretary, Mary Jo Kopechne.

At the bridge they tear up splinters as souvenirs, and tramp around, and take pictures of it all. Then they go back to the ferry, where the life preservers have been padlocked against keepsake hunters, and join the line of cars waiting to return to Martha's Vineyard.

This is what the Kennedy accident means these days to the residents of Chappaquiddick, once a quiet spot by the sea with a few scattered homes and not even a store to sell a package of cigarettes. And the citizens are not very happy about it.

#### Spelling The Island

The fame that now attends their island was illustrated the other day by the author Vance Packard, who has summered there with his wife for 18 years.

Several weeks ago, Mrs. Packard asked a friend in New York to send some items from Saks Fifth Avenue. The friend reported that "the clerk couldn't spell Vance and she couldn't spell Packard, but she didn't have any trouble with Chappaquiddick."

Disgruntled residents spoke of being virtually "marooned" by the ferry jam on the island, where 12 persons live year round and 400 more spend summer vacations. They complained about frozen foods melting in their cars, and of having to pay waiting time for plumbers, electricians and other repair men from the Vineyard who inched forward in the ferry line.

"All during August it has gotten progressively worse," said Dr. Edward B. Self, a noted surgeon who is president of the Chappaquiddick Association. "It poses a nuisance and a hardship. Repair people and contractors from the Vineyard are beginning not to want to come over here."

#### To Ask Ferry Bar

Dr. Self, whose association comprises all Chappaquiddick residents, said he would meet Tuesday with the Edgartown selectmen to discuss the problem. Arguing that the tourist crush means that Chappaquiddick settlers "are being discriminated against," he will propose that anybody not on "legitimate business" there should be barred from the ferry.

John Willoughby, one of three men who run the "on time," says it is now common for him to ferry across

400 cars a day from 7:30 A.M. to midnight. The record on one day last summer was 300, far above the average.

The other day, one of those on the ferry, a confused 85-year-old woman, swiveled around to her daughter and said: "Tell me when we get to the spot." Her daughter replied: "No ma, you're on the ferry. This is where he [Senator Kennedy] swam across."

On the Chappaquiddick side, a steady trickle of sightseers was making its way toward the bridge, three miles east across the island. About a dozen cars and many bicycles were parked at both ends of the little wooden bridge, which is humped in the middle so that small boats can pass underneath.

#### Picture Taking

Families were photographing the bridge and each other. A brawny motorcyclist drove up to the top of the hump and then photographed his motorcycle. Someone had carefully scratched into the bridge, in inch-wide letters: "Ted plus Mary." This was only a couple of feet from the scrape marks where the car went off on the night of July 18.

A boy and girl summering on the island appeared with a card table and two chairs, several baskets and a sign that advertised homemade sandwiches for 40 cents each and brownies for 15 cents. They thus became the only commercial establishment on Chappaquiddick, serving both tourists and those who merely wished to cross the bridge to reach the magnificent beach beyond it.

Mrs. Ruth Doucette, a real estate operator, from Quincy, Mass., stood on the bridge and chatted while her 13-year-old grandson, Gary Robillard of San Diego, pried a splinter from the side. Mrs. Doucette said she had come over for a day from Hyannis Port on Cape Cod and was staying at the Shiretown Inn in Edgartown, where Senator Kennedy lodged during the weekend of the accident.

#### Cottage Owner Secluded

Fifty yards away Mrs. Pierre Malm remained secluded from a visitor in the house known as Dyke Cottage. Some time around midnight on July 18, her daughter Sylvia, reading upstairs, heard a car come down the road. Senator Kennedy walked past this and another lighted house that night after the accident to seek help from friends at a cottage 1.2 miles away. The family has been besieged by the curious ever since.

Sidney Lawrence, who owns the Chappaquiddick cottage used for the Kennedy cookout on July 18, but was not on the island that night, was more accessible. Stretching a canvas for his wife in their studio out back, Mr. Lawrence said that tourists were still coming to photograph each other in front of the cottage.

"Some reporters are coming back asking questions,"



On the Dyke Bridge on Chappaquiddick, site of the accident, Gary Robillard of San Diego, 13, pries a splinter from the bridge for a souvenir while his grandmother, Mrs. Ruth Doucette of Quincy, Mass., photographs him.

Mr. Lawrence said. "They're still not satisfied, and I can't say I blame them."

Foster Silva, who was on the roof hammering in insulation, poked his head over the edge to add he thought the stream of visitors was "petering out."

Mr. Silva, a contractor and caretaker at the Lawrence

place, lives close by and heard the noise of the Kennedy party that night. He also has been extensively interviewed.

Mr. Lawrence said the front cottage had been rented out ever since the Kennedy accident, but that one couple who moved in immediately after that weekend, paying \$200 for a week's stay, "left

② been what one described as "very much stiff upper lip."

At the long annual meeting of the Chappaquiddick Association Aug. 2, not the slightest allusion was made to the Kennedy accident until near the end, when someone commented grumpily on the traffic problem.

"Most of the people seemed to feel it was bad taste even to that far," said a man who was there.

And two men who run bus tours of Martha's Vineyard, Terence McCarthy and Ben David, said their buses had never gone to Chappaquiddick and were not going. Despite requests for information about the accident from some tourists, "our men are told mandatorily not to talk more than the minimum about it. I don't want any of our drivers editorializing," Mr. McCarthy said.

① suddenly" after spending only one night.

The attitude of most residents of Chappaquiddick has

② Apart from the Edgartown-Chappaquiddick area at the

southeast corner of the vineyard, the island seems untouched by the tragedy that has focused world attention upon it. There are still the same nut-brown babies playing on the beaches, the wild, rusty cliffs of Gay Head, the dreaming meadowlands and ponds of West Tisbury and the white sails belled by the steady winds of Nantucket Sound.

Those who love Martha's Vineyard return to it year after year for some of the same reasons described more than three and a half centuries ago by the men of Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold's expedition. Its pastoral quality, like farmland set adrift in the 'sea, gripped them in 1602.

"We stood awhile," they wrote, "like men ravished at the beautie and delicacie of this sweet soile; for besides divers cleere lakes of fresh water [there were meadows very large and full of greene grasse; even the most woody places."