

United States Life-Saving Service

1848



1915

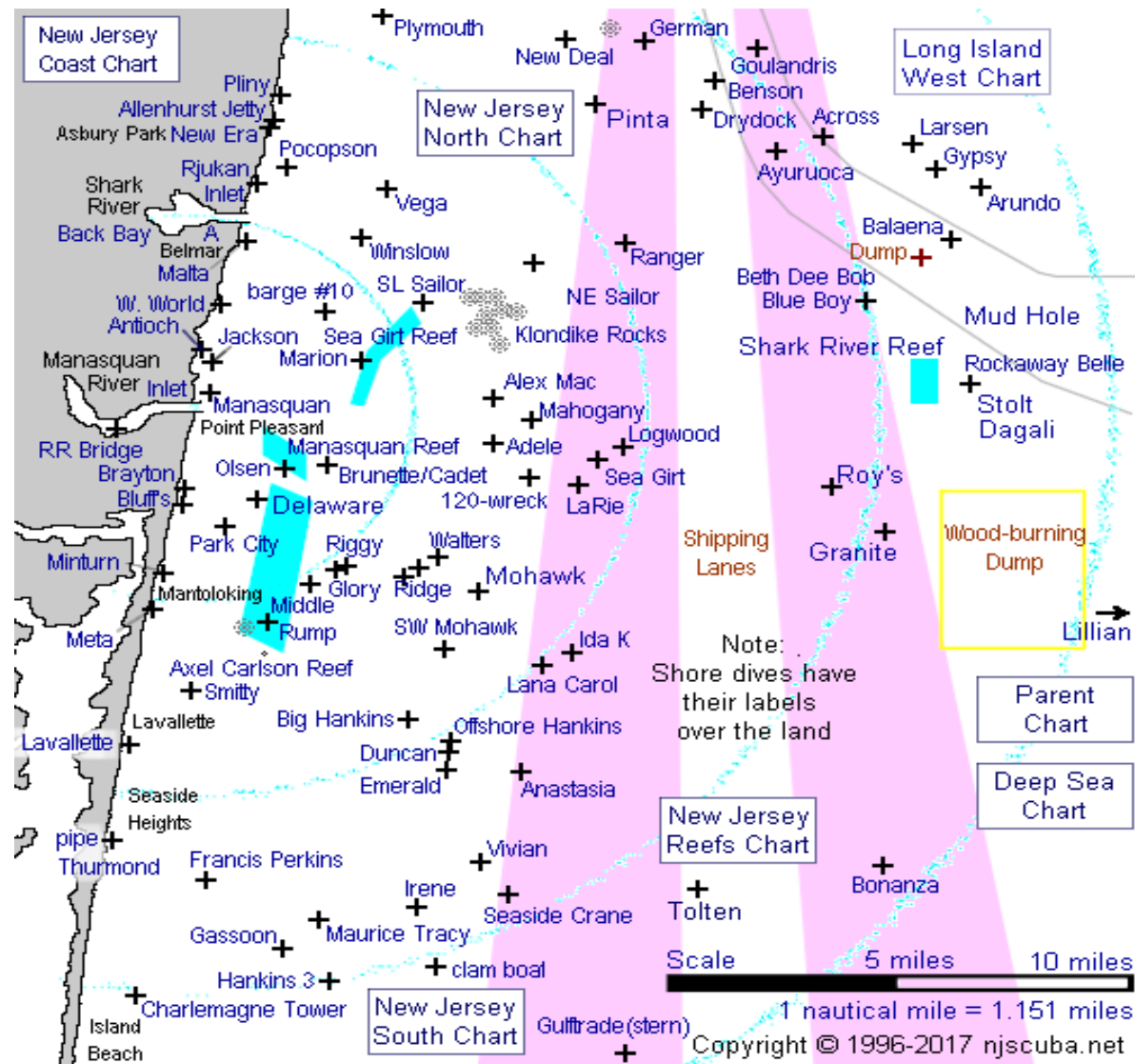
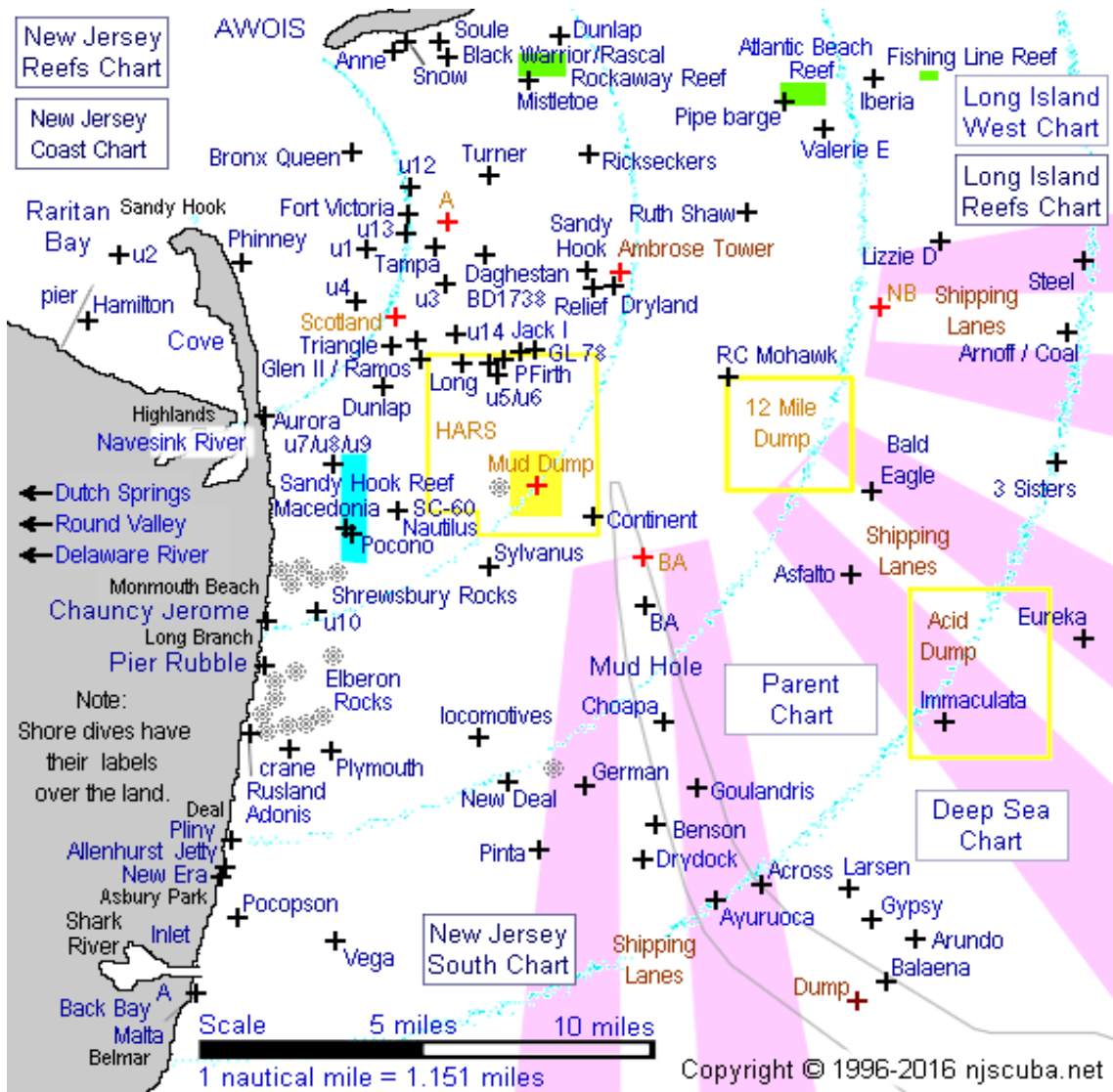
"You have to go out, but you don't have to come back"
- Life-Savers Motto

What lies beneath: N.J.'s coast littered with shipwrecks



Estimates of the number of wrecks off this coast are between 4000 and 7000.

Shipwrecks in NJ



Sandy Hook Wreck Chart

Manasquan Wreck Chart

In all types of weather...24\7... 365 days a year...



“In the wave-swept shore, night and day, in storm and sunshine, faithful and untiring...”



**“...the noble men of the Life-Saving Service
are ever on duty.”**



Early History of the LSS

**Boston
and
vicinity,
1800**



- As a result of the continuous catastrophic loss of life in Massachusetts, the Boston Humane Society suggested the construction of several small British developed, “lifeboats”.
- In 1807, a 30 ft. long, 11 crewmen craft was completed.
- First lifeboat station was built at Cohasset, MA.

LSS Challenges

- Prior to 1848, small, sporadic stations were only near busy ports.
- Nearly all of America's coastlines and waterways were unprotected.
- Structures were not manned nor maintained.
- Many had no boats and were vulnerable to theft and vandalism.





Artist renderings appeared in national newspapers and magazines to capture public sympathy and support for a National Service.



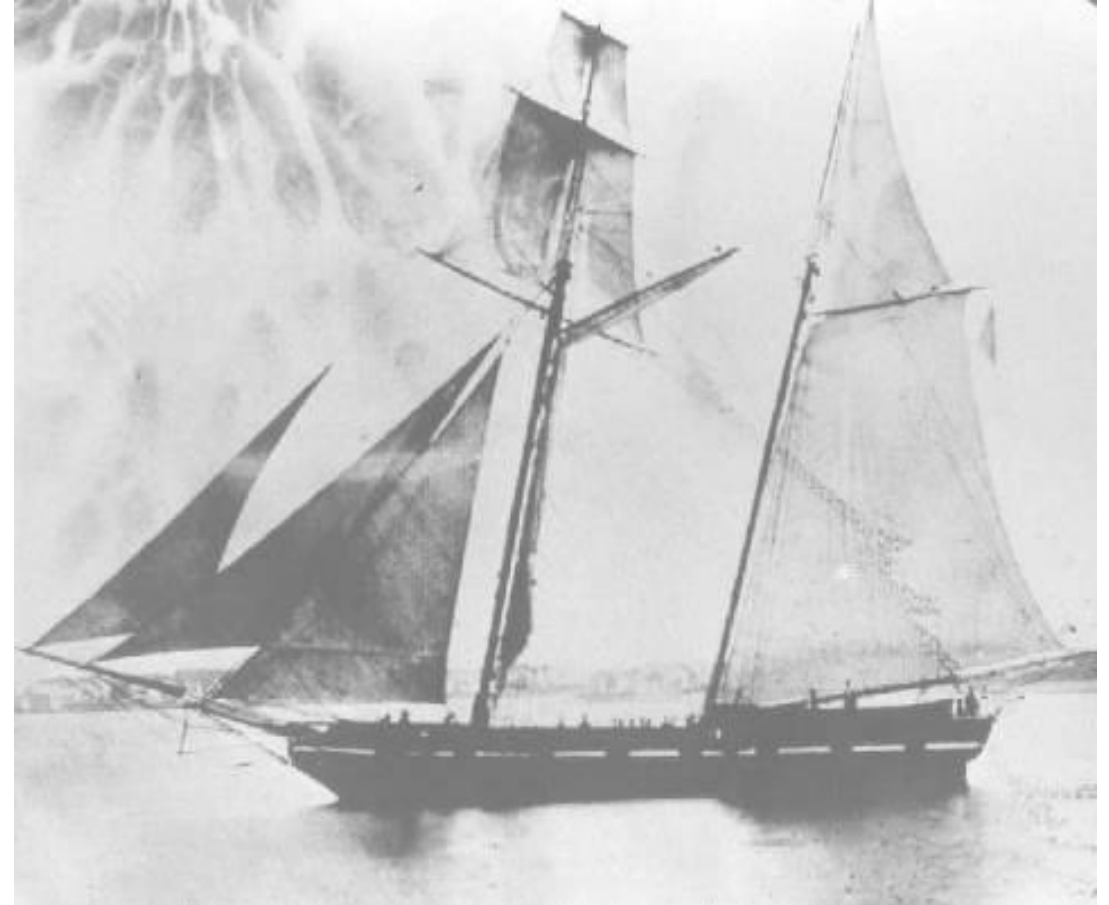
Drawings, lithographs and paintings supported the heroism and dangers faced by the LSS.



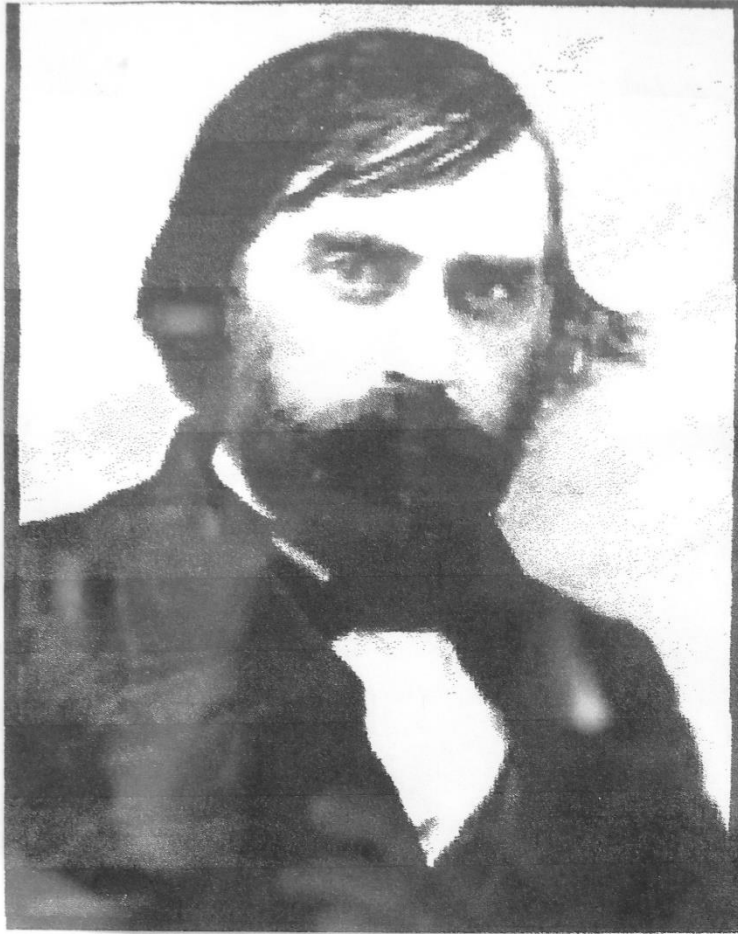
Illustration of LSS Surfman, Rasmus Midgett Rescues the Crew of the *Priscilla*.

US Government Appropriates Resources

- **1831 – *Gallatin* cruises the coast in search of persons in distress.**
- **First government directive to save lives.**
- **1837 – Congress authorizes search and rescue on the high seas.**
- **Falls short of oversight and fiscal support.**



USRC *Gallatin*



William Augustus Newell

18th Governor of New Jersey

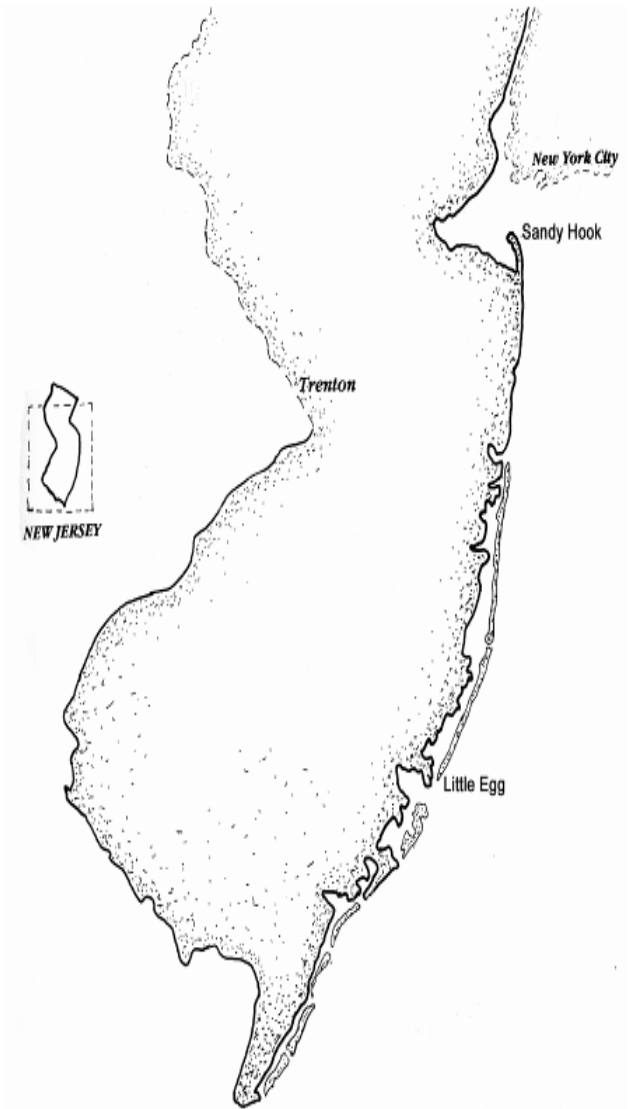
Born: September 5, 1817 in Franklin, Ohio

Served: January 20, 1857 to January 20, 1860

Died: August 8, 1901 in Allentown, New Jersey

William A. Newell

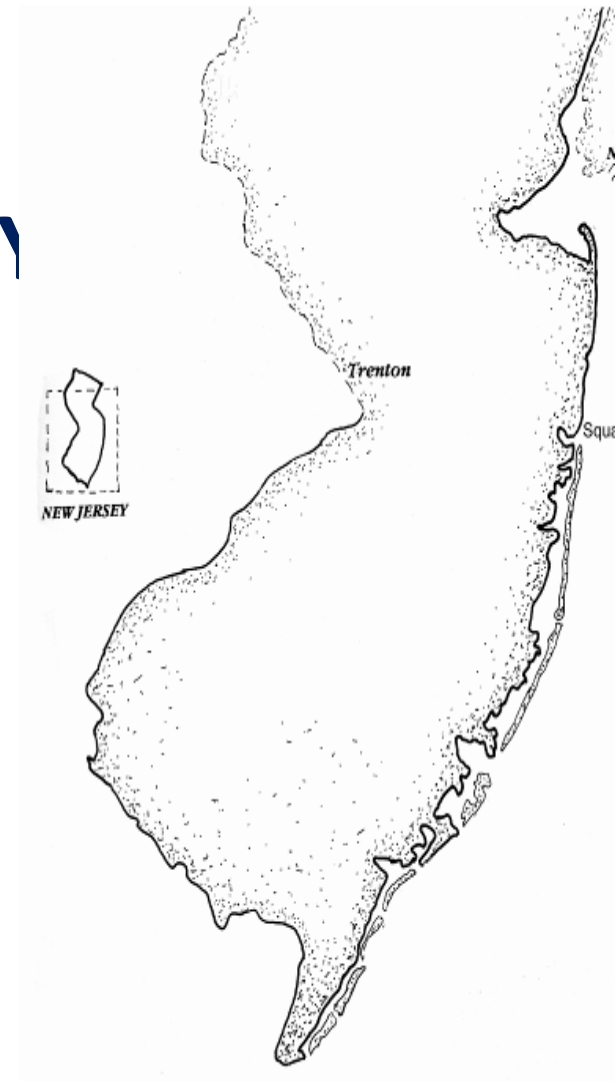
- Congressman from New Jersey champions and improves the service.
- In 1848, Congress appropriates \$10K for “...surfboats, rockets, carronades....”
- Appropriations are limited to New Jersey only between Sandy Hook and Little Egg Harbor.
- Spermaceti Cove Life-Saving Station was the first government station built in 1848 at Sandy Hook.



New Jersey Coastline

Challenges Continue....

- 1848 legislation was inadequate.
- **1850** The *Elizabeth* wrecks – many more die.
- Two-thirds more stations are built in NJ and NY
- Systemic problems:
 - Small facilities
 - Voluntary crews - in the early 1800s, crews were funded by local charities or by wealthy individuals.
 - Neglect and theft.
 - No standardized practices.



The Beginning of a National Life-Saving Service

Winter of 1870-71: increasing deaths result in a public outcry for more Federal support.

20 April 1871 Congress appropriates \$200K.

Surfmen receive wages. New stations are built. LSS comes under jurisdiction of the Treasury Dept.

Captain John Faunce's report on the state of life-saving found the system "... in deplorable disrepair and in a state of near-complete unreadiness."

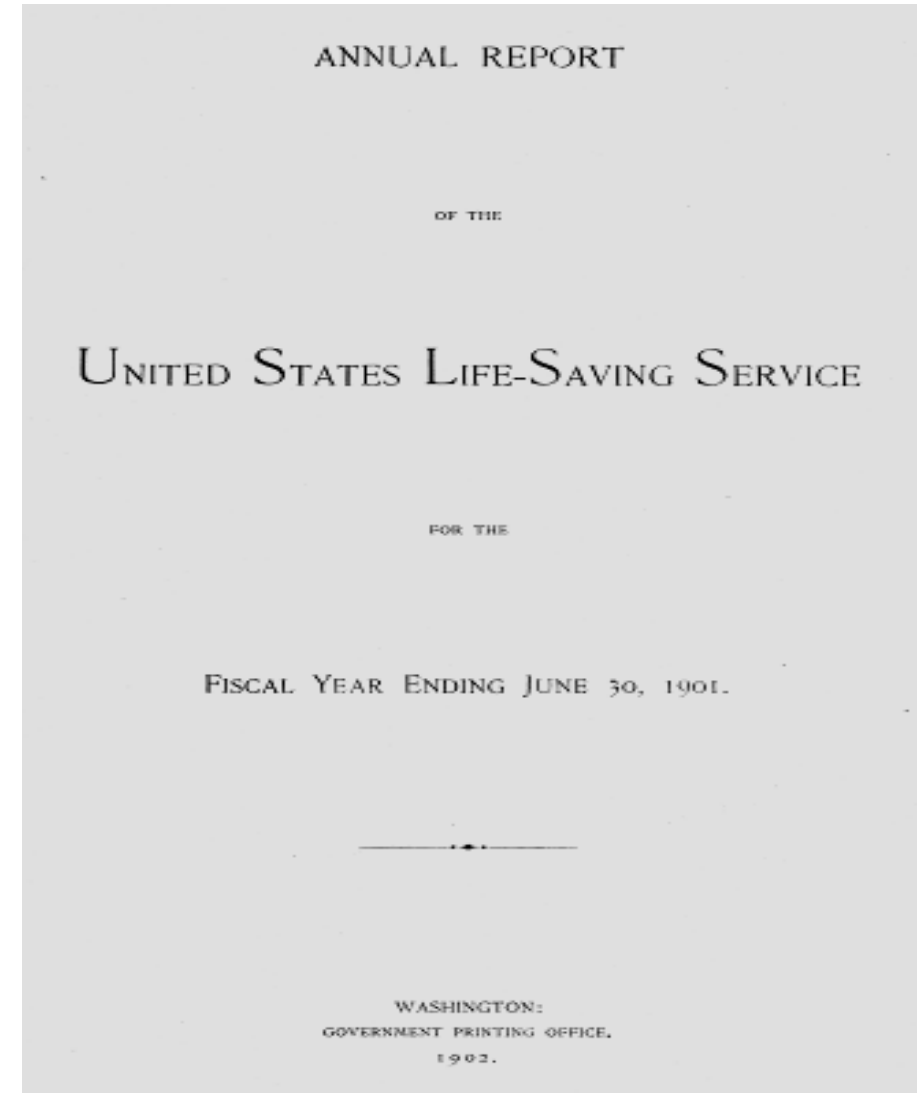


Captain John Faunce

Garnering Public Support

William D. O'Conner

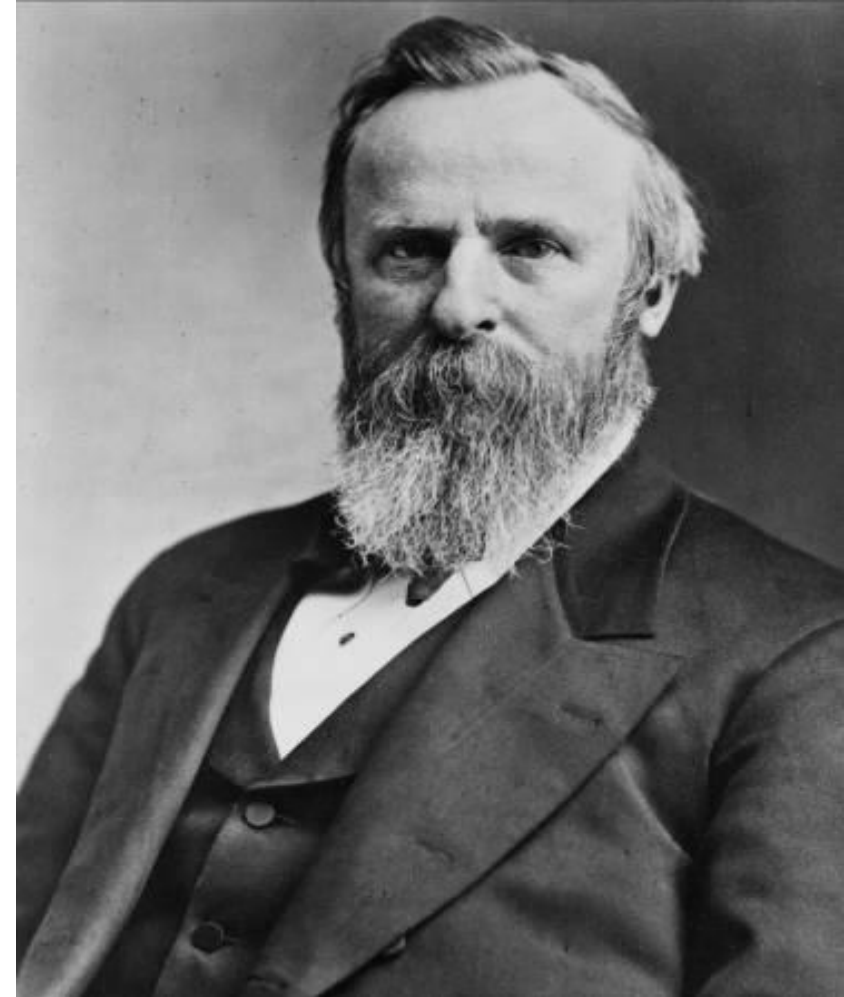
- Journalist
- Authored rescue accounts in the annual reports.
- Vivid and Eloquent.
- Accounts disseminated to the general public.
- His reports ensured support for the USLSS.



Title Page from an Annual Report

Founding of the U.S. Life-Saving Service

- 4 June 1878 – Rep. Samuel S. Cox petitions the HR to organize the National LSS.
- 18 June 1878 – Congress unanimously passes legislation creating the USLSS.
- President Hayes nominates Sumner Kimball to be the first General Superintendent.
- Congress unanimously approves the appointment.
- Stations are built on all coasts and the Great Lakes.



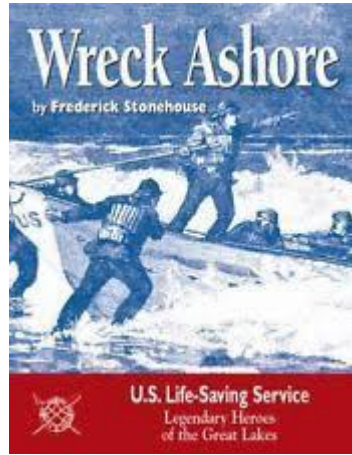
President Rutherford B. Hayes

Spermaceti Cove



USLSS Stations in NJ

**Sandy Hook , Spermaceti Cove - Seabright -
Brigantine South - Monmouth Beach - Ocean City -
Long Branch - Deal - Shark River - Spring Lake -
Manasquan Beach - Bayhead - Mantoloking -
Chadwick - Toms River - Island Beach - Cedar Creek -
Great Egg - Forked River - Barnegat - Loveladies
Island - Harvey Cedars - Ship Bottom - Long Beach -
Bond's - Little Egg - Little Beach - Brigantine -
Atlantic City Absecon - Peck's Beach - Corson's Inlet-
Sea Isle City - Townsends Inlet - Avalon - Tatham's -
Hereford Inlet - Wildwood - Turtle Gut - Two Mile
Beach - Bay Shore - Cold Spring - Cape May -
Fenwick Island - Five Fathom Bank**



THE UNITED STATES LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.

BY MARK LANE.

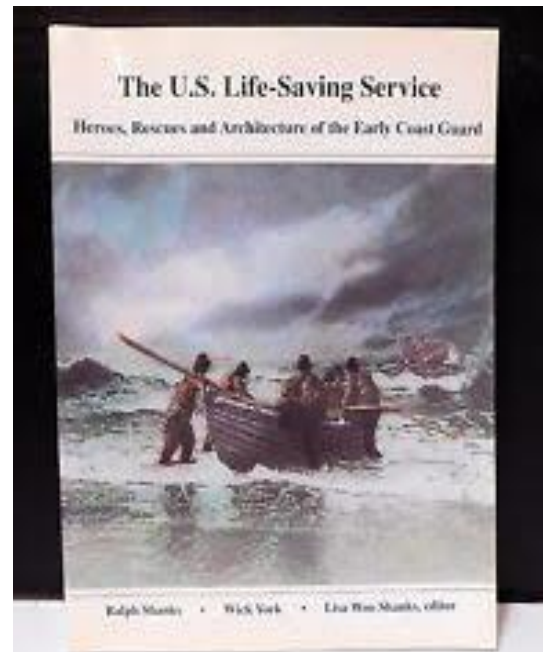
The Life-Saving Service of the United States is the only government establishment of its kind in the world, all others being maintained principally by private contribution. There are now upon the ocean and lake coasts of the United States about two hundred and twenty-five life-saving stations. In the past twenty years these stations have saved more than fifty million dollars' worth of property and forty thousand lives.

The stations are two-story pine houses for the accommodation of the crews, and the apparatus. On portions of the coast they are only five miles apart, at dangerous exposed points and manned from September to April.



HEROES TO THE RESCUE.

The crew is chosen from the neighboring fishermen whose life-time experience fits them for the trust. A strict lookout is kept day and night, and each man carries a signal which flashes a red flame far out over the water to warn ships approaching too near the breakers or to assure the shipwrecked that help is at hand. Five principal appliances are used. A cedar six-oared surf-boat suitable for flat beaches and provided with

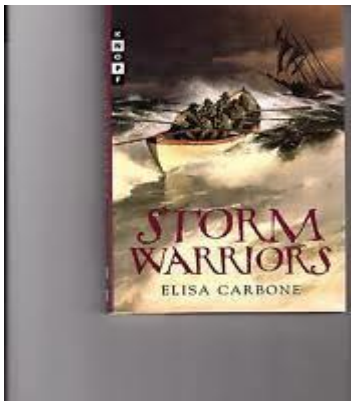


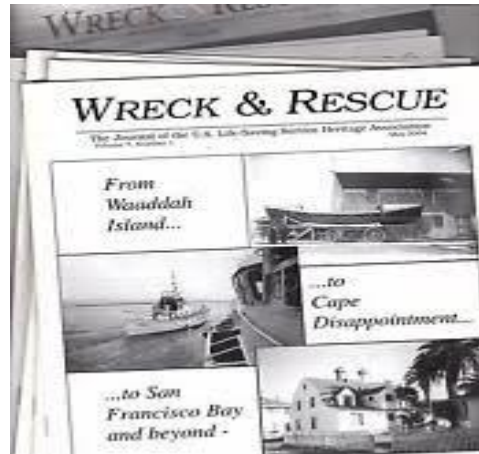
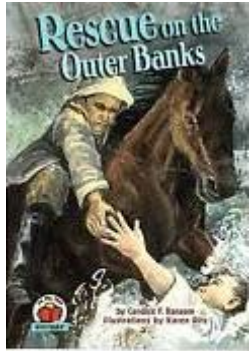
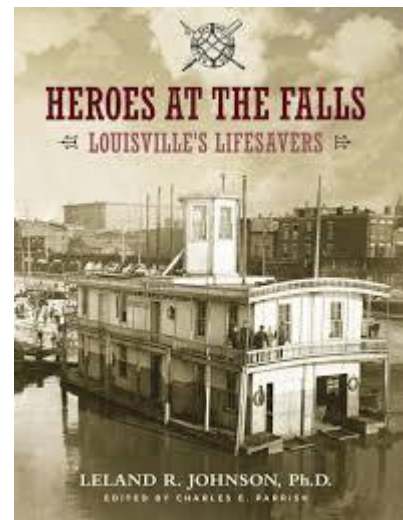
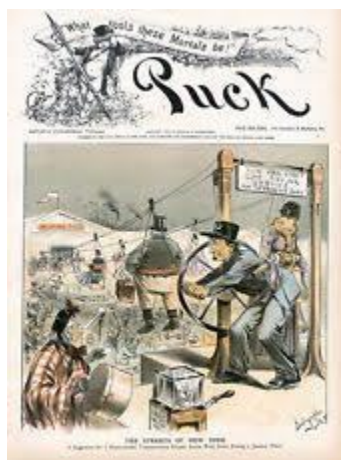
KNIGHTS OF THE WAVE.

THE STORY OF RESCUE AT SEA
BY JOHN D. WHITING

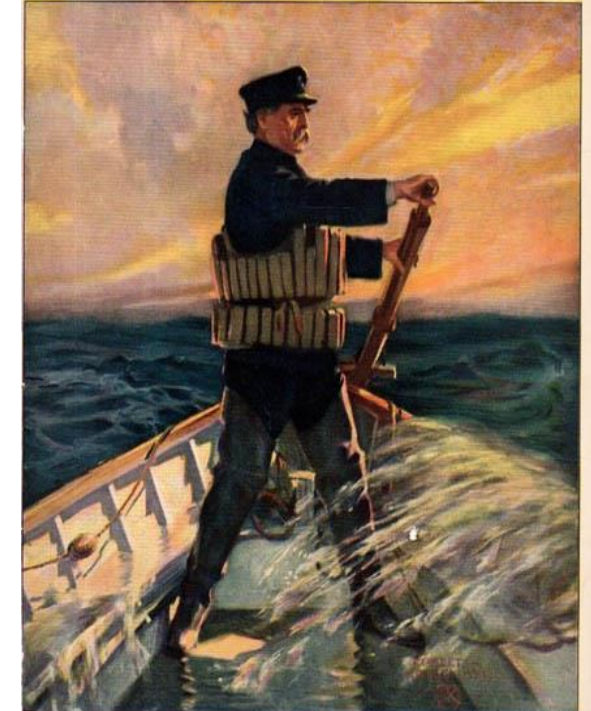


"THERE was not a day throughout the winter year when the Coast Guard was not engaged in some kind of heroic enterprise in the Arctic." So reads the simple message of the United States Annual Report. The book which is issued "Saving Life and Property on the Sea," the leading aid to the distressed, warning illustration by means of drawings, pictures, plans and sketches, showing the life and training of the men who save lives and many other interesting matters, is the best source of the Coast Guard.





U.S. Life-Saving Service Heritage Association
Dedicated to Preserving our National Life-Saving Treasures



The Storm Veteran

Copyright 1901, L.F. Co., New York

Life-Saving Equipment

-Beach Cart

-Boats

Lifeboat

Surfboat

-Cork Lifebelt

**-Heaving Stick
and Line**

-Beach Apparatus

-Lyle Gun & Faking Box

-Breeches Buoy

-Lifecar

-Foul-Weather Gear

-Coston Flare

Beach Cart

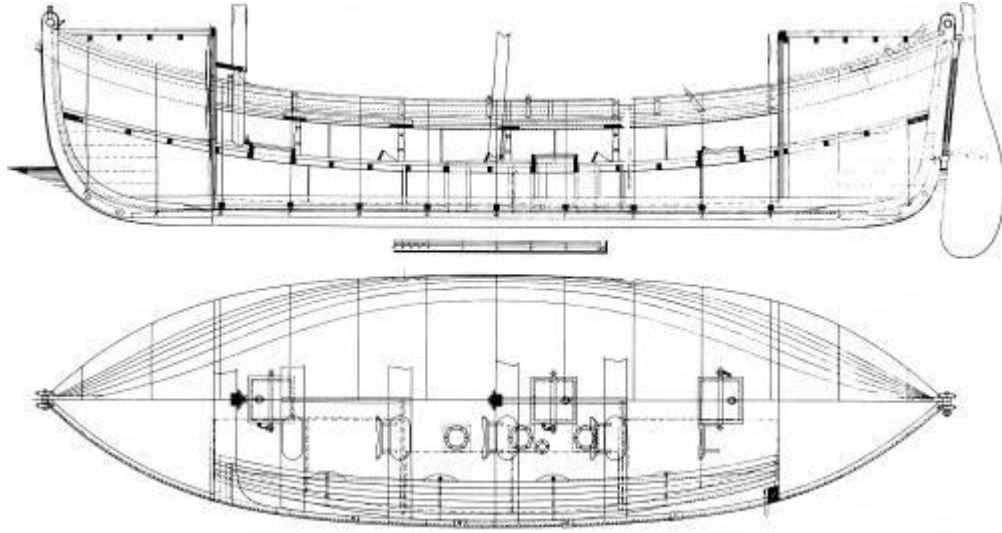


"...The beaches many times were clad with ice and at best, were pathless deserts in the night."

- A Surfman

Boats

- Lifeboat



- Surfboat



Launching Lifeboats





A later, motorized, ramp-launched Lifeboat



Transporting a Surfboat to the shore.



Surfboat drills were conducted several times a week.

Cork Lifebelt



CORK LIFE-BELT.



Heaving Stick and Line

- Short-stick with oval weight attached to a line.
- Surfman could throw it up to 50 yds.
- Inadequate for shore-based rescues.
- An alternative was needed.

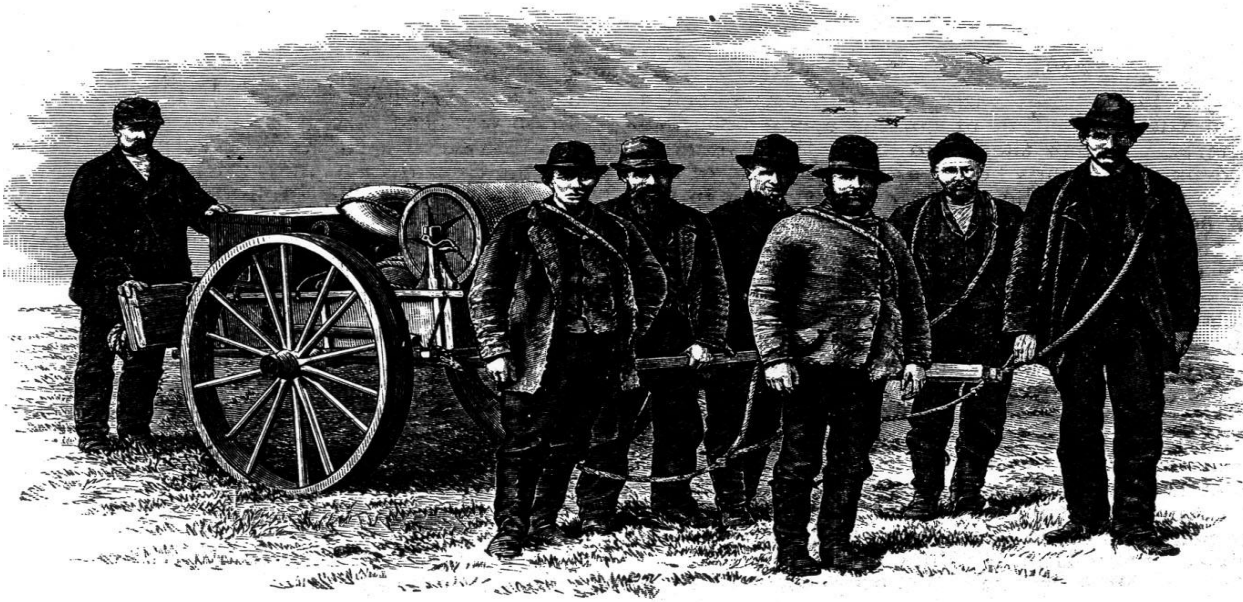




The Bridger Line-Throwing Gun, ca. 1870

Beach Apparatus

- Beach Carts were used to get rescue lines to the wrecks
- Pulled by Surfmen or a maybe a horse, to the beach over dunes it included ropes, a line-throwing gun & faking box, a crotch (for elevating the lines), a sand anchor, shovels, a breeches buoy and/or a lifecar.
- Fully loaded, with a Lifecar, a cart could weigh as much as 2 tons.

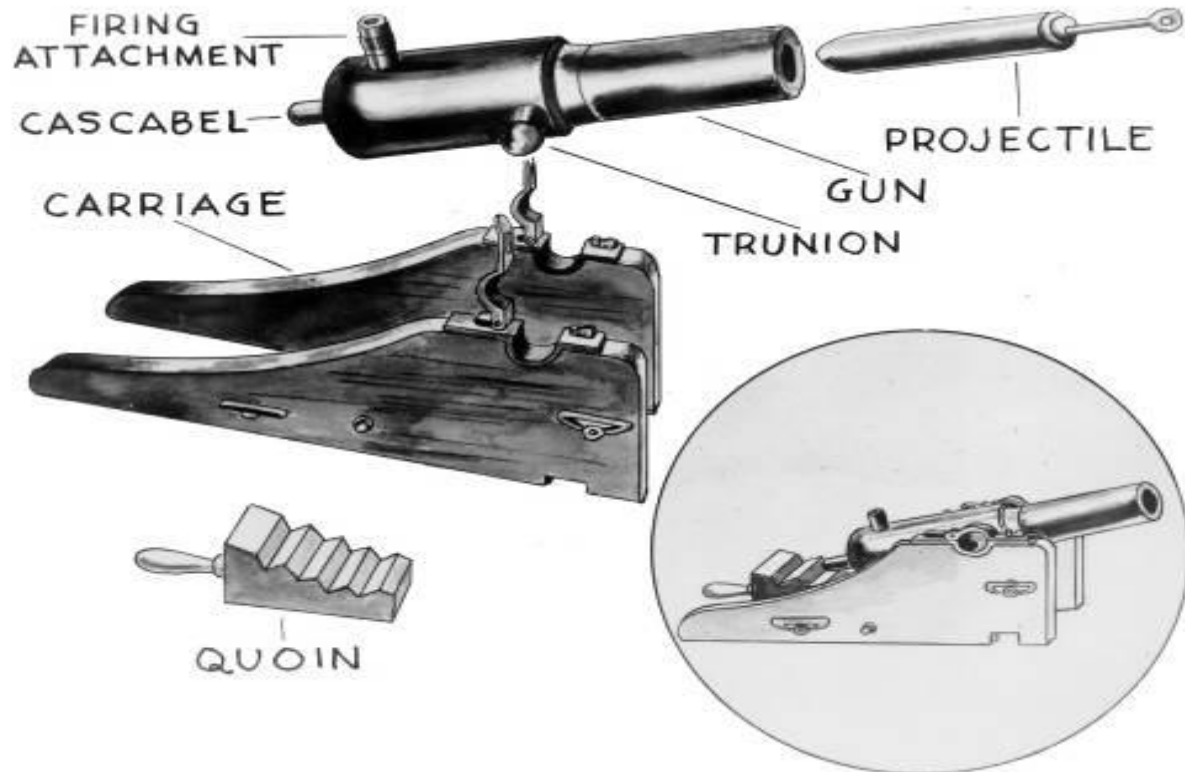
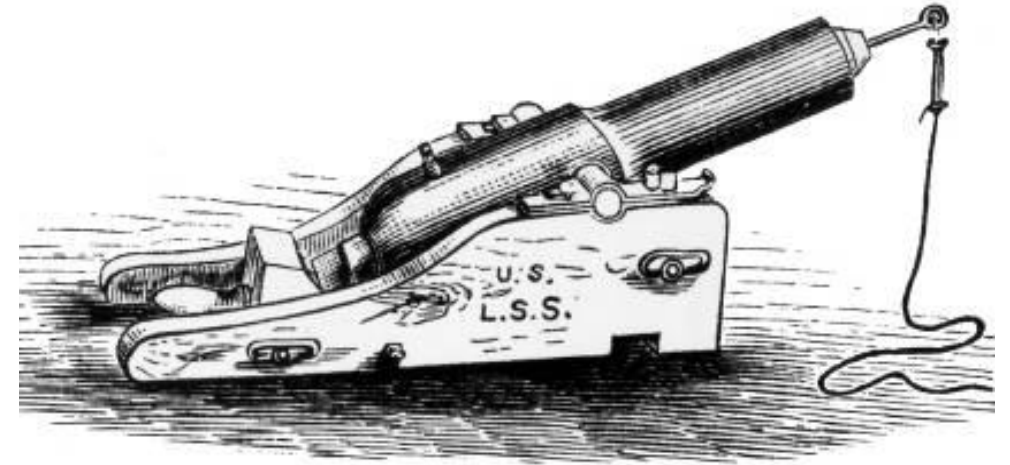


LIFE-SAVING CREW WITH HAND-CART LOADED WITH APPARATUS.



Lyle Gun

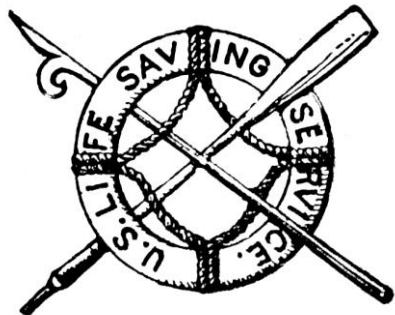
- Designed by David A. Lyle, US Army.
- Improved design to throw lines.





The Lyle gun had a range of about 700 yards. It also had huge recoil and hence, it was mounted on a small cart. The Lyle gun stayed in use until 1952.

Firing the Lyle Gun

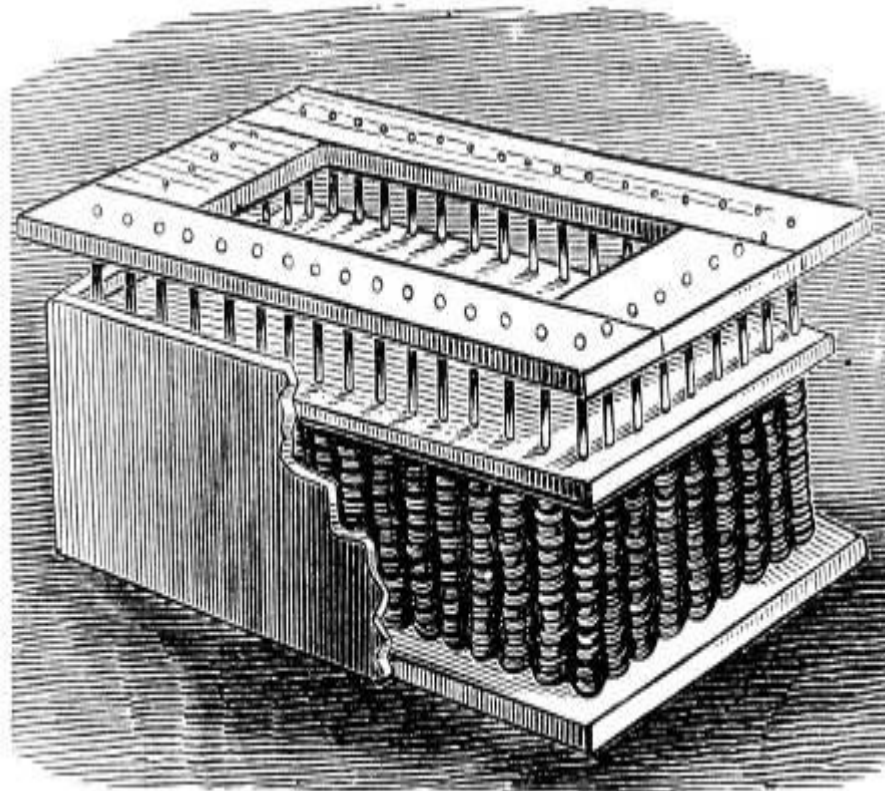




A rocket-launched rescue line

Faking Box and Shot line

Surfmen Stringing the Shot line in the Faking Box



METHOD OF WITHDRAWING FRAME AND PINS FROM SHOT-LINE IN FAKING-BOX.

Completed Faking Box



Breeches Buoy



**Crewmen Training with the
Breeches Buoy**



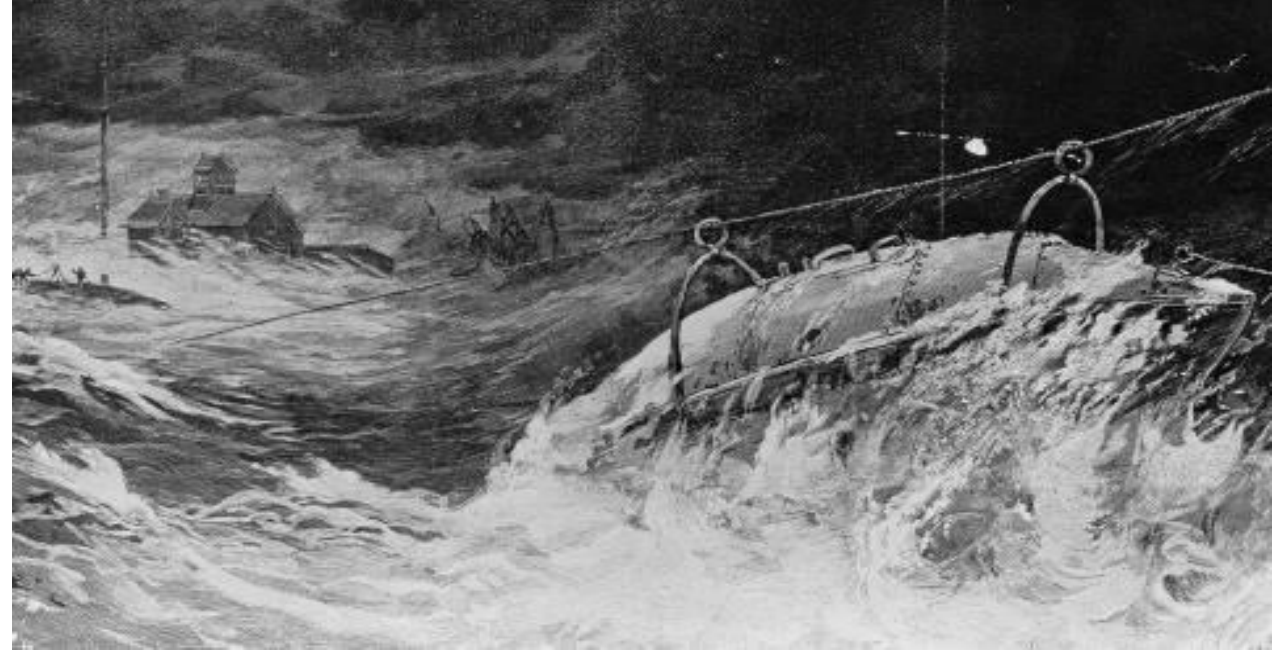
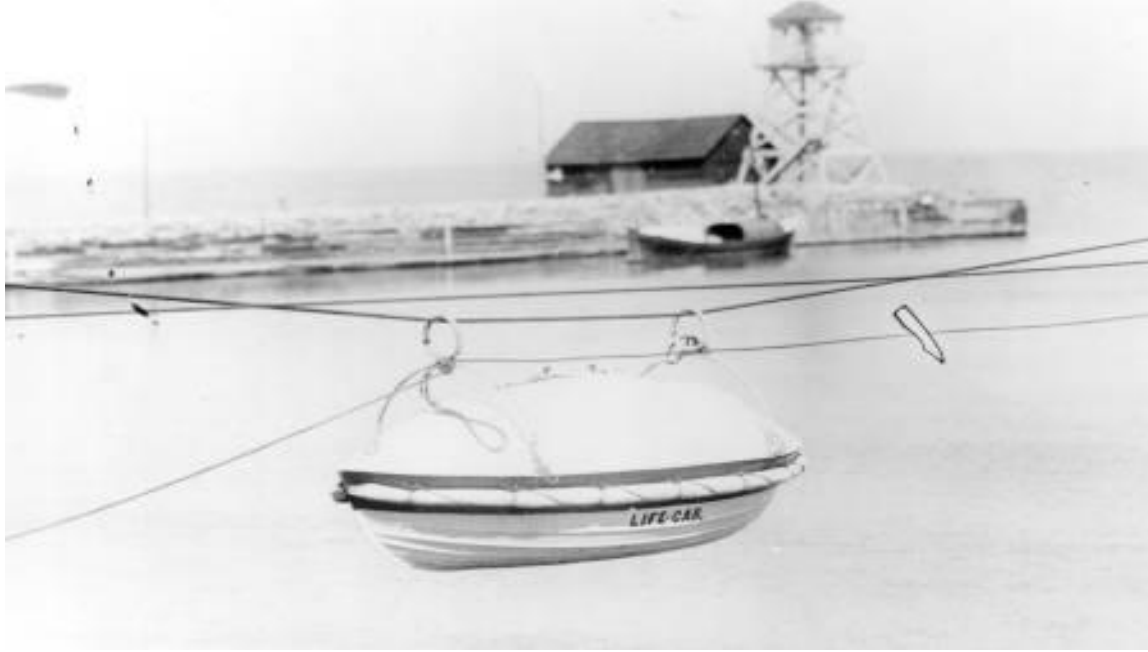
Breeches Buoy in Action



Some views of an actual Breeches Buoy at the Museum of New Jersey Maritime History.



The Lifecar



- **Developed by Joseph Francis in 1838, perfected in 1847, it was replaced by the lighter, faster Breeches Buoy in 1899.**
- **It resembled a small boat or submarine enclosed with small holes to let in air but little water. It was pulled between shore and ship much like a Breeches Buoy .**
- **Carried 2 to 4 people who would lay down inside as they were pulled ashore.**



Joseph Francis Life Car in Action

Museum of New Jersey Maritime History.

US LIFESAVING STATION



MTC

Small white sign with illegible text

Foul-Weather Gear



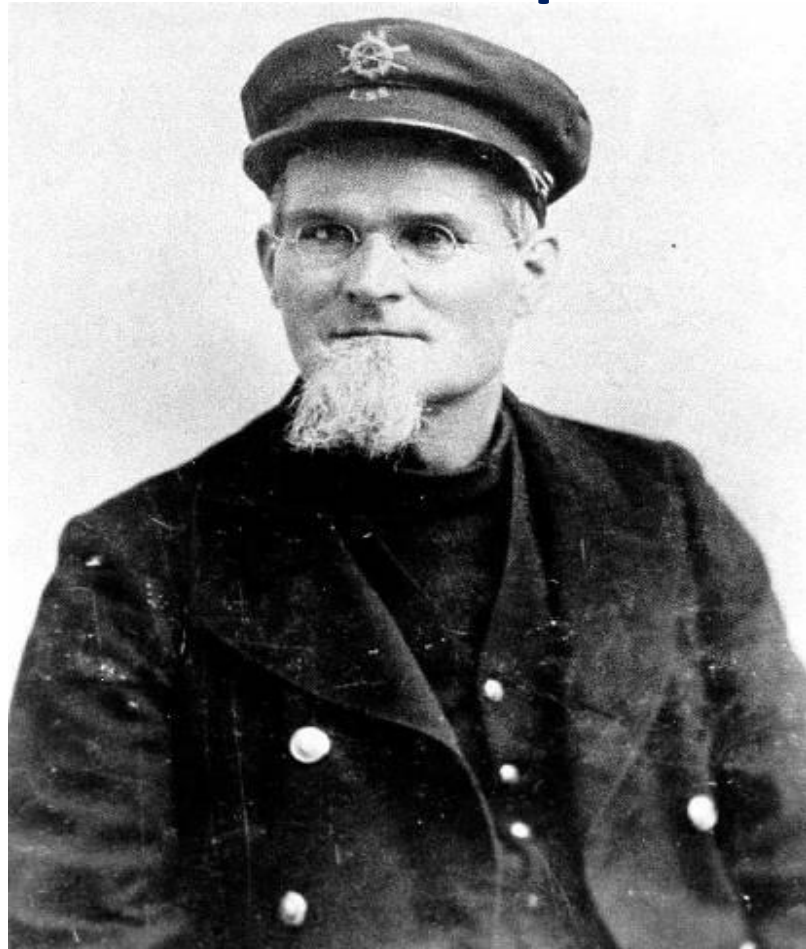
Gear for conducting rescues



On Beach Patrol

Uniforms of the Life-Saving Service

Station Keeper



Surfman



“Dress Type”



• It was not until 1889 that surfmen began to wear a standardized uniform. It should be noted that the surfmen were not issued uniforms, they had to pay for them.



Coston Flare

- Developed by Ben Coston and promoted by his wife Martha.
- Adopted by the US Navy.
- Adopted by USLSS--every station equipped.
- Helped save thousands.
- In 1899, Surfmen burning Coston signals warned off 143 ships in danger of running aground.





Station Toms River



Life-Saving Stations



Station Deal



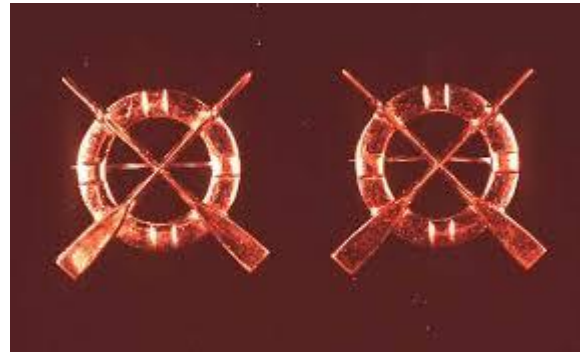
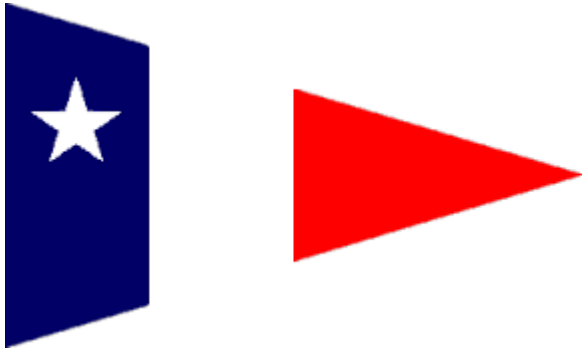
1885



The photo below is from 1961 and the station is listed as near the mouth of Shark River, Avon-by-the-sea. Its keepers included William A Hawey (1872), John C. Patterson (1883) and Charles Chasey (1915).



-THE SHARK RIVER LIFESAVING STATION (CG 103)-



Life Saving Medal 1st Class



End of the US Life-Saving Service

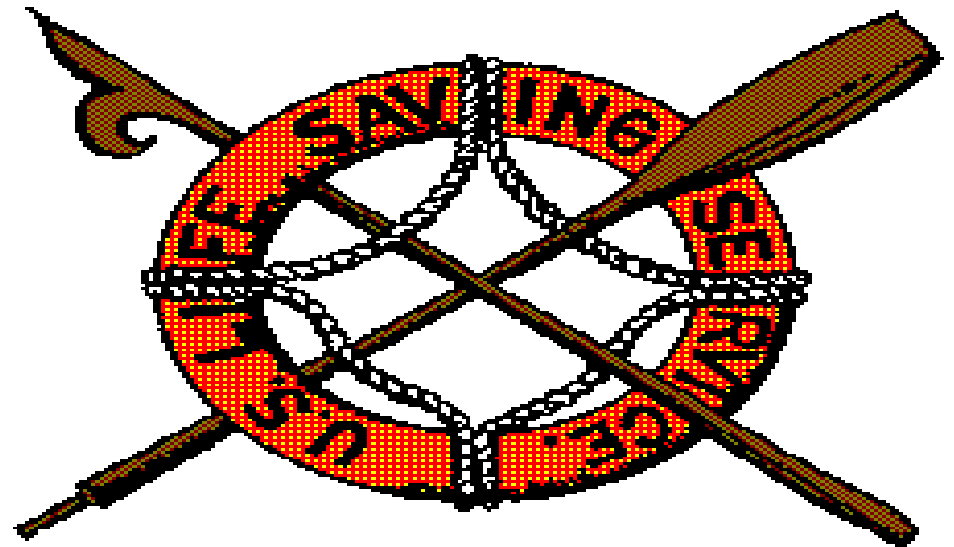
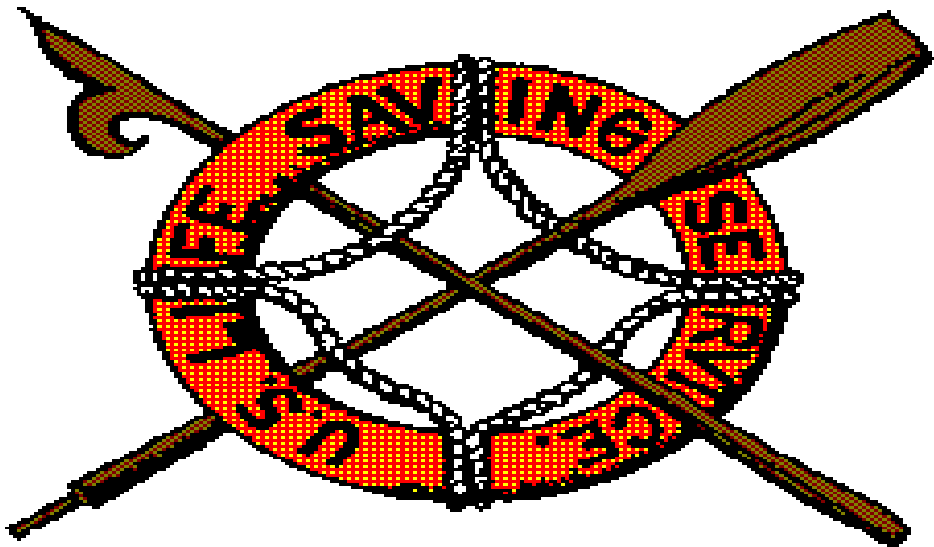


- **20 January 1915** -- "Act to Create the Coast Guard" combines the U.S. Life-Saving Service and the Revenue Cutter Service.
- **28 January 1915** -- President Wilson signed the Act into law and the US Coast Guard was established.

*The US Life-Saving Service, in its 67 year history,
was responsible for saving no less than
181,000 lives.*

- US Coast Guard statistic

One can only imagine how many lives were lost
before the Service was created.



***“You have to go out, but you don't have to come back”
Life-Savers Motto***

