

U.S. Coast Guard History Program

Station Orleans, Massachusetts



**USLSS Station #12, Second District
Coast Guard Station #40**

Location:	Abreast of Ponchet Island; 41-45' 31"N x 69-55' 31" W in 1878; 41-45' 35" N x 69-55 55"W in 1915.
Date of Conveyance	1878
Station Built:	1872-1873
Fate:	Turned over to the GSA in 1954

Remarks:

Orleans station was one of nine station erected on the shores of Cape Cod in 1872. The position was "abreast of Ponchet Island;" Ponchet was later changed to Pochet. The station was built on what was called Little Ponchet Island, back of the Nauset Beach, about two and one-half miles south of Nauset Harbor, and

about five miles from what was the Orleans village. The station was located at one of the most dangerous sections of the coast, sunken bars stretching along the coast there for miles. The 1878 *Annual Report* mentions that "for the proper protection of the Richardson self-righting and self-bailing life-boat, a suitable boat-house has been erected." The station was extensively repaired and improved in 1888. In 1933, PWA funds were used to rebuild the station buildings. The station disappears from the listing of lifeboat stations in April 1947.

The property was turned over to the GSA in 1954 and subsequently transferred to the National Park Service in 1970.

Keepers:

The first keeper at Orleans station was Solomon Linnell, who was appointed at the age of 52, with twenty years experience as a surfman, on December 12, 1872 and resigned September 1, 1881. He was followed by Marcus M. Pierce, who served from August 26, 1881 until he resigned on November 8, 1894. Then came James H. Charles (November 13, 1894 until he was incapacitated and retired on July 10, 1917), Walter I. Hammond (reassigned from Gurnet station on August 13, 1917 until he resigned on December 2, 1918), and Robert F. Pierce (reassigned from the City Point station on February 22, 1918 until reassigned to the Straitsmouth station on July 6, 1921). The station was listed as discontinued in 1922; nevertheless, Richard E. Ryder was reassigned from the Monomoy station on July 2, 1921 and served until reassigned to Gloucester station on May 1, 1923. Then came Edward L. Clark, reassigned from the Pamet River station on September 11, 1918 until his retirement on April 2, 1928. The station was again listed as an active station in 1928. Clark was followed by Chief Petty Officer A. N. Ormsby, who was reassigned to the Pamet River station in 1932. Next came Chief H. O. Daniels in 1932, who was assigned to the Peaked Hill Bars station in 1936. Alvin H. Wright, newly commissioned, was assigned on February 15, 1938 and remained until the outbreak of World War II.

Photographs:



"1872 – ORLEANS LIFESAVING STATION, one of the original nine U.S. Lifesaving Stations erected on Cape Cod, Mass. (Photo courtesy of Mr. Charles G. Dalton, First District Court of Barnstable, Barnstable, Mass. Published in the book, 'THE LIFE SAVERS OF CAPE COD,' by J. W. Dalton (copyright 1902)); Official Coast Guard Photograph No. API-07-20-67 (01).



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Sources:

Station History File, CG Historian's Office

Dennis L. Noble & Michael S. Raynes. "Register of the Stations and Keepers of the U.S. Life-Saving Service." Unpublished manuscript, compiled circa 1977, CG Historian's Office collection.

Ralph Shanks, Wick York & Lisa Woo Shanks. *The U.S. Life-Saving Service: Heroes, Rescues and Architecture of the Early Coast Guard*. Petaluma, CA: Costañó Books, 1996.

U.S. Treasury Department: Coast Guard. *Register of the Commissioned and Warrant Officers and Cadets and Ships and Stations of the United States Coast Guard, July 1, 1941*. Washington, DC: USGPO, 1941.

