

SOME OFFSHORE SAND BANKS.

GeoSuffolk Notes
#40

There are numerous large and shifting sand banks off our coast, lying approximately parallel to the coastline, and often dangerous for ships.

The Suffolk Chronicle of 15 December 1849 reported that the night of the previous Friday was exceedingly dark, thick and rainy, with a strong wind blowing from eastward, a good deal of sea and a strong ebb-tide. That night five coal-laden ships belonging to Newcastle and Shields were wrecked on the Gunfleet Sands (off Frinton on Sea).

About 1917 Scroby Sand off Great Yarmouth became an island again after an interval of nearly 100 years. In 1925 Major Ernest Cooper (in Journal of Ipswich & District Natural History Society) reported that during the last two summers large numbers of people had been taken there from Yarmouth and landed on the sand for a walk. While the tide was falling the sand became firm allowing good walking, but as soon as the flood tide set in the sand became wet and quick (loose) and it was time to hurry to the boat.

In 'East Anglia from the Sea' (1972: Stanford) David and Joan Hay reported that Buxey Sands (off the Dengie Peninsula) dry out at low tide, become quite hard and one can go for a walk on the some three or four miles of sand. They mention that a sea fog or thick mist can come down very quickly and there may be very little chance of finding one's yacht again, and about eight feet of water cover the sands at high tide.

R. Markham

GeoSuffolk Notes #40.

RM 2013