ANCHOR TO WINDWARD

Books by Edwin Valentine Mitchell

THE ART OF WALKING

THE ART OF AUTHORSHIP

THE HORSE AND BUGGY AGE IN NEW ENGLAND

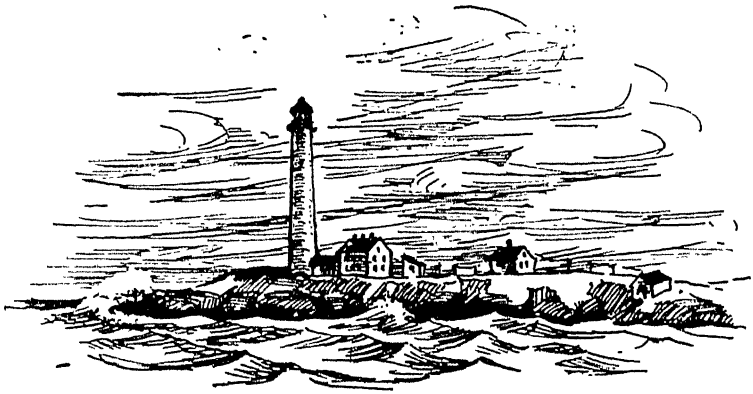
MAINE SUMMER

ANCHOR TO WINDWARD

Anchor to Windward

BY EDWIN VALENTINE MITCHELL

ILLUSTRATED BY RUTH RHOADS LEPPER



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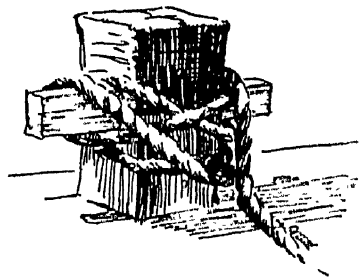
To Rev. Neal Dow Bousfield



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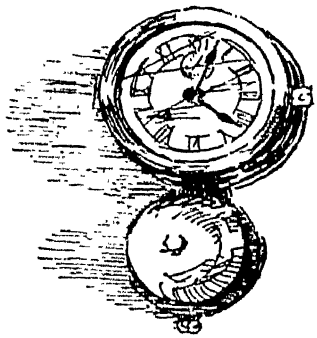
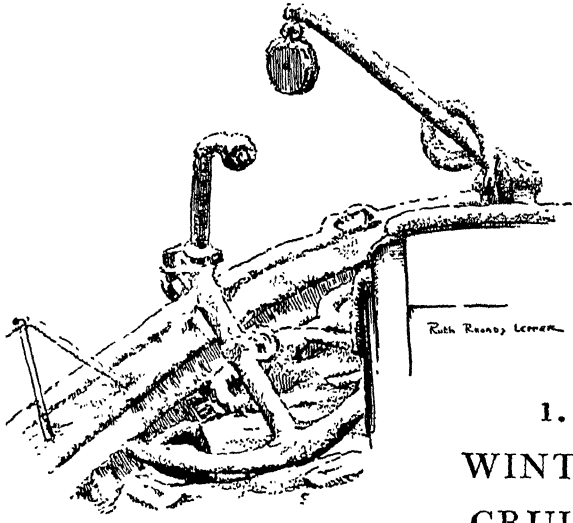




1.
WINTER CRUISE

ON the train between Boston and Portland, Maine, I hoped to catch a glimpse of the sea. For the morning papers all carried front-page stories about the fierce southeasterly gale that had been lashing the New England coast. I was particularly interested in the procession of storm effects along the shore, because, although it was the middle of January, I was going to Portland to meet a vessel that was to take me on a cruise along the Maine coast.

This winter voyage on which I was about to embark had its origin one stormy night at the end of summer, while I was reading a book in an old white house on the maritime border of Maine. The wind and the rain were having a wild time together outside in the darkness, crying and weeping around the place like Longfellow sobbing over the

dead body of the robin that he shot. It was during the early days of the war, and I had the radio turned on to catch any news that might blow in on the wings of the storm. Nothing much had been reported for several hours, but I let the instrument dribble on like a leaky tap, as the broadcasting company switched from one warring capital to another. First the American radio reporter in London would describe the blackout there. Then the person in Paris would tell what life in the gay city was like with the lights turned off. He in turn was followed by the commentator in Berlin who presented the Nazi nocturne. It all sounded very much like the experience of the toper in *Jorrocks*, who intended to put his head out the window, but stuck it in a cupboard instead, and said the night was hellish dark and smelled of cheese.

Yet those were urgent, stirring hours filled with excitement and suspense, when everybody wondered if death in new and novel forms was stalking over the Polish battlefields, how ships were faring on the high seas, and if we would be drawn into the maelstrom. It seemed almost certain that we would be drawn in, since there was no escaping the fact that, whether as nations or as individuals, we all live under the same law, namely, if one suffers all suffer, and a wrong done to one is a wrong done to all. Nor did it appear as if our geographical position could save us. For, as Macaulay pointed out of the Seven Years' War, almost a century and a half ago, a quarrel over dynastic succession

among small European states could even then result in minor wars in Asia and Africa, and in red men scalping white men along the rivers and the coast of Maine.

The book I had was well suited to random reading. It was a guide book—a guide to Maine—into which I dipped haphazardly, reading snatches here and there about this town and that, from China to Peru and from Vienna to Paris. Maine has as quaint a collection of place names as any state in the Union. At Paris, I read, is located the oldest and largest factory in America devoted to the manufacture of children's toys. From Paris I jumped to the front of the book, where various Maine matters, such as the flora and fauna and fishes of the state, were treated. As I casually turned the pages, my attention was caught by a paragraph at the end of the section on Maine education and religion. It seemed almost to have been added as an afterthought or as a footnote, but the moment I read it my curiosity was aroused. This is what it said:

"The Seacoast Mission, an independent philanthropic enterprise supported by individual contributions, has its headquarters at Bar Harbor, and by means of its boat brings religious, educational, hospital, and recreational facilities to the inhabitants (particularly the children) of the islands and lonely outposts of the coast. Its work at Christmas time is especially praiseworthy."

Scarcely had I finished reading the paragraph when the lights suddenly went out and the radio became silent. The

storm had unexpectedly left the Maine Power and Light Company without either power or light, or at least without the ability to transmit them to the section of the coast where I was, and as a result the whole countryside was plunged into a darkness as profound as that of London, Paris, or Berlin. It was useless to try to read by the light of the fire, so I put down the book, and sat listening to the storm, while phrases from the guide book drifted through my head: "Seacoast Mission... islands and lonely outposts of the coast... by means of its boat... at Christmas time ... headquarters at Bar Harbor."

In a vague way I knew there was such an organization as the Maine Seacoast Mission, but beyond the bare fact of its existence I knew practically nothing about it. I could not remember ever having seen the boat. But sitting there in the dark I began to wonder what kind of boat it was. A summer boat would never do in winter. And of what did its Christmas cargo principally consist? There would be toys, of course, perhaps from the old toy factory at Paris; but what else? Did the captain in December suddenly cry in the tone of a bosun in a half gale, "Clear the decks! Make room for Christmas!" as willing workers began loading the craft with turkeys twice the size of Tiny Tim? What was Christmas like on the outer islands? Of one thing I was sure. Whatever else might be lacking, there would be no dearth of Christmas trees in this land of evergreens.

It was easy to imagine the Mission boat nosing its way into a cove at some small island, as the whole population, consisting of a fisherman, his wife, four children, a dog, and grandma, beshawled and very spry at ninety-four, trooped down to meet it. Visualizing the people was simple, but I was not so sure about the winter background of the scene. I had a little acquaintance with Maine people, but I had never seen Maine in winter. I am afraid I pictured it in my mind as being rather like a scene in a Russian novel.

During the next few weeks the item in the guide book kept coming to mind, and I began to ask questions. There was something in the item, probably the mention of medical aid, which suggested the work of Dr. Grenfell in Labrador. Yet if the work of the Seacoast Mission was anything like the work of the Grenfell Mission, why had not more people heard of it? For, when I began to make inquiries about the Maine Mission, most of those whom I asked had either never heard of it, or, like myself, were only dimly aware of its existence, and the few persons I found who had actually seen the boat could not describe it satisfactorily. I realized, of course, that this in itself probably meant little or nothing, because most of those whom I asked were summer visitors to Maine, and it might be that I had happened to ask just the wrong ones. But the longer I remained in the dark the greater my interest grew.

To a large extent, I think, this was because I remembered all those islands strewn along the coast—there are more

than two thousand of them—and the fact that scattered through the islands are several thousand people, many of them living in tiny communities, sometimes numbering less than a dozen souls, whose only means of communication with the mainland or with other islands is by small boat. Very often cut off from the outside world, especially during the winter season of storms, rough seas, and ice, these people's lives are not gently set. The wind is keen and the work hard. These islands and the lonely headlands of the coast comprised the Mission field. If through the agency of its boat and its workers, the Maine Seacoast Mission brought to the people of these isolated places the spiritual and mental aid indicated in the guide book, then I was almost certain its sea-going services were something unique in this country. It was a work I felt I should like to observe, perhaps even report on, and I began to wonder if the Mission would allow me to make a trip on its boat and watch its workers in action.

If you really want to find out about something, there is nothing quite like going directly to headquarters and asking. So on a marvelously clear and colorful day in October I drove the hundred miles or so along the coast from Boothbay Harbor, where I was staying, to Bar Harbor, to call at the headquarters of the Maine Seacoast Mission. I still knew no more about it than what I had learned from the fifty-word statement in the guide book, but even if nothing came of the trip to Bar Harbor, I felt that the

drive along the coast in the fine autumn weather, with a visit to the top of Cadillac Mountain on Mount Desert Island, would be its own reward. The summer tide of traffic had ebbed completely away and it was as yet too early for the armed invasion of the hunters. Consequently I knew that the main coastal highway, which has the continuous interest of a serial story, would be comparatively free from wheeled vehicles of all kinds. This would give me an advantage in space and time that would add to the pleasure of the trip.

For some reason I expected to find the Mission headquarters on the waterfront at Bar Harbor. I am not sure that I did not have in mind one of those dingy mission halls

which may be seen in the purlieus of the docks in many seaports. But instead I found the Mission House in the residential quarter of Bar Harbor. It was a good-sized house, with the offices and supply rooms of the Mission on the ground floor, and the living quarters of the superintendent above. There was nothing to distinguish it from the other residences in the street, save for a modest sign, such as a doctor might have, with the name on it.

The Mission House gave me my first surprise, and the second surprise came a minute later when I went upstairs and met Neal D. Bousfield, the superintendent of the Mission, who was at work at a large, flat-topped desk in a book-lined room. I had expected to find a much older person than the agreeable young man who welcomed me. I put his age at not more than thirty or thirty-two. Some medical supplies on the top of the bookcase behind him made me think he might be a doctor, but he said he was a minister, though sometimes in an emergency he was obliged to treat people.

"Is the Mission boat here in Bar Harbor now?" I asked.

"We sold the old boat day before yesterday," he said. "But we're building a new one at Damariscotta. We expect to launch her early next month, and have her in commission in time for the Christmas trip in December."

When I asked about the possibility of my going with him on the Christmas run, Mr. Bousfield said that as far as he was concerned he would be pleased to have me go,

but it was a matter which he felt he should put up to his committee. Frankly, the accommodations on the boat were limited, and if all requests like mine which they received were acceded to, the Mission would be engaged most of the time in taking boatloads of passengers for cruises along the coast. I could appreciate the Mission's position in the matter, and it was arranged that I should write a letter stating my reasons for wishing to make the trip, and that he would submit this to his committee. Then for some time I asked questions about the past, present, and future of the Mission, and briefly this is what I learned.

The Mission was founded thirty-five years ago by the Rev. Alexander MacDonald and his brother, who knew the needs of the coast people, the people of the islands as well as the people of the mainland. According to one story, the idea for the Mission came to Alexander while he and his brother were on the top of Green Mountain, now Cadillac Mountain, on Mount Desert Island. Standing there as on a peak in Darien, looking out over the immense expanse of sea and hills and the long line of the coast, with its rugged headlands and island-studded bays, Alexander MacDonald suddenly clapped his brother on the shoulder and cried, "Angus, what a parish!"

He was a man who, once he had an idea, pursued it as relentlessly as the Hound of Heaven pursued Francis Thompson. He was the pioneer type, a huge-fisted man of enormous energy and driving power, who, when he saw

anything that needed to be done, set to work doing it. If an island needed a road, a school, or a church, Alexander MacDonald started to build it with his own hands. He dressed in rough clothes and beat the bounds of his far-flung parish in the small Mission launch. Many stories are told of him on the coast. Before the Mission built its church at Head Harbor Island off Jonesport, Mr. MacDonald held services in a quarrymen's boarding house. In a spirit of mischief, one of the stone workers tried to break up the meeting. Alexander MacDonald walked down to where the man was sitting and said, "Brother, I think the Lord would like it better if you did your praying outside." And taking the burly quarryman by the scruff of the neck he heaved him out the window. There was never any trouble after that. After the church was built at Head Harbor Island, Mr. MacDonald entered one evening to find most of the congregation sitting on one side. He was delighted when, upon asking some of them to move over to the other side, a fisherman spoke up, "What's the matter, skipper?" he asked. "Are you afraid she'll list?"

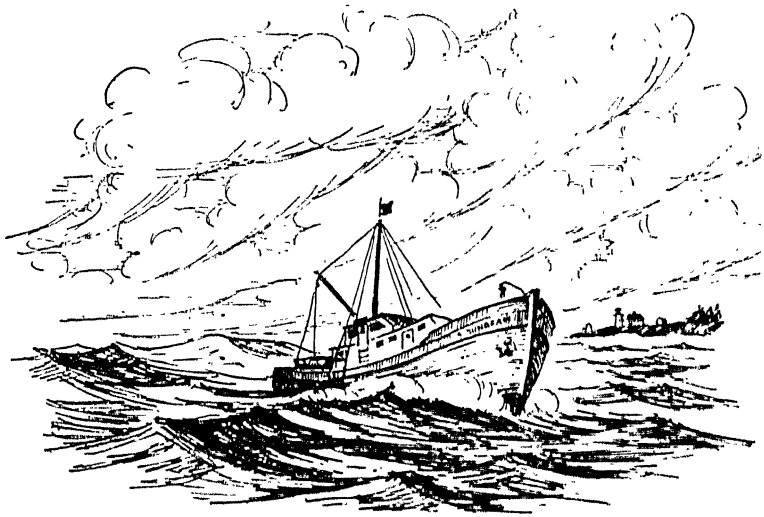
Mr. MacDonald's successor in the superintendency, after a brief interval during which Angus MacDonald carried on in his brother's place, was the Rev. Orville J. Guptill, who was the right man to follow in the founder's footsteps. Mr. Guptill was an organizer and builder; diplomatic, fearless, far-sighted. He was a fine speaker and a marvelous storyteller. Like Mr. MacDonald, he was a

human type to whom young people always went. He could see the underdog side of things. Like Mr. MacDonald, he was an absolutely tireless worker, who never spared himself in any way, and when a call came for help never failed to respond promptly and cheerfully. He generally dressed in a blue yachting coat which he wore until it was threadbare. He was a man of little stature, but great of heart, who gave away so much that when he came to retire he had nothing, not even a pension. But he did not live long in retirement. He stopped work in August owing to a bad heart, and in October he was dead. He was superintendent of the Maine Seacoast Mission for twelve years.

It is, of course, not only its staff but the gallant succession of boats owned by the Mission, which has enabled the organization to serve the people of the coast. It is the means by which the sick are carried to hospitals, convalescents returned to their homes, Red Cross Mission nurses, dentists, doctors, and welfare workers transported to the islands, supplies taken to those in need, and the dead carried to their last resting places. In winter the Mission boat breaks ice in harbors to make way for mail and stores, and in summer takes the people on picnics. In commission throughout the year, except for the time necessary for her reconditioning, the boat when not on cruise is kept at Northeast Harbor ready for any emergency and available for any errand of mercy or good will.

Counting the vessel then under construction, the Mission

has owned five boats. The first one, a very small Friendship sloop, was called the *Hope*. This was followed by the power boat *Morning Star*. At the suggestion of the small daughter of a lighthouse keeper, Mr. MacDonald named the third boat the *Sunbeam*, and this name Mr.



Guptill retained for the fourth boat, the one which had just been sold. And now his successor informed me that the boat in its cradle at Damariscotta was also to be christened the *Sunbeam*, making the third boat of that name in the Mission service. It is not a common name for a vessel, though every now and then you run across it. A noted Yankee whaler, a bark, bore the name; and many eminent Victorians, including Gladstone and Tennyson, went cruis-

ing in the famous auxiliary schooner yacht, *Sunbeam*. Each of the Mission boats has been larger than its predecessor, with the exception of the new one, which was being built on somewhat shorter and broader lines than the boat it was to replace. The new *Sunbeam* was to measure seventy-two feet in length, seventeen and one-half feet in beam, and draw six feet of water.

It seemed to me, as Mr. Bousfield talked about the Mission, that it had been organized at precisely the right time to be most helpful to the people of the coast. When it was founded in 1905, sailing vessels were being superseded by power-driven craft, and the life of the coast was beginning to undergo the greatest change in its history. Almost everything in the lives of all of us has altered during the past thirty-five years, but the change was especially marked on the Maine coast, particularly among the islands. How great the change was there, can perhaps be fully appreciated only by those who knew the region prior to the transition. It created many problems, but throughout what has been the most trying period experienced by the coast since the War of 1812, the Maine Seacoast Mission has served the people with indomitable enterprise.

It ministers not only to the people of the outer islands and the more isolated onshore communities, but also to the families of the Lighthouse and Coast Guard Stations. Its services include pastoral visitations, faithful and continuous, the holding of religious services in places otherwise

without pastoral care, and the sustaining of Sunday schools, vacation schools, and extension work in religious education. Its approach is undenominational. It maintains a welfare department through which clothing, old and new, is available, and many forms of emergency aid are rendered. Ambitious young people are assisted to educational advantages far beyond the opportunities of their immediate environment, and a small handcraft enterprise affords employment to some women and young folk. Much is done for the health of the people through instruction, distribution of simple aids to health, like cod-liver oil, dental and other clinics. At Christmas, gifts are distributed to more than 2,400 individuals in scores of communities along the coast.

"What," I asked Mr. Bousfield, as I rose to go, "is the question people most frequently ask you?"

"I suppose the question I am asked more than any other," he said, "is whether or not I am ever seasick. Of course, we sometimes get pretty badly tossed about, especially in the winter, as you'll see if you come with us. There's a tradition that the Mission staff can stand anything in the way of weather. But of course we're only human," he added, "and there's a limit to what we can stand."

A long exchange of letters followed my visit to the Mission headquarters. In this I thought the Mission officials showed their good sense. After all, they did not know me, and if a stranger writes and asks whether he may visit you, the only reasonable thing to do is to inquire into his motives

and discover if possible whether or not he is the sort who is likely to steal the silver candlesticks. But at length it was settled that I should join the boat on its maiden cruise. I hoped this would be in December, but building a boat is apparently like building a house. It takes longer than you think.

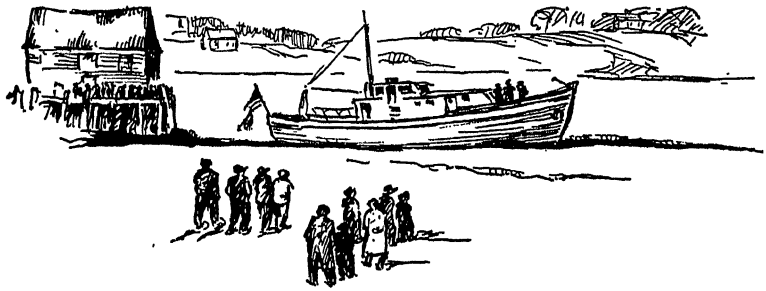
It wasn't until the day after Christmas that I drove from Connecticut to Maine to be on hand for the launching of the boat, which was scheduled to take place at high tide the following morning at Harry Marr's shipyard in Damariscotta. It was my very first glimpse of Maine in winter. Every place has its particular season when its special characteristics and charm are at their best, and while it would not be true to say that the winter months are the best months on the Maine coast—the northerly blasts of wind are apt to be a trifle too glacial for comfort—at no other time does the coast seem so alive and sparkling. There is a quality of light, a clarity of air, that sharpens the scene, casting a brilliant spell over trees and rocks and water. At night this clearness of atmosphere gives an unwonted keenness and glitter to the stars.

In the coastlands there was not so marked a difference between summer and winter as I had expected to find, a fact which I attributed to the predominance of the evergreens. That the general New England landscape owes much to its trees is evident by the change in outlook from summer to winter. This change takes place gradually, some

trees shedding earlier than others, but towards the end of the year even the oaks and beeches give up the contest, until at length all ranks stand denuded, exhibiting nothing but bare limbs and trunks to the winter gales—all ranks, that is, except evergreens. They remain clothed throughout the year, so that along the Maine coast, where they thrive, there is less bareness than elsewhere in New England, and consequently less change in outlook.

There was no snow worth mentioning, but it was evident that piles of it were expected. At the ends of the state highway fences, saplings six or eight feet tall had been stuck in the ground and a small piece of red cloth tied to the top of each. These flags were to show the plows and other vehicles where the fences were when the snow hid them. A high board fence extended along the entire north side of the bridge across the Kennebec River at Bath, but this, I think, was chiefly to protect pedestrians using the bridge from the cold winds sweeping down the river. The houses, of course, had a December look. All along the way they were decorated with Christmas greens. The magnificent old Sortwell house on the main street of Wiscasset looked marvelous in its holiday attire. Maine has a natural advantage in decorative Christmas material. At the easterly end of the coast, around Machias and Pembroke, Christmas trees are harvested on a large scale. From these places and other near-by sections more than a million trees are sold annually in the Christmas market.

Harry Marr's shipyard, where the Mission boat was built, is down an alleyway behind a row of old brick buildings lining the water side of the principal street of Damariscotta. These mellow brick structures, with their slanting green roofs, their generous collections of chimneys, and



their many-paned windows dressed with granite caps and sills, give this antique river port its character. Although the buildings differ from each other, all seem to have been built at about the same time, and give the effect of a piece of town planning. Many towns along the Maine coast give this impression of a controlling idea. It used to puzzle me until I learned that there is scarcely a town between Portland and Eastport which has not at one time or another been terribly ravaged by fire. Not once alone, but sometimes twice, or even three times. So now when I see a town with a brick business section having a period look, I know the chances are that the place once had a conflagration. If I wish to know the date of the disaster, I look at the dates

on the buildings, and from these it is usually possible to deduce the time of the fire within a year or two. In the case of Damariscotta, I forgot to look at the legends on the buildings, but offhand I would say that the central part of the town was badly burned in the late James Buchanan or early Abraham Lincoln period.

The launching of a boat is a thrilling thing to watch, a spectacle which people have viewed with interest if not emotion for thousands of years. In the great days of wooden ships, Maine was the scene of innumerable launchings, ship after ship sliding down the ways to take the water with beauty. It was a Maine poet, Longfellow, who wrote the most famous of all launching poems. It was nothing new for Damariscotta to have a launching. The town once rang with the sound of the broad-ax, the topmaul, and the caulking mallet, as its shipyards turned out every variety of sailing vessel. I spoke to several townspeople before the launching. Mr. Castner, who runs the stationery store, and the others with whom I talked all wished the town had more launchings. They were pleased that the Marr shipyard had just signed a contract to build a $15,000 fishing boat for a Gloucester man.

Many of the people who came to Damariscotta for the launching of the Mission boat apparently did not know that exercises were to be held beforehand in the white Baptist church at the head of the street. Nevertheless, the church was well filled. I was interested to learn that Harry Marr,

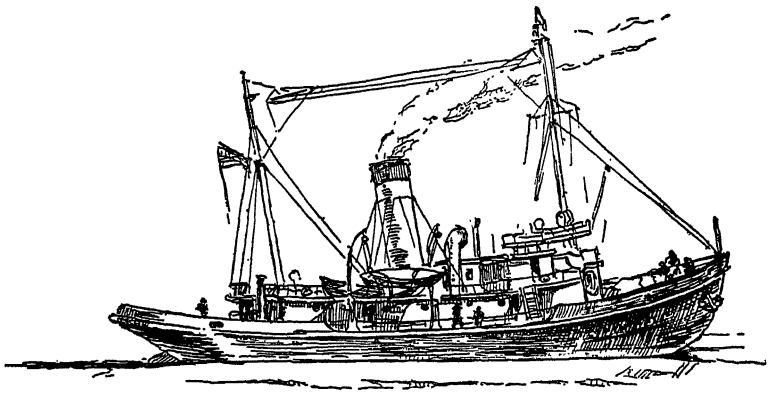
the builder of the Mission boat, was not only the sexton of the church, but also taught a class of boys in the Sunday school. It was the second Mission boat on which he had worked. He was foreman of the shipyard which he now owns when the second *Sunbeam* was built there in 1926. The shipyard was then owned by Jonah Morse.

Various directors and officials of the Seacoast Mission spoke briefly at the church. Mrs. Alice M. Peasley, dean of the Mission staff, who is known affectionately up and down the coast as Ma Peasley, told of some of her experiences on the earlier Mission boats. A sister-in-law of Mat Peasley, the laconic Yankee skipper whom Peter B. Kyne made famous, Ma Peasley expressed the hope that the new boat would not be a holy roller. The exercises came to a speedy end when a man in a windcheater jacket from the shipyard hurried into the church with the message that the tide was ebbing and the boat was ready to go overboard. Everybody hastened down to the shipyard.

"Do you think they'll christen her with a bottle of champagne?" said a man in a deerstalker cap with a twinkle in his eye, as he hurried down the shipyard alleyway beside me. "Looks rugged, don't she?"

The high bow of the new vessel could be seen looking out the great doorway of the boat shop. The pachyderm gray bulk of her practically filled all one side of the building. She looked, indeed, as if she were built to stand almost anything in the way of Maine coast weather.

A spray of red roses instead of the traditional bottle of champagne was used to christen the boat, as the men went to work with jacks to get her started down the ways. The extreme cold hampered the work. As early as three o'clock



that morning men were busy cutting a channel through the ice of the Damariscotta River to receive the boat when she came out to meet the eleven o'clock tide. Waiting in the cold it seemed as if she never would start down the ways. Perhaps, as someone said, the grease was frozen; it was cold enough to freeze anything. But presently the fifty-five-ton craft began to move, as imperceptibly as a star at first, and then she gradually gathered momentum. Still in no hurry to take the icy plunge, she moved steadily but very slowly.

"Look out for the chain!" someone cried. "Don't get caught in the chain!"

Attached to the cradle in which the boat was moving down the ways was an anchor chain. It was to be used to haul the cradle out from under the boat once she was in the water. It was lying out on the sawdust and chips of the shipyard like a partly coiled snake. If the boat finally went with a rush, there was danger that someone might be caught in its coils and snaked down the ways. The crowd stood clear of the chain.

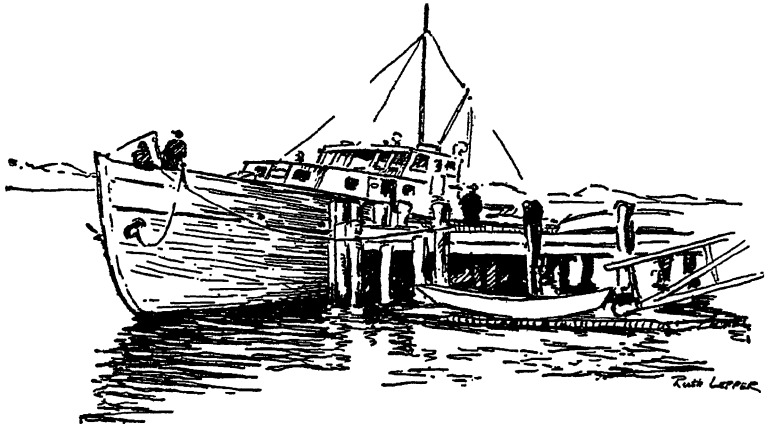
The suspense and excitement increased as the stern of the new *Sunbeam* emerged from the river end of the yard. A man standing in the bow of the boat made a heroic and triumphant figurehead, though I felt that to be perfectly heroic and triumphant he should have held aloft a flag or torch. At last, moving without a hitch, the boat glided cradle and all into the river, kicking up a great white wave as she hit the water. The crowd in the shipyard and on the opposite wharf applauded, and a chorus of auto horns saluted the new boat as if she were a new year. I thought they should have rung the church bells, but probably all the bell ringers were at the launching.

Harry Marr's marine building, which had been so largely taken up with the boat, suddenly became vast and empty and shadowy, like the interior of a vacant hangar; and the boat, a third of her now submerged, just as suddenly shrank to modest dimensions. Men quickly laid hold of the anchor chain and pulled the cradle out from under the boat. Then, after hauling her around to the wharf, where she was

to remain until completed, they went home to dinner.

Early in January I received a letter from the superintendent of the Mission saying that while a good deal of work remained to be done on the new boat, he was determined to take her out. He did not want to break in her engines on the ice in the Damariscotta River, but he thought the government ice breaker *Kickapoo* would open a passage for the boat. He planned to leave Damariscotta on Saturday the thirteenth and go to Loud's Island in Muscongus Bay for the week-end. On Monday he would head for Portland to have the compass adjusted and the radio direction finder installed. From Portland he would run to the eastward, calling at lighthouses and other places along the coast, until he received word from Harry Marr that fittings which the boat still lacked were ready to be installed. He would then slip into Rockland to have the work done. He said he would be pleased to have me join the boat for her maiden cruise. I wired that I would reach Portland Monday noon, January fifteenth, and gave the name of a hotel where he could get in touch with me.

Sunday, New England was in the clutches of a bad storm. The January thaw had come, and torrents of rain driven by winds of gale force lashed the coast. On the train between Boston and Portland I hoped for at least a fleeting view of the sea, but the windows were so blurred and misty I couldn't see anything, and before I realized it the train stormed into the Portland station.



2. CITY BY THE SEA

FOG was blowing through the streets of Portland, and I had the unmistakable feeling of being in a seaport, with docks and ships and men who go down to the sea in ships. If any confirmation of this fact were needed, I had it when my taxi stopped for a traffic light, and I detected on the damp air the familiar harbor sound of a tug hooting. This sense of being in a seaport is, I believe, partly a matter of light. Cities situated by the sea enjoy a quality of light not vouchsafed to inland cities. The two most beautiful cities in New England are Hartford, Connecticut, and Portland, Maine, but the light of these places differs because of the difference in their location in relation to the sea.

There was no message for me at the hotel, so I left my second-hand suitcase there, and walked down the street to Charles Campbell's bookshop. The Portland waterfront is

several miles long, and I had no idea where to look for the Mission boat. But Mr. Campbell would know where I would most likely find her, if she had arrived. Not only do booksellers as a rule know their towns and the people in them, but they have the faculty of being able to dig up almost anything you want to know in the way of local information. Moreover, they are used to answering questions, and never seem to mind when you ask about things which have nothing to do with books or authors. I knew Mr. Campbell of old, and I knew there was nothing about Portland he couldn't tell me.

It took me only a minute or two to reach his bookshop, which is a long, narrow place, with a small gallery across the back, like a minstrel gallery, whence occasionally comes the musical sound of a typewriter bell. Although the shop is small, it has chairs, because Mr. Campbell is old-fashioned enough to believe that bookshops should have places for customers to sit while sampling the literary wares offered for sale. A tall, spare man with a sense of humor and a natural curiosity about the insides of the books on his shelves, Mr. Campbell looks like a college professor, or as if he had stepped out of the pages of a book entitled *Portrait of a Yankee Bookman*. He has for many years prescribed successfully for the literary tastes of Portland people and of many summer visitors to Maine. Connoisseurs of books and bookshops who pass through Portland never fail to visit his shop.

When I asked him if he thought there was any chance of the Mission boat's having arrived from Loud's Island, he shook his head.

"Not a day like this," he said. "There's a bad sea outside. Even the island boat had to take it easy coming through Hussey's Sound this morning. But I'll be glad to call the Coast Guard Station at Cape Elizabeth and ask if they have seen anything of her."

The Coast Guard line was busy, and one or two other numbers which he rang yielded no news of the boat. It was thought highly improbable, however, that she had tried to get through to Portland. Shipping was hugging the harbors all along the coast.

"You wouldn't like to run out to Cape Elizabeth to see the surf, would you?" Mr. Campbell asked.

"I should be delighted, indeed," I said. "But I don't like to take you away from your business."

"Pshaw!" said Mr. Campbell. "The girl can look after that. Besides, I'd get a kick out of seeing it. Let me see. She'll be back at two. Could you come back then? Or you can wait here, if you like."

"Thanks," I said. "I have some shopping to do before I go aboard the boat. I think I'll get that done and come back. Where's the best place to buy red flannel underwear?"

It was a misty ride out to Cape Elizabeth in Mr. Campbell's car, and when we reached the end we found the

visibility poor; but the wind, which had died down, had shifted from southeast to west of southwest, and it was expected to clear shortly. The fog signal, meanwhile, was going full blast. It was almost enough to blow a man down.

"If the wind was east, I could hear this in my home ten miles away," Mr. Campbell said. "And it's pointed the other way."

It was not so misty that we did not have a clear view of the huge combers smashing themselves to pieces on the black rocks. With such a sea running, it was certain the *Sunbeam* had not ventured out. We stood for a while between the one-story building which houses the fog signal apparatus and the Coast Guard Station on the cove, and then, because the seas seemed more spectacular further along, we moved to the other side of the fog warning, where long lines of waves were crashing into the ledges.

"It's getting chillier."

I turned to find a gray-haired man with a ruddy complexion standing near me. He was dressed in the blue uniform of the Lighthouse Service. He was the foghorn tender, who had stepped out of his heated engine room for a breath of air and a look at the sea. He wore no coat, and I wondered that the damp air did not make him shiver. He lit a cigarette and said the storm was the worst of the winter, but the waves were nothing to what he had seen while stationed at Mount Desert Rock. There you could see all around. In one storm he and the other keepers rushed

into the lighthouse tower, thinking the houses were surely going. They didn't go, but the sea got into them.

"My kitchen—" he began, and was interrupted by his blasted horn. "My kitchen was filled with seaweed as high as the stove."

He asked us if we would care to see the engine room, and after carefully wiping our feet we entered. Everything was painted a battleship gray and was as clean as a dairy. We watched the pump supplying air to four large storage tanks, and the mechanism that at regular intervals released great blasts of it through the quartet of horns outside the building.

"Once," said the engineer, "the seas came right into this room. Gave it a good washing."

On the way back to town I listened once or twice for the fog signal, but I didn't hear it. It was not so misty as on the way out, and I concluded that the fog had probably lifted.

That night and the next morning the Portland papers carried news of the storm. Fishing vessels had been held in port, or had been forced to come in for shelter. A beam trawler from the Banks laden with fish had managed to roll into port Monday despite the heavy weather. Colliers and tankers due in port had to wait out the worst of the storm in the lower harbor, or were delayed elsewhere along the coast. Longshoremen had been unable to unload baled pulp from a Swedish steamer at Portland Terminal Pier No. 1. A wind velocity of more than thirty miles was

reported at Eastport, and the ice in the St. Croix River was breaking up, and was expected to go out on the night tide. A sleet storm Monday morning at Machias was followed by rain. No damage was done at Bar Harbor, although heavy seas pounded the southern side of Mount Desert Island. Gale conditions were reported at Rockland, with the wind blowing forty miles an hour from the southeast. The Coast Guard Station at Popham Beach at the mouth of the Kennebec River had lost its weathervane, and Old Prince Bell Buoy No. 2 at Cape Porpoise was reported capsized. None of the Coast Guard Stations had apparently received any calls from distressed craft, but the shore patrols were unusually vigilant. The weather offshore was said to be still bad.

During the evening I stepped out of the hotel for a few minutes, and while I was gone the superintendent of the Mission called me from Round Pond. He left word that they would be in Portland the next day. I waited at the hotel all day Tuesday with my bag packed, and at four o'clock Mr. Bousfield called up to say that they had arrived at Central Wharf. The *Kickapoo* had broken six or eight miles of ice in the Damariscotta River on Saturday and the *Sunbeam* had gone to Loud's Island near Round Pond in Muscongus Bay. They had ridden out the storm at Round Pond. The run along the coast to Portland had been something of an ordeal. Everybody was pretty well shaken up, and he himself had never been so seasick in his life. They

would be in port for a couple of days, and he advised me for the sake of my own comfort to stay in the hotel that night. Coal was being unloaded from a collier at the next wharf and they were experiencing a coal-dust blizzard. It was a dirty kind of storm they had not expected to encounter. I said I would be down in the morning.

So shortly after breakfast the next day I took a sea-going taxicab down to Central Wharf. The thermometer during the night had taken a disconcerting plunge down to the zero mark. The streets which had been full of slush were frozen; shop windows were frosted, and people, their faces red, hurried along the sidewalks. The January thaw was definitely over.

The *Sunbeam* was lying at the end of Central Wharf, but as the tide was low only her mast and the top of the pilothouse showed above the wharf. When I reached the end and looked down on her I thought they should have named her the *Cinder* instead of the *Sunbeam*. For she was streaked and grimy with coal dust from stem to stern. Soaking wet when she arrived, the black particles had blown all over her and frozen on everything. She was not equipped with a steam hose with which she could be defrosted and then cleaned. It would probably have done no good anyway, since they were still digging coal out of the collier *Jonancy* at the next wharf, and though there was no dust storm at the moment, one might blow up again at any time.

The *Sunbeam* carried a fifteen-foot ladder on her deck which was leaning against the wharf, and after passing my luggage down I did what I was to do many times while cruising on her—I descended the ladder. Librarians, house painters, and others who are used to climbing ladders would probably not have minded this feature of the trip at all. They would have taken it in their stride. It really wasn't so bad in daylight at a place like Portland, after you had done it a few times, but it required a sense of humor to appreciate fully your position on a dark night, when with one end of the ladder resting uncertainly on the icy deck and the other end barely reaching to the top of a rotten old wharf, the boat started to move away just as you began to ascend or descend the ladder. Usually when this occurred you were carrying something in one hand. It was an upsetting situation which called for the skill and stout heart of a fireman.

This ladder business was, of course, all the fault of the tide, which has great ups and downs on the Maine coast. At Eastport the average rise and fall is eighteen feet. How much tide it is good for a place to have I am not competent to say. Personally, I like the Maine tides, which seem different from the tides of other places, because they never appear to run in and out, but always to move up and down. When later I asked Mr. Bousfield whether he favored high, low, or medium tides, he said at once that he was a high tider.

"Apart from the fact that they make for picturesque em-

barkations and debarkations," he said, "they are an indispensable part of Maine coast life. The clam industry, which means hundreds of thousands of dollars to the coast every year, depends upon the tides. Without tides I am afraid ice would be the menace it is in the Great Lakes. In areas that are almost landlocked, the tides prevent the water from stagnating. And you can tell time by the tide. Clocks run down, but the tide never does."

Once aboard the *Sunbeam* I was introduced to Captain Ralph J. Frye, one of the best pilots on the coast, whose early years at sea were spent in sail, and Engineer Llewellyn Damon, who was in yachts for fifteen years, the Morgan, Whitney, and Ford yachts among others, and to Arthur Poland, who had been shipped at Loud's Island to do carpentry work on the boat. The port and starboard pilothouse windows and one or two of the forward windows had not been fitted and the spaces were boarded up. The interior doors to the cabins and many of the lockers had not been installed, and there were a hundred and one other minor jobs that remained to be done.

Yet the *Sunbeam*, of course, was substantially complete, and as Mr. Bousfield showed me over her I had the feeling that she would measure up to all the exacting demands that were bound to be made upon her. Her most important work is in the winter when conditions are apt to be severe, and she was obviously built with these conditions in view. Her hull is of very heavy construction. It is built of four-by-eight

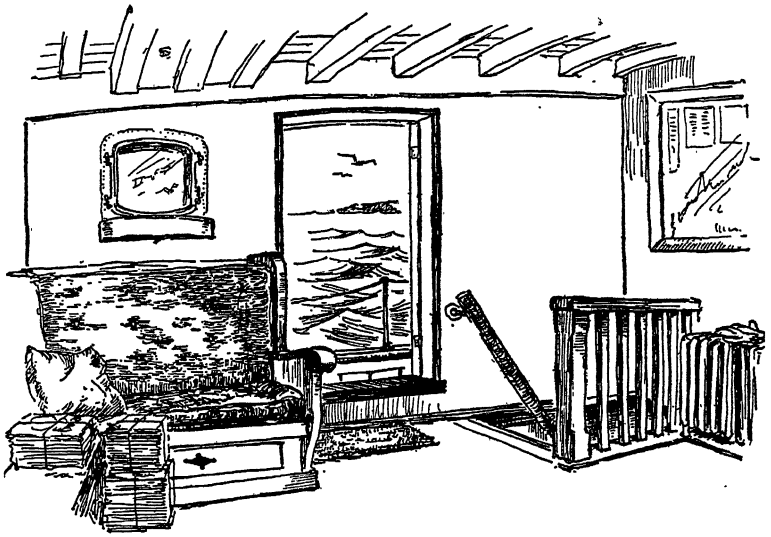
oak timbers placed fourteen inches apart from centers, the planking is yellow pine one and three-quarters inches thick, and she is equipped with watertight bulkheads. The prow is protected with a seven-eighths cast bronze shield, and the forward part of the boat is sheathed with greenheart, a South American wood of unusual quality for withstanding ice.

The boat has a cut-away bow which enables her to ride out on heavy ice and break it down. In the old boat ice had to be broken by smashing into it. The new boat when tried out walked right through ten inches of solid ice without stopping. The bow is also unusually high, and although I noticed that in heavy weather the *Sunbeam* threw a great deal of water, not once did she put her nose under.

Many features of the new boat were the result of experience gained from the old boat. Thus the windows in the deckhouse of the old boat were all right when the sun was shining, but when the sea was rough or it rained, water leaked in around the windows so badly that there was hardly a dry place aboard. Even the dishes were covered with salt deposits, according to Mr. Bousfield. Port lights were therefore ordered for the new boat. These are large enough to admit plenty of light, and at the same time keep the water out. They are fitted with plate glass which is also a safety glass.

The deckhouse is forward of the pilothouse and contains the superintendent's office and sleeping quarters, a

lavatory, and the deck saloon. The saloon is large enough so that in a pinch it can be used for a clinic, or for religious services for a small group. It has a folding berth for a hospital bed, the cushions of which are brown. Brown is also



the color of the linoleum throughout the boat. Both the deck saloon and the dining saloon are finished in weldwood and trimmed with light mahogany.

Going below, you pass the ship's clock and a supply locker and find yourself in the dining saloon, where there is a folding table which will accommodate eight persons. There is also a folding berth for emergencies.

Looking aft from the dining saloon, there is a spare

cabin with two berths on the port side. This is the cabin which I occupied and found very comfortable. The cushions on the berths have inner springs, and there are reading lights in the berths.

On the starboard side is the galley, which shows careful planning down to the last detail. There is a gas stove and an automatic hot-water heater, an electric refrigerator and a sink with running hot and cold water. There is ample cupboard space for dishes and cooking utensils. The dishes are a stock pattern of plain light-brown vitreous china of heavy design. Llewellyn Damon, who in addition to his engineering duties was acting as cook, had put hooks in the ceiling

and hung the coffee mugs on them. In the galley is kept the enormous dinner bell.

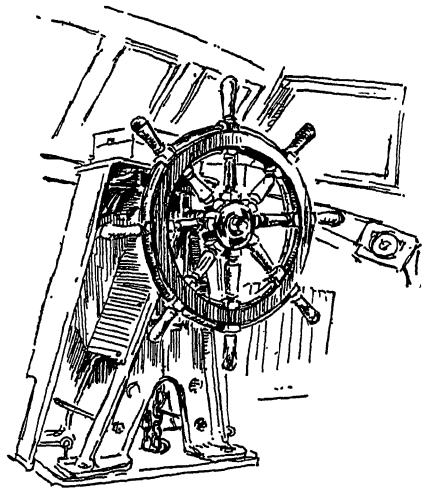
Forward of the dining saloon you enter the passageway leading to the forecastle. The passageway opens on the starboard side into the bathroom, which is fitted with a shower capable of punching holes in your back. On the port side is another cabin with two single berths. Arthur Poland was quartered in this cabin, and the first night had a nightmare from which he was awakened when he hit his head on the upper berth. "Dreamed I went ashore," he said the next morning, "and struck a ledge."

The crew's quarters are located in the forecastle. The berths here are high with drawers under them, so that the occupants look as if they are sleeping on top of chests of drawers. From the forecastle a companionway leads to the forecastle deck. Llewellyn Damon was looking forward to summer when this could be left open and he could lie in his berth and gaze at the stars.

On the forecastle deck there is an electric windlass fitted with a capstan. The *Sunbeam* has a light navy-type anchor which hauls up into the hawse pipe, and a regular heavy anchor of more adequate holding qualities for use when the boat is exposed to the weather. This heavy anchor is kept on the deck beside the windlass, and there is a special davit for swinging it overside.

Proceeding aft along either the port or starboard deck you pass the door of the deck saloon and come to the pilot-

house. This has a folding seat which provides sleeping accommodations for two. As you look into the pilothouse from the deck you can see the charts rolled up and tucked into a rack overhead, a heavy steering gear, clock, barome-



ter, folding chart table, and a radio compass in addition to a seven-inch underlit compass in front of the wheel, the latter the gift of Henry Morgenthau. The pilothouse is four feet above the deck and allows for unusual visibility fore and aft. On the way from Round Pond to Portland the visibility out the forward pilothouse windows was so bad owing to the drenching spray that Captain Frye said he steered part way by looking out the after windows and getting a line on Seguin.

Practically all the mechanical equipment of the boat is

located in the engine room, which may be reached by a perpendicular ladder from the starboard deck or through a flush hatch in the pilothouse. In addition to a 230-horsepower diesel engine, with a three-to-one reduction gear, there is a hot-water furnace with an automatic oil burner and circulating pump. The thermostat regulating the heat is in the dining saloon. The boat is equipped with a 5000-watt diesel generator and heavy ironclad batteries weighing almost a ton. Beside the main engine and connected with it is an auxiliary generator which, when the boat is cruising, helps to keep the batteries charged. In the engine room is also located an air compressor which supplies air to the whistle and has a hose connection for use in the engine room. There is also an electric bilge pump, with connections to each of the four bilges, and a hand bilge pump for emergencies. Connected with this pump is a fire hose reaching to all parts of the ship. A water pump supplies water under pressure to all faucets and to the furnace. On the after bulkhead is a large switchboard with separate circuits to each part of the boat. It is hooked up in such a way that any circuit may be switched directly to the generator. Thus, when weighing anchor, the generator is started, which saves taking power from the batteries. This can be done at any point where the pull on the batteries is large. Electrically lighted throughout, the *Sunbeam* has on the roof of the pilothouse a searchlight with a twelve-inch reflector. This light is capable of throwing a beam a mile on a clear night.

The boat also has an after hold which is used for storage and for carrying freight, portable equipment, extra life preservers, a stretcher, etc. This has a door leading into a spacious lazarette, also used for storage. In this hold are fresh-water tanks holding eight hundred gallons, and forward is a tank with a capacity of two hundred and fifty gallons. Under the decks are located the fuel tanks, holding a maximum of eight hundred gallons of fuel oil.

Aft of the ship's one heavy mast, which is equipped with a hoisting gear capable of lifting loads of a thousand pounds, is the tender built from a very able model. Nested in it is a skiff. All around the boat is a chain rail supported by demountable stanchions, so that when it is necessary to place large and bulky articles on board the rail can be removed at any point.

How much does a craft of this sort cost? The *Sunbeam*, which as I have said is seventy-two feet long and seventeen and a half feet in beam, with a draft of six feet, cost around forty thousand dollars. People up and down the coast, on the islands and the mainland, natives and summer people, and many other individuals and organizations familiar with the work of the Mission contributed the money. The old boat was sold, and the captain and Llewellyn Damon took her to Charleston, South Carolina, where the captain, who had sailed in her for ten years, hated to part with her.

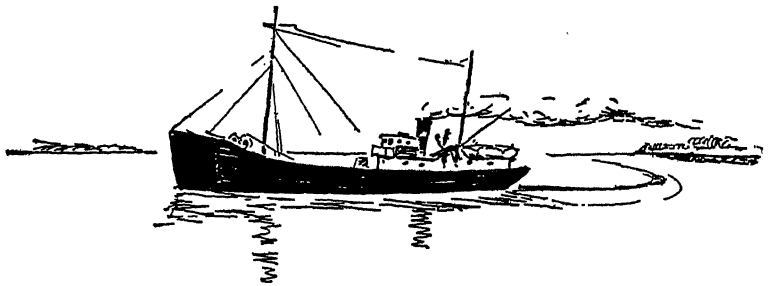
The first day in port Mr. Bousfield spent in purchasing

equipment for the boat, especially for the galley, and hardware which Arthur Poland needed in his work. One thing that always impresses me about a boat is the way the naval architects utilize every bit of space. Not a cubic inch is wasted. All is turned to the greatest advantage. Space which in a house would be covered up and forgotten is turned into lockers or storage space of some kind. Arthur Poland when he couldn't work outside was kept busy inside putting hinges, handles, and catches in places where I never suspected lockers, drawers, or cubbyholes existed. This work reminded Mr. Bousfield that hardware taken from a church in a parish which he had before he joined the Mission staff was once used in building a vessel on the Maine coast.

When the Unitarian church at East Lamoine, near Mount Desert, was renovated and the old box pews removed, Deacon Barney Hodgkins saved the latches and hinges from the pew doors. He placed them in a large bowl which he kept on his kitchen shelf, where they remained for some time. But the deacon was a Yankee who could not bear to think of all that hardware lying idle in a bowl, so he decided to build a boat in order to put it to some use. He built a schooner in which he installed much of the hardware which he had salvaged from the church. He used the vessel to take out fishing parties, but he never went in her after some young people from Ellsworth stole the schooner one Sunday while he was in church and sailed off on a frolic of their own. The deacon, who was a strict Sab-

batarian, declared that the vessel had been polluted, and was no longer safe to go in, and so he sold her.

Greenland could not have been much colder than it was that day on the Portland waterfront. Gulls rising from the water and alighting on the wharves immediately squatted down to protect their wet feet and legs from the cold. A vessel bound up river was armor-plated with ice. The Boston fishing schooner *Marjorie Parker*, which had taken refuge in Portland Harbor, was tied up at the same wharf as the *Sunbeam*. I counted her dories. There were two nests of them, seven to a nest, all mustard color. The only sign of life aboard her was white wood smoke coming from the stovepipe of the after house. Coal was still being hoisted out of the collier at the next wharf and dumped into small coal cars which ran endlessly round and round a track high above the wharf, like the cars of a model railway. Several



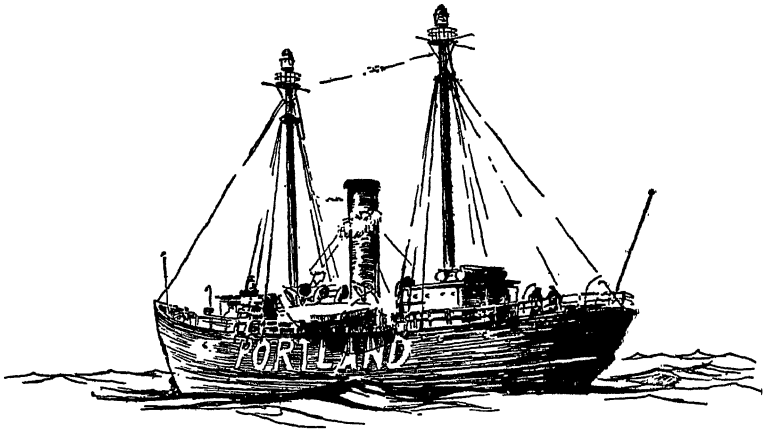
wharves away I could see the white bow and forward guns of the revenue cutter *Algonquin*. My view of her was cut off for a moment when a beam trawler backed out of her

berth and headed seaward. She was one of the O'Hara fleet destined ultimately to be turned over to the Navy for a mine sweeper. She had disposed of her fare of 100,000 pounds of ground fish, and was now bound back to the Banks for no deadlier catch than fish.

It was not until the next morning when the compass was being adjusted and we began to run courses in the lower harbor that I was able to get a general view of Portland from the water. Tied up at Central Wharf the outlook was restricted to the inner harbor, to the line of wharves on the Portland side and the yacht anchorage and yards on the South Portland shore. Beyond the breakwater, which makes out from the southern side, part of the lower harbor was visible, with one of the old granite forts sitting in the water and behind it some of the islands in Casco Bay. The city itself, which is on a high, stubby, saddle-backed point or arm of land, has a remarkably picturesque and unusually fine ecclesiastical skyline. Church spires seldom stand out along the skylines of our cities today. They are obscured by high office buildings, which have taken their places as the most conspicuous landmarks in the modern urban skyscape. The Portland churches are outstanding, not because the city has no high buildings, but because the business section is located in the depressed part of the land, the seat of the saddle as it were, and a number of the larger churches stand on higher ground. This unusual feature gives a pleasant impression of the city, for here, one feels, is a place that

has not lost its old horizon, a city with a sense of values, wherein commerce is not glorified above all else.

We ran courses all the morning in the lower harbor from Portland Head Light to the ship anchorage, where a Lat-



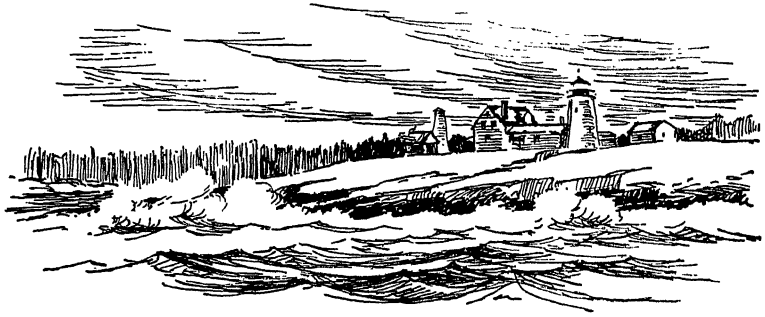
vian steamer with baled pulp from Baltic ports was waiting a berth to discharge her cargo. Painted on her sides and on her stack was a striped flag, red, white, and red. Some of the crew were working on the decks. One with a peasant handkerchief tied over his head looked like a woman. They all acted as if their job was a cold one. After a while a tug came out and towed the vessel from Riga to a pier in the inner harbor. She had been waiting a week for a berth.

It was too cold to stay on the *Sunbeam's* deck for any length of time. Yet it was the only place you could see anything. The saloon ports were opaque with frost. Land and water looked positively polar. Shore lines were white

with ice. There was ice on the channel buoys. The islands, with their summer hotels and cottages all closed, looked desperately forlorn. Grimmest of all were the granite forts. The grass on their ramparts was the color of dirty thatch. The old things looked as if they had been out all night.

By noon the compass was set and we returned to the wharf to request the Portland Lightship to start broadcasting from its radiobeacon, so that the *Sunbeam's* direction finder could be calibrated. In the afternoon while this was being done we ran outside the harbor toward the lightship, which is anchored five miles southeastward of Cape Elizabeth, where we were right out among the Atlantic rollers, and the *Sunbeam* danced around on top of the waves in a dress rehearsal of what we were to see her do later. She was carrying only a thousand pounds of ballast. Eventually eight thousand pounds more of lead pigs had to be added to settle her properly. Meanwhile, she yawed around a good deal, and that night the captain said his arms were sore from grinding on the wheel.

At last the radio direction finder was brought to concert pitch, and we sailed from Portland, leaving by Whitehead Passage. It was late in the afternoon when we headed Down East.



3. PENOBSCOT BAY

THE SEA, I think, must have a sense of humor, as witness some of the odd things it does, such as suddenly making strong men as weak as infants and smashing glassware and crockery in the pantries and saloons of ships with all the gusto and abandon of a music-hall comedian. It has a strong sense of deviltry, too, as when it tears a costly government buoy loose from its moorings and sweeps it miles away from the land into the shipping lanes, to mock some poor wretch of a navigator, who can scarcely believe his eyes when he sees the thing bobbing about in the water, perhaps whistling or playing a tune on its bell.

Yet, the sea's mood itself, whether rowdy or frolicsome, threatening or menacing, depends upon one's point of view. A storm is one thing to a person on land and another thing to a person at sea. I may rejoice in the violent action of the sea when perhaps it is ruining some fisherman by wrecking his boat or his gear; while he may laugh at my

being weatherbound in his harbor when it seems vitally important to me that I should be elsewhere. As is intimated in the old proverb about the wind that blows nobody good, perhaps no mood of the sea, afflicting though it may be to some persons, is in itself entirely and universally bad.

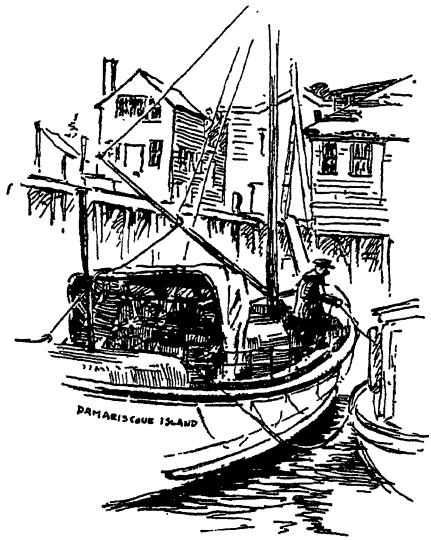
Although wind and tide were with us as we headed Down East, and the teakettle rattled merrily on the galley stove, and everything seemed to be set fair for the run to Boothbay Harbor, where we were to lie that night, the sea was to play a trick on us before we made the harbor.

We were taking the inside passage, hugging the shore as fondly as the Argonauts. As we emerged from under the cliffs of Whitehead, the sun, a dull and rayless ball, disappeared behind a mass of gray winter clouds in the southwest, leaving not a trace behind, except a few faintly stained pink clouds high above the gray southwestern bank. A small flock of black ducks, flying swiftly above the tops of the waves, overhauled and passed us. We must have been logging about eleven knots. The immense character of Casco Bay was apparent as we skirted the outer range of islands, passing just inside Outer Green Island, the Junk of Pork, and Halfway Rock, with its lonely lighthouse. Jewell Island, which is on the seaward fringe, is said to have a cave, but I could see nothing like a cavern entrance on the side it presented to us. Eagle Island, where for many years lived Admiral Robert E. Peary, is prominent on account of its height and its trees. There is a story that it

once belonged to two widows to whom the government paid an annuity of sixty dollars to keep the trees standing as a landmark for vessels. Many of the islands at the easterly end of the bay have literary associations, particularly with women writers. Harriet Beecher Stowe lived on Orr's Island, and Clara Louise Burnham had a summer home on Bailey's Island. Ragged Island is owned by Edna St. Vincent Millay.

We had hardly brought Cape Small abeam when the lights along the coast came out. Halfway Rock astern of us was as red as a cherry when it wasn't white. Dead ahead Seguin Light on its high, rocky isle, a silhouette against the sky, looked the prominent beacon it is—the highest and only first-order light on the Maine coast. Its fixed white light is one hundred and eighty feet above the water. There has been a lighthouse on Seguin Island since 1795. The first keeper was an officer of the Revolution, Major John Polereszki of Dresden, Maine, who distinguished himself under General Rochambeau. Our course lay inside the island, which lies two miles south of the mouth of the Kennebec River, where there are many dangers. It was pitch dark when we passed to the northward of the island, a strong tide was coming out of the Kennebec, and the *Sunbeam* rolled and pitched madly. The motion became even more violent when the engine was suddenly shut down and we began to drift in the seaway. I heard a crash in the galley, but by that time I could not have staggered down

the companionway steps to save my soul, let alone the ship's crockery. After what seemed an interminable interval, we got under way once more, and not long afterwards we passed the Cuckolds Lighthouse and shaped our course for Boothbay Harbor.



"What was the trouble off the Kennebec, Captain?"

"The Number One lighted buoy was out. I mistook it for another buoy. Then I saw breakers. When I see breakers I know it's time to stop."

And the thing that went bump in the galley? It was just a couple of vegetable dishes jumping off the shelf onto the floor.

We left Boothbay Harbor at dawn while the harbor lights were still burning. Burnt Island Light and Ram Island Light, which mark the western and eastern entrances to the harbor, are pleasing to many people because both have red lights with white sectors. Red is the color many people prefer to see in lighthouses. It is a lighthouse's first duty to be red, they say. With these people it seems to be merely a matter of taste. As in the case of wine, some prefer red, others white.

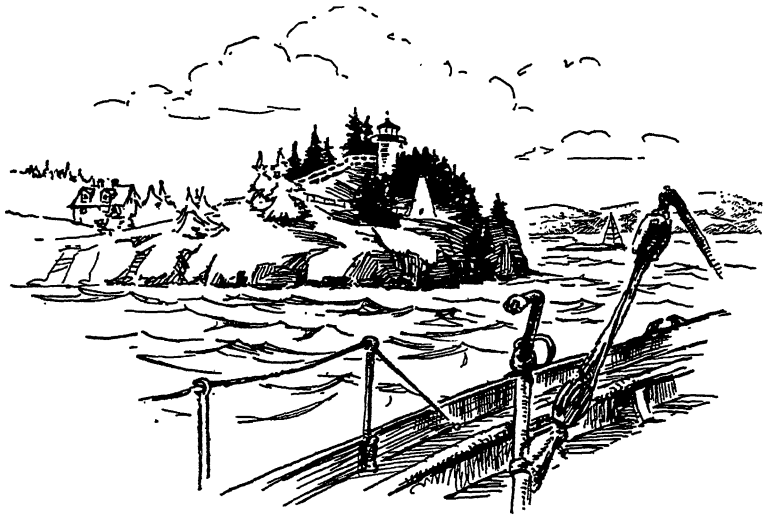
Bays and coves which we opened up were still partly in shadow. Pemaquid Light was flashing as we passed. There were a few patches of ice and snow around it, and moderate waves were breaking lazily on the rocks below. In Muscongus Bay we could see the lonely tower of the light on Franklin Island. The government burned the buildings there when they made it an unwatched beacon like Pemaquid.

"There were good doors and windows to her," said Arthur Poland, speaking of the keeper's house at Franklin Island. "Somebody would have been glad to get them, but it wasn't the government way to give them away."

Although it was broad daylight before we passed through Davis Strait in the Georges Islands, no boats were to be seen anywhere. Lobster buoys were plentiful, but the only sign of life was a seal going like a scared cat. The *Sunbeam* saluted Marshall Point Light at the entrance to Port Clyde Harbor, and the keeper and his wife came out and waved and rang the lighthouse bell.

"Once when I was in Port Clyde with Father," Arthur Poland remarked, "I saw an old whiskered captain on the deck of his vessel beating a boy with an oar."

We were bound to Rockland through Muscle Ridge Channel, which we entered at Whitehead, giving the lighthouse three blasts from our whistle, and presently we were in Owl's Head Bay, passing the squat little tower of Owl's Head Lighthouse on the knoll above the keeper's



house. A white boardwalk and flight of steps leads from the house up to the tower, which is more than a century old. The chimneys and small buildings here were painted a cardinal red. Owl's Head, which is a harbor light at the southwest entrance to Rockland Harbor, is one of the most

picturesque lights on the coast. Situated on a high, wooded point rising steeply from the water, it is a dramatic accent in the coastal panorama.

And now the Camden Hills came out by, dim and purple in the distance. There was snow on them. On Megunticook. Camden has a rather special association with the Maine Seacoast Mission, since it was there that the first *Sunbeam* was built under the direction of Alexander MacDonald. The boat is still in commission in Penobscot Bay. I saw her at Stonington, where she is used as a ferry for the quarrymen between Deer Isle and Crotch Island. Camden, incidentally, was once the center of a great marine industry—the forging of anchors. More anchors were turned out at Camden than at all other places in the country combined. Thousands of tons of old iron were used in the industry annually. The iron was cut into pieces and bound into bundles with strong wire and fused in the forges, after which it was pounded into the various parts of the anchors. Anchors ranging in size from a few pounds to 7,500 pounds were made in Camden.

The water tower of the Samoset Hotel at Jameson Point is a prominent Rockland landmark, but the hotel itself was not the outstanding mark it is in summer. It was the same yellow as the grass of the fields before it. Despite streaks of snow across this grassy area, it suggested the world of choppped straw that Munchausen found in the moon. The keeper of the light on the breakwater, which makes out from this point, rushed out of his house and along the side

of the light to answer the *Sunbeam's* shrilling salute.

We went directly to a large fish-packing wharf at the head of the harbor, and after making fast, stood our ladder against it. We were three and one-half hours out of Boothbay Harbor. Rockland was the first port we made in Penobscot Bay.

Penobscot Bay, with its islands great and small, its irregular shore line, and its background of superb hills, is one of the most beautiful bays in the world. This is not a parochial verdict. Many of the region's greatest admirers speak from a wide experience and judge by the best the world has to offer in the way of natural beauty. Edna St. Vincent Millay, who was born here, mentions it nostalgically as the place where she was happy all day long.

The bay is sometimes quiet and at peace, sometimes boisterous and unruly. There is an admirable brief description of it in a government nautical publication which I read while on board the *Sunbeam*. You could search a long time before finding a tidier presentation of salient geographical facts than that offered by the *United States Coast Pilot:*

"Penobscot Bay is the largest and most important of the many indentations on the coast of Maine. It is about 20 miles wide from Isle au Haut on the east to Whitehead on the west, and is 28 miles long from its entrance to the mouth of the Penobscot River. A chain of large and small islands divides it into two parts known as East and West

Penobscot Bays; the southern part of East Penobscot Bay is known as Isle au Haut Bay. Numerous harbors indent its shores, those of the most important being Rockland, Rockport, Camden, and Belfast on the western shore, and Castine on the eastern. The bay is the approach to Penobscot River, which has several towns, and the city of Bangor at the head of navigation."

Nathaniel Hawthorne was particularly fascinated by the islands of the bay. He was rather envious of the owners of the smaller ones, the islands having but a single habitation, and made a note about them in his journal at the close of the summer of 1837. He was leaving Maine at the time, which may account for his feeling a bit broody, and for the slight note of sadness that creeps in at the end of the entry:

"Penobscot Bay," he wrote, "is full of islands, close to which the steamboat is constantly passing. Some are large, with portions of forests and portions of cleared land; some are mere rocks, with a little green or none, and inhabited by sea-birds, which fly and flap about hoarsely. Their eggs may be gathered by the bushel, and are good to eat. Other islands have one house and one barn on them, this sole family being lords and rulers of all land the sea girds. The owner of such an island must have a peculiar sense of proprietorship and lordship; he must feel more like his own master than other people can. Other islands, perhaps high, precipitous, black bluffs, are crowned with a white

lighthouse, whence, as evening comes on, twinkles a star across the melancholy deep—seen by vessels coming on the coast, seen from the mainland, seen from island to island."

The islands also impressed the government geologists when thirty or thirty-five years ago they spent some time examining the region. The islands, they said, were the high spots of a once hilly land which during the glacial period sank beneath the sea under the weight of millions of tons of ice. The melting of the ice cap was followed by a period of uplift, but the land never fully recovered its former position. Only certain hilltops emerged above the water to form an archipelago of islands, while the valleys remained submerged, the smaller ones becoming tidal estuaries and the old river valleys forming the deep-water marine channels which now comprise the main routes of navigation through the bay.

Before the land rebounded to its present level, it stood from 240 to 250 feet lower. This the geologists discovered when searching for clues at Isle au Haut. Beach gravels were found 225 feet above the shore, but from a height of 250 feet to the highest point of the island (556 feet) careful search failed to reveal a single water-worn stone. According to these experts, it was the subsidence of the land rather than the eroding action of the sea that caused the irregularity of the coast line. This is shown by the fact that the irregularity is as marked a feature of the protected

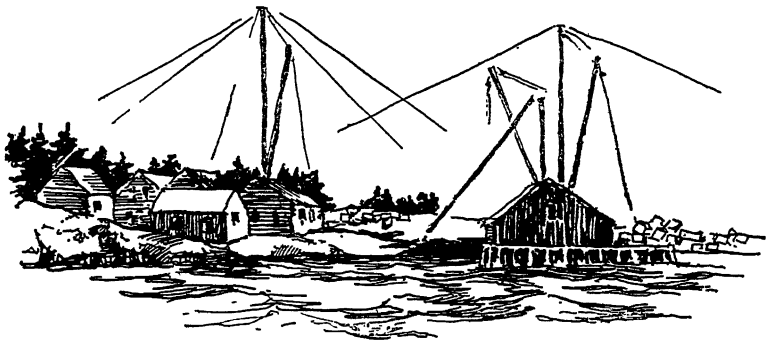
coves and estuaries as it is of the exposed sections of the shore where the storm waves beat with unmitigated force.

A ragged shore line of this kind, with its many islands, which is more or less typical of the whole coast of Maine, exhibits all the characteristics of what in geology is termed a drowned coast.

It is a notable fact that a reputation was won for this region by the inhabitants' following three of the oldest pursuits known to man, namely, fishing, shipbuilding, and quarrying. Much has been written about the first two, but not so much attention has been paid to the last. Yet for more than a century Penobscot Bay has been famous for its limestone and granite quarries, the former located almost exclusively on the mainland, the latter on the islands and the mainland. From the island granite quarries, stone has come that has been used in building cathedrals, libraries, schools, hospitals, jails, customhouses, post offices, state houses, town buildings, banks, bridges, dockyards, mausoleums, and many other structures and monuments in the chief cities of the country. There is Penobscot Bay granite in the Cathedral of St. John the Divine and in the Triborough Bridge, New York.

At some of the islands the old granite workings can be seen from the water. Often where the stone has been cut in broad tiers from the flanks of hillsides the quarries look like ancient Roman amphitheaters. Interest is lent to these places by the antiquity of the quarrying craft. In a thousand

and one years, its appurtenances, like the appurtenances of fishing and shipbuilding, have changed very little. Besides, there is a certain nobility about work involving the taking of great blocks of massive granite from the earth. It is a Herculean business. Unlike mining, there is nothing about it that seems secret, dark, or furtive. Quarrying has always been a clean, open, and above-board operation.



Yet an abandoned quarry may be an eerie place. Once in October I visited the old quarries on the bridged island of Sprucehead. It was one of those lonely autumn days of absolute and deathlike stillness, when no wind stirred, no bird sang, and no cricket chirped. When I listened for the sound of the rote on the shore, I heard nothing. Everything was hushed in a queer kind of calm. Not a soothing, peaceful, languorous tranquillity, but an oppressive, disquieting silence. The desolate excavations, once places of enormous activity, suggested the cellar holes of a fallen

civilization. Definitely a place in which Edgar Poe or Edgar Wallace would have delighted on account of its possibilities as a setting for a murder, the only appropriate sound to shatter its silence would have been a horrid, long-drawn death scream. I must have half expected something of the kind, because I left the island hurriedly, with my heart in my rubbers.

The quarries at Sprucehead were principally paving-stone quarries or motions, as the smaller openings were called. Wilbert Snow, the Maine poet, who lived at Sprucehead as a boy and still spends his summers there, wrote a poem called *The Paving Quarry*, in which an old-time quarryman tells of the days when cities paved their streets with granite and he could reel off two hundred blocks or more a day at five cents apiece. But those days are gone and the click-clack of the drills ceased years ago at Sprucehead.

"Paving stones made a hard cargo—hard on a vessel," said Captain Frye, who in his coasting schooner days often handled cargoes of granite. "We used to sluice them aboard. Ran the blocks against bumpers right into the hold. The bumpers wore out fast."

In granite, as in nearly every kind of stone, there are joints or planes along which it splits easily. The movement of the earth's crust, even in the case of such massive material as granite, has caused vertical or highly inclined joints in the rock mass that may be followed a long way. Bottom joints or nearly horizontal planes of divisibility are notice-

able features of many of the Penobscot Bay quarries. It is the position of the joints or rifts, whether close together or far apart, that governs the character of the type of work for which a quarry is suited. At some quarries the parting planes are so close together that the output is fit only for paving stones, curbing, sills, and similar uses requiring small blocks of granite; while at the larger quarries the joints are so widely spaced that blocks of almost any desired size can be quarried. Thus on Vinalhaven, at one of the quarries of the old Bodwell Granite Company, which was founded by Governor Bodwell of Maine, were quarried the huge monoliths for the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. These columns were turned from rough blocks of granite sixty feet long, six feet wide, and six feet thick, each weighing approximately one hundred and eighty-five tons. The giant lathe on which these colossal blocks were turned was designed to take columns seventy feet by seven. One of the cathedral columns split after being removed from the lathe, so the rest were turned in two sections.

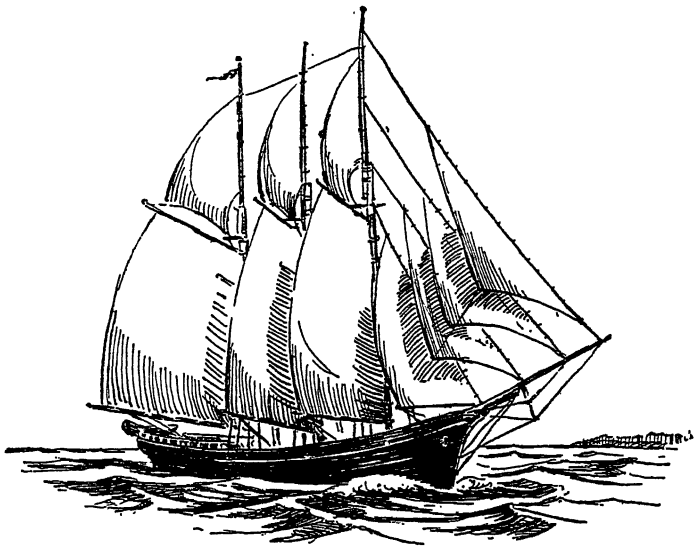
The color and grain of granite are also leading factors in determining its fitness for commercial purposes. Rock which can be utilized for rough building blocks may be unsuitable for dressed building material. In the important granite belt that extends from the southern part of Brooklin southwestward across Deer Isle to Vinalhaven, a belt that includes the Crotch Island and Hurricane Island quarries, the granite is gray to pinkish-gray in color and in

grain ranges from fine to coarse. The bulk of the rock quarried is the medium-grained pink granite. It is even-textured, more or less uniform in color, and largely free from the dark segregations or knots which make the granite of some places unfit for commercial use. The granite here is not only clear, but is distinguished by a general absence of pyrites and other minerals which on exposure may cause stains. Its color comes from the presence of quantities of coarsely crystallized pink feldspar.

Some of the quarries on the Penobscot Bay islands are among the largest in the United States, the openings covering from five to eight acres each, and averaging thirty feet in depth. They are not so deep as the limestone quarries near Rockland, some of which have sheer walls extending downwards two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet. The location of the granite quarries on the shore next to deep-water channels by which large barges and vessels can approach to be loaded, simplifies the transportation problem and confines the outlay for equipment mainly to the machinery used in finishing the product.

Limestone was quarried in the Penobscot Bay region long before granite. In 1733 Samuel Waldo made experiments, and, finding the rock suitable for reducing to lime, built a kiln the product of which he sold in Boston. A century later, when lime was first shipped to New York, it brought $2.00 a cask. It brought fame and fortune to Rockland. At one time one hundred and twenty-five of the old-style, wood-

burning kilns were in operation there. They are said to have given an unkempt, smoky, and barbaric appearance to the waterfront. In other words, there was a definite suggestion of hell about the place. It must, indeed, have resembled a nursery of young volcanoes. The rock on being quarried was broken up and hauled to the kilns located along the harborside, where, after being burned into lime, it was placed in cedar casks and loaded for shipment on board coasting schooners.



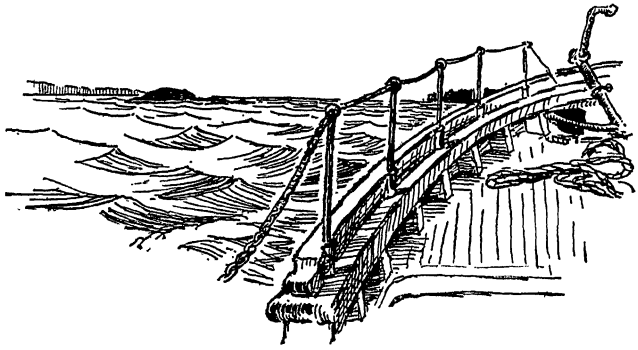
Most of the lime schooners were built at Rockland, which was noted for its shipbuilding. It was the Rockland-built clipper, *Red Jacket*, which made the all-time record for a sailing ship crossing the Atlantic. Upwards of three hun-

dred schooners were needed to handle the output of the kilns, but they were nothing to the vast number of vessels employed in supplying wood to the kilns. Thirty cords of wood were required for a single burning of rock at each kiln, and Rockland swarmed with kiln-wooders, as the fuel boats with their high deckloads of cordwood were called. Every old boat along the coast of Maine and the maritime provinces was used to carry wood to Rockland. Captain Frye's father was captain of a kiln-wooder at the age of fifteen. But eventually the lime industry changed to coal and oil, and later even to gas. The kiln-wooders vanished like winter vapor, and the Rockland limers were replaced by steel barges and tugs. Lime is still made at Rockland, but the trade is not the picturesque business it was once.

The wharf where the *Sunbeam* lay in Rockland Harbor was next to Tillson's Wharf, where the Boston and Rockland steamers used to dock. The island mail and passenger boats now make it their point of departure. Several were wintering at the wharf. The ice-breaker *Kickapoo* was also there, and Captain Frye reported to her the lighted buoy that was extinguished off the Kennebec. The Matinicus mail boat, *Mary A.*, came in during the afternoon. A smaller craft than the *Sunbeam*, she makes two trips a week in winter and three in summer. In 1920 the mail boat to this island was lost. No trace of her was ever found. Matinicus Isle was the place we were going in the morning.

In the meantime, a visitor to the *Sunbeam* was a young

man in a visored sea cap, a son of the assistant keeper of Two Bush Island Light. He had lost his twin brother only a few weeks before when the scallop dragger *Madeline and Flora* left Rockland for the Georges Banks and was never heard from again. Hope was held out for some time that the missing craft might be located. Coast Guard boats and seaplanes made a thorough search, but no trace of the dragger, which it was thought might be drifting helplessly in the North Atlantic, was found. Nine men were on board when she left port. Their dependents numbered forty-one. One member of the crew, Edward Kelley, had a family of fourteen. Robert Hickman, who replaced a man who was stricken with appendicitis just before the boat sailed, had seven children. The *Madeline and Flora* ran into a storm on the Banks, and it is thought she foundered. What actually happened will probably always remain a mystery of the sea.



4. MATINICUS

THERE is not much earth at Matinicus Isle, but a great deal of sea and sky. It occupies a position off Penobscot Bay, eighteen miles southeast of Owl's Head, or twenty from Rockland, and is one of the most distant islands of any consequence on the Maine coast. Not quite so large as Monhegan Island, it lies half a dozen miles farther out in the sea, which gives the visitor to it the feeling of being completely out of bounds.

In order to make the harbor at Matinicus at a reasonably early hour of the day, it was necessary for us to take advantage of the morning tide, so we turned out in the dark at six, and a few minutes later had slipped out of the shadows of Rockland harbor and were headed down the bay, a great comet's tail of white vapor from the *Sunbeam's* exhaust streaming out astern of us on the winter air. There was no wind to speak of, but it was intensely cold—only four degrees above the goose egg, as someone remarked—

and the murky sky showed no trace of a star. But the harbor lights shone brilliantly in the frosty atmosphere, and everything indicated a relatively smooth run to Matinicus.

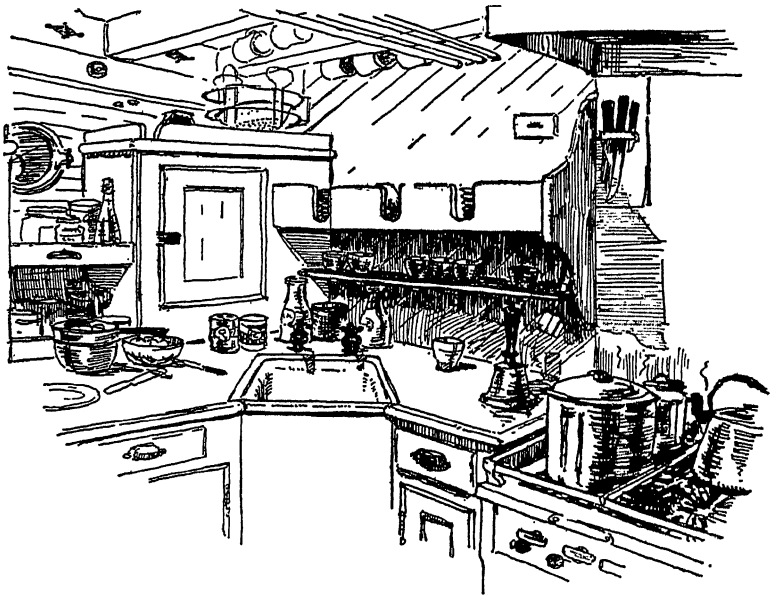
"Is that string of lights Camden?" I asked Llewellyn Damon, as he stepped out on deck through the engine-room door and started forward to prepare breakfast. He glanced up the bay at the cluster of lights to the northwestward of Rockland.

"That's Rockport," he said. "I don't think you can see Camden from here."

Owl's Head was a silhouette of raven's-wing darkness as we came abreast of it, though the rest of the world was rapidly turning gray. Islands were beginning to appear, and presently I could see the pale line of the Camden hills. Lighthouses remained illuminated, but they seemed to be tiring fast, their lights growing feebler and more anemic by the minute, with the exception of Two Bush Island Light to the westward, which was still carrying on bravely. We were in its red sector, and it flashed and glowed like a pigeon's-blood ruby in a platinum setting. I hoped for a colorful sunrise over the water, but there was nothing but an oysterish-gray sky that threatened snow. I went below willingly when the bell rang for breakfast.

One thing I never ceased to wonder at while on board the *Sunbeam* was the speed with which Llewellyn Damon could prepare a meal. He would turn his back for a few minutes in the galley and the next thing you knew break-

fast, dinner, or supper, piping hot and as appetizing as food can be on shipboard, was on the table. It was lucky he was so handy at the job, because he was first of all the engineer, and when the *Sunbeam* was running it was necessary for him to stand by in the engine room to execute any orders signaled from the pilothouse by Captain Frye. The pilothouse controls had not been installed for the first voyage.



The galley, of course, presented a rare economy of labor. Everything in the way of pots, pans, and provisions was within easy reach. Standing in the middle of the galley, Damon could open the door of the Frigidaire on one side

and at the same time reach the oven door of the four-burner Shipmate gas stove on the other side. He learned to cook on yachts, I believe, and was at one time cook on Edsel Ford's yacht. Rough weather never delayed a meal. The only concession he ever made to the sea was to put up the rails around the top of the stove to prevent the pans and the pressure cooker from sliding off on the floor.

When I came out on deck again after breakfasting on oatmeal, eggs, bacon, toast, and coffee, it was broad daylight and the *Sunbeam* was well down the bay, rolling gently in the long swell. Isle au Haut was on the port bow, Matinicus dead ahead. Isle au Haut, which Champlain christened when he visited the coast early in the seventeenth century, is, as the name implies, a high island. Rising 556 feet from the water, it is the tallest of the Penobscot congregation. But when I saw it for the first time years ago from a small boat in the bay and asked the native boatman what island it was, I misunderstood him. I thought he said, "I dunno," which struck me as very strange indeed, considering the upstanding character of the place.

If you did not know there was a settlement at Matinicus, you would think as you approach it from the bay that it was an uninhabited island. The harbor on the east side, with its cluster of houses, cannot be seen, and the homes higher up in the center of the island are hidden by the spruces and firs. It appears to be just a rocky, woody island of no great height, with a bold shore which in winter is white with ice

and snow. As you draw nearer, some of the subordinate islands of the group begin to detach themselves, deploying in a general easterly and southeasterly direction for a distance of five or six miles. Of these Seal Island is the easternmost, while Matinicus Rock, with its two granite lighthouses, only one of which is in commission, is the southernmost. Other islands in the collection are the attractively named Ragged Island, Ten Pound Island, Wooden Ball, and No Man's Land, all good-sized islands, but none, with the exception of Ragged Island, is inhabited. In addition, there is a vast number of parasitic islets and rocks. Threading your way among so many dangers, you do not wonder that in the past vessels commonly came to grief in these waters.

Bound as we were to Matinicus Harbor from the northward, Captain Frye took the *Sunbeam* through the passage between the northeast end of Matinicus Island and No Man's Land. Perhaps No Man's Land does not look so sad and desolate in summer as it does in winter, but even with green grass instead of brown it would still have a bare and blasted appearance. Once as thickly wooded as Matinicus, it is now a treeless waste, with only a few dead trunks left standing to remind you of its former state. One of these which retained a couple of its limbs looked to me like an old man holding up his arms in an attitude of despair. There is no mystery as to what caused the death of the trees. It was the sea birds flocking there in great numbers—

a case of too much fertilizer. The same thing is happening on other islands up and down the coast. No Man's Land was once a sanctuary of the Audubon Society. It is the ruined trees, I think, that make the name of the island seem so aptly descriptive, using No Man's Land in its modern World War sense. In England the name has been used for centuries to designate certain common lands not belonging to anyone in particular, and when twenty-five years or so ago British troops in France applied it to the strip of land between the opposing lines of trenches, the French thought it intensely English. The island near Matinicus I have seen referred to as No Man's Land in a book published three quarters of a century ago, and I wouldn't wonder if the name dated back twice that length of time. In any case, it is undoubtedly an English importation.

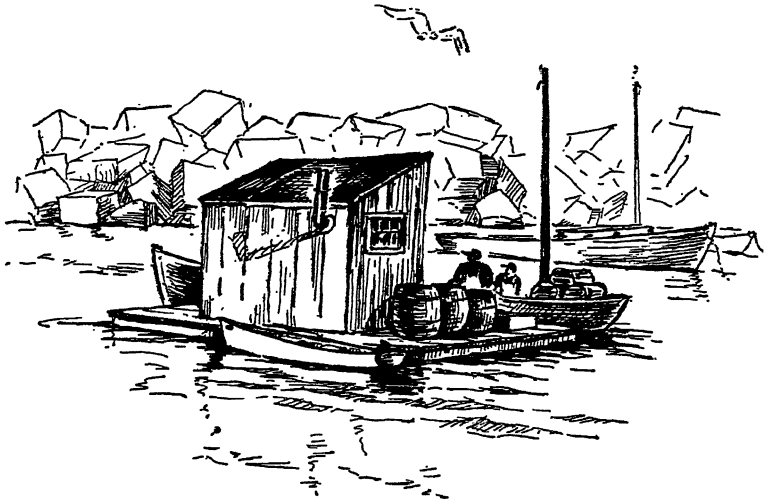
Captain Frye awoke the island echoes with three long blasts of the whistle. It was the signal that we were nearing the harbor. I had not looked at the chart and had no idea how the entrance was to be negotiated. Some harbors are so easy to enter that without any previous knowledge of them you can tell almost at a glance the probable course that will be taken. All is plain sailing. Matinicus Harbor, however, is not so simple as all that. It is somewhat complicated, and therefore more interesting. It is a cove lying behind an island and a six-hundred-and-fifty-foot breakwater, the entrance to which is mazy with ledges. The

breakwater, which makes out from the northern side, is not a neatly cemented sea wall, but a barrier composed of great blocks of granite piled higglety-pigglety on top of each other. It protects the harbor in easterly weather, though during a storm from that quarter, tons of sea water are driven over it. Nevertheless, the fishing boats sheltering behind it are quite safe. It was the first time the new *Sunbeam* had visited Matinicus, but entering the harbor was an old story to Captain Frye, who, after a little fast work at the wheel, first this way and then that, brought her safely inside.

The harbor is a small, shallow-water harbor, and as soon as we entered a curious thing happened to the *Sunbeam*. In the large harbors we had visited—Portland, Boothbay, and Rockland—she seemed a small vessel, but in a little harbor like Matinicus she suddenly grew to formidable dimensions. Docking her at the old stone wharf on the northwestern side of the harbor seemed as much of a job as berthing the *Queen Mary* in the North River. Wherever we went, the *Sunbeam* seemed to undergo an Alice-in-Wonderland change of one kind or another.

Some idea of the size of the harbor may be gained from the fact that the anchorage behind the breakwater, where the Matinicus navy rides when in port, is only about two hundred yards square. Within this area were three lobster cars and a score or more of lobster boats. The lobster cars of the Maine coast, whenever I saw any, invariably brought

to mind the raft in *Huckleberry Finn*. They are in reality almost completely submerged wooden cages, in which the lobster buyers keep the live crustaceans purchased from the fishermen, until such time as the lobster smacks come to take the lobsters to market. As a rule, they are unpainted,



but one of the cars at Matinicus presented a colorful appearance the morning of our arrival. There was a weathered red shack on it, with a black roof and a rusty stovepipe. Tied to it were two boats, one pea green, the other white. The man standing on the car wore an ensemble of yellow oilskins and red rubber boots. The lobster boats lying in the anchorage, most of them a brilliant white in the gray-blue water, appeared to be larger and more powerfully engined than the inshore craft we had seen. At no time

while at Matinicus did I hear a single engine of the put-put class. Fishing at Matinicus is a deep-water business, and a good engine is essential.

The whole fleet was astir as we rounded the breakwater. Owing to the bad weather, it had not been out for several days, but the men were now preparing to leave for the fishing grounds. Some had already gone; we had seen them on the way as we approached, while others were warming up their engines. Local custom seems to govern the hour of departure of the fishing boats in the different villages of the coast. At some places they leave long before sunrise, but at Matinicus a more reasonable hour is kept. The run from Rockland to Matinicus had taken an hour and forty minutes, so it was about a quarter to eight when we reached the harbor. By eight o'clock the anchorage behind the breakwater would be destitute of lobster boats, and a squadron of skiffs and dories would be lying at the moorings where the larger boats had been.

The bustle in the harbor and the appearance of the wharves and buildings around it made an agreeable impression. It was a Breughelesque scene. Here was no dead or dying port, but one that was very much alive. It was obviously the home of an alert race. Most of the people on the Maine islands are the descendants of the original English settlers. At Matinicus if you should stand on the old stone wharf and shout the name Young, more than half the population, which numbers one hundred and thirty,

would probably answer back, for the Young element is very strong in the island. The family is, indeed, the largest family of Matinicus. Its suzerainty over the island was established many years ago when the leaders of the rival houses of Young and Hall adopted a simple expedient to

decide which of the two patriarchs, old man Young or old man Hall, should be the uncrowned king of Matinicus. It was agreed that the one who could shout the loudest should be king. So the two men went up together to the top of Mount Ararat, the steeply wooded hill overlooking the harbor, and on this commanding elevation endeavored to shout each other down. Both were seafaring men accustomed to making themselves heard above the sound and fury of storms, and it was thought that the contest would be a close one.

Hall was heard from first. Filling his lungs with pure

Matinicus air, he let out a blood-curdling yell that would have shamed a Penobscot chieftain. It was a yell of which any man could be proud. It made the welkin ring. But the sound had scarcely died away when Young stepped forward and let loose the mightiest human holla ever heard on the coast of Maine. It nearly blasted Hall off the top of Ararat. It rocked the shipping in the harbor, sent clouds of seabirds into the air with frightened cries, and stampeded the seals sunning themselves on the outer ledges. It reached the neighboring islands and echoed and re-echoed throughout the archipelago. There was not the slightest doubt as to who had won the kingship, and as soon as Hall recovered his senses he congratulated Young on becoming the founder of a dynasty.

Horace Young, the postmaster and general storekeeper, came down to the wharf to take our lines. The office and store are close to the wharf, so he did not bother to wear a hat, coat, or gloves. But it is never so cold at Matinicus as it is on the mainland. It is six to ten degrees warmer in winter and that much cooler in summer. In the autumn the frosts come later to the island than to the mainland. People who visit Matinicus in the fall are sometimes surprised to find flowers blooming a fortnight after all the mainland flowers have perished. Yet the winds of winter are keen and searching, and in accordance with coastal custom, the people "bough" their houses. In November spruce boughs are piled around the foundations. The heavier boughs are

placed on top to hold down the lighter ones, and stakes also are used. This keeps the winds from seeping in, and prevents the frost from striking deeply and heaving the foundations. The green banking gives the houses a snug and festive Christmas look. Towards spring, however, the green grows rusty, and when in April the banking is at last taken away it is usually a deplorable brown.

Most of the houses at Matinicus are out of sight above the harbor in the elevated central part of the island, where the land is relatively flat. Here are located the church and the school. The houses, of which there are perhaps twenty-five or thirty, are widely spaced, and the effect is that of a New England town common, a mile or so long, with the houses facing each other on either side. There are fields and pastures and woods of coniferous timber. Despite a noticeable dearth of barns, the impression made upon one is of a farming rather than a fishing community. In the old days it was both, but not so much farming is done at Matinicus now. All the men are lobster fishermen.

The land on Matinicus is said to be excellent farm land, but the soil of most of the maritime islands is pretty thin, and not well suited to agricultural purposes, though the islands generally afford fine pasturage. Sheep have been raised on the islands since the earliest times, the flocks in many cases lending a patriarchal, even Biblical, touch to them. In summer, passing hilly islands where sheep were grazing, I have caught myself looking for bearded shep-

herds of the Old Testament type. Originally, I suppose, the islands were chosen for sheep billets because, being moated places, they afforded a certain measure of protection against the visitations of wild beasts, and there was no need to build fences. They were not, however, safe from human raiders, and not so many years ago there was a good deal of sheep stealing among the islands. Vessels would drop anchor near an uninhabited island where sheep were left untended, and stock up with mutton. At one time there was so much slaughtering and stealing of sheep on the islands in the vicinity of Deer Isle that it was said to have affected the value of the islands.

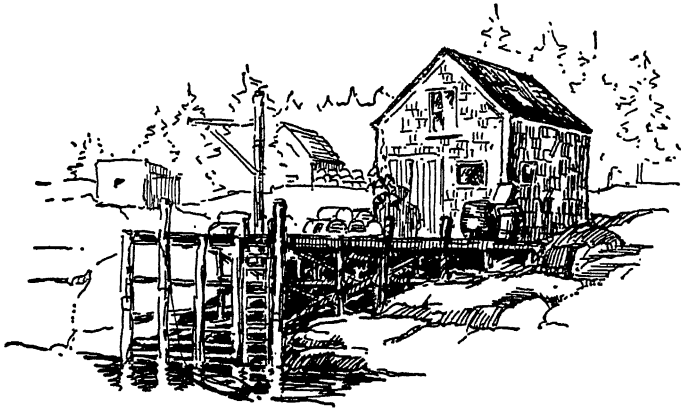
Apparently there have been sheep on Matinicus for upwards of a century. The cover on the superintendent's berth in the *Sunbeam* was made from Matinicus wool. Whether the Matinicus dogs worry the Matinicus sheep or not, is a question I did not hear ventilated while on the island; but I know that they do not bother them in summer, for the sheep are then in exile on Ten Pound Island, between Matinicus and Ragged Island. Eagles are sometimes a pest, if not at Matinicus or Ten Pound, at islands only a few miles away. The bald eagles seize the baby lambs in their talons, carry them up into the air, and kill them by dropping them on the rocks. They then descend and gorge on the carcasses. It's a bloody business.

Cows and pigs as well as sheep are raised on Matinicus, but there are very few horses. A good deal of butter is

homemade, and many islanders have their own smokehouses in which to cure bacon and ham. From the poultry yards come broilers and roasters, to say nothing of eggs. No better potatoes and cranberries are grown anywhere. If I am not mistaken, one of the largest farms now in operation on the island is that of Mrs. Marian Young. There is a truly magnificent barn on this farm. It is perhaps a century and a half old, and looks to be good for another century or two. Among the vicissitudes of weather which it has withstood during the many years of its existence must be reckoned the worst storms in the annals of the coast. When I went to see Mrs. Young, a strong wind was drifting the snow around the barn, and Kipling's line about the great Canadian barns in a blizzard drifted into my head. "Then do the heavy timbered barns begin to talk like ships in a cross sea, beam working against beam."

The house, which is not so old as the barn, is the oldest house on the island. It was built in 1800, and is typically New England—low and rambling, with a great central chimney. Maine houses sometimes mislead you as to their age, because in many cases the large chimney has been removed and replaced by a small one. But happily this has not been done at the Young house, which still has its old fireplaces. The original kitchen across the back of the main part of the house is now the living room, and most of one side is taken up by the great fireplace. On one of the walls is a quaint mirror, which, according to family tradi-

tion, has hung in the same place ever since the house was built. Through the upper panels of one of the doors two hearts were cut, but the romantic story of these, if any, has been lost. Sitting in the living room beside a table on which were the latest books and talking with Mrs. Young, it was difficult to realize that I was on a remote island off the Atlantic coast.



Sunday I was invited to dinner at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Judson Young. Mrs. Young's father was the keeper of Grindel Point Light at the island port of Gilkey's Harbor in the upper bay. The light was discontinued a number of years ago, but the tower remains as a landmark. At the time her daughter was born, Mrs. Young went to the mainland, where she was nursed by the mother of Edna St. Vincent Millay. Mrs. Young's family and the Millays became acquainted when the two families lived in Appleton, Maine. After the birth of the baby, Mrs. Young stayed

for a while with her family at Grindel Point before returning to Matinicus. Mrs. Millay accompanied her to Grindel Point and to Matinicus. Like everyone who visits Matinicus, she was fascinated by the island. She liked it so much that she said:

"Wouldn't Vincent just love to come out here, and sit around on these rocks and watch the waves!"

"Why don't you send for her?" said Mrs. Young. "Tell the other girls to come too."

So Mrs. Millay wrote to her daughters in Camden, and Edna, Norma, and Kathleen Millay came out to Matinicus on the mail boat and stayed at the Youngs'.

"She had the handsomest hair," said Mrs. Young, speaking of Edna. "You wouldn't call it red—guess it was auburn. Just like my heffer sweater—rust and brown. She liked the sweater so well we swapped. The three girls were in one bedroom. They never knew where anything was. Couldn't find their clothes when they had dates, and borrowed my stockings. A little twelve-year-old boy used to take Vincent around the island. One day I said she ought to go down to the Gut where Jud was, and she went. She was so taken with it she wrote a poem."

Mrs. Young had a newspaper clipping of the poem. It was written in September 1913, when Edna St. Vincent Millay was seventeen. It is a sonnet in which she tells how on a salty day in autumn, when things were not to her liking, and "inland woods were pushed by winds that flung

them hissing to leeward like a ton of spray," she thought of how the tide came pounding in off Matinicus, running through the Gut, and how the island women stood in their stripped gardens, with slapping skirts and dahlia tubers dripping from their hands, gazing seaward where the men had gone. It is a very interesting poem, not only as an example of the early work of a major American poet, but also as a Maine poem. Edna St. Vincent Millay was influenced by her environment, but in all the books of her verse there is scarcely any mention of Maine. Matinicus, however, inspired her to write a poem that is wholly Maine.

Living at the Youngs' house, occupying, in fact, the same room the Millay girls did when years before they were there, was Mrs. Laura J. Varney, the American Red Cross Nurse, who is attached regularly to the Mission staff. Mrs. Varney is a public health nurse assigned to the coast under the Delano Red Cross Nursing Service, which provides visiting nurse services to isolated communities in all parts of the country, from the Aleutian Islands in Alaska to the islands of the Maine coast, and from Washington and Idaho in the Northwest, through California and Arizona, to the mountains of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. One cannot see the work of the Delano nurses at first-hand without having the greatest admiration for the program and for the efficiency of the nurses engaged in the work.

It is perhaps worth recalling that it was a nurse, Jane A.

Delano, the first chairman of the National Committee on Red Cross Nursing Service, who, as a result of her own experience in ministering to the people of a lonely mining community in the West, saw the need for a general health nursing program in places cut off from ordinary medical aid. She not only saw the need, but made provision in her will for the establishment of such a service. Miss Delano, after a brilliant career in the nursing profession, died in the line of duty in an army hospital in France in 1919.

The present policy of the Delano Red Cross Nursing Service is to aid a community for a few months rather than a continued period. In this way, more communities can be served by the nurses, who, in addition to many other duties, conduct classes in home hygiene and care of the sick, which prepare the women and girls of a community to carry on after the nurse leaves. The response of the people to this educational work and the broadening effect it has had upon the service has more than justified the policy. In accordance with it, Mrs. Varney was to remain at Matinicus through January, February, and March, and was then to be transferred to another island. There is a local nursing association at Matinicus which gives generous financial support to this Red Cross service.

On the way down to the harbor, or, as they speak of it on the island, going down to the shore, I stopped to see some paintings by Mrs. Esther Ames, of whose work Matinicus has reason to be proud. Exceptionally interesting

were her water colors of Matinicus Harbor. They were interesting historically as well as esthetically because they showed the changes that have taken place at Matinicus. In one picture, for example, were a number of sloops, but now probably not one is left in the island fleet.

Curious about the government of the island, I asked Captain Leon Linwood Young, one of the assessors, about it, and from him I learned that Matinicus had been a plantation for exactly one hundred years. Many Maine towns were originally plantations, a form of local government which goes back to the days when the state was a province of Massachusetts. In organization it is not unlike the New England town form of government, except that it has fewer officers. There are no selectmen in a plantation; its affairs are administered by a board of assessors. If the population is less than 200 and the grand list less than $100,000, the state supports the poor. A plantation is authorized to elect one constable.

There is something exceedingly pleasant about the word plantation, suggesting as it does an estate, a family affair, fruitful and well-to-do. Matinicus suggested this and something besides. An island sharply delimited by the sea, it made me think of a walled town, proud, independent, and self-sufficient behind its rocky bastions and outworks, a place which once you enter you do not like to leave.

It is, indeed, "an island like a little book, full of a hundred tales," and Captain Young is the possessor and un-

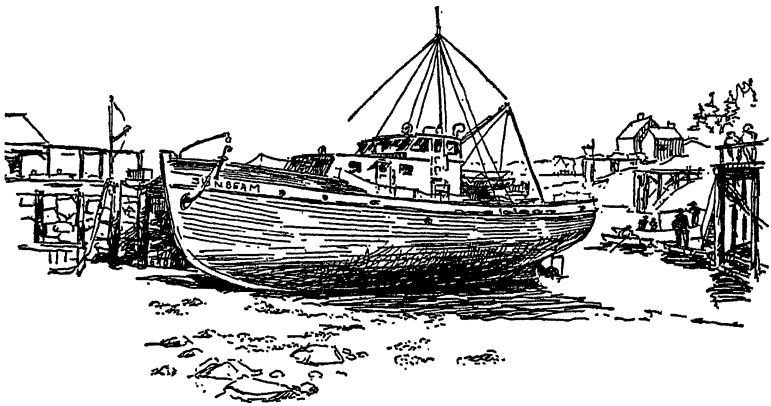
rivaled teller of the tales of Matinicus. I had heard of him before I visited the island. Both Captain Frye and Llewellyn Damon had told me he was one of the best talkers and most amusing storytellers on the coast. They hoped I would meet him while we were at the island. He came on board one evening, and when he left we were all weak from laughter. Any attempt to reproduce his stories would result only in a pale reprint of the original publication. The personality that entered into them, their piquancy and flavor, defy translation to the printed page.

One of his stories in particular I wish I could retell as he told it. It was about a man who retired from the sea and brought his spirit compass with him. Once, when there was a drought and funds were low, the retired captain remembered his compass. He said, "That compass contains alcohol." Nobody knew how old the compass was, and the skipper and his crony had no idea whether the stuff in it was safe to drink or not. But they hit on a practical plan to test it. They decided to try it out on an old man who lived down the road. If he took a drink and lived, they knew it was all right for them to drink. Accordingly, they tapped the compass, drained off a little, and took it down to the old man. He drank it and it didn't kill him. So the skipper and his crony had quite a time till the compass was dry.

As we sat around the table in the dining saloon, Captain Frye borrowed my pencil and every little while let it roll

down the table. The tide was ebbing, and at low water the *Sunbeam* would be completely grounded out. Finally the captain nodded as he watched the pencil.

"It's all right," he said. "She's listing toward the wharf."



When the *Sunbeam* was grounded out in daylight, Llewellyn Damon would don his rubber boots and splash out through the mud to clean the bilge cocks.

"There are chips and shavings in a new vessel," he said, "that get into the bilge cocks and clog them."

At other times he would go clamming at low tide. A clam hoe was carried on the *Sunbeam*. If the clamming was good, we had a chowder which would have won a trophy in any cookery contest. Damon declared that the secret of making chowder, whether clam or fish, was to use condensed milk.

In the cold weather it was noticeable all along the coast that at low tide the smell of the fishing ports was nowhere near up to summer strength.

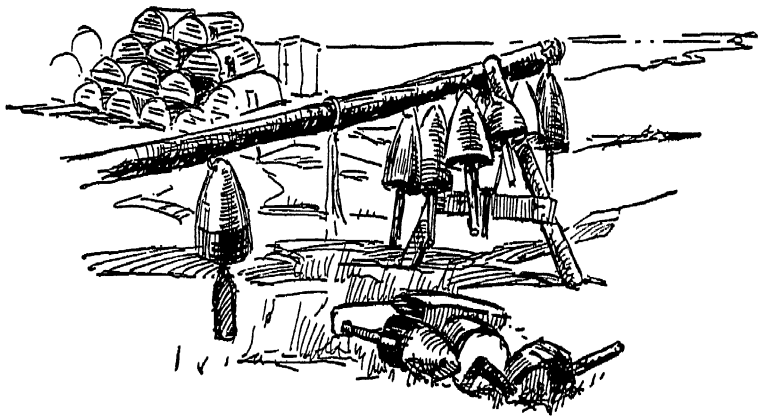
I was sorry while at the island not to meet Charles A. E. Long, the meticulous historian of Matinicus, but he was absent on the mainland, or, to use a phrase I often heard among the islands, he had gone ashore. His *Matinicus Isle: Its Story and Its People* is an engrossing book, which I read before I visited the island and reread afterwards. One of his most interesting chapters is devoted to wrecks. 'Tis an ill wind that blows nobody good, and many of the wrecks that occurred at or near Matinicus were an undoubted boon to the islanders. Mr. Long does not go so far as to say that the people hoped for these disasters, but he says they were wonderfully quick to take advantage of any that did come their way. It was nothing short of providential that, a few years before the Civil War, when they were about to build the island schoolhouse, the brig *Mechanic* laden with lumber was lost on the west shore of the island. Part of the salvaged cargo was used in constructing the school.

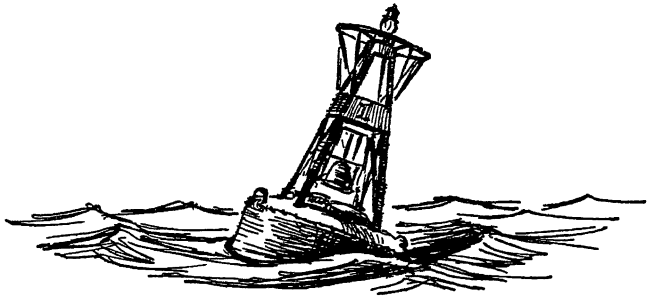
Every house I visited at Matinicus had a radio. Probably not a home on the island is without one. But great differences exist between the islands of the Maine coast. They are like different civilizations separated by the sea. Some islands have only one or two radios, others none. Those you see, of course, are the battery kind.

The people of the Maine islands are extremely fond of music. Mr. Long, whose history of Matinicus was published in 1926, says there were at that time on the island no less than fifteen pianos. But the radio may even then have been

coming into use there, because he adds, "Five pianos were recently removed."

What kind of music do the people like? I think they like all kinds. The fishermen of the coast seemed especially fond of mountain music. Not the yodeling songs of the Swiss mountaineers, but the homely American mountain folk ballads sung nasally to the accompaniment of an old hill-billy band.





5. MUSIC ON THE MAINE COAST

ON the Maine coast you can have music wherever you go. Not merely the kind that comes over the air waves, but the home-grown, native variety, which is often fine, stirring stuff. There is an old saying that a lonely land makes a man sing, which may account for the fact that whenever a few people foregather on any of Maine's oceanic islands singing is one of their favorite pastimes.

Captain Frye, who sometimes went ashore nights at island ports to visit old friends or former shipmates, as often as not reported, "We had a sing-song." A splendid tenor singer himself, the captain learned about music in his youth from his mother, who was a singing-school teacher in the Down East port of Harrington. "When my mother bought a new song book," he said, "we would start at the beginning and sing our way right through it."

The captain also learned as a lad to play the cornet. That was in the days when every coast town worth its salt

had a cornet band, and it was the ambition of most boys to play in the local band. But one night a man with a fiddle came to the Frye home. The captain listened to his music for some time, and then said to himself, "I can play that instrument as well as he can." From that time on he played the violin.

Mention by the captain of his cornet days brought back the time I heard one of these instruments played in church. One Sunday morning in a midwestern town I was taken to the Methodist church, where the leading local dentist, a little man with a swivel eye, surprised me by playing a cornet solo while attired in full evening dress, complete with white tie and tails. Edgar Allan Poe says, "We are often made to feel, with shivering delight, that from an earthly harp are stricken notes which cannot have been unfamiliar to the angels." What effect the little dentist's playing had upon the angels that Sunday morning I have no way of telling, but I know that when he got to the twiddly parts of his piece I got to shivering so hard with delight I almost had to leave the church.

One of my earliest Maine memories is of a barber in Eastport standing outside his shop door on a summer day practicing on his cornet. Without a customer's chin to cut, he was cutting capers on his cornet. But this is by the way. The cornet, of course, is not so popular now as it was then. I was reminded that there is a fashion in musical instruments as well as in other things, when after leaving the

Sunbeam I broke the land journey home by staying overnight at the Boothbay House at Boothbay Harbor. This ancient hostelry, which dates from the eighteenth century, has been run by the present owner, Mr. Harris, since 1890. I was talking with him in the office after supper when there drifted through the halls of the old hotel the sound of an instrument I had not heard for years. Although it was midwinter, someone upstairs was playing *Stars of a Summer Night* on a mandolin, and my mind went back to the days when golden lads and lasses everywhere plucked or twanged a mandolin or guitar. Probably it was the romantic tradition of these instruments that gave them such a vogue. The tradition of the serenade, of moonlight and love and roses. And this probably accounts, too, for the later popularity of the ukulele. Neither the mandolin nor the guitar was much of a solo instrument, so the young folk of thirty and forty years ago organized mandolin clubs, and there was massed tinkling of such pieces as *Juanita*, *Our Director March*, and *The Merry Widow Waltz*.

Not long after this I saw in an antique shop in Portland an instrument which I believe was the fashionable instrument just before the mandolin had its day. This was a zither, a shallow, boxlike instrument, with strings across it, that lay flat on the table. Its tones were about as colorless as those of the mandolin and guitar. Yet none of these instruments, even at the height of their popularity, ever succeeded in completely usurping the place of the piano in

the parlor. My sisters, for example, played both the zither and the mandolin, but most of their musical hours were spent at the piano, playing everything from "Chopsticks" to Chopin. They were very angry when they discovered that my tame white rats had built a nest in the old square Steinway.

What songs the captain sang when he went ashore nights are not beyond all conjecture; I know beyond any doubt that those he liked best were the hymns, especially the sailor hymns, such as *Let the Lower Lights Be Burning*, *Throw Out the Life Line*, *Master, the Tempest Is Raging*, *Pull For the Shore*, *Sailor*, and *Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me*. This last

hymn is one of the most popular on the coast, and it is interesting to note that the tune was composed by a Maine man, John Edgar Gould, who was born in Bangor in 1822 and died at Tangier in 1875. He was a member of a firm of Philadelphia piano dealers, and seems to have proved an exception to the rule that successful piano salesmen usually cannot play a note. As a dealer once explained the matter to me, the salesman who is capable of doing anything more than strike a few chords to show off the tone and key action is almost certain to think more of his playing than he is of displaying the instrument. So absorbed does he become in his prowess at the keyboard that he forgets to mention to the prospective buyer the beautiful finish of the case, the easy weekly or monthly payments, and the free piano stool, with the result that no sale is made.

Also linked with Maine is the famous old nautical hymn, *Throw Out the Life Line, Someone Is Sinking Today*, which I heard sung spiritedly on the coast. It was written by Rev. Edward S. Ufford, a Baptist preacher, who for many years conducted the Bethel Mission, near Snow's shipyard, on the waterfront at Rockland. In those days Rockland was a port of intense marine activity, and Mr. Ufford worked among the seamen from the crowded shipping in the harbor. He often preached holding a coil of rope in one hand.

Wilbert Snow, the Penobscot Bay poet, who knew Mr. Ufford, told me not long since that the hymn was written

half a century ago, after Mr. Ufford had watched the drilling of the crew of the Coast Guard Station on Whitehead Island, at the western entrance to the bay. Snow, who was born on Whitehead Island, where his father was a coast-guardsman, said that he once discussed the hymn with another poet, Vachel Lindsay, who declared that it reeked of the coast. A whole book might be built up around *Throw Out the Life Line*, Lindsay said.

Another Maine hymn writer was Rev. Edwin Pond Parker, author of *Master, No Offering* and other hymns, who was born at Castine in 1836, and was educated at Bowdoin and Bangor Theological Seminary. Ordained and installed as pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Hartford, Connecticut, in 1860, he served as pastor or pastor emeritus of this church until his death sixty years later. He was a member of the famous Hartford literary group, which included Mark Twain, Charles Dudley Warner, and Rev. Joseph H. Twitchell, the latter one of the *Innocents Abroad*. In his younger days Dr. Parker taught singing in various Maine towns. A musician as well as a poet and preacher, he composed both the music and the words of his hymns. Yet, despite his coastal origin, none of his compositions has the sea or seafaring for a theme.

The extremely popular hymn, *Let the Lower Lights Be Burning*, is not native to the seacoast, but came from the shores of the Great Lakes. It was inspired by the harbor

lights of Cleveland. Mr. Bousfield sometimes illustrates this hymn with a colored chalk drawing which he makes while the hymn is being sung. At one place he induced the illustrator of this book to make a drawing for the hymn on a blackboard.

"How much time do I have for it, Mr. Bousfield?"

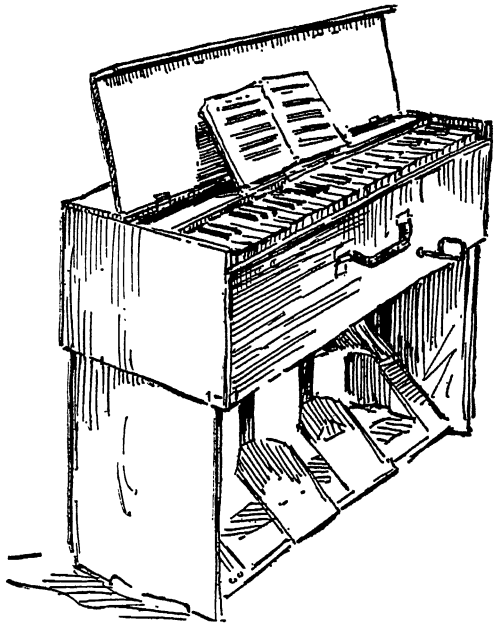
"About three minutes."

Still another sacred song in great request, especially by older people, is *Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.*

Strange to say, one of the best-liked hymns on the coast is *Life Is Like a Mountain Railroad.* Some of the islanders with whom this hymn is a favorite have never seen a railroad. Its popularity is very likely owing to its having a certain roll and go which makes it easy to sing without any accompaniment. I noticed in places where there was no organist or violinist that the hymns with a swing went best. The unusual railroad theme is carried through the entire hymn. Here are two of the verses:

Life is like a mountain railroad,
With an engineer that's brave;
We must make the run successful,
From the cradle to the grave;
Watch the curves, the fills, the tunnels;
Never falter, never quail.
Keep the hand upon the throttle,
And the eye upon the rail.

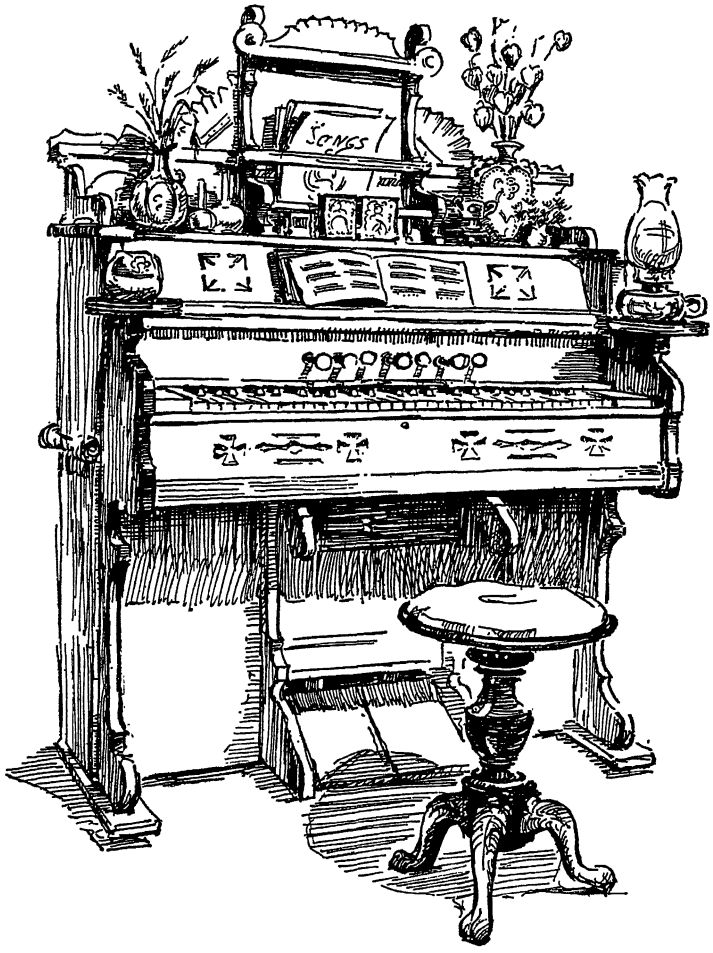
As you roll across the trestle,
Spanning Jordan's swelling tide,
You behold the Union Depot
Into which your train will glide;
There you'll meet the Superintendent,
God the Father, God the Son,
With the hearty, joyous plaudit,
"Weary pilgrim, welcome home."



A portable organ weighing thirty pounds was carried on the *Sunbeam* for use at places where there was none. At

Matinicus we were going to take it with us to Criehaven in a lobster boat, but we left it behind when we heard that the person who usually plays for the Mission services had gone to the mainland. Mr. Bousfield asked me if I could play, but I told him truthfully I could not. It would not have been fair to do what a medical student whom I knew did in the organ-playing line. Asked by a theological student, who was to hold Sunday afternoon services at a country chapel, if he would go along to play the hymns, the medical student consented. And play he did, but with only one finger. On the way home the theological student nearly murdered him.

One sees many different makes and styles of organs in Maine. The Mission has collected many of these instruments and distributed them among the islands. Half a dozen have been taken to Frenchboro, and as many more were waiting at Northeast Harbor to be taken there and elsewhere. Most of these organs suffer from some disease or other, but they are none the less appreciated. There was one thing about them I was eager to learn, but failed to learn. Although I inquired diligently, I could find no one who could tell me the difference between the privately owned and driven melodeon, the harmonium, and the ordinary cabinet organ. As someone once pointed out, a Mason-Hamlin line separates them. One person whom I asked, said, "The direct attack is best. Just pull out all the stops and pump like the devil."



The music of bells, which is frequently heard on the Maine coast, is something one associates with the sea quite as naturally as one does the sound of an anchor chain being run out, a rope being rove in a block, the lapping of waves

along a vessel's side, or the tide washing a beach. For bells are put to a variety of marine uses. They are part of the system of buoyage. Almost all lighthouses have them. So does every ship. Docks and wharves are often equipped with them. Time is designated on shipboard by a special system of bells. And because marine bells have figured importantly in their lives, the people of the coast have never been chary of buying bells for other than marine purposes. Maritime Maine, indeed, abounds in great, middle-sized, and little bells of every kind.

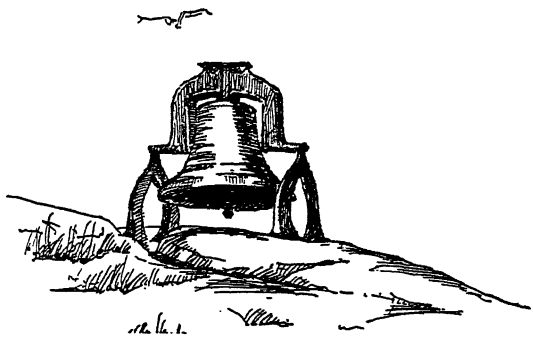
Of all these, the sound of the bell buoy is the most unearthly, perhaps because it is not rung by any human agency, but is operated by the uncertain action of the sea. Not only the irregularity of the sound, but the general mournfulness of tone, the grave note of warning, and the utter loneliness of the thing itself tethered amid endless acres of water make it seem non-terrestrial. It is neither a part of the land nor a part of the sea, but is like a thing existing sadly in limbo. No one, I am sure, ever heard a merry or joyous bell buoy. I used to think that it would be a melancholy experience to live on the edge of the sea near a bell buoy, but once when I did live for months within sound of one on the Maine coast, I found that, as in the case of almost any oft-repeated sound, I soon got used to it and did not notice it at all; though when it was replaced I had to accustom myself to it all over again, because the new bell buoy had a slightly different tone

from the old one. I used to listen to it at night, and could sometimes tell from it the state of the sea and the direction of the wind. In a southeasterly I could hear it plainly. It sounded crazy to me.

On April 17, 1939, the Cranberry Island Coast Guard picket boat, with Captain George Clark and Engineer Calvin Alley, rescued from Long Ledge Lighted Buoy, near the southwestern end of Mount Desert Island, two fishermen, Lennox Sargent and Gilbert Oakley of Southwest Harbor, whose boat had caught fire and burned under them. They clung to the buoy, which is a gong buoy, for several hours before they were rescued. While the men were holding on for dear life in the wet and cold, the four hammers of the buoy beat the gong incessantly.

Lighthouse bells, which are used as warnings in thick weather, are much larger than any of the bells or gongs suspended in the skeleton superstructures above the floats of buoys, and are generally operated by clockwork and are sounded at regular intervals. Each lighthouse has its own special signal, such as a group of two strokes every twenty seconds or one stroke every ten or fifteen seconds, so that those who hear it can tell what particular bell it is and get their bearings from it. In returning the *Sunbeam's* salutes, the lighthouse bells were rung by hand. Often a child could be seen running along a boardwalk or down a pathway from the lighthouse to the bell to answer us. At Bass Harbor Head Light on the southwestern point of Mount Desert

there used to be a dog that would get hold of the rope and try to ring the bell whenever the *Sunbeam* saluted. It is a big bell, but the dog sometimes succeeded in ringing it.



The large bell at Pemaquid Light was removed a few years ago when that place was converted into an untended light station, and ever since has hung in an antique shop in Waldoboro, Maine. It is a huge thing, a 1,500-pounder I should judge, with an awfully solemn tone. Despite all the service it has seen, it is still in good condition. If I remember the inscription on it correctly, it was cast in the Sixties at a foundry in Boston. Every year I inquire the price of the old bell, but it remains the same, namely, sixty-five dollars. I like to ask about it, because the dealer always rings it to show off its vibratory qualities.

Church bells play an important part in the religious life of many island communities. Since services at some islands are not held regularly, the bell is an important means of notifying people when there is to be public worship. At

Matinicus the bell is rung first to let the islanders know that there will be a service; the next bell is to warn them that there is only fifteen minutes before church, and then it sounds again at the beginning of the service. At Loudsville, the island community in Muscongus Bay, there is a dog that jumps up and runs to the church whenever he hears the bell ring.

The United States government once became interested in a Maine-coast church bell. During the Civil War the Methodist church at East Boothbay bought a new bell which was shipped from New York on a steamer that was captured by Confederate raiders, who took their prize to Canada. In a Nova Scotia town they sold the bell to a church that needed one. After the war the bell was traced and the government compelled the Nova Scotians to give the bell back to the East Boothbay church. Unfortunately, it proved to be such a sour-toned bell that people couldn't endure the sound of it, and after listening to it with gritted teeth as long as they could, they bought another—the bell which can be heard today ringing out over the waters of Linekin Bay and the Damariscotta River on Sunday mornings.

Foghorns are heard more frequently in summer than in winter on the Maine coast. Commonly likened to a cow mooing in the mist, they have always sounded to me like one of those colossal curly instruments in the band that grunt. No two foghorns in the same locality sound exactly

alike, nor is it intended that they should. On the contrary, by employing various types of apparatus to produce the blasts—reed horns, diaphragm horns, and diaphones—a difference in tone is achieved, which, taken in conjunction with the time spacing of the signals, facilitates station identification. Some have an alternate pitch signal, a high- and low-toned blast, while others have units of duplex or triplex horns that produce a so-called chime signal. Foghorns differ in range of audibility, but sound is an eccentric thing, and sometimes areas exist near a first-class fog signal where it cannot be heard. The government is constantly warning mariners not to assume that a signal is not sounding because they cannot hear it, or, if they do hear it, not to judge distance solely by the power of the sound. Maine foghorns are practical and blatant. They never sound like the horns of elfland faintly blowing.

There is a community chorus on the coast which should be mentioned. It is the frog chorus of Matinicus Isle. There were no frogs on the island, but the islanders liked to hear them in the spring, so they imported a few from the mainland, which they released near the island's one small ice pond, and now the place is full of them.

6. THE CAVE AT SEAL ISLAND

ON the way to Matinicus Mr. Bousfield had mentioned a cave on Seal Island, six miles to the eastward of Matinicus. He had never seen the cave himself, nor did he think many people had, but he understood from local fishermen it was worth seeing. He said that if the weather was favorable when we reached Matinicus, it might be possible for us to land at the island and visit the cave. I was immediately enthusiastic. For, quite apart from the fascination which all such places possess, there was the added feature that a cave on an uninhabited island, a score or more of miles out in the sea, must be about the last thing in the way of a cave on the Atlantic coast.

Yet it was not surprising that there should be a cave at Seal Island. The rockbound coast of Maine abounds in caves. Some islands have more caves than there are in Shakespeare's plays. Most of them, of course, are sea caves, which have been created by the action of the waves, push-

ing, prying, and tearing at the rocks. Some are accessible only at low tide, when the sea, having looked in, has turned and fled. The high margin of tidal variation along the coast gives a little fillip of adventure to visits to these ocean grottoes, as there is the possible—but admittedly not very probable—danger of being cut off by the tide. Doubtless the chief peril of caves lies in the fascination which they have for children. Inquiries concerning Broocher's Cave at Monhegan brought only shakes of the head. The people there do not like to talk about it, because it is considered a menace to the children of the island, and attempts have been made to fill it in. But if you ever want to know whether there are any caves in a particular locality, ask the children. They always know where they are. Their reports, however, of the size of caves should not be taken too literally. A cave that appears mammoth to a youngster may seem small to a grownup. Most of Maine's oceanic caverns are shallowly carved. None is measureless to man.

It is an odd fact that while cave study must have been among the earliest interests of mankind, it is only lately that we have had a word for it. The word is speleology. It is a perfectly sound word philologically, but that is all that can be said for it. Cavern is a romantic word and so is grotto, but speleology is dully prosaic. It suggests a system of reformed spelling, or at best the spells which witches use to put their necromancy on people. Cave worship, I suppose, goes back to Neanderthal or Piltdown, possibly to

even more elderly prehistoric gentlemen. Nobody knows when man first sought the wet glooms of underground caverns to worship devils or deities. It has even been claimed that cave worship antedates both gods and devils. Norman Douglas says that it is a cult of the female principle, a manifestation of early man's instinctive desire to hide in the womb of Mother Earth, from whom we derive our sustenance and who when life is over receives us. One wonders if there is a possible outcropping of the idea in the lines of the famous hymn:

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee.

I forgot all about the cave at Seal Island until well along in the afternoon of our first day at Matinicus, when Mr. Bousfield said he thought he had persuaded Bradford Young to take us to the island in his lobster boat. I went round with him to another wharf and down onto a float, where I was introduced to a tall young fisherman with humorous blue eyes, who it was at once plain was not at all eager to take us to the cave. It wasn't that he didn't want to be obliging, nor that he had already been out on the water for hours in the nipping January air. It was simply that he didn't like the looks of the weather. He glanced at the steely sky disapprovingly, and said he was afraid the wind would shift. If it backened in, it would bring snow, and it was no fun being out in an open lobster boat in a snowstorm. If the weather held for a couple of hours, we

could make it, but he didn't have any faith that it would hold. He was anxious, however, to accommodate us, and was willing to leave it up to the others, who were more weatherwise than he. We went with him while he consulted two of the older men. They too looked at the steely sky and sniffed the air. Then they pronounced judgment. They said they thought there would not be much change—leastways, not for awhile. They thought we could get to Seal Island and back before there was a turn for the worse.

"That settles it," said Bradford Young. "I'll have to borrow a skiff from someone so we can get ashore at the island."

One of the weather prophets offered us his dory, but the bottom was thick with ice, and the sides were also glazy with it. Salt had been thrown into the dory, but there had not been time for it to take effect. We borrowed a small ice-free skiff at one of the lobster cars, and taking it in tow, doubled the breakwater, and set our course for Seal Island.

It was not so cold in the lobster boat as I had expected. Slanting up over the engine breast-high to the helmsman, who stood amidships, was a spray hood fashioned from a heavy tarpaulin. It was frozen stiff, and by keeping in the lee of it you were pretty well protected as to the sub-cincture portions of your body against both wind and water. Considerable comfort was also to be derived from the heat of the engine imprisoned beneath the hood. If you crawled in

under the cover past the engine, you were in a warm canvas cave.

Outward bound we had a good view of Ten Pound Island and Wooden Ball Island. The names interested me, but I was to ask many persons before finding out anything about either one. Two other islands I knew bore the name Ten Pound, one on the Maine coast, the other on the edge of Massachusetts, and I wondered if the duplication had been caused by the people taking the name with them when they moved from island to island. The Sandwich Islanders used to have this custom. I wondered still more how the original Ten Pound Island came by its name. Was it bought from the Indians in the early days for the sum of ten pounds, or did the first white child born on the island weigh in at that figure at birth? All sorts of explanations suggested themselves, but the one I finally received at Matinicus was the most reasonable and interesting of all. Ten Pound Island derived its name from the fact that a ten-pound cannon ball was once found there.

Wooden Ball Island does not appear on the chart to be a circular island, nor could I see as I looked at it from Bradford Young's lobster boat any connection between its appearance and its name. Yet the physical aspect of Wooden Ball was the only explanation anyone had to offer of the name. It was suggested that when the island was wooded, it may, when viewed from a certain position, have had the hemispherical appearance of a wooden ball floating

in the water. Perhaps it did. I did not look at it from all angles, nor did I know it in the days of its forested glory.

We made the six-mile run to Seal Island in a little over half an hour. As we drew close to it, a large flock of black ducks and old squaws flew up over the southwesterly end. This is the highest part of the island, which is a forlorn and treeless place about a mile long. The headland, which looks immensely old, rises sixty feet above the water. We passed to the northward of it into the long curving Western Bight. Here more ducks rose, moving out of the bight at a tangent to our course, flying very fast and low over the water. Seal Island is a breeding ground of Mother Carey's chickens or stormy petrel, the frail-looking birds sometimes seen five hundred miles at sea, but we saw none of these harbingers of storm.

Near the shore we picked up an old mooring shaggy with seaweed, and, making fast to it, pulled the skiff alongside. It was the first time we had really looked at the skiff, and it suddenly appeared woefully inadequate for the job. It was all right for one man, or possibly for two men, but not for three. However, it was relatively quiet in the bight, so we decided to go all together. Bradford Young, who was to handle the oars, got in first, then Mr. Bousfield in the bow, and I followed in the stern.

"Don't breathe, anyone," said Mr. Bousfield.

"I suppose you fellows can swim," said Brad Young cheerfully, "but if anything happens, I'm a goner."

Few fishermen on the coast can swim. Five-sixths of the time the water is too cold for swimming, but I have always liked the explanation a fisherman gave to a summer visitor. He said, "We aim to stay in the boat."

We landed on the rocks near two small, deserted weather-beaten houses. "All houses wherein man has lived or died are haunted houses," says Longfellow. The Seal Island houses certainly looked as if they might be haunted. The door of one stood open to the winter winds, as if ghostly children had entered and thoughtlessly left it ajar. As we hurried by, I caught a glimpse inside of an iron bed with a mattress on it. We raced up over the island through a tall, rank growth of coarse, straw-like stuff, until we came out on the rocks at the edge of a declivity. The sea was visible on our right, and before us was a downward-sloping series of snow-covered rock terraces, which terminated abruptly in a wall of great blocks of granite. It was a wild-looking place, but I saw no disheveled cave men peeping at us from among the rocks, and down we went in the wake of Bradford Young. When he reached the bottom, he nodded toward a dark fissure at the base of the barrier, an irregular cleft six or eight feet long, and possibly a yard high. "There it is," he said.

Peering into the dark interior, I could see that the cave slanted downward to the right under the rock wall in the direction of the sea. We had been warned that in rough weather the sea enters the cave, but listening at the en-

trance we heard no sound of surging waters at the lower end. The tide was out, and while the sea on that side of the island was rough, the waves were not of storm proportions. The entrance was not difficult. Mr. Bousfield, who had brought the electric lantern, went in feet first, hitching himself down sideways over rough slabs of rock till there was sufficient headroom for him to stand upright. The light of the lantern revealed that what at first blush appeared to be stalactites hanging from the roof were in reality nothing but a small cluster of large icicles. I was sure the cave was granite, not limestone, so it was merely a perverse hope that led me to think it might contain stalactites. Twenty-five or thirty feet from the entrance the cave opened up into a spacious chamber twelve feet high and large enough, according to Mr. Bousfield, to hold one hundred and fifty people. As he was a preacher used to judging the number of persons gathered in a particular place, his estimate, I have no doubt, was correct down to a whisker.

It was much warmer inside the cave than outside. The floor was strewn with fallen rock, but it was dry and free from ice, which showed that if the sea at times does flood the interior, it had not done so lately, though the island had only a few days before been beaten by the worst storm of the winter. The same thought about the cave occurred to all of us—it would make an excellent air-raid shelter. There is a legend that during the Spanish-American War it was stocked with provisions, so that it could be used by the

islanders as a hide-out in the event of a naval raid on the coast. Before the destruction of the Spanish fleet at Santiago, rumors of enemy cruisers flew up and down the coast, and the island people were genuinely apprehensive of a visit from Spanish ships and sailors.

From the main chamber two passageways led to the shore. The easterly one was the less obstructed of the two. It had plenty of headroom and was nicely arched at the end. I doubt if either of these exits is noticeable from the sea, unless you happened to know precisely where to look for them. The distance through the cave, which was roughly Y-shaped, was about two hundred feet. A speleologist would, I think, give pretty good marks to this insular cavern.

The expected change in weather came while we were still at the cave. It began to snow, very leisurely at first, then in deadly earnest. We hurried back to the skiff and rowed out to the boat as fast as we dared. I was surprised to see another lobster boat in the bight. A Matinicus fisherman was hurriedly pulling his traps. Young hailed him as he passed, asking how many more traps he had to haul. I did not get the answer, nor did I understand at first why we did not start immediately for Matinicus. We were then in a driving snowstorm, which cut down the visibility worse than fog. But Bradford Young was apparently in no hurry; he seemed to be interested only in the other boat. At length the reason for the delay dawned on me.

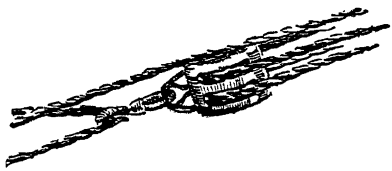
"Are you waiting for him?" I asked.

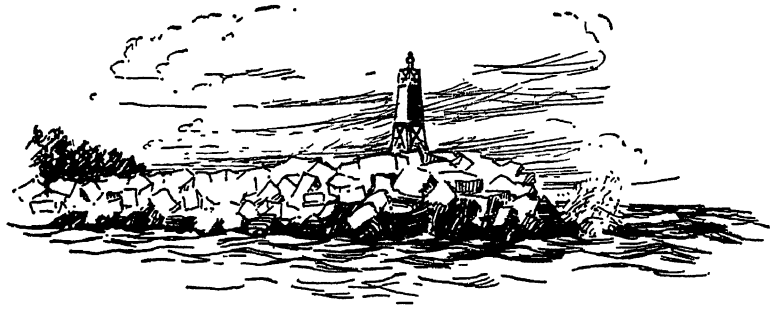
He nodded. "We'll go in together," he said. "They'd never find you in this weather if anything went wrong."

We watched the fisherman as he hauled his remaining traps with a quick turn of the warp around the winch head or capstan. When he had dumped his last trap overboard we stood out of the bight together. As we cleared the headland, a third lobster boat from the eastward joined us. Nothing was said, but the three fishing boats stayed close together all the way back to Matinicus.

Several weeks later I was surprised to discover that the cave at Seal Island was apparently indicated on the large government chart under the name Squeaker Guzzle. I doubt if I would have known from the name that the cave was meant had I not heard the people of Matinicus speak of it as a guzzler, a word which they applied to sea caves as if it were the generic term for such caverns. Thus they spoke of another guzzler—presumably so called because it guzzles water—at the southern end of Matinicus, which I hoped to visit, but the sea proved too rough.

Looking back, I realize that it was really an exceptional bit of luck that gave us a few hours of calm winter weather during which we were able to land at Seal Island and visit one of the most interesting caves on the Maine coast.





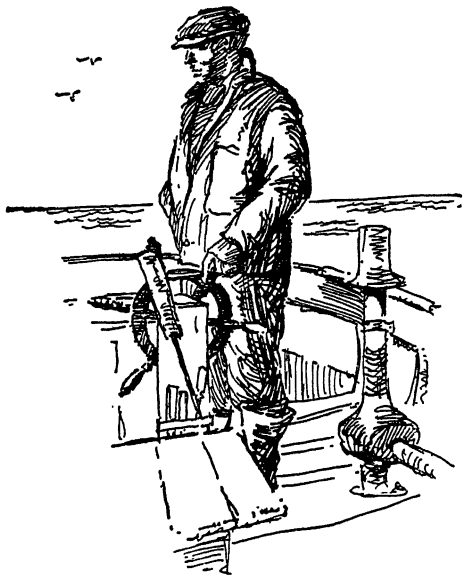
7. CRIEHAVEN

IN Matinicus Harbor I saw a lobster boat with the curious name *Racketash* painted on her stern. I guessed she was from the neighboring port of Criehaven on Ragged Island, for Racketash was the Indian name of Ragged Island. But the settlers changed Racketash into Ragged Ass, and by this name it was known for many years, until at length it became simply Ragged Island. Before I visited the island or knew about the Redskin origin of the name, I supposed it was called Ragged Island either because it had a tattered and torn coastline, or because it was so thinly clad with soil that the bare rocks showed like the flesh of a beggar seen through his rags. But explanations of place names, no matter how plausible they may seem, often prove wide of the mark. Hypothesis, it is well to remember, is not the same thing as fact.

Criehaven is a mile and a half or two miles from Matinicus Harbor, and on returning from Seal Island another member of the Young family—Max Young—took us there in his lobster boat. Mr. Bousfield was to hold services at Criehaven that night, and had invited me to go along. We left the harbor by way of the narrow and picturesque thoroughfare between Matinicus and Webber Island, along which are fish houses and spindly landing stag s. This is the Gut which inspired Edna St. Vincent Millay's Matinicus poem. At its narrowest part it is scarcely half a cable's length in width, and Max Young had to watch sharply not to become embroiled with other fishing boats. It was like navigating a crowded canal. There was some calling back and forth as we went through. I think it had been a good day for the fishermen. Since it was several days since they had been out, they were getting a good price for their lobsters. Twenty-five cents a pound was being paid at the lobster cars. Max Young had brought in eighty or a hundred pounds. He had also caught in one of his traps a large codfish, which he was taking home. It lay frozen in the scuppers, as glamorous in death as in life.

I admired his boat, which was about as trim and smart appearing a fishing boat as I had seen. She was a thirty-six-footer, staunch and streamy, with a professional naval look about her, as if she had been built to the special design of an architect rather than by the rule-of-thumb method of a local builder. But she was wholly a Criehaven produc-

tion, the creation of the late Peter Mitchell of Ragged Island, who knew the boat-builder's art. I mistook another boat in Matinicus Harbor for Max Young's boat a day or two later, but it was a natural mistake. It was another Mitchell boat.



"It's strange," said Llewellyn Damon, "but no matter how many boats a man builds, there's something personal about them all."

Emerging from the Gut into rough water, Max Young left the after steering wheel for the helm in the forward house. We followed him inside. An old coat hanging over the door preserved some of the heat from the fire that had

been burning in the tiny stove. Even on the frostiest mornings, I thought, an hour's run to the fishing grounds would be no hardship in such a boat. The pilothouse was just large enough for three or four persons to stand. There was an advantage in not having it any larger. Within its narrow limits you were able to brace yourself to meet the motion of the boat, thus saving yourself from being thrown about, though the boat was as steady and well-behaved as you could ask. She carried a trimming sail which helped to keep her upright in the seaway. She would climb up a wave, seemingly bend, and then glide down the other side in an extraordinarily graceful and seaworthy way.

Criehaven, like Matinicus, has a breakwater, but whereas the Matinicus seawall is to protect the harbor in easterly weather, the Criehaven barrier is to mitigate the force of westerly storms. There is a gas beacon on the end of the Criehaven breakwater. Its white flashes were illuminating the surrounding water as we passed within a biscuit toss of it and entered the harbor.

Everybody who visits Criehaven meets Captain Herbert J. McClure, popularly called Captain Mike, who is the owner of the only wharf at Criehaven, and the keeper of the store on the wharf. The post office is in the store, and Mrs. McClure is in charge of it. Mr. Bousfield makes his headquarters with the McClures when he is in Criehaven. After we climbed the ladder at the wharf, we entered the store, where I was introduced to Captain Mike, a genial giant of

a man with a white mustache. Fishermen in rubber boots and mittens kept coming in, warming first their hands and then their backs at the stove. They would talk quietly for

a while and then go out. The talk was mostly about lobstering—how many fathoms of line on the traps, the price of lobsters, and how many they had on hand—and, of course, the weather, which plays such an important part in their lives. Some stood and others sat on low barrels or kegs, which Captain Mike had provided especially for sitting around the stove. Each of these seats had a small board across the top to keep the sitter's legs from going to sleep. They seemed quite new, but there would be plenty of use for them in a presidential year.

The McClure home, where we went for supper, is beautifully situated among the trees at the top of a wooded pathway leading upward from the wharf. From the broad front porch you can look out over the village and the harbor to the sea. Monhegan Island, fifteen or twenty miles to the westward, is visible by day and its light by night. From the back door you can look out across the other side of the island to Matinicus Rock, only a few miles distant, where after dark the light flashes like stage lightning. Beyond the Rock there is nothing but thousands of miles of ocean. Mrs. McClure said that their mainland weathervane was the smoke from the twin stacks of the cement plant at Thomaston, twenty-six miles away. They judge by the smoke what kind of a day it is on shore.

Forty people live at Criehaven in the winter, and there must be almost the same number of cats, for one woman alone has eighteen of the creatures. These are not the famous long-haired Maine coon cats, but the snug-haired variety, though there are coon cats on the island. The McClures have one, a big fellow named Jigger, which stays in the store nights, but likes to visit the house when it gets a chance. Jigger is a nautical name bestowed by the boy in the McClure family, who when the cat was a kitten thought it carried its tail like a jigger sail on a boat. Mrs. McClure had an aquarium filled with goldfish, but she did not seem mistrustful of the cat when it was in the house, perhaps because Jigger is given all the fish it can eat and so would

never dream of bothering to catch any on its own account.

I wondered if the presence of so many cats on the island accounted for the total absence of rats. Matinicus has both cats and rats, but Criehaven only cats. Till I looked into the history of the islands I thought this might be explained by Matinicus having all the shipwrecks, but on that score the honors between the two islands seem to be even. On the shore of one of the coves at Ragged Island is a tiny skull orchard where lie buried five unidentified seamen whose bodies were washed ashore from a wreck; and Matinicus also has its unknown sailors' graves. Perhaps the answer is that Matinicus, being much older in point of settlement and more than twice as large as its neighbor in population and area, was in the past more frequently visited by vessels, among them some that were infested with rats.

It was not until 1849 that Robert Crie of Matinicus built a house on Ragged Island at the place which now bears his name. Ragged Island was for many years a part of the Plantation of Matinicus Isle, but in the Nineties it seceded from the parent island in consequence of a dispute over a school matter, and since then has plowed its own political furrow.

After supper we all bundled up, and, armed with the electric lantern and flashlights, set out for the meeting. It was hard walking through the snow, as it concealed boulders over which I constantly stumbled. I am not sure that we followed what might lawfully be called a road, but

presently, perceiving the error of our way, we crossed a field where the footing was better and soon reached the meeting place. Criehaven has no church, so services are held in the schoolhouse. Most of the congregation squeezed themselves into the primary seats attached to tiny desks. Those of us who, because of our bulk or our rheumatism, found the scholars' seats impossible, sat on benches along the wall. The weather was anything but favorable to the meeting, but I think half the population of the island was there. There was no organ, but Mr. Bousfield, who led the meeting in rubber boots, chose hymns with a swing, or perhaps I should say hymns that could be swung, and they went remarkably well. Everyone really cut loose and joined in the singing. There was more spirit than you find in most city churches.

The launching of the Mission boat furnished Mr. Bousfield with the subject of his sermon ("Prepare ye the way of the Lord"). If I am not mistaken, his method is not to ransack the Bible for a text from which to preach, but rather to take some problem, work it out, and then find relevant scriptural citations to sustain his conclusions. His Criehaven sermon and others which I heard him preach were very carefully thought out, and skillfully built up with a series of pictures, many of them from the actual life of the fishing villages, which brought them home vividly to his hearers. The cumulative effect of this method is singularly forceful.

After the service I stopped at the store while Mr. Bousfield used the only telephone on the island to call Bar Harbor 86. When the government laid the cable from the Coast Guard Station at Whitehead near the mainland to Matinicus Rock Light, the Mission used its influence to have Matinicus and Criehaven connected with the mainland. Since the cable had necessarily to pass close to both islands, it was possible for the government to give each place a telephone without going much out of the way. The Coast Guard Station connected Mr. Bousfield with the Rockland telephone exchange, which put through his call to the Mission House. By communicating nightly with his headquarters, the superintendent not only kept abreast of all Mission business, but made the *Sunbeam* available for any emergency call.

"Why not a ship-to-shore telephone?" I asked.

"Some day we'll probably have one," he said. "But the calls now have to go through Boston. We would have to pay toll charges from Boston to Bar Harbor. It would cost too much money."

While he was talking on the telephone I took the lantern and glanced around at Captain Mike's well-stocked shelves of groceries. His store is probably the outermost grocery on the Atlantic seaboard; it is one of the few I.G.A. stores on the Maine coast, for Captain Mike is one of America's independent grocers. I was interested to see what he kept on hand. His supplies, I found, were the same as those of

any well-managed island store. Very much in evidence, of course, were the best-selling staples, such as oatmeal, corn flakes, beans, ketchup, marshmallow fluff, coffee, candy, and tinned milk. But the standby articles of diet on the coast are fish and potatoes. Wilbert Snow, the poet of Sprucehead, told me that the first lines of verse he learned were:

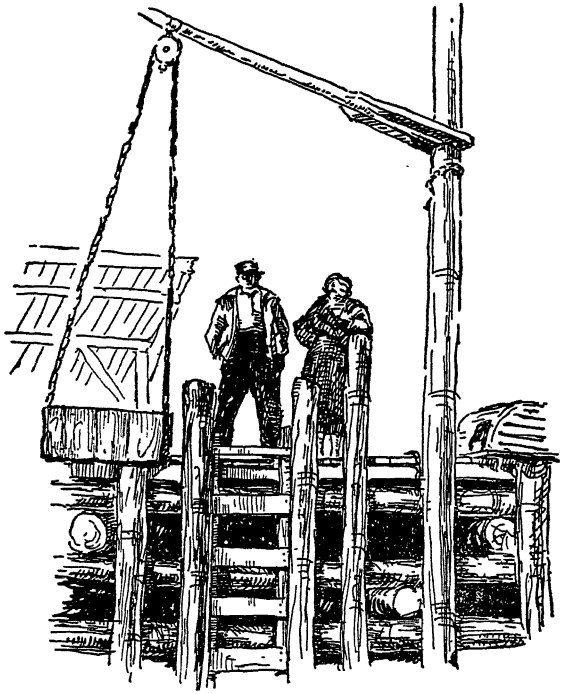
Fish and potatoes, the fat of the land;
If you won't eat that, you can starve and be damned.

It was pleasant to get into the lamplight and warmth of the McClure house, where Mrs. McClure showed me some interesting photographs which she had taken on the island. Documentaries is the best word, I think, to describe them, since many of them recorded dramatic events in the history of the island, such as storms and shipwrecks. One series of snapshots was of a four-master that was lost on a ledge near Criehaven. This was the *Ethel M. Taylor*, which was wrecked eleven years ago. She struck in thick weather. Her stern was in eighteen or twenty fathoms of water, and in island opinion she could have been pulled off with an anchor; but the skipper delayed too long, and the tide swung her around onto the reef. Her position was then hopeless, and she was a total loss.

Pictures of ships are naturally popular on the coast. There is always a large demand for the calendars of the Plymouth Cordage Company and the Columbia Rope Company, because of their colored reproductions of ship paint-

ings. You see these calendars everywhere. One hung in the McClure kitchen.

"Bless my soul—no pie!" exclaimed Captain Mike the next morning, as he gazed at the well-laden breakfast table Mrs. McClure had set for us. But he was mistaken. There was pie, and he was able to uphold the old New England custom of eating it for breakfast.



After breakfast Max Young came to take us back to Matinicus. It was Sunday morning and Mr. Bousfield had to be there for church school. In the evening he was to hold

regular services in the Matinicus church. As in many other places along the coast where there is no established minister, the only religious services at Matinicus and Criehaven are those conducted by the Mission.

As I came out of the McClures' house, I paused for a moment to look at the view. Everything was covered with snow—roofs, rocks, trees, the wharf, the breakwater, and the boats in the harbor. But snow seldom lasts long here. The salt air and the sea winds make short work of it. Among the snow-burdened trees on the opposite side of the harbor the crows were holding a town meeting. I hoped to see one of the American ravens which haunt these islands, but the only one I have seen on the coast was a stuffed specimen in a glass case at Bar Harbor. It seemed a smaller bird than the great, glossy ravens I once saw flying about in the precincts of the Tower of London. The British birds had a wing spread of more than a yard. There is a tradition that every time one of these London ravens dies, one of the Beef-eaters at the Tower also dies. But no such ill omen attaches to their American cousins, the ravens of Criehaven.

When we left Criehaven the plan was that we would return the following morning in the *Sunbeam* to take a woman who was ill to the mainland. But the next day we received word that it was too rough for the *Sunbeam* to enter the harbor, and the woman was not well enough to be moved anyway. Mr. Bousfield asked Mrs. Varney, the Red Cross nurse at Matinicus, to go to Criehaven in a small

boat at the earliest possible moment, and a week later the *Sunbeam* returned and removed the woman. They brought her down to the side of the harbor on a sled, and then transferred her to the Mission boat from the wharf. Sometimes it is possible to carry a sick person right out over the ice to the boat. It is a dramatic thing to see a group of fishermen carrying a person on a stretcher across the ice. It is a much easier way than bringing a person out in a small boat and then making the transfer, or taking someone from a wharf when the tide is low. At no time is there any lack of willing hands to help. There are no better neighbors in the world than the people of the Maine islands. In times of crisis and danger, all differences, if any exist, are forgotten, and everybody rallies around the one who is ill or in trouble. It is the same spirit which the men in the lobster boats showed at Seal Island when they stayed together in the snowstorm.

The Criehaven woman was apologetic because she had no money to pay for her transportation, which, of course, the Mission did not expect. She said that eight years before, during another illness, she had been taken ashore on the old *Sunbeam*, and when she got home she gave a supper at which she raised thirty dollars for the Mission. If she got out of this illness, she would do the same again. That is the spirit of these people.

From Matinicus we steered northward for Vinalhaven Island, which lies at the entrance of Penobscot Bay. We were bound for North Haven, but we stood in towards

Carver's Harbor, at the head of which is the town of Vinalhaven. We did not enter the harbor, but, steering northwestward through the Reach, crossed Hurricane Sound, and finally threaded our way out through Leadbetter Narrows. This is one of the most beautiful parts of Penobscot Bay, a region which is the special preserve of the poet Harold Vinal.

"I wouldn't be surprised if we ran into some ice up in here," said Captain Frye, as we passed the light at Brown's Head at the western entrance to Fox Island Thoroughfare.

This Thoroughfare, which leads from West Penobscot Bay to East Penobscot Bay between the islands of North Haven and Vinalhaven, is extremely narrow where the village of North Haven stands on the northern side. Drifting cakes of ice came out past us on the tide as we proceeded, some of which at a distance looked as if they were gulls resting on the water. The curious islands called the Dumplings were icy and looked more like buns. Beyond them the Southern Harbor was frozen. At the village we had to break ice to get in to the wharf.

Chinese antiquities and rare *objets d'art* are perhaps hardly the things you would expect to find in a small village on a Penobscot Bay island, but that is what I found at North Haven. For Mr. Bousfield's father, Dr. Cyril E. Bousfield, who for the past few years has been the doctor at North Haven, operated a hospital in China for forty-two years, and brought back many rarities when he left China

in 1935. Incense burners, ancient idols, vases, rice wine cups —I can't begin to enumerate the things I saw in the Bousfield home. Many of them had been in the same families for hundreds of years, but recent governments in China put on such heavy taxes that the families were obliged to sell them. One of the bronze vases had been dug out of the Chao-Yang wall, which was built in 60 A.D.

"When China became a republic," said Dr. Bousfield, "they pulled down the walls around the towns in South China."

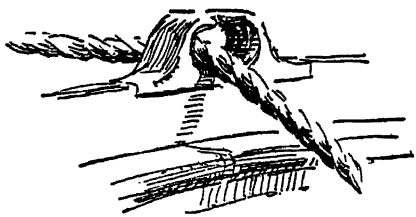
Dr. Bousfield, a graduate of Cambridge University, was a volunteer worker for the Mission for a couple of years before he settled at North Haven, cruising on the old *Sunbeam* with his son.

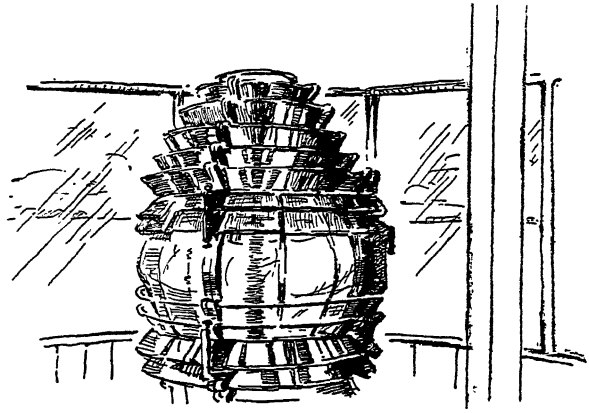
"But I couldn't stand it," he said. "The sea water got into my berth and froze."

Some of the experiences of the Bousfield family in China, where their lives were often in danger, are contained in a book written by Mrs. Bousfield called *Sun-Wu Stories*, which was published in Shanghai.

There are many estates on the island of North Haven, including the Morrows' and the Lamonts'. The church in the village, which was built by the summer people and the natives, is Episcopal for ten Sunday mornings in the summer, and the rest of the time Baptist.

Late in the afternoon we returned to Rockland, where more work was to be done on the *Sunbeam*. That night in a borrowed car Mr. Bousfield and I drove out to call at Owl's Head Light. It was the first of a number of calls I was to make with him at lighthouses.





8. GUARDIANS OF THE COAST

WHERE do lighthouse keepers go on their vacations? What is their favorite reading? What are their hobbies? These were some of the questions I asked Mr. Bousfield, who as missionary pastor of the Maine Seacoast Mission has within his wide-flung parish fifty-four lighthouses, nine out of twelve Coast Guard stations, and a lightship.

I wondered if light keepers were like the sailors one sees on leave rowing about in small boats on the artificial ponds of city parks, or if during the course of the year they see so much water that when their holidays come round their ruling ambition is to get away from it. It is true that a few keepers occasionally visit other lighthouses, but the thing most of them like to do best is to jump into a car and drive as far inland as possible. And I dare say that when they sight one of those filling stations designed to represent a

lighthouse, they bear down hard on the accelerator and pass it with averted eyes.

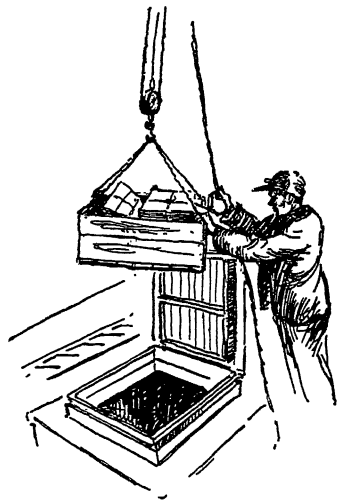
The sea being so much with them accounts, perhaps, for the great passion lighthouse keepers have for reading western stories. Tales of the rolling plains rather than the rolling ocean hold them spellbound, relieving the tedium of their lives. To the beat of waves, they like to read of the beat of horses' hoofs; and prairie schooners are more apt to occupy their minds than coasting schooners. Nor do they ever seem to tire of these melodramatic yarns of action and suspense, all written to a formula, in which anything so modern as a motor car, a radio, or a telephone plays no part. Inevitably, virtue triumphs, of course; but villainy and vice get a good long run for their money, though the wages of sin never result in the enjoyment of an old-age pension.

Captain Frye, I discovered, shared the lighthouse keepers' love of western stories. Reclining in his bunk at night, with no other sound save the lip-lap of waves along the vessel's side or the occasional straining of a mooring line, he would read westerns until blind with sleep. One evening, sitting around the table for supper, we estimated that he read two or three hundred a year.

Detective-story magazines are also great favorites with the light keepers, but by and large the most popular magazine on the coast is the *National Geographic*. Many others, however, are in request. The Mission distributes almost every variety of popular magazine from the *Reader's Digest*

to *Good Housekeeping*, and from *Popular Mechanics* to *Field and Stream*.

The magazines are collected and sorted at the Mission House, tied securely with proper nautical knots in bundles, and prior to each trip a mixed cargo of them is stowed in the glory hole of the *Sunbeam*. Then, before landing at a lighthouse or going ashore at some island or mainland point, bundles of assorted magazines are brought on deck and placed in the skiff or dinghy with the landing party.



After landing at a number of lights I began to see great virtue in the pulp magazines, their feather weight making them much easier to handle than the ordinary kind, which become leaden in no time. The difference is noticeable when you begin climbing up to a lighthouse over slippery rocks

and rough ground in bitter weather, especially if you have to do any jumping from rock to rock. At some places it seemed as if the leaps required were positively Nijinskian.

"How many periodicals does the Mission distribute a year, Mr. Bousfield?"

"From four to six tons. Handling magazines is the way I get my exercise."

In addition to the magazines delivered personally by Mr. Bousfield and other members of the Mission staff, each lighthouse is given a subscription to any magazine it wants within certain price limits. A one-man light is allowed a $2.50 subscription, a two-man station a $3.00 one, and a three-man light a $3.50 subscription. Most of the magazines selected are fiction magazines. The money for this has for a number of years been donated to the Mission by one person.

The government supplies some reading matter to the lighthouses. Portable libraries, each containing several dozen books, are circulated among the stations. Years ago I spent a week at Body Island Light on the Carolina coast, where I had occasion to resort to the chest of books kept in the watchroom. But the only book I recall in the collection was Southey's *Life of Nelson*. On the Maine coast the Mission also supplies books to the lighthouses. Mr. Sargent, who has charge of the Mission library, makes up assortments for any lighthouse that wants them. At one lighthouse they were delighted with the lot they had just had. The

government books, they said, were too serious. Mr. Sargent had sent them just what they wanted. He had given them fiction, including plenty of crime thrillers and westerns that went with a bang.

Games also help to assuage the loneliness of lighthouse life. The great indoor game of the Maine coast is checkers. It is played in the bait sheds, the barber shops, the general stores, and the lighthouses. Its popularity would have pleased Edgar Allan Poe, who thought it a better game than chess. Whether it is better or not is arguable, but if you wish to know why Poe considered the "unostentatious game" of checkers superior to the "elaborate frivolity of chess," turn to the opening pages of *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, the tale in which Monsieur Dupin, the French detective, ancestor of all fictional sleuths from Sherlock Holmes to Ellery Queen, solves the mystery of the death of Madame L'Espanaye and her daughter. A peculiar kind of sailors' knot tied in a bit of ribbon was one of the important clues in the case. Chinese checkers was sweeping the coast when I was there, but this is a passing phase, and not a serious threat to the orthodox game of checkers. Of card games, cribbage and sixty-three were the most popular at the lighthouses.

Some of the light keepers paint for a hobby, decorating shells and bits of wood with marine views, or they use regulation artist's canvas or academy board for their compositions. Unacademic the work may be, but it is virile, and

when it comes to drawing a ship the artists are perfectionists. In the eyes of the coast people any picturization of a vessel that is not technically correct is intolerable. When Miss Rand, the Mission worker at Little Deer Isle, drew a picture of a vessel moored to a rock to illustrate some point in a talk, a sailor promptly pointed out to her that she had placed the ship in an impossible position. It would be on the rocks in a jiffy, he declared.

One satisfactory thing about calling at a lighthouse is that you always find someone at home. A light station is never left untended. At a one-man light the keeper's wife looks after things during her husband's absence. There is always the chance that thick weather may set in, and the clockwork for the warning bell will have to be set in motion.

Although light keepers do not plan to be away in foul weather, an unexpected shift of the wind may bring fog, and storms have been known to blow up suddenly. More than once bad weather has temporarily prevented a keeper

from returning to his light. Many tales could be told of the heroism of the women of the lighthouses who have single-handed kept the beacons burning. Perhaps the most remarkable instance was that of Abby Burgess, a seventeen-year-old girl, the daughter of the keeper at Matinicus Rock, who for four weeks tended the two lights then in use there. She also tended her invalid mother and four younger members of the family. During that month it was impossible for anyone to land at the Rock. Another time when the father was away and couldn't get back, the family subsisted for several weeks on short rations, consisting of a cup of cornmeal and an egg a day apiece. Again Abby kept the colors flying.

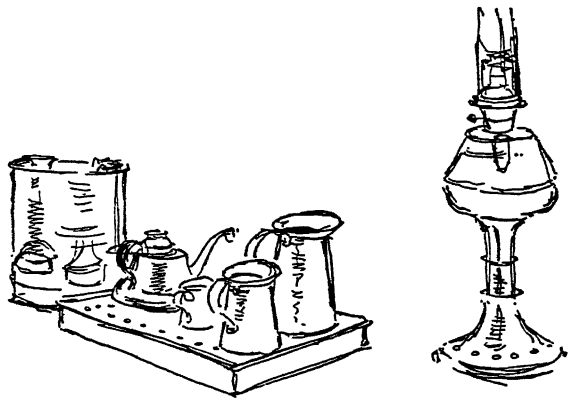
Ma Peasley, the veteran Mission worker, while stationed at one of the islands, furnished the means for keeping one of the coast lights working. Aroused at night by a knock on her door, she opened it to find the light keeper, who told her he was having trouble with his light. What he needed to fix it, he said, was a rib from a corset and a large safety pin. Ma Peasley supplied the articles.

A few of the lighthouses are stag stations. Women are not allowed to live at these stations, because the lights are not considered fit places for women to live. The living accommodations are too cramped for the keepers to have their families with them. Saddleback Light is a stag station, and so is Halfway Rock midway between Cape Elizabeth and Cape Small. Naturally the men at the stag lights sometimes get on each other's nerves, but they know that it is

a result of the isolation, and that the cure for it is a brief respite ashore.

"When we begin to quarrel," one of them said, "we know what's wrong."

At the lighthouses where there is more than one keeper the old caste system of the sailing ships prevails. The relationship between the head keeper and the assistant keeper or keepers is that of captain and mate. In calling at these lighthouses, most people, out of deference to the captain, call on him first.



The most important visitor to a light station is the government inspector, who visits each lighthouse twice a year, in the spring and fall. Everything is made shipshape in anticipation of his visit. One light keeper's wife, who was always commended by the inspector for the spotlessness of her house, used to cover her newly finished floors with old quilts. When the inspector was seen in the offing the

quilts were hastily taken up, stuffed into sacks, and placed with the bags of potatoes in the storeroom. The exact time of the inspector's arrival is not known, but his movements are known. Through the coastal grapevine the wardens of the lights keep posted as to his whereabouts. The minute the inspector finishes at a light, the keeper considers it his duty to ring all neighboring lighthouses, informing them of the course the inspector took when he left. One thing the first World War did for the light stations was to give them telephones, but even before that, news is said to have spread along the coast with remarkable rapidity.

Landing at some of the island lights, especially those located on bold, rocky islets, is difficult even under favorable conditions. At Saddleback Light, at the entrance to East Penobscot Bay, they swing out a hoisting boom and let down a bosun's chair. Here you are pulled up after the fashion used at the Meteora monasteries in Greece before the monks got too old and fat to man the windlasses. The usual landing procedure at the island lights is to run your skiff onto the wooden slips that extend down into the water from the boathouse. This is a ticklish piece of business. At precisely the right moment on the right wave the boat has to be driven onto the slips. If you miss, your position is immediately critical. The heave of the sea may carry you in over jagged rocks, which may upset you when the sea suddenly withdraws and lets you down on them. But usually

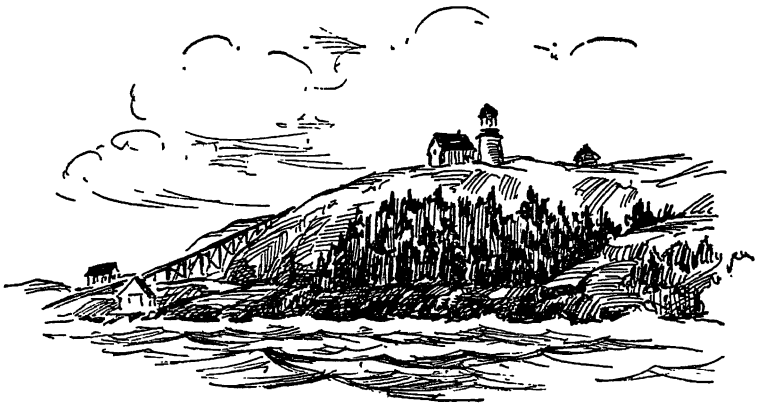
there is a keeper on hand to grab the boat while you jump out, and all hands quickly haul her up out of reach of the sea. Landing at these lights is particularly difficult in winter when everything is covered with frozen spray.

Captain Frye was expert at sizing up the landing conditions at any light in advance. He knew from the wind, the tide, and the state of the sea whether or not the attempt to land could be made with reasonable prospect of success, and the best point at which to make it. As it is sometimes as difficult to get away from a place as it is to land, the captain would warn us that it was breezing up and we had better not stay too long. The average lighthouse visit lasted an hour. In that period the weather could change radically for the worse. When the captain saw us coming off he would stand in to pick us up, maneuvering the *Sunbeam* to protect us as much as possible as we came tossing in alongside.

The people of the lighthouses keep in touch with each other through the medium of a news column in the Rockland *Courier-Gazette*, which is as fine and salty a paper as any published on the Maine coast. Under a drawing of a lighthouse and a headline which I have taken for the heading of this chapter—Guardians of the Coast—are printed personal items about lighthouse keepers and their families. This praiseworthy feature was, I believe, the result of a suggestion made by the Mission when Mr. Guptill was superintendent.

At some of the deep-sea lights, which are manned by

three keepers, the men sometimes hire a teacher for the lighthouse children. From seven to a dozen children of school age may live on one of these lonely rocks. At least they did in the days when large families were the rule, and both Seguin and Matinicus Rock have had teachers, though a



woman whose husband was once one of the keepers at Seguin told me that while he was stationed there she lived in Bath in the winter so her children could go to school there. School at Seguin was held in the building where later they kept a cow.

Many sons and daughters of different lighthouse families intermarry and commence lighthouse keeping on their own account. While I found no lighthouses that were hereditary in the sense that the wardenship passed from father to son, I did find families which for several generations have had members in the service.

One matter which I was able to investigate somewhat during the course of my visits to lighthouses was the rumor that during the migratory periods of autumn and spring great numbers of birds are killed by flying into the lights. I had even heard it said that the keepers gathered them by the barrel. But the rumor, like that of Mark Twain's death, proved greatly exaggerated. Such tragedies do occur now and then, usually during thick fogs or storms accompanied by high winds, but not in alarming number. Sea fowl are seldom involved, the chief sufferers being the smaller land birds. In clear weather the lights rarely lure birds to their death.

This may be because the birds have learned to avoid the lighthouses, just as they have learned not to fly into telegraph wires. For there are not nearly so many casualties from either cause as there used to be. The fact that most of the victims of the lights fall during bad weather would seem to indicate that the so-called sixth sense or instinct that guides the flight of the migrants is not always absolutely unerring. Elaborate theories have been advanced to explain this mysterious directional sense. It has been described as electric or magnetic. But whatever it is, it is not infallible. In exceptional weather the sense fails to function, and the birds become confused, lost, frightened. Blinded, perhaps, by the strong light in the tower, some birds then find the lighthouse a death trap.

When I asked Mr. Bousfield about this perishing of the

birds at the lights, he said he was under the impression that after a severe storm in the autumn or spring as many as fifty or sixty dead birds might be picked up outside a single lighthouse, but it didn't happen very often.

"I wish you had been with us when we came in from Frenchboro one night," he said. "You could have seen the effect of our searchlight on the gulls. It was after a bad storm somewhere offshore. There was no wind, but the old sea was giving the *Sunbeam* a real abdominal motion. It was blacker than ten cats in a row, and every few minutes the captain switched on the searchlight as we approached great patches of foam, which in some places were two hundred yards wide and possibly a mile long. It was exactly like cotton or wool. As we neared one of the islands where the gulls congregate, they were disturbed by the light, and great clouds of them rose into the air. Maybe five hundred of them. They flapped and floundered around, blinded by the rays of the searchlight. I have never seen anything quite like it—the confused, helpless mass of white birds, and the uncanny white foam on the water. It was like something out of the adventures of Sinbad the Sailor."

In many of the lighthouses I noticed that the keeper kept a gun standing in the corner or hanging on the wall, doubtless for ducking or pothunting purposes—in season, of course. One of them admitted he sometimes got a "mess o' birds."

"For a game pie?" I asked.

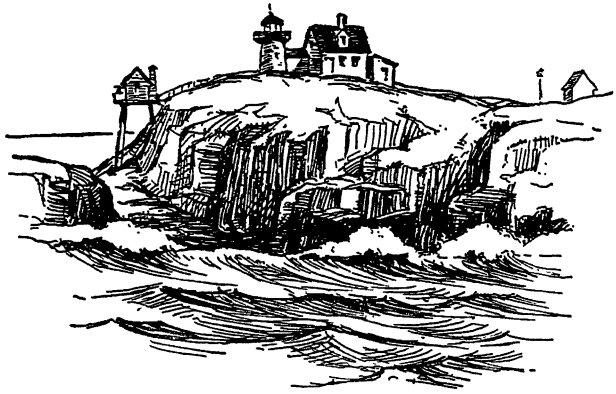
He shook his head. "The missus stews 'em," he said.

Nearly every lighthouse has a dog, which is sometimes a bird dog. At Libby Islands Light they keep cocker spaniels for use as retrievers.

At one lighthouse I inquired about a great snowy owl that was mounted in the parlor. It was a magnificent specimen, and I did not notice until after I spoke that it looked slightly motheaten. I was told the cats got it on the floor one morning and mauled it. A case of furry mousers maltreating a feathered mouser. The keeper said he shot it while stationed at Manana, the Gargantuan rock next to Monhegan, where he said he had bagged a great many of these huge owls. But the owls, of course, were not drawn there by the light, because Manana is a fog signal station, not a light station. For all I know it may have been the hooting of the mechanical warning during fog blotouts that aroused the curiosity of the owls and attracted them to the place.

Yet neither the lights nor the keepers of the lights are serious destroyers of birds. The lighthouses are, in fact, friendly places. At many of them you see birdhouses erected by the keepers to attract the birds. Several of the Maine coast light men are ardent students of bird life and are members of the Audubon Society. At Pond Island Light, at the mouth of the Kennebec, the gulls come up to the kitchen door to be fed, returning as regularly as the tide. A starling spent last winter at this lighthouse; and just before we called there a northward-bound goose had made a

two-day visit to the island. Its movements were watched with the greatest interest by the keeper and his wife. This keeper was leaving the doors of his boathouse open in readiness for the dozen or so pairs of swallows that nest in the boathouse



every year. Another island keeper, who retired a short time ago, had a parrot which perched on his shoulder. In talking with people, the keeper never failed to include the bird in the conversation, turning to it repeatedly with, "How about it, Polly? Ain't that right?"

A bird story told me at still another island light took me straight back to Rabelais—to the time when Pantagruel was at the island of Medamothy buying rarities, which, it will be recalled, included the life and deeds of Achilles in seventy-eight pieces of tapestry four fathoms long and three fathoms broad. A ship arrived bearing Gargantua's carver, who was sent by his master to observe and report on Pantag-

ruel's health and circumstances. When the carver had saluted Pantagruel, he took a gray pigeon from a basket, and having tied a white ribbon to its feet, let it loose. If any ill fortune had befallen Pantagruel, he would have used a black ribbon. When Gargantua was informed that the feathered messenger had returned to the dove house wearing a white ribbon, he rejoiced over his son's welfare. This was the custom of the noble Gargantua and Pantagruel when they would have speedy news of something of great concern.

The story which recalled this concerned a pigeon that alighted one afternoon on the windowsill of one of the island lights. The keeper noticed at once that the bird was carrying a message, not in the form of a white or black ribbon, but a written message contained in a tiny metal case or capsule attached to one of its legs. As the bird seemed tired and hungry, the keeper, who was curious about the message, got a bowl of water and some crumbs and proceeded to stalk the pigeon in the approved manner of Mrs. Martin Johnson and John J. Audubon. But the bird was too wary to be caught. It flew off to the ridgepole of the house, then to the railing of the parapet deck of the light. There it remained, refusing to come down, until at length it flew away.

"And ever since," said the keeper, "I have been wondering where the bird came from and where it was going and what message it was carrying."

At several lighthouses they told me that any dead birds found around the lights were sent to the park naturalist at Acadia National Park, Mount Desert. So when I landed at Bar Harbor I went to see Maurice Sullivan, the park naturalist. I found him with his assistants, all in uniform, in a spacious office in the basement of the public library. The light from a cheerful fire blazing on the hearth was reflected in a tall glass case filled with stuffed birds. Mr. Sullivan was very cordial and answered a great many questions, not only about birds, but many other matters as well. We talked, indeed, about everything from the nesting habits of puffins at Matinicus to the wild calla lilies of Great Cranberry Island, and from the ravens on the outer fringes of the coast to the ankle-high, blue-green juniper that thrives along the shore. I asked about the trailing yew at Monhegan Island. Was it really a species of yew? Mr. Sullivan had never seen any, so would not venture an opinion. But he thought that the bake-apple berry, which is found in the southern extension of the Labrador tundra at Mount Desert, might be unique in this country. It is a low-growing, orange-colored berry, not unlike the raspberry. Unique or not, it has a rather nice name.

I had come, however, primarily to inquire about the birds, and Mr. Sullivan pulled out reports and gave me one of the information sheets he sends to lighthouse keepers. The sheet contained instructions for wrapping up the bodies of the birds and mailing them to Mr. Sullivan, and a number of

questions to be answered when the birds were shipped. The questions concerned the date the birds were found; place of finding (foot of light, etc.); cause of death, if known; kind of weather and wind direction when the birds were killed, and the steadiness and color of the light and the distance visible. Mr. Sullivan said that birds practically never fly into a red light, and I gathered from the reports which I looked over that not many fly into the white lights. Not all the birds, however, that meet their fate at the lighthouses are sent to the park naturalist. Collecting and forwarding the bodies is purely voluntary, and though Mr. Sullivan stands ready to tell any light keeper the names of the birds which he sends in, some keepers do not co-operate with him. The fact, however, that a keeper fails to report does not necessarily mean that he isn't willing to be helpful. Perhaps no birds are found at his light, or the lighthouse may be so isolated that it isn't feasible to save and send those that do fall.

Lighthouse keepers as a rule do not do much fishing. There are some who put out a few lobster traps and occasionally do a little hand-lining, but it is merely for their own consumption. Light keeping is a full-time job, and the government does not expect its men to engage in fishing on a commercial scale.

On July 1, 1939, the administration of the Lighthouse Service was taken over by the Coast Guard, and when I visited the lights in the winter and early spring of 1940

most of the keepers were wondering what was going to happen. When the superintendent of lights visited the *Sunbeam* in Boothbay Harbor I asked him if the merger had anything to do with national defense, but he said he thought it was primarily an economy measure. I liked the way he spoke proudly of his men.

Mr. Bousfield, who is in a position to know the men of the Coast Guard and the character of their work, had nothing but praise for the fearlessness of these seamen, who when a call comes for help never hesitate to go out whatever the weather.

"As I have come to know the men and some of the stories of their rescues, I have formed a deep respect for

them," he said. "I can appreciate the terrific odds against which they work. Today their job is more hazardous than in the days of sailing ships."

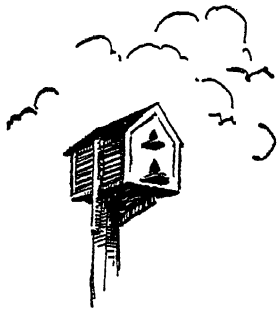
"I am surprised to hear you say that," I said. "I supposed their equipment had been so improved that life-saving was easier and less perilous than it used to be."

"But the character of the work has changed," he answered. "It's no longer confined to rescuing the crews of vessels cast on the reefs. The Coast Guard now combs large areas of angry water to find some small craft. The areas searched may be filled with sunken reefs, and the work may have to be done at night in a raging blizzard. Even with an intimate knowledge of these waters, the risk is great.

"When night comes and a lobster boat fails to return to port," Mr. Bousfield continued, "the other fishermen know something is wrong. No time must be lost in searching for the missing boat. The fishermen know what landmarks their absent colleague used in setting his traps, and the compass direction. Also at which end of his gang of traps he commenced hauling. With these data, the Coast Guarders start out. Figuring the direction of the wind and tide from the most likely place the boat may have been, they begin the search, proceeding cautiously, of course, if the night is dark. If they didn't have an intimate knowledge of every acre of the areas searched, plus extraordinary skill in navigating, they would be sunk. The Coast Guardsmen are the twentieth-century heroes of the sea."

"Would you say that the work of the lighthouse keepers has changed any?" I asked.

"Not so much as that of the Coast Guard. But their problem is different. It's an exacting job, because they can't leave the station unguarded. They have to stand sentinel duty. It is interesting to see with what care they cast frequent glances over the water to see that all's well. Anything that doesn't look just right they report by telephone. Nothing escapes the eyes of the keepers. Often in landing at a lighthouse the keeper will say he spotted us miles away, recognized us, and that we must have come from such and such a place. Or he will ask where we were headed when we passed on a certain date when the storm was so bad. Lighthouse keepers never miss a trick. Those on the Maine coast are a remarkably fine lot of men."



9. OFF BLUE HILL BAY

ONE of the roughest patches of water on the Maine coast is between Swan's Island and Frenchboro, but it was as calm as a garden pool when we crossed it one morning early in March after lying all night in Burnt Coat Harbor.

This was during my second voyage on the *Sunbeam*. I had arrived at the Mission House in Bar Harbor the afternoon before, where I was greeted by Mrs. Young, the office secretary, who performs many offices for the Mission. She was working in the clothing department, the large room that resembles a general store, laying out garments and accessories for the spring crop of babies along the coast. It looked as if the crop would be a large one. A minute or two later Mr. Bousfield came downstairs from his study, a briefcase in one hand, a pair of rubber boots in the other. He said he had just had Captain Frye on the telephone. The captain said the glass was falling. It stood at twenty-

eight point six, which was rather low, and by tomorrow it would probably blow. We had better not stand on the order of our going.

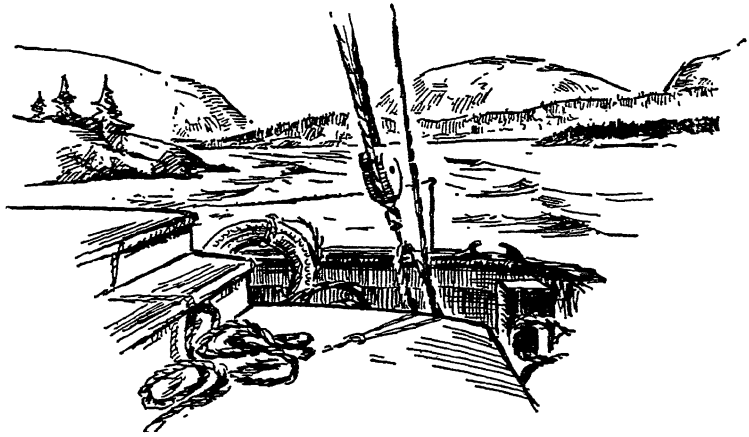
So we lost no time in getting the luggage into his car, already laden with half a ton of magazines, and in driving the twelve miles across Mount Desert Island to Northeast Harbor, where the *Sunbeam* was waiting for us. Snow and ice were visible under the spruces as we traversed the island, and there were large downward-forking tracts of it on the flanks of the mountains, whence came coolish drafts, though the day was really mild, considering the season. The road up Cadillac Mountain was closed with remnants of belated snow.

Northeast Harbor is a beautiful harbor at any season of the year, though it is a much livelier place in summer than in winter, for it is a yachting center, which swarms with cruisers and sailboats during July and August, but the rest of the time is practically empty, save when the *Sunbeam* is in port. The *Sunbeam* was lying at the coal wharf a little to the westward of the harbor entrance, and our first view of her was a bird's-eye view, because the tide was out, and we had to look down on her from the dock. The captain and Llewellyn Damon were on hand to get the literature and luggage aboard. A man with a small child watched us as we unloaded the car, stacking the magazines on the wharf. As soon as it was unloaded, Mr. Bousfield drove the car away to leave it in some place of safety during his absence. By the time he returned, the magazines had been swung on board and lowered into the glory hole. This was done with the boom in the same way luggage is loaded on a liner, except a box instead of a net was used. Then we descended the ladder, the lines were taken in, the whistle screamed, the child howled, and it was westward ho! for Swan's Island, our first port of call.

The view of Mount Desert from almost any point is impressive, but I think it is most impressive from the sea, because the granite cliffs are on the seaward side, and from sea level the mountains pile up into the sky until they seem almost Alpine. Looking back at them as we headed southwest, they were a marvelous blue-gray, slightly misty about

the peaks, with extensive areas of snow, the whole collection overhung by great dark clouds. This is the section of the coast where the rocks are red—red granite and gray-and-white granite—which, with the greenness of the evergreens, makes the coast here strikingly colorful, even in dull weather, winter or summer.

We went out the Western Way past Bear Island, with its lighthouse and buoy depot, past the Cranberry Islands, including Sutton Island, where Rachel Field has her summer home, past other islands. The Mission, Mr. Bousfield said, used to go to Great Gott Island for services, but now there is only one person on the island in winter. All these islands are bold, and darkly and mysteriously wooded.



The sea was smooth, and the *Sunbeam* steady. On the southern side of Swan's Island, which is only a few miles from Mount Desert, we passed one of the numerous Spout-

ing Horns found along the Maine coast. A dark, narrow cleft in the rock, it throws water high in the air when rough seas come trampling in on the returning tide and force the water upward through the horn. But the horn wasn't playing when we passed it. Wind and tide were not right for it to be roaring and booming. The change in weather indicated by the barometer would perhaps bring it into action.

To be perfectly picturesque, a harbor ought to have a lighthouse at its entrance, preferably a lofty white tower set on a high point of land, its light visible for many miles at sea. This requirement is fairly fulfilled at Burnt Coat Harbor, the chief port of Swan's Island, which we entered just before sundown. This curious name, Burnt Coat, with its suggestion of ordeal by fire, is a corruption of Brulé-côte, or Burnt Hill, which Champlain gave to the island when he visited it in 1604. Much the same thing happened in the case of the islands of North Haven and Vinalhaven. Originally christened the Fox Islands by Martin Pring, who discovered them in 1603, the name survives only in Fox Island Thoroughfare, the name of the narrow reach of water that separates the two islands. But whereas Pring named them the Fox Islands on account of the silver foxes which he saw there, Swan's Island did not derive its name from being a haunt of wild swans—at least, not any of the feathered tribe. It was named after Colonel James Swan, who bought the Burnt Coat group from Massachusetts in 1786.

Colonel Swan was one of the most obstinate men who ever lived. He remained in a debtors' prison twenty-two years simply because he refused to pay, or allow anyone else to pay, a debt that he considered unjust. It was a case in which a policy of appeasement would seem to have been the wiser course, but he steadfastly refused to adopt any such policy, perhaps because he liked being a martyr to a principle. A Scotchman by birth, he came to Boston when a mere lad, and grew up to be an ardent patriot. He was a member of the Boston Tea Party, and was wounded twice at Bunker Hill. After the Revolution he speculated in lands which had been confiscated from the loyalists. Apparently he made and spent money with the greatest of ease. About the time that General Knox became interested in settling in Maine, Colonel Swan purchased the Burnt Coat group of islands, building a large colonial mansion on the largest island, the one that now bears his name, where he also erected a sawmill. The island was then covered with a fine stand of hard timber suitable for shipbuilding. But his dream of developing his island empire soon faded, as the colonel found himself in financial low water. He went to France to recoup his fortunes, where, with the help of his friend, Lafayette, he became the financial agent of the French government. For a while he seems to have prospered exceedingly, but misfortune overtook him once more, and in 1808 he was thrown into St. Pélagie, the Paris debtors' prison, where he remained until a few days before his death

in July 1830, at the age of seventy-six. The house which Colonel Swan built at Burnt Coat sheltered many of the first settlers while they were building their own homes on the island. As many as a dozen families occupied the Big

House, as it was called, at one time. And a family in those days was generally a numerous tribe. The house is no longer standing.

As we hauled in past Burnt Coat Light, I glanced aft over the port quarter across the waters of Jericho Bay to the western sky. It was clear near the horizon, a clear orange, but heavy gray clouds were pressing down on it, squeezing the daylights out of the orange. Whether this betokened bad weather or not, I did not feel competent to say, but it didn't look good to me.

On the east side of Burnt Coat Harbor there is a settlement called Minturn, and on the west side is the village of Swan's Island. Minturn has a white church, a black wharf,

and an old, gray, paving-stone quarry. This quarry, an outrageous gouge in the steep hillside that rises abruptly from the rocky shore, could not have been more advantageously located. Schooners could come to the foot of the quarry to be loaded, and to judge from the extent of the workings and the size of the grout pile, millions of granite paving blocks must have been produced at this seaside quarry in the days when cities paved their streets with stone.

I did not have much time to look at Minturn, as our business was on the opposite shore, at the larger village of Swan's Island, where we were soon tied up to a large but lonely fish wharf under the high wooded ridge that extends along the western side of the harbor, a quarter of a mile or so below the steamer landing and the village center at the head of navigation. Here we were to lie all night, making the short run across to Frenchboro early in the morning. It was a good place to spend the night, because Burnt Coat Harbor is well sheltered in all winds, while the harbor at Frenchboro, though it affords good holding ground, is somewhat exposed in northeasterly weather.

After supper I went ashore with Mr. Bousfield. The darkness had shut down quickly and completely. There was a total absence of stars, but there were lights in the village, and over on the Minturn side the headlamps of a car moved across the blackness along an invisible road. We could have gotten nowhere without the aid of the electric lantern or

light of some kind. On climbing the ladder, with the sound of water below and the smell of ripe lobster bait above, we had to pick our way across the wharf among lobster pots and odds and ends of gear, and then climb a rough path up to the road, along which it was by no means smooth walking to the village.

We had gone only a short distance when we heard a steamer whistle. It was the mail boat from Rockland feeling her way into the harbor. We could see her searchlight playing about. It is a narrow and tricky entrance, but Mr. Bousfield said that on a clear night Captain Frye could make it without lights. We paused to watch the boat pass, an inky shadow, the lights from her ports and saloon windows dancing on the dark flood. As the steamer neared her berth, we could hear people calling to each other, and a lot of laughter when she finally docked. It was the climax of the day at Swan's Island.

With daily mail service and telephone connections with the mainland, life on Swan's Island is not so drastic as it is at other islands less in touch with the outside world. Although I did not enter any of the stores, I did visit a number of island homes, which were very pleasant and comfortable, and the people as gracious and cordial as any I have met anywhere. There was no place at which we called that I did not wish we could have stayed longer. The talk was mainly about the town meeting which had just been held, about lobsters, and things like that. In the vari-

ous villages on Swan's Island there must be five or six hundred people, or at least enough to make a town, for it is one of a number of island townships in the Penobscot Bay area; and here as elsewhere in New England the annual town meeting is a prime topic of conversation immediately before and after the event. Inevitably, too, in a place like Swan's Island, where the occupations and tables of the people are largely furnished by the sea, the subject of fishing breaks into the talk. In the Seventies and Eighties Swan's Island was the greatest mackerel seining port on the Atlantic coast. Its importance today as a lobstering center is shown by the fact that the island has one hundred and one registered motor craft, a majority of which are engaged in the lobster trade.

At the first place we called, the man of the house was about to leave to get his paper, which had just arrived on the boat, and it took a good deal of urging to get him to go for it. When we learned from his family, and from the young school teacher who sat by one of the lamps crocheting, that he was anxious to get his paper not so much on account of the war news as to see how Popeye was getting along, we refused to listen to his protests any longer, but insisted on his going. So presently he went, but not before he had visited with us and had shown me a couple of swords made from the elongated snouts of swordfishes. These he had polished and carved and decorated in the skillfullest manner. Scrimshaw work, I believe it is called.

There is always something of interest to see in a Maine home.

During the course of this call the reason why we had come to Swan's Island came to light. Mr. Bousfield visits the island about once a month for services, but I knew that this time he had not come for that purpose, and I was equally aware that it was not his habit to visit places on sleeveless errands. I began to perceive why we had come when he led up to the approaching stay of one of the Red Cross nurses whom he was transferring to the island. Before we left the house he had arranged for the nurse to live there during her sojourn at Swan's Island. And at this house and at the next one a further reason emerged. In May the Mission wanted to hold a dental clinic at the island. Could a certain sum of money be raised among the islanders to help defray the expenses of the clinic? The women to whom he put the question thought it could be done, and I know it was done, because I have since learned that the clinic there was a success. This work is carried out by the Mission in places where there are no dentists, in co-operation with the State Department of Dental Hygiene.

Early the next morning when half awake I looked out the porthole of my cabin, and a dimmer, damper, dismaler scene it would be difficult to imagine. But I soon discovered that I was peering under the wharf into a dark forest of old dock piling covered with barnacles and rock weed. Yet the outlook was not much brighter when later I looked out the

other side. It was a gloomy, overcast day, but the surface of the harbor was unrippled by any wind, and we found the same condition prevailing outside. On the way out we saluted Burnt Coat Light, and a dog, a cat, and several children promptly tumbled out of the house, followed by the keeper and his wife. The *Sunbeam*'s salute was answered by the lighthouse bell, and there was mutual waving.

"A fine family that," said Mr. Bousfield. "One of the few Catholic families in the Maine light service."

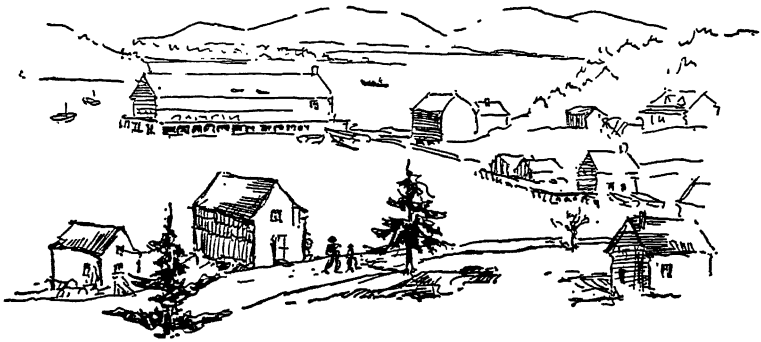
Despite its reputation for turbulence, the deep water between Swan's Island and Frenchboro was as smooth as a garden pool when we crossed it that March morning. Lying to the southeastward of Swan's Island, Frenchboro is the only village on Long Island, the most southerly of the larger islands off Blue Hill Bay. It used to be referred to as Outer Long Island, or Lunt's Long Island, to distinguish it from the Long Island that is at the head of Penobscot Bay, now generally called Islesboro, where are located Dark Harbor and Gilkey's Harbor. The name, Frenchboro, probably commemorates the earliest settlers, who in all likelihood were Frenchmen from Mount Desert, or from the French settlements in that vicinity. Some of the people whom I saw at Frenchboro had black hair and black eyes and looked as if they might have French blood in their veins.

The harbor at Frenchboro is officially known as Lunt's

Harbor, and there are still many members of the Lunt family living there. I could see nothing of either the harbor or the village as we approached from Swan's Island until we were practically there. But when we slipped in behind a small island next to the big island, the harbor suddenly opened up to starboard, with the village strung around it. We did not enter, but hove to at the entrance, letting go the light anchor in a good berth between a lobster car and one of the McLoon lobster smacks from Rockland, which we were constantly meeting in small island ports up and down the coast. Simultaneously with the plop of the anchor into the water—and there is no pleasanter sound in the world, unless as a friend suggests, it is the noise of a large check being torn from its moorings by a rich benefactor—the sun came out to challenge the gray embankment of clouds; but after a brief interval of brightness it withdrew, leaving us again in the half light that seemed to presage a storm.

There are two admirable views at Frenchboro, one looking into the harbor, the other looking out of the harbor. The inward view is of a long, moderately steep-sided cove, around which runs almost a mile of hard-surfaced road in the form of an elongated horseshoe. Along this road, on both sides of the harbor, are dwellings and other buildings, with a preponderance of structures on the east side, where also are located the principal wharves, including an enormous fish-packing wharf with facilities so obviously and vastly

in excess of the requirements of the place as to suggest either some local ebb tide of fortune in the fishing industry or a radical change in its character. But the focal point of the scene, the spot to which everything leads as to a rallying ground or a strong point, is the church at the head of the harbor.



Churches seen from the sea are common landmarks on the Maine coast. They are often represented symbolically on the charts by a dot within a circle and a legend indicating whether they are spired or cupolaed. As you sail along the coast, it is quite usual to see an anchorage open up with a cluster of fishermen's houses at its head dominated by a church. Sometimes the church occupies so commanding a site as to become the chief thing by which you remember the place. Just as in the movies, the familiar Hollywood shot of the Eiffel Tower stands for Paris, so does a church come to stand in your mind for a particular coastal town or village. Anyone who looks in at Frenchboro is not likely

to forget the church. But the most conspicuous of all Maine's seaward-looking churches is the Congregational church on Isle au Haut, at the entrance to Penobscot Bay. Its white spire can be seen for miles. It can be seen when no other buildings on the island are visible. Lobstermen use it as a landmark by which to set their traps. And the little Baptist church on the Atlantic side of Swan's Island—the village of Atlantic, not the Atlantic Ocean—can also be seen from afar; while at the other end of Swan's Island the Advent church at Minturn, already mentioned, stands out conspicuously, though it hasn't much of a spire. Its elevated situation gives it prominence. The Congregational church on Great Cranberry Island is likewise outstanding. These island churches are not many miles apart.

I first noticed the view looking out of the harbor at Frenchboro while we were rowing ashore in the cedar dinghy. It was a grand view of Mount Desert, which I was surprised to see so close at hand. It was perhaps a dozen miles away, but it seemed much nearer, a clear blue above dark islands set in a pale March sea. As in the case of the Camden Hills, there must be some magnification in the atmosphere that makes Mount Desert seem much higher than its actual altitude.

It was the first time we had used the dinghy, the skiff having been previously employed for all landings where it was necessary to use a boat, and it was at once apparent that a new pair of oars was needed, as the skiff's oars were

too small for the dinghy. But we got along all right, pulling in past the big old fish wharf, which in the days when the harbor was crowded with fishing craft is said to have been the scene of many revels. But nowadays I doubt if the sound of scraping fiddles or scraping feet is often heard in Frenchboro. For one of the first things I learned about the place is that there are twenty-four bachelors and only two eligible young women on the island. And the bachelors have recently had their ranks reinforced by the presence on the island of a gang of woodchoppers engaged in cutting off the pulp wood.

We landed near the fish wharf on the east side and climbed up over ledges and through snow and mud to the post office and general store overlooking the harbor. A clean, well-kept place, where vigorous-faced fishermen in rubber boots were waiting for the mail. It came while we were there, two men carrying in the sacks and dumping them on the floor behind the nest of glass-fronted pigeon holes. The mail had come from the mainland to Swan's Island on the steamer which we had seen entering Burnt Coat Harbor the evening before, and had been brought the rest of the way in a motor boat which couldn't have been far behind us as we made the crossing. Although in bad weather the steamer from Rockland occasionally fails to show up at Swan's Island, the mail boat from Frenchboro seldom misses a trip. Ice rarely interferes with navigation at Long Island.

It was over this mail route that Miss Mildred Wye, the Red Cross nurse, came to Frenchboro on New Year's Day. Ordinarily the nurses and workers for the Mission are transported in the Mission boat, but the new *Sunbeam* was not in commission until the middle of January, so Miss Wye had to reach the island as best she could. In the following extracts from her diary, which is on file at the Mission House in Bar Harbor, where are preserved the diaries each member of the Mission staff is required to keep, Miss Wye tells of her arrival and settlement at Frenchboro.

"January 1, 1940. I arrived on deck today, much to my joy not having to stay over night at Swan's Island. Although it was fair, the sea was very rough, and I rolled and bucked the waves with every motion of the steamer from Rockland. There was a great deal of freight to be put off at every stop, so I hardly expected to reach Swan's Island before the second. We lost a half hour here and more there, but the boat took on speed and reached Swan's Island at 6:30, although I understand that Saturday it didn't arrive until 9:00. I was just getting my luggage in hand when I saw Clarence Howard from Frenchboro. He had come for me in his launch. When he asked me if I would go down the ladder, I said I would do anything on earth to get over to Frenchboro that night. In the end, he brought his launch alongside the steamer, and I hopped over the side into the launch, forgetting in my haste to be afraid.

"It was a wonder I didn't catch cold coming from Swan's Island, as the steamer was terribly hot, and of course the launch was an open boat, with only a canopy which served more as a windbreaker. We transferred to a rowboat as the tide was out, and that had no canopy; still I was not too cold. As we rowed along, I saw Aunt Rose's light in the window. She had heard us and brought her lamp to the front window to give us a welcome. Frenchboro seemed so lighted up that if I hadn't known better, I'd have thought there was electricity.

"January 2, 1940. I waited round to see if my trunk would come over on the mail boat, but no such luck. . .

"January 3, 1940. It was bright and fair all day with the temperature about 18 or 20. The snow, I fear, is here to stay longer than usual, as it seems packed down so solid, and in spite of the wind it has not blown into the sea. The snow always makes it easier for the men to haul their wood via sled, but now I am told the lumbermen's trucks do most of the hauling for them. The lumbermen have shipped 500 cords of wood from the island and in the spring much more will be shipped. It is cut and in the woods ready for shipment. The islanders who buy and pay for their wood can buy it for $7.00 a cord, but the woodsmen are willing to have the men pick up the trash wood or discarded wood and take it for their own use. A vessel came as usual last fall to sell wood at $9.00 a cord. This was owned by the same company which bought the island for pulp wood.

"My trunk came over on the mail boat this morning, but because of the tide it could not be brought up to the house until late this afternoon. When I asked the mail carrier if my trunk was aboard, he replied, 'Yes, and how do you expect to get it up here?'

"I really wasn't sure myself, and thought I would have to swim out and bring my stuff in piece by piece. It was a big trunk, but not too large for a typewriter, a snow suit, a heavy duty coat, etc. Freight is an awful chore with so much snow on the ground, and, of course, heavy stuff has to wait until the boat can get into the wharf, as it cannot be transferred to a rowboat, etc.

"In the afternoon I visited Miss Teel. It takes quite a while to visit the first time, as there is so much to talk about. Miss Teel's cat, Pat, died, and she misses him a great deal. She really likes cats, but I wouldn't if I had been scratched and bitten the way she was after I left last spring. Some of the children wrote me about it, and others told me about it, so I guess it was quite serious. I never knew cats would turn on people who really like them. Personally, I dislike cats, and as far as I know cats do not like me, and that goes for all kinds of cats, human and otherwise."

Miss Saphronia Teel, whose cat attacked her with such jungle fury, was the first person on whom Mr. Bousfield and I called after we left the post office. She is an old friend of the Mission. Her house is near the post office, and

I could tell at once it was an old house by the fireplace and cupboards in the living room. Miss Teel makes amazingly fine scenic hooked rugs. Her favorite subject for a rug is Owl's Head Light at the entrance to Rockland Harbor. She told me she got the pattern for it from a picture postcard. Her cat and her rugs brought to mind Mark Twain's cat and carpet story in *The Innocents Abroad*. It is in the chapter on Morocco:

"France had a Minister here once who embittered the nation against him in the most innocent way. He killed a couple of battalions of cats (Tangier is full of them), and made a parlor carpet out of their hides. He made his carpet in circles—first a circle of old gray tomcats, with their tails all pointing towards the center; then a circle of yellow cats; next a circle of black cats and a circle of white ones; then a circle of all sorts of cats; and, finally, a centerpiece of assorted kittens. It was very beautiful; but the Moors curse his memory to this day."

Once in a bad storm when a vessel was wrecked on Money Ledges near Frenchboro, Miss Teel was the only person in the village who had any faith that the crew would be saved. It was the first day of April, and when Louis Nickerson, a boy of twelve, who had spied the wreck from a hill, ran down to the harbor with the news, no one would believe him. Everybody thought he was trying to perpetrate an April Fools' Day joke. But he finally succeeded in convincing them he was telling the truth, and Alphonse Lunt

headed the men who went to the aid of the shipwrecked crew. The vessel had gone broadside on, and the waves were breaking over her. The island women gathered on a hill to watch the perilous work of rescue. They could see four men in the rigging of the wreck. They expected every moment they would be washed away. After each wave they looked to see if they were still there. Only Miss Teel thought that the men would be saved. She made hot coffee and had warm blankets and clothing ready for the survivors when Alphonse Lunt and his men brought them safely into the harbor.

According to Ma Peasley, who told me the story of the wreck, Miss Teel's nephew, Raymond Teel, was one of the rescue party, and I was sorry I did not meet him while I was at Frenchboro, because I was interested in a political advertisement he wrote announcing his candidacy for the legislature from his home port, Frenchboro, or rather Long Island, which is one of the three remaining island plantations on the coast, the other two being Matinicus and Monhegan. Mr. Teel's declaration is interesting because it rings true on a note of honest, crusading sincerity, and contains a straightforward statement of the political philosophy of an island fisherman. Readers of the announcement will perhaps be glad to know that its author won the nomination.

POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

To the Voters of the Class Towns of Mt. Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, Lamoine, Cranberry Island, Swan's Island and Long Island Plantation:

I expect to be a candidate in the June primaries for the Republican nomination as representative to the legislature from my district. This is the first time that Long Island Plantation has ever offered a candidate for this office; I trust that the voters will give consideration to this fact if they find the qualifications of the candidate are equal to the duties of the office.

I am a fisherman, and I should like to represent this district at the next legislature simply as a working man, there to benefit my fellow workers, as a boon to the common good of all. I expect the voters to select the candidates who, in their opinion, are best fitted to fill the offices to which they aspire; this is real democracy, and I shall be well satisfied with the decision when the elections are over.

At the present time there is real need to aid the fishing industry. In my opinion, the way to a successful business is to adopt constructive policies and maintain them, which hasn't been the rule in the past. Too long these interests have been exploited and laws enacted to benefit a few. One by one, Maine's great industries have been shrinking away, and fishing is no exception to the rule.

It would please me greatly to have an opportunity to offer some constructive suggestions to promote the State's fisheries industry. I really have a sincere desire to be of service to the business of which I am a small part. However, this decision rests with the voters at the coming elections held during the year.

RAYMOND L. TEEL.

From Miss Teel's we walked along the road toward the head of the harbor, past many picturesque fish houses, with piles of lobster traps and clusters of lobster buoys, past

disconsolate dories hauled up on the shore. Frenchboro is strictly a fishing village. It has no summer trade, nor are there any farms on the island. The children at Halloween make jack-o'-lanterns from cigar boxes because there are no pumpkins. Every house, of course, has its woodpile, often with a saw leaning against it; and from many chimneys came bluish-white wood smoke, its evergreen fragrance spreading through the air like incense. At one woodpile we spoke to a boy who seemed to be sawing wood as a penance, but he smiled as he answered our greeting. On the hillside behind the houses long piles of neatly stacked pulp wood showed where the woodcutters had been at work. Acres and acres of timber have been cut on the islands along the coast, but fortunately this deforestation is not visible as a rule from the water as you sail by them. Many uninhabited islands have been spared only because the paper companies have been unable to locate the owners. Spruce is the wood the companies want.

Almost as numerous as the woodpiles were the family burial plots near the houses, containing anywhere from two to six graves. There is, I was told, a small cemetery on the island, but at one time nearly everyone who died seems to have been buried in his own yard. I have seen many small family burial grounds in Maine, mostly lonely little places overgrown with berry bushes or trees, but I have never seen a closely-set village like Frenchboro with so many small collections of graves beside the houses. Yet it is easy to see

how the custom once started was continued, and one can understand how people might like to have their dead near them. It goes without saying that

They sleep well here,
These fisher-folk who passed their anxious days
In fierce Atlantic ways;
And found not there,
Beneath the long, curled wave,
So quiet a grave.

Like many other islands, Frenchboro has its poet laureate, a native son, a member of the Lunt family, whose verses have appeared occasionally in the Mission bulletins. Once while he was away from home the rats got into the box where he kept his poems and ate them. But he took the loss philosophically. He said he guessed the rats liked his poems better than the people did.

An earlier laureate here was a hermit named Uncle George, who, like a troubadour of old, used to recite long ballads of his own composing. None of these was ever committed to paper. Ma Peasley, who listened to him many times, said it was one of the regrets of her life that she did not take down some of Uncle George's ballads. He was a mine of insular folklore.

And just as nearly every island has its poet laureate, so does almost every one have its Marco Polo, a man who has visited strange and exotic places in the remotest parts of

the globe, and returned with a mixed cargo of rich and colorful tales. The Marco Polo of Frenchboro was a man named Peter Cornet, a Norwegian, who had been to the most outlandish places. I missed him by a number of years, but another may turn up there any time. It is a mystery how some of these men find their way to the lonely islands of the coast. Shipwrecks formerly accounted for the presence of many, but there are so few large ships on the coast now that the loss of one is accounted a rare casualty, and it may be that with the passing of the ships the Polos may become a dying race, though I doubt it. I think you will always run athwart them in unexpected places on the coast of Maine.

At length we reached the head of the harbor, where the church, the school, and the parsonage form a hillside group. The church is on the road. Behind and above it stands the school. Out-topping both is the parsonage. Mrs. Gladys Muir who lives in the parsonage has charge of the school and the church. The plantation pays her as a teacher, the Mission as a worker. She is one of the representatives of the national sorority of Sigma Kappa. She has been in Frenchboro for seven or eight years, and has been wonderfully successful. The school is Maine's model rural school, and the church is a thriving organization around which the religious and social life of the community revolves.

Symbolic, perhaps, of the social life of Frenchboro was the first object I saw on entering the vestry of the church.

This was a huge ice-cream freezer. And it should be said to the glory of the islands that their church suppers are something to make a song about. The women outdo themselves and each other producing pies, cakes, cookies, salads, and other good things. Always there is such a great variety that it is impossible to sample even a tithe of the tempting things set forth. The platters are constantly being refilled with beans and ham. Yet, despite the abundance of food, no person, young or old, takes more than he or she can eat. Every plate is scraped clean. I noticed this particularly because I have attended church suppers elsewhere in New England where the people helped themselves to everything and only ate about half of what they took.

The church, which was on the eve of celebrating its fiftieth anniversary, was being renovated. Mrs. Muir had designed a new platform for the front of the church, where once stood one of those extraordinarily high, old-fashioned pulpits, which for some reason always make me think of that diabolical passage in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in which the angels in Heaven, seeing Satan roving about below, tease him by letting down a set of steps. They are spirits in a state of bliss, but the poor devil is a fallen spirit doomed to eternal punishment, so he cannot reascend the steps. Could anything be more unangelic? There is a legend that while preaching from the old high pulpit at Frenchboro Alexander MacDonald, the founder of the Mission, inadvertently drove his fist through the ceiling of the church.

The new platform had been made by a carpenter from Swan's Island, who when I looked in was busy repainting the interior of the church. Not only was he a carpenter and painter, but also a glazier, for he had installed the stained-glass windows, which had been salvaged from the Mission church at Head Harbor Island opposite Jonesport on Mooseabec Reach. The Mission gave up the Head Harbor church when the population of the island reached the vanishing point, in consequence of the granite quarry there being abandoned. Operations at the quarry ceased a number of years ago, but people continued to live on the island, engaging in fishing, and even when their numbers dwindled to twenty-eight, they could still boast of being a community with a church, a school, and a post office. Now practically everybody is gone. The islands, like the tides that wash their shores, have their ups and downs. Some rise, others fall, and the coastal population remains more or less static. When Mr. Bousfield sold the church, a part of the consideration was that the purchaser should remove the stained-glass windows and prepare them for shipment to Frenchboro. This was done, and the glazier from Swan's Island had with considerable ingenuity adapted and fitted them to the church at Frenchboro.

Although the Frenchboro school is a one-room affair, it is not the little-old-red-schoolhouse type of building, but a square, spacious, well-lighted structure. Outside the door was a sturdy, homemade sled used for hauling wood to feed

the school stove, but the stove was not going because it was Saturday. On the walls inside were pictures of Washington and Roosevelt, and exhibitions of the pupils' work. From this work you could tell at once that here was a school of the most up-to-date kind. Even knot-tying is taught and there is a rhythm band. On one of the blackboards was a notice about banking day. Each child has a porcelain-frog bank. Part of the money which the school receives for books is used to pay for the batteries for the radio over which are received the broadcasts of the American School of the Air. In contrast with the little-old-red-schoolhouse type of equipment, I noticed that there was a water cooler instead of a pail for drinking water.

"We started in with hot lunches for the school today," Miss Wye writes in her journal for January 8, "serving

cocoa and white bread-and-butter sandwiches. At 9:45 I left the house and was met by one of the children. I can't carry very much as I walk along with my kettle this year, as it is very full to care for eighteen youngsters. We also gave out cod-liver oil tablets, each one being equivalent to three teaspoonfuls of the fluid form. They are a bright orange color, and really quite attractive looking."

Mrs. Muir, to whom credit must go for this fine island school, was ill when I visited Frenchboro, so I only saw her for a moment at the parsonage, but everywhere about the island people were enthusiastic about her and her church and school work. Even the casual visitor to the island soon finds herself sharing in that feeling.

One annual event at the school that is largely attended by adults is the dental clinic. At the last one sixty-five teeth were extracted in one morning. The dentist and the dental hygienist worked on the platform. At first screens were placed around the patients, but at the request of the people these were removed, so that everybody could watch the operations. It is bad enough having a tooth pulled, but imagine having it done before a gallery of spectators!

Here are some interesting sidelights on contemporary life in Frenchboro from Miss Wye's journal:

"January 15. It has been a fierce day all day long. Rain came in the night and drove most of the day. The sea lashed high and loud even within the harbor. Mr. Dalzell, our brave mail carrier, said it was the worst storm he'd ever

gone across to Swan's Island in. The steamer did not leave the dock at Swan's, which means we shall have no mail in the morning. This is considered the worst storm for over a year. . . .

"January 18. I doubt if the men have been able to get out to their traps. Several expect heavy trap losses owing to the severe storm of last Monday and the high seas and wind ever since. We heard that the Canadian lobsters are now restricted from coming into the United States markets as a war measure, there being need for them in Canada or England. This may help our men a little bit, as there has always been much said about the quota system.

"I have now decided to start the nutrition class next Wednesday at the schoolhouse from 3:30 to 4:00 P.M. We cannot plan for it anywhere except at the school, because that is the most central place for the people on both sides of the harbor to meet, and on school days the room is always warm and comfortable. If held at the church, there would be the question of heat. . . .

"January 22. Fair today until late afternoon when we had snow squalls. At night the wind blew like a hurricane, and my lamp flickered so fitfully I expected it to go out every time the curtains moved. It is an uncanny feeling to know the wind is so strong, even though one's windows are fastened tight.

"I visited every single home today where there are

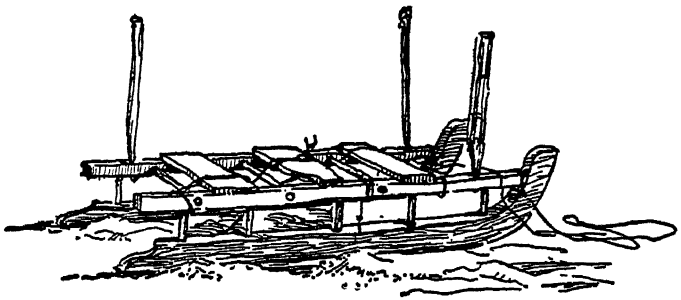
women. I finished health inspections in the school this afternoon, too. . . .

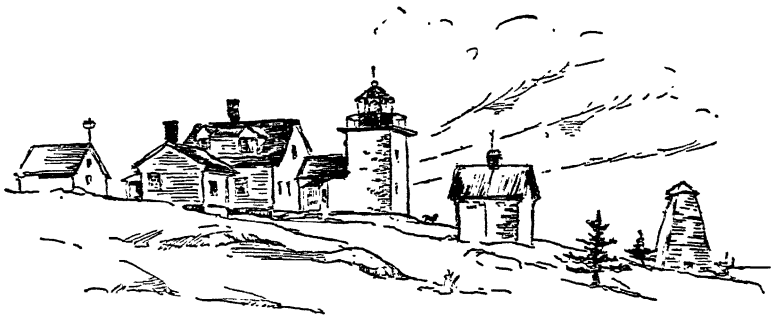
"January 26. Money is very scarce at present. The seas have been very rough, traps have been lost, and the men have not been able to get out to their traps much this month, which means that few lobsters were sold. I have learned that many of the men are now buying their clothes through some magazine ad of a Chicago concern that deals in second-hand clothing which has been scrupulously cleansed. The trousers cost $1.00 a pair and coats $1.50. Then there are work shirts too. While the majority are khaki-colored woolen, one man got a navy blue suit which looks very good indeed. I admire the men for wearing these clothes."

We walked back along the bit of public highway to the dinghy, with the view of Mount Desert framed before us in the harbor entrance. Eighty-nine people live on the island, but we met no one. Nor was there any wheeled traffic on the road. Frenchboro, I believe, has only two trucks. Yet there was a Maine state highway sign beside the road reading "School." It seemed redundant, but I suppose it was placed there to carry out the strict letter of the law. In many of the smaller islands the few motor vehicles you see seldom carry license plates, doubtless because there are, legally speaking, no public roads. Whether the brace of trucks which use Frenchboro's seven-eighths of a mile of

public highway are licensed or not, I did not learn, but the motor boats, of course, are registered.

It was still overcast as we weighed anchor, a pewter sky over a pewter sea. I looked back at the village as we moved away, and the last I saw of Frenchboro was the church at the head of the harbor standing out significantly.





10. EAGLE ISLAND, CASTINE, AND LITTLE DEER ISLE

FROM Frenchboro we sailed for Eagle Island, not the island of that name in Casco Bay where lived Peary the explorer, but the one in East Penobscot Bay, which is much larger. Retracing our course to Swan's Island, we passed Burnt Coat Light once more, but instead of entering the harbor we bore to the westward through the channel leading between Swan's Island and Marshall Island into Jericho Bay, and headed for the easterly entrance to Deer Island Thoroughfare. I was in the pilothouse when we brought Burnt Coat Light abeam, and, glancing at the chart, noticed for the first time that it is located on Hockamock Head, an Indian name which I had encountered before on the Maine coast.

An amusing legend tells how the original Hockamock Head, which is a gray, craggy point on the inland passage

between Boothbay Harbor and Bath, came by its name. Near it in the early days was a small settlement that was sacked and burned by the Indians. When the savages appeared, like howling banshees, the settlers, according to Williamson, the Maine historian, fled along the precipitous promontory, where the cliffs and steeps made a series of natural defenses. The Indians pursued the settlers hotly as they ran across the neck to their stronghold.

"A Scotchman, less fleet of foot than his fellows from age or corpulence, his head protected by a wig of antique size and fashion, brought up the lagging rear, and soon fell within grasp of the pursuing red man, whose outstretched hand laid hold on the flowing wig for a head of hair which promised a magnificent trophy to the scalping knife. But to the surprise and consternation of the savage, the periwig clave to his hold, while the apparently headless body still ran on, leaping from steep to steep, utterly indifferent to what had been left behind. The astonished savage, believing he had been running a race with a devil, suddenly stopped, and dropping the wig in superstitious horror, turned to fly in the opposite direction, crying to his comrades, 'Hockamock! Hockamock! The devil! The devil!' "

The chart also revealed many other interesting names of islands and ledges which lay near our labyrinthine course or not far from it—such names as Hat Island, which really looked like a piece of feminine headgear from *Godey's Ladies' Book*, and Devil's Island and St. Helena, High

Sheriff and Sally Prude, Colby and its mascot Colby Pup, Shabby Island and Sparrow Island, Popplestone and Brimstone. The origin of some of these names is fairly obvious, but local information is necessary to explain many of them.

Entering Deer Island Thoroughfare, we had a close view of the southern end of Deer Isle and the town of Stonington. Most of the houses you see along the Maine coast are white, but here were many yellow ones, and a number of red barns made warm notes in the landscape. Stonington is the center of the granite business in this part of the bay. Tied up at one of the wharves was the first *Sunbeam*, now used to ferry the men who work in the vast quarries on Crotch Island across the thoroughfare. Crotch Island is high and the many large derricks that stand out along the skyline make the place look as if some gigantic WPA project was being carried on there. Llewellyn Damon, a native of Deer Isle, said that the contour of the island had changed since he was a boy, much of it having been chiseled away. Hardly anything can be seen of the quarries from the thoroughfare, but the cutting sheds are ranged along the waterfront, where the finished granite is loaded on barges or vessels for transportation to Boston, New York, and other places. Crotch Island, which is actually crotched by a long cove that parts it in the middle, lies so close to Deer Isle as to bottleneck the thoroughfare, narrowing it down to a width of not more than one hundred and fifty yards. But

there is water enough to carry through vessels of fairly deep draft.

Across from Crotch Island on the Deer Isle side of the passage is a yacht basin, where many pleasure craft were lying in winter quarters. Yachting is an important thing in the life of the Deer Islanders. Many of the largest yachts on the Atlantic coast have Deer Isle crews. There was a time when the American cup defenders were manned entirely by Deer Isle men. There were no better sailors anywhere. Llewellyn Damon's uncle was in the *Columbia*, and he himself began his seafaring career as mess boy on a three-hundred-foot yacht.

On Mark Island at the westerly end of the passage is Deer Island Thoroughfare Light. As we approached it, Mr. Bousfield scanned the shore near the light through his binoculars, and, remarking that conditions seemed favorable for landing, he disappeared down the glory hole to bring up some magazines. Captain Frye, after blowing for the light, let the engine idle while we launched the skiff. The sea was choppy, and though we were only a few hundred yards off the light, it seemed to breeze up suddenly and the water to grow rougher the moment we left the *Sunbeam*. I was sharing the stern with the magazines, sitting between a pile of masculine reading matter and a pile of feminine reading matter and holding a mixed grill of literature in my lap, and I could see the light keeper, Alva Robinson, an old shipmate of Captain Frye's, as he came down from

the lighthouse in his rubber boots onto the rocks at the best landing place. The lighthouse keepers usually guided us ashore in this way, or by indicatory gestures and shouted directions. A small black-and-tan dog nearly went mad with excitement as we neared the shore. Without any passing motor cars to bark at, he barks at passing boats, running along the rocks in vain pursuit of them. Mr. Bousfield paused for what he judged to be the right moment, and then we went in with a rush towards the rocks. The keeper caught the bow of the skiff and there was a scramble to get out. I was a fraction of a second late. With the bow in the air, a wave which must have come all the way from Baffin's Land broke over the stern, drenching me and the magazines.

Mr. Robinson said that the rocky spot where we landed was no place to leave the skiff, not because we couldn't haul it up high enough to be safe, but because it was the weather side of the island, and if the sea made up any more we might later have difficulty in getting away. He said he would take the boat around to the other side of the island, and before we could offer to do it ourselves, he had jumped in, and with the ease of an expert in small boat management was clear of the rocks and pulling away for the end of the island. They were watching from the *Sunbeam*, and, taking their cue from the skiff's course, started at once to follow round to the other side.

The dog cut circles around us as we trudged up to the

kitchen door of the lighthouse, where we were cordially welcomed by Mrs. Robinson and Miss Rachel Robinson, who seemed pleased with the magazines despite their damp condition. The pots and pans in the kitchen shone, and the floors of the house were like mirrors. I had the feeling that here was a perfectly kept light station.

The three members of the Robinson family are the only persons on the island, and I think we were the first visitors in five or six months. Mr. Robinson said that he managed to get ashore for mail and supplies about once a week, but I gathered that Mrs. Robinson and her daughter, a girl of perhaps seventeen, had not been to the mainland for several months. Mrs. Robinson said that she and Rachel crocheted and made quilts and went to bed early. They had been at the lighthouse four years. Before that they were at Matinicus Rock for six years.

"Don't you like it better here?" I asked Mrs. Robinson.

"Well, we're nearer things," she said, "but still it's an island."

There was no note of complaint as she said this, but that phrase, "still it's an island," has recurred to me many times. I gained the impression that while Matinicus Rock is an off-shore light it was less lonely for the Robinsons because of the other families stationed there.

The square white tower of the thoroughfare light, which is over eighty years old, is attached to the dwelling. The connecting room between the two was unheated, and the

Robinsons were using it as a cold-storage place for their provisions. Here were their meats, butter, and other supplies; it looked to me as if they had enough to hold out for weeks should they be cut off. In this room were also kept the sacred vessels of the light—the polished brass oil measures, the brass box containing cleaning cloths for the lens, and a spare lamp for the light. There was even a brass dustpan, which was so bright it might have been used for a handmirror.

The lighthouse tower was also unheated, and as we spiraled up the iron stairway I asked Mr. Robinson if he was ever troubled by the glass of the lighthouse steaming up.

"Now and then," he said. "I have to watch out for that in winter."

"The fog bell—how long will that run by itself?"

"Five hours; but I don't like to let it go more than three hours."

Deer Island Thoroughfare Light is a fixed white light, so there is no mechanism to get out of order as there would be if it were a flashing or occulting light. The lens, I noticed, was French, as is a great deal of the optical apparatus in our lighthouses. It was the French physicist, A. J. Fresnal (1788-1827), who was the first to construct compound lenses for lighthouse use instead of mirrors. Fresnal's name was on a brass plate of the framework of the Deer Isle illuminator.

From the top of the lighthouse we had a fine view up East Penobscot Bay towards Eagle Island Light, and down the bay in the direction of Saddleback Ledge Light, which marks the seaward entrance to the bay. Many are the shipwrecks that these waters have seen. It was on Saddleback Ledge that a vessel came to grief as she was setting out on her maiden voyage. This was the full-rigged ship *Hualco*, 1,086 tons, which was built at Belfast at the head of Penobscot Bay in 1856. Launched on the morning tide, she left immediately on her first run. Four hours later she struck Saddleback Ledge and sank. According to Lincoln Colcord, the *Hualco* drove over this pinnacle of rock going eight knots, with topgallant sails set. The bottom was ripped out of her and she sank by the head in twenty minutes. The captain and crew had time to take to the boats, and that evening arrived back in Belfast, but without their ship. The *Hualco* probably had the shortest career of any ship on the Maine coast.

Twenty years before this a terrible tragedy occurred near Saddleback when the wooden side-wheeler *Royal Tar*, 400 tons, caught fire and burned with the loss of between thirty and forty lives. The *Royal Tar* was built at St. John, New Brunswick, and was named for King William the Fourth of England, or Silly Billy, as he was called. There is a swagger portrait of him as an Admiral of the Fleet by Archer Shee in the National Portrait Gallery, London; and he is mentioned in a book of reminiscences written by a

Londoner, who once saw a genial gentleman suddenly look out of his carriage window and stick out his tongue. This turned out to be His Majesty King William the Fourth, who wished to indicate to some old naval friends on the sidewalk that his elevation to the throne had not made him too proud.

The *Royal Tar* was on her regular run between St. John and Portland and when near the Fox Islands was found to be on fire. A heavy northwesterly gale was blowing at the time and the flames spread rapidly. There were between ninety and one hundred persons on board, and the animals belonging to a traveling circus, including an elephant, six horses, two dromedaries, two lionesses, a Bengal tiger, a gnu, a pair of pelicans, and a number of other creatures, besides Burgess's collection of birds and serpents. The elephant, the dromedaries, and the horses jumped overboard, the elephant knocking several persons into the water. Three of the horses swam instinctively for the land and so did the dromedaries, but the other three horses swam around in circles until they were exhausted and drowned. The elephant hesitated for a long time with its forefeet on the rail. When at last things got too hot for him and he jumped, the burning steamer had drifted four or five miles from land and the elephant was lost. The wild animals in their cages were burned alive.

One would like to record that the circus band calmed the passengers by playing when panic threatened, but it

seems to have been a case of women and children last. For at the first cry of fire the engineer and fifteen others jumped into one of the boats and rowed away as fast as they could. The captain in another boat stood by and rescued many persons, who were transferred to the revenue cutter *Veto*, which happened to be near the scene of the disaster, but was afraid to approach too close lest its powder magazine should become ignited and explode. The cutter landed forty survivors at Isle au Haut.

An account of this calamity, which occurred October 25, 1836, is contained in Howland's *Steamboat Disasters*, published at Worcester in 1840, with a nice wood engraving of the ill-fated *Royal Tar*.

The lee side of the island where Mr. Robinson had taken the skiff was very bold, and I was grateful for the barnacles that clung to the long, smooth, sloping rocks which seemed to go down deep into the water. Between high and low water where the rocks were wet and slippery, the barnacles acted like ashes on an icy walk. Mr. Robinson helped us shove the skiff off and we were soon back on the *Sunbeam*. As we passed the lighthouse, we gave the Robinsons three long blasts of the whistle. Mrs. Robinson and Rachel waved, and the black-and-tan dog raced at breakneck speed over the rocks to the very end of the island, where with its feet almost in the water it barked and waved its tail at us.

I think the longest flight of steps on the Maine coast must be the steps at Eagle Island Light. It seemed an end-

less climb up them when, after landing from the skiff on the slippery rocks in the shadow of the light, we began the long ascent to the top of the bluff. Yet if there were no steps here one would have to be something of an Alpinist to get to the top. For Eagle is a high and noble island which

puts up a bold front to the sea. The steps are in a chasm where some of the rocks are a coppery green and trees grow out of crevices in the face of the cliffs. Near the water are incipient grottoes. It is a beautiful place.

About thirty persons live on Eagle Island the year round. A few people spend the summer there. There is a school, but no church. Religious services are held on the island once a month by the Mission. During the building of the *Sunbeam* these had been conducted by Rev. Arthur H. Sargent of the Mission staff, instead of Mr. Bousfield. Mr. Sargent, who lives at Ellsworth and usually cultivates the Down East end of the Mission field, had also relieved

Mr. Bousfield at Monhegan Island and Loud's Island. While at Eagle Island, Mr. Sargent generally stayed with the Bracey family at the lighthouse. It struck me that there was something very fine about this veteran seacoast missionary writing sermons in a lighthouse.

Here are some extracts from Mr. Sargent's diary, which are fairly typical of his visits to the island:

"Friday, December 29, 1939. Journey from Ellsworth to Eagle Island in the forenoon, visits to nine homes in the afternoon, and prayer meeting at the last house, tail-end of the island, where the people asked me to have it.

"Saturday, December 30. Snow fell thick and fast in the forenoon, while I wrote and studied at Eagle Island Lighthouse. In the afternoon I tramped through it to other homes for calls.

"Sunday, December 31. This last day of the old year was spent with four meetings and a church sociable. All the children on the island (seven) came to a children's meeting at 10:30 A.M. Eight people came to the afternoon meeting; ten got to the evening Bible study class; and twenty were present for the sociable and Watch Meeting, which lasted until the beginning of the first day of the year Nineteen Hundred Forty."

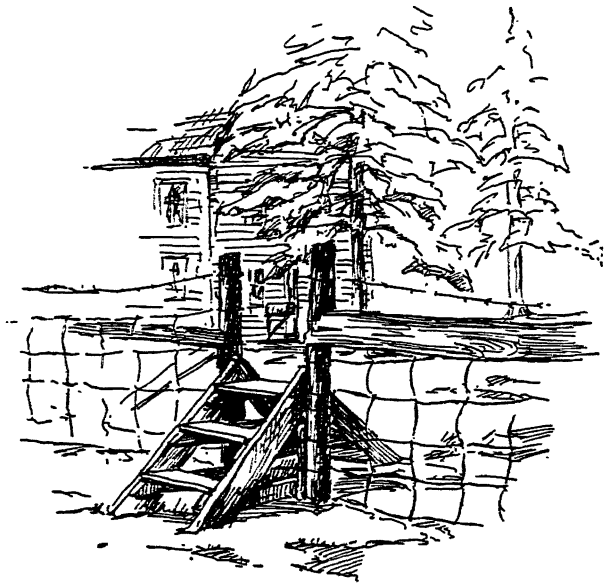
At the lighthouse we found that Mr. Bracey, the keeper, had gone to Camden for supplies, and after a pleasant visit with Mrs. Bracey, during which her daughter and the island school teacher in shiny rubber boots came in, we slogged

through the wet snow down the island to call on Uncle Edgar Quinn, the patriarch of Eagle Island.

On the hillside behind the lighthouse I looked down and saw a man with a pack on his back crossing the flank of the hill.

"Isn't that the keeper?" I said to Mr. Bousfield.

"Yes, that's Mr. Bracey," he said. He hailed him and glissaded down the hill to speak to him; while I went on up the hill until I came to a sheep fence where I sat on the top step of a stile.



This was not my first visit to Eagle Island. Twenty-five years before, while staying for a short time on Dirigo Island, or as it is called on the charts, Butter Island, I had

landed at Eagle Island. There was at that time on Dirigo Island an eighteenth-century farmhouse, two or three summer cottages, and a barn which had been converted into a summer inn of sorts. It was a galleried inn. The central part was open from floor to roof, while on either side were rooms, two tiers of them, the upper tier opening off a gallery which extended along both sides and across one end. At the other end was an enormous fireplace. There were not more than half a dozen guests. We ate at the farmhouse, where the cooking was done by an island woman called Aunt Lucy. Every once in a while Aunt Lucy would disappear mysteriously from the island. A fishing boat would come for her in the night. She was a midwife and would go to some island to deliver a baby. All babies, she said, were born when the tide was ebbing. Urged by a fisherman to make haste, Aunt Lucy would say, "There's no hurry. The tide won't turn till midnight. The baby can't come before twelve."

I was curious to see Dirigo Island again, but I was surprised when we came to a place where I could look across at it. There was not a house left on the island. There was no trace of anything, not even the wharf. The place had reverted completely to a state of nature. A man who was dragging a sled loaded with supplies told me that the buildings had been burned, with the exception of the barn, part of which had been moved to Eagle Island. He said that the houses had gone to wrack and ruin, and casual visitors were responsible for setting them on fire.

Uncle Edgar Quinn, the island patriarch, is a carpenter, farmer, boat builder, and fisherman. He raises and cards his own wool and knits the mittens which he wears out scalloping. He was ailing when we called, but he said that

he was going to do things his own way just the same. He was looking forward to Mr. Sargent's next visit, so that they could have a game of dominoes.

"Double twelves," he said. "That's what we play."

Mr. Bousfield thanked him for the mittens which he had sent him. A perfectly made pair of white woolen mittens had arrived in the mail with nothing to indicate who had sent them. But Mr. Bousfield knew that the wool was from Uncle Edgar's sheep and that the patriarch himself had knitted them.

"Where do you go from here?" Uncle Edgar asked, and

when we told him he said sagely, "Look out for cannibals!"

On the way back through the snow we stopped for a moment at the schoolhouse, which was built by Alexander MacDonald. It is a sturdy, single-room, frame building. Among other things hanging on the walls were pictures of Washington and Coolidge, an American flag, and a large linoleum picture map of the United States. I think the school has five pupils, some of them quite small, to judge from the size of the seats. Orange crates had been converted into small high-backed chairs by simply knocking out one end of the crate, standing it on its good end, and putting a slip cover over it.

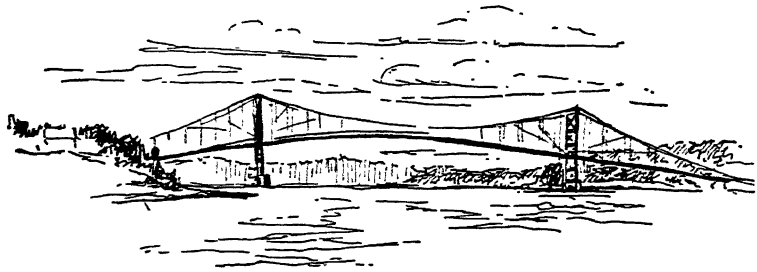
We stopped once more on our way to the lighthouse steps to look out over the bay at the many islands and the Camden Hills. There was one patch of turquoise sky with dark clouds around it. They were low, spectacular clouds through which the sun broke to make a long streak of glistening water that reflected the light upward. The sky and the far hills and the dark splotches of the islands gave a sense of enormous space and the air a feeling of breezy healthfulness.

"There," said Captain Frye, "is a lighthouse I would like to own."

Pumpkin Island Light at the entrance to Eggemoggin Reach is one of the lighthouses which the government sold a number of years ago. It is on a small ledge about two hundred yards northeast of Little Deer Isle. Of the pri-

vately owned lighthouses it is one of the most picturesque. A collector of lighthouses who could bag it would have a rare specimen.

"There's good construction in the buildings," said the Captain, "and it wouldn't be hard getting on and off."



Spanning the reach ahead of us was the new suspension bridge connecting Little Deer Isle and Deer Isle with the mainland at Bayard Point. A ship and a bridge are said to be the two most romantic things ever devised by man, but some yachting people were opposed to the building of this bridge despite the fact that it has a horizontal clearance of eight hundred feet and a perpendicular clearance of eighty-five feet, which is enough to permit the passage of any yacht, with the exception of a cup defender. The bridge, which was opened in the summer of 1939, appeared to be a slender, graceful structure as we approached it, but when, having passed under it, we came to anchor in Sally's Cove on the Little Deer Isle side of the reach, just east of the bridge, it didn't look so good. This is probably its worst angle.

After supper Mr. Bousfield rowed ashore to see Miss Ethel L. Rand, the Mission worker at Little Deer Isle. The wind had gone down with the sun, and the night was mostly clear. Suspended in the western sky above the island, like golden spiders on a thread, was the remarkable collection of planets which early in 1940 received almost as much publicity as the stars of Hollywood. Venus was shining so brightly that her light made a pathway on the waters of Sally's Cove.

Later in the evening, when the superintendent returned, we weighed anchor and crossed the reach to Sargentville, where we lay all night at Guild's Wharf.

A Sunday calm lay over Castine when between nine and ten the next morning we slipped into the mouth of the Bagaduce River between Dice's Head, with its antique lighthouse, and Nautilus Island, with its private astronomical observatory. Although the lighthouse has been abandoned by the government and divested of its lamp, the observatory presumably still houses its telescope, which I suppose is kept pointing eternally heavenward, like an anti-aircraft gun.

"Do the people of the coast go in much for astrology?" I asked Mr. Bousfield.

"Not at all," he said. "They're too hard-headed for that."

The wharves of Castine are a mile to the eastward of the entrance on the north bank of the river, which is here

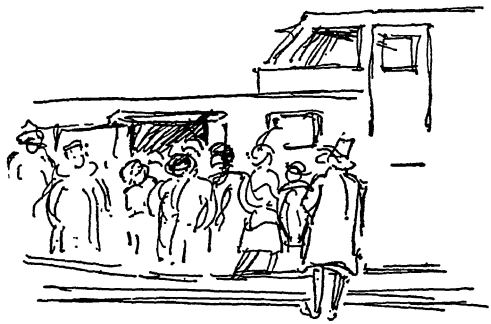
known as Castine Harbor. It is said to be the deepest harbor on the Atlantic seaboard. From the entrance to a point opposite the wharves the chart shows an average depth at mean low water of over seventy feet. There were no signs of life as we approached, but in response to the customary three blasts on the *Sunbeam's* siren a man suddenly appeared from nowhere and did us the favor of taking our lines.

"Bringing someone to the hospital?" he inquired when all was fast.

There is an admirable small hospital at Castine, to which the Mission has from time to time in the past brought patients; but it was explained that this time we had come on different business. I am not sure, but I think the man was the skipper of the small power mail boat, the *Hyppocampus*, nicknamed the *Hyppo*, which carries the mail back and forth between Castine and Belfast. She lay a few yards ahead of us at the next wharf, which a sign said was Acadia Wharf. She hadn't missed a run all winter, I learned. There were a couple of days when Castine Harbor and Belfast Harbor were pretty well sealed up with ice, and at both ends the mail had to be taken out over the ice on sleds to the *Hyppo*, but there was no delay. If the man on the wharf was the skipper of the mail boat, he was much too young to have equaled the record set by Captain Isaiah Skinner of Castine, who was the master of a packet plying to the opposite shore. According to a statement on his

gravestone, Captain Skinner braved the perils of the bay no less than thirty thousand times.

From the deck of the *Sunbeam* as she lay at the wharf I could look up into the streets of Castine which lay supine in the early Sabbath morning sunlight. The only movement was that of a long-haired black cat, which walked nonchalantly down one street, paused at the corner where a man stood waiting patiently for nothing at all to happen, and then passed on down another street out of sight. Nor did a walk through the town reveal much other evidence of life. A few cars and a pedestrian or two were abroad, but beyond that nothing, save a very old lady sitting in the front window of a very old house. A fine portrait of old age serenely facing the end.



Soon the church bells began to ring and the town came to life. A small boy asked if we had any empty pop bottles, meaning, of course, the kind with a cash-surrender value at the local store. Then the children from the Unitarian Sunday School trooped down the hill to visit the boat. This

Sunday School had contributed to the building of the *Sunbeam*. The boys were chiefly interested in the pilot-house, while the girls asked questions about the hospital bed. Two dogs which got aboard went everywhere. When church was over there was a great crowd of people. The men gravitated towards the engine room, and the women seemed fascinated by the galley. From the advent of the small boy in search of pop bottles until everybody went home for Sunday dinner, there was a constant stream of visitors. The boat apparently won the approval of the old salts of Castine. "She certainly is rugged," I overheard one of them say, to which his companion replied, "Nothin' could hurt her."

This Sunday morning call at Castine was not primarily to show off the boat, nor to offer the services of the Mission to the town. Castine has its own churches and ministers, and is therefore not a regular port of call for the Mission boat. The visit was to enable Mr. Bousfield to go to the State Normal School to see about a student there whom the Mission was helping, and also to enable him to explore the possibility of securing for one of the Mission's island churches some benches which he heard the Methodist church was discarding. With these matters attended to, he had gone to the Unitarian Meeting House, which is a lovely old building, one of Maine's oldest churches. It was built in 1791 and has a white belfry and spire. It also has white box pews trimmed with mahogany, from which you

can look out through clear panes of glass to the village green. The Unitarian minister, Rev. John Brigham, who was a college classmate of Mr. Bousfield's at Colby, invited him to speak, which the superintendent did, telling about the *Sunbeam* and inviting everybody to visit the boat.

The educational phase of the visit to Castine interested me, because it seemed an important part of the Mission program. Many islands cannot afford to have high schools, and yet they are too remote for pupils who want a high-school education to become daily commuters. It is true that the islands will pay the pupil's tuition, but there is the further expense of board and room which has to be borne by the pupil's family. If the family cannot pay this and there are no relatives on the mainland with whom the pupil can live while attending school, his formal education ceases when he finishes grammar school. Often only fifty or sixty dollars stands between a pupil and a year of high-school work. And this is where the Mission enters. It tries to find a place where the youngster can work for his board and room. If it cannot make such an arrangement, it provides the money. With only a thousand dollars to spend for this purpose, the Mission manages to assist a good many students each year, not only in high school, but also normal school. One girl whom the Mission helped through normal school had succeeded in getting a high-school education by walking eight miles daily each way between Holmes Bay and East Machias.

When the last visitor to the *Sunbeam* had departed, we cast off and headed for Little Deer Isle again. It was a blue Maine day which made the gulls wheeling and crying over Castine Harbor look very white. The thermometer stood in the late thirties and there was a fresh breeze from the northwest. Off Cape Rosier the *Sunbeam* rolled a little, but we had smooth going in Eggemoggin Reach, and by two o'clock were back in Sally's Cove, where Llewellyn Damon pulled us ashore in the skiff. He landed us on the shingle near the bridge and returned to the *Sunbeam*, which was to be moved down the reach to Scott's Landing on Great Deer Isle.

We walked a mile and a half to Miss Rand's house, which is on a hillside overlooking the bar that connects the two Deer Isles. This bar has been built up into a serpentine roadway which may be crossed at any time, but ten years ago, when Miss Rand first went to live at Little Deer Isle, it seems to have been awash at high tide, or at all events during spring tides. In any case, she once started to walk across the bar when the tide was just beginning to come in. She thought her rubbers would be ample protection, but before she could get across, the water was up to her knees. Lying in the bar water, which had only been free of ice for a week, was a two-masted schooner, with a green hull and a white rail, which Miss Rand said was Wilmot Hardy's pulpwood boat, *Enterprise*. It seemed a snug berth for a vessel to lie in all winter.

Miss Rand, like Mrs. Muir at Frenchboro, is a representative of the college sorority of Sigma Kappa, which has the Maine Seacoast Mission for its only philanthropy. For more than twenty years it has been a loyal friend and supporter of the Mission, choosing in this way to honor the five Maine girls who in the Seventies founded Sigma Kappa at Colby College, Waterville, Maine. Not only does the sorority contribute nearly 10 per cent of the Mission budget by paying part of the salaries of two workers, but

college and alumnae chapters throughout the United States and Canada provide hundreds of gifts which are distributed by the Mission at Christmas. Valuable service is also rendered by members of Sigma Kappa acting as volunteer

workers in the Mission field during the summer months.

In her work Miss Rand not only makes many parish calls, but holds many meetings in her home. One room is a branch of the main Mission library, and contains hundreds of books for readers of all ages, including some sea books. Among these last, I noticed such titles as *Moby Dick* and *Count Luckner the Sea Devil.* In the experience of the Mission, Joseph C. Lincoln is the most popular novelist on the coast.

"Always I get news when my women meet," reads an April entry in Miss Rand's diary. "Mostly it is a discussion of yachting jobs. They are scarce—large yachts are being sold to Canada and small yachts are slow in coming out. Yachting is the index of prosperity on this island."

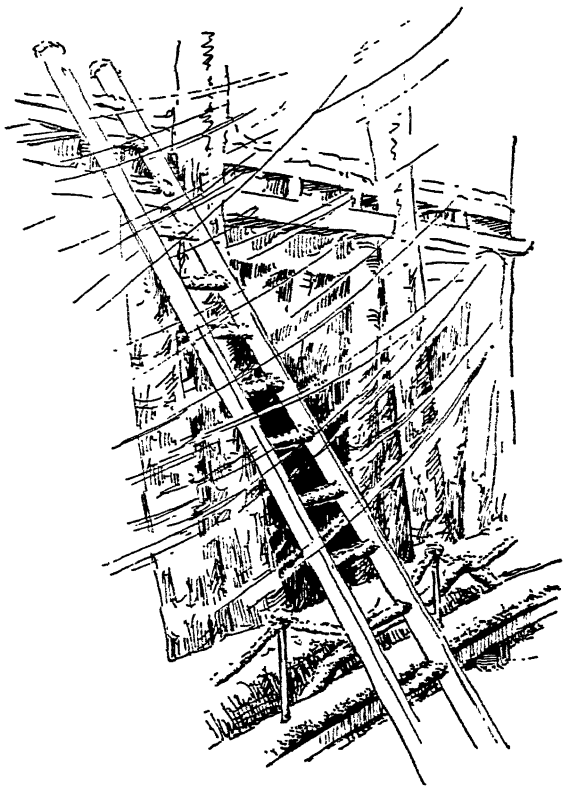
Another entry about a call in Stonington says: "Mrs. C. sat braiding rugs before two large windows overlooking a gorgeous view of the harbor, the two quarries, and a portion of the town, besides the far horizon of islands. No wonder she is famous for beautiful handwork with such an inspiration."

A young girl is the subject of the following paragraph: "She is immature and is kept busy at home so that she has little time for study. She goes clamming each tide and can dig a bushel of clams on a tide. The rest of the day she helps digging out the clams. Fires from steaming clams send up their blue thick smoke after each tide over the whole island."

Miss Rand took us for a ride in her car around Little Deer Isle. She drove us to Eggemoggin, an attractive summer resort at the head of the island, near Pumpkin Island Light, and to what is called the Haskell District on the western side of the island. A feature of this last place was the great number of bird houses. One home alone had no less than six. Bird houses are a characteristic of the Maine coast. You see them everywhere, and of all shapes and sizes, from elaborate miniature steepled churches to small one-room bungalows. The presence of so many argues a genuine fondness for birds.

During our tour we passed the Mission Church near the bridge, where a meeting was to be held that evening, and also the Latter-day Saints church. The Latter-day Saints have another church at Stonington on Deer Isle, and they are also strong down the coast at Jonesport, Beal's Island,

and Addison. The esteem in which the Mission is held by the people of the coast is shown by the fact that the towns of Jonesport, Beal's Island, and Addison each vote fifty dollars a year to the Mission out-of-town funds. Down East towns like these where taxes are the serious concern of all do not lightly vote away their money. In all three places the Latter-day Saints co-operate with others to make the gifts to the Mission possible.

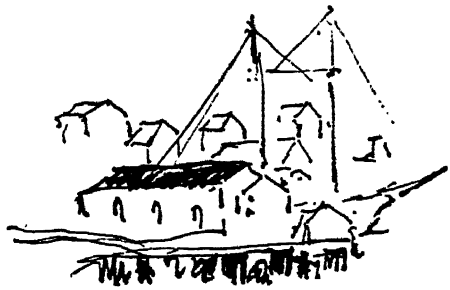


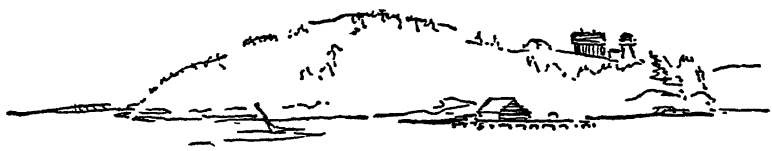
It grew colder during the afternoon, and when Miss Rand took us back to the *Sunbeam* just before supper the wind was noticeably stronger. When it came time to leave for church it was blowing hard and sleeting. The wharf where the *Sunbeam* lay was an exceptionally long one, and it seemed to put us right out in the thick of the storm. Things are apt to seem much worse at night, but, making every allowance for this, I thought they were quite bad enough. The deck was slippery, and though we had out the breast and spring lines the *Sunbeam* was restive. The waves made a great noise as they splashed through the piling of the pier. It was pitch dark and the ladder was icy and unsteady. The wharf was also slippery, and I thought we should be blown off it. But with heads down and keeping close to the lantern to avoid defects in the wharf we reached Miss Rand's car. The young man who came for us lost his hat, but he said it didn't matter. It was an old one, and he was used to losing hats. In the summer he worked on a yacht, and at the beginning of the season each member of the crew was given a dozen hats, six white and six blue, but by the end of summer they had all gone with the wind.

We had a wild ride to the church, especially on the serpentine road across the bar. I was surprised to find anyone out on such a night, but there was a crowd at the church. I judged that there were seventy-five or a hundred present, which I thought spoke well for the people and Miss Rand, who conducted the services with Mr. Bousfield. Outside

the wind howled and the sleet beat against the windows, but inside the wood crackled cheerfully in the oblong stove and it was perfectly comfortable. The men sitting near the stove were forced to take off their overcoats, and before the service was concluded were forced to move. There were no pews, just plain wooden chairs; but there was an organ, and the congregation joined wholeheartedly in the singing.

Following the service there was another wild ride back to Scott's Landing. But the ladder wasn't so bad this time. The tide had risen.





11. WAY DOWN EAST

"SHE'S rolling sideways some with this tide running in," said Captain Frye.

We were crossing the lower end of Blue Hill Bay, and the *Sunbeam* was indeed heeling to it, first to port, then to starboard. I had to brace myself and hold on to keep from being thrown from one side of the pilothouse to the other. The brass ash receiver slid back and forth on the broad shelf beside the compass. Spray froze on the deck, on the rails, and on the sides of the deck housing. Captain Frye's remark about the motion of the boat struck me as a piece of flagrant understatement.

We had breakfast at seven and at seven-thirty had sailed from Scott's Landing for Northeast Harbor, where we were to put in for a few hours before heading Down East for Jonesport. The boisterous night had led me to expect a stormy day, but it was clear and colder, with only a ruffled sea in Eggemoggin Reach. The white spire of the Brooklin church was outstanding on the mainland side as we ran down the reach. The Torry Islands looked winter-killed, and it seemed a far cry to summer, when, according to

Llewellyn Damon, the islands are covered with wild strawberries. This was a sector of the coast which the engineer knew by heart. He pointed to a farm on the Deer Isle side where as a boy he worked for a farmer for fifty cents a day. We passed Naskeag Harbor and Devil's Head at the entrance to the reach, and crossing the head of Jericho Bay passed through York Narrows into the lower end of Blue Hill Bay, where the *Sunbeam* commenced to roll. At the head of the bay Blue Hill, with snow on one shoulder, stood out a deeper blue than the water. The whole region here is inseparably associated with the name of Mary Ellen Chase, whose writings about it have added to the goodly heritage of New England and the country at large.

Near the place where Bass Harbor Head Light nestles among the spruces, at the southwesterly end of Mount Desert, Captain Frye pointed out the bottleneck entrance to a secret haven called Ship's Harbor, which he said practically no one ever entered, not even in small boats in summer, perhaps because the entrance looks discouragingly small. But inside, he said, it opened up amazingly; you could run in for a considerable distance, and there was plenty of water. From among the ledges near the entrance to this concealed harbor the old *Sunbeam* once hauled a three-masted schooner, the *Rebecca Douglas* of Machias. Her position was pointed out to me, and if ever a vessel was hopelessly trapped, it was the *Rebecca Douglas*. If the

Sunbeam had not extricated her, she would, indubitably, have been wrecked.

"What was her cargo?" I asked.

"She was going home light."

There were signs of spring at Northeast Harbor, which we made from Deer Isle in two hours. I saw a robin on the ice under some spruces, and walking into the town past a road that was closed for coasting, I noticed in a shop window a goatish sign advertising bock beer. Mr. Bousfield had gone to Bar Harbor, where we were to pick him up later, and the captain and engineer, who live in Northeast Harbor, had gone to their homes for a few hours. There were people and cars in the town, but the harbor was a lonesome place. There was no one around. Everything was shut down. Nor were there any signs of activity on Bear Island, at the mouth of the harbor, where is a lighthouse and a buoy station.

It should be held to the government for righteousness, I think, that it permits the Maine Seacoast Mission to store furniture in the buoy depot. There among cables and chains and marine gear belonging to the government are tables, chairs, commodes, beds, mattresses, lamps, pictures, cottage organs, and similar chattels collected by the Mission for distribution among the islands. It is as safe as government property, and the *Sunbeam* can get up almost to the door to load and unload. An interesting government item stored

here is the old submarine cable which ran from the mainland to Mount Desert Rock Light—twenty-one miles of it wound on a single spool. If the old cable, which is flat and oval-shaped, cost as much as the new one, the government paid for it at the rate of seventy-five cents a foot.

When Llewellyn Damon returned to the *Sunbeam* shortly before one o'clock he reported that his sixteen-year-old son had got a deer on Jordan Mountain. Young Damon and two other boys had spied the deer marooned on a ledge of rock on the face of a precipice. The deer took fright when the boys appeared and jumped to its death. The game warden to whom they reported told them they could have it. A man with a truck helped to get it out, and each had a quarter of venison.

Further signs of spring were apparent on Mount Desert during the hour's sail around the island to Bar Harbor. The hills were a smoky color where the tops of the trees were beginning to come to life, and the birches showed red among the evergreens, though here and there on the faces of the cliffs were cascades of ice. It was a day that brought out the color in everything. Dull red was the dominant tone of the island rocks, which also carried hints of purple and splotches of yellow ochre and a good deal of gray. The broken rocks on the beaches were red, with an admixture the color of cooled lava that has been exposed to the salt air for centuries. Curious rock formations were an accent in the picture. One place looked like the entrance to an Egyptian tomb.

It was calm in the lee of the island, but the moment we rounded Schooner Head into Frenchman's Bay we ran into a choppy sea, and the pilothouse windows became bleary-eyed with spray. The windshield wiper kept a section of the glass clear and the doors were opened so that Captain Frye could see to take the *Sunbeam* in to the wharf. He brought her about on a wide arc right alongside the wharf, and as he did so the superintendent with a coil of new rope over his shoulder came down to join us.

The coast to the eastward of Frenchman's Bay is quite as broken and island-strewn as the coast to the westward, save at the extreme easterly end between Little River Light and West Quoddy Head Light, where for fourteen or fifteen miles the shore is high, rocky, and precipitous. The cliffs here are so high as to dwarf men and habitations, though people and houses are scarce. The situation is analogous to that created by Aubrey Hammond, the stage designer, when he drew the sets for *Antony and Cleopatra* at the Shakespeare Memorial Theater at Stratford-on-Avon. He designed the scenery on such a vast scale that the actors appeared to be pygmies.

"They didn't like it, of course," he told me. "But my conception of the play was of an impending fate or doom overhanging the whole piece, so I decided to make puppets of the players."

It was not until the next day, however, that we got as far to the eastward as Little River, the limit of our run

that afternoon being Jonesport. On the way to Jonesport we passed along outside many bays and harbors, which opened up one after the other—Schoodic Harbor and Prospect Harbor, Gouldsborough Bay, Dyer Bay, Pigeon Hill Bay, Narragaugus Bay, and Pleasant Bay. These bays form the approaches to towns and villages located on the bays themselves or their tributaries. Among the numerous islands that lie along the shore are channels affording good inside passages which Captain Frye used whenever it was to our advantage. Indeed, we no sooner left Frenchman's Bay, and passed the radio direction-finder station on the entrance point, than he took the *Sunbeam* through the channel between Schoodic Island and Schoodic Point, where breakers could be seen near by smoking over the ledges. As we came out by Schoodic Island, Petit Manan Light, which in coast parlance is always spoken of as Tit Manan, stood up out of the water. It is not the highest light on the coast, but it has the tallest tower. It rises one hundred and nineteen feet above the rocky islet which it has all to itself, a slender, gray-granite sentinel that has been doing duty for nearly a century.

Among the array of islands which complicate the geography of this part of the coast are some noteworthy single islands and groups of islands. The Douglas Islands, for example, on the western side of the entrance to Narragaugus Bay, northward of Petit Manan, are rocky, tree-tufted islands that might be Greek. Shipstern Island at the

eastern side of the bay is a beauty. It is high and tree-clad, with a precipitous frontage on the sea all around. I should like to own it, but I don't know any way to get on it. In order to conquer it, you would have to be a mountaineer

as well as a mariner. Mr. Bousfield said he could see in the island a resemblance to a ship's stern, and he tried to point it out to me, but I couldn't see it. Spotting likenesses to men and beasts and things in rocks and other natural objects is a special gift. I am blind to such resemblances unless they are as plain as the topiarian work in old-fashioned gardens. But the superintendent walking along a beach would suddenly stop and pick up an innocent piece of driftwood which would turn out to be an amusing caricature of some person, bird, or beast. He was like a man I knew who, as you walked with him, would without warning pluck four-leaf clovers by the wayside. In trying to find just one, I have vainly exhausted the years. But with so many islands lying about it was easy even for me to see miniature Gibraltars, full-sized Tarpeian Rocks, and St. Angelo Castles with trees growing out of their tops. Just beyond Shipstern Island, inside Nash Island Light, are two islets

that really live up to their names. They are the Pot and the Ladle. The Ladle is a rounded rock with a long tongue, which looks like a Stone Age ice-cream scoop lying on its face in the water; and the Pot is like a large cauldron, which, when the sea mists wreathe about it, looks as if it might contain an enormous steaming New England boiled dinner.

The only vessel we met on the long and lonely stretch of coast between Schoodic Point and Cape Split was a little two-masted green fisherman inside Petit Manan Light. She was a brave sight as she came boiling down toward us. She was under power, but was carrying her mainsail to steady and help her. Spray from the water she was throwing was going right across her deck.

"She's sailing pretty," Damon observed.

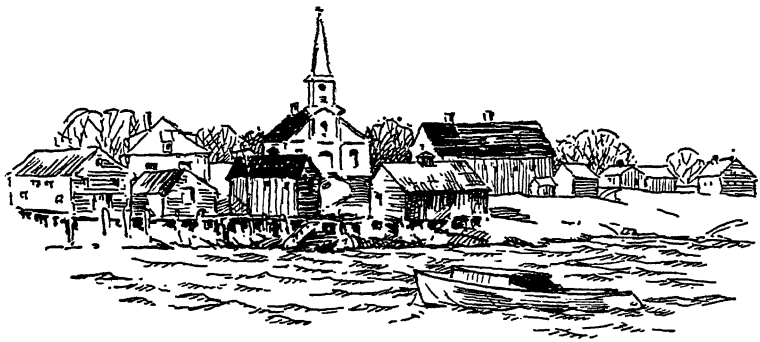
"Bet she's got ice on her deck," said the captain.

As we passed her, he reached for the brass chain overhead and gave her three toots on the whistle. She was the *Verna G.* of Vinalhaven, most likely loaded with lobsters from Nova Scotia for Boston.

The sun was getting low as we came abreast of Cape Split and entered Mooseabec Reach. The sky over Jonesport was black and squally, but to the west it was fabulously golden, a clear winter gold with green above it. The windows of the houses in Jonesport and on Beal's Island across the reach began to glow with reflected light. A

lobster boat took on a temporary glory, while a towering four-master in the harbor was illuminated from stem to stern. The white spire of the Jonesport church turned a warm yellow against the heavy eastern sky. I looked forward to the afterglow, but almost immediately after we came to anchor off the town the bell rang for supper, and all hands went below.

The next morning the clock in the white spire of the Jonesport Congregational Church pointed to six-thirty when the anchor was hove up and the *Sunbeam* headed east for Cutler. Mr. Bousfield, standing beside me on the forward deck, gave a very apt description of the sound of the anchor



chain coming in through the red mouth of the hawse pipe. He said it was like a miser counting his gold, clink, clink, clink!

We had swung at anchor all night on the fringe of the local fishing fleet, some of the units of which struck me as being slimmer than any boats I had seen to the westward.

When I inquired about this I was informed that the further east you go the narrower they get. As we got under way, the fleet caught the *Sunbeam's* wash, which made one craft after another start nodding and bowing to us, until the whole collection—*Alice*, *Beatrice*, *Meriam*, *Octavia*, *Elva*, *Flora Belle*, *Anna M.*, *Verna Kelly*, and the rest—was curtseying away at a great rate, as much as to say, "Good-by and all the best!" Only one seemed diffident, bowing stiffly and coolly, as I thought. She had no name, only a number, and a rather outcast, Sadie Thompsonish look. I could imagine her saying, "Well, s'long, and stormy weather!"

It was a typical North Atlantic day, cold, gray, and in the reach, glassy. I asked the captain what he thought of the weather. "Wind's getting into the northeast," he said, "We'll have some snow."

He put up the chart table, and taking a couple of charts from the ceiling rack unrolled them on the table. "Just in case it shuts down," he said.

Sea charts are fascinating things to study. Sometimes they are more interesting than the actual sections of the coast they represent, because they reveal more than can be seen with the eye, and there is always the fascination of the place names. Through the use of easily decipherable symbols a vast amount of detail is included. Not only is the shoreline and the depth of water shown, but the character of the sea bottom is indicated, and rocks, bars, sand-

banks, and other dangers, sunken, awash, and bare. The buoys and other navigation aids marking the courses for entering ports and negotiating passages are given; and prominent features of the landscape, natural and artificial, such as hills and church spires, which may be used as landmarks, are carefully noted. Special attention is given to lights and signal stations, their characteristics being presented in abbreviated terms readily understood by anyone. Lines of latitude and longitude, of course, always appear, as do the compass roses, showing magnetic variation, and much else of practical value to the navigator.

Yet complete as these modern marine maps are, they are not nearly so picturesque and colorful as the old maps, which were made when the world was not so well known as it is today, and cartographers made up for their lack of information by filling oceans and continents with all sorts of quaint and curious devices, such as spouting whales and sea serpents, dolphins and sea horses, tortoises and strange birds, mermaids and mermen, puffy-cheeked cherubim blowing the sails of tubby little ships, and old Triton with his wreathèd horn. On one of these brilliant old maps, Machias, Maine, which is said to come from the Indian name Mechisses, whatever that may mean, is called Havres des Roi Magi (Port of the Wise Men of the East), and the Seal Rocks, Rochers Magi.

Equally quaint are the old pilot books, with their directions for getting in and out of places. Compiled for sailing

vessels, much of their language now sounds archaic, and the information given is decidedly sketchy in contrast to the minute directions contained in modern books of pilotage. Here, for example, are the directions for crossing Mooseabec Bar from Blount's *American Coast Pilot* for the year 1841:

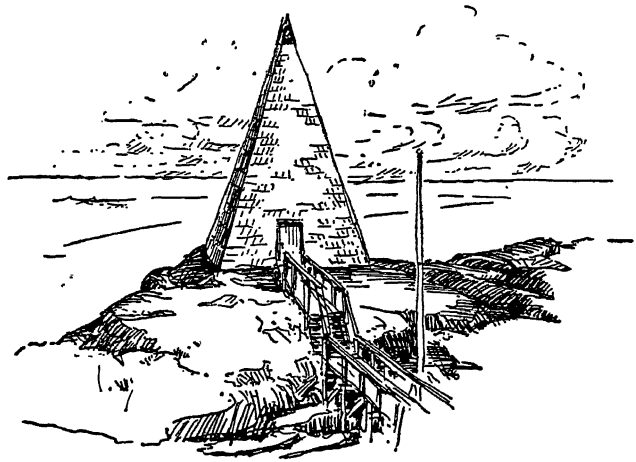
"When bound to the eastward over Moose a Beck Bar, which you must not cross before two hours flood, you steer for Kelley's Coffee House, which lies on the larboard hand as you go to the eastward, on the N.E. point of Moose a Beck Reach. When you are entering on the bar, you will bring a bushy tree right against Kelley's House, which stands on the point. Your course over the bar is east. You leave the Virgin's Breasts, one on your starboard and one on your larboard hand; but if you are bound for Chandler's River you will leave the Virgin's Breasts on your starboard hand, and Rogue's Island on the same hand."

The Rogue's Island referred to is really Roque Island, where a few years ago lived three hermits. They were brothers, but each kept to his own patch of woods and strip of shore. It was a great pastime at Jonesport for boating parties to sail out around the island in the hope of catching a glimpse of one of the hermits. Ma Peasley told me she once saw one of these Roque Island eccentrics. He was bearded in true hermit fashion, she said.

Today Mooseabec Reach is plentifully supplied with navigation markers. Threading our way out of the thor-

oughfare, we passed what seemed a forest of spar buoys and spindles, and other aids, including one of those maritime monuments, like the Fiddler in Penobscot Bay, which is suggestive of the mausoleum or cenotaph of a dead sea king.

When the *Sunbeam* had passed Machias Bay and Little Machias Bay and saluted Little River Light at the entrance to almost the last harbor of refuge on the southern seacoast of Maine, a young girl ran down the boardwalk to the



white wooden pyramid on which the fog bell hung and answered the salute. It was always the same ritual—three blasts of the whistle followed by three strokes of the bell, then one blast of the whistle and one stroke of the bell. And whenever this ceremonial was observed it would set me to

wondering about the white pyramidal bell structure which is a feature of most light stations. Why a pyramid? Did it have anything to do with giving wider scope to the sound of the bell? Was it to lessen the wind resistance of the apparatus? No one seemed to know. My own theory is that the bells were originally suspended in open tripods and rung by hand, but when clockwork came into use the weights were suspended in the tripod, which was boarded up to protect the mechanism, and the bell was hung outside. The pyramid, in other words, developed from the tripod. But this, of course, is only a theory, and may be wide of the mark.

Little River Harbor or Cutler Harbor, as it is sometimes called, is considered one of the best harbors for its size on the coast. It is small, but affords protection from all winds, and it never freezes. It has great natural beauty, though it was far from looking its best the day we were there. It was one of those grim, colorless days when everything—sky, land, and water—was a dull monochrome. The thermometer stood at fourteen above zero, but the dampness made it seem much colder, and the wind got to the very marrow of your bones. Every little while there were flurries of snow. We anchored inside the island on which the lighthouse stands, perhaps three-quarters of a mile below the town of Cutler, and hoisting out the skiff went over the icy rail into her to visit the lighthouse.

Mr. Corbett, the keeper, came down onto the shingle in

his rubber boots and waded into the water to catch the bow of the skiff. Then when we had landed we all dragged the boat high up on the beach, and, taking the magazines we had brought, walked up a path through a grove of very old yellow birches and spruces—from which moss was hanging—to the house. Here we were greeted by Mrs. Corbett and the girl who had rung the bell. The girl was the youngest of eight children and the only one left at home. She told me that the large, yellow, long-haired cat, Teaser, had caught all the rabbits on the island. The Corbetts, who have been at Little River Light for seventeen years, once kept a cow on the island, but the animal was no good after it drank three gallons of kerosene. When I asked Mr. Corbett what kind of a winter it had been at Little River, he said it had been a good one. Only one day at zero, and no bad storms. It was five or six degrees warmer at the light than up town in Cutler, he said.

He took me up in the light tower, from which I could see Grand Manan at the entrance to the Bay of Fundy. All the villages on this Canadian island are on the eastern side. The western side facing us is a continuous line of unbroken cliffs two to three hundred feet high and twenty miles long. On the southwestern headland, fourteen miles from Little River, is a lighthouse, and beyond it, out in the water, there is another light on the notorious Gannet Rock. Both lights are visible at night from Little River. Many years ago in a season of calm weather I landed on Gannet Rock.

The keeper was an old man with a beard as long as Rip Van Winkle's. He had lived on the rock nearly forty years, and he showed me a manuscript a foot thick which he said contained his philosophy of life. Another Canadian light visible from Little River is Machias Seal Island Light, six miles or so to the westward of Grand Manan, and therefore somewhat nearer. Machias Seal Island is American territory, but the light on it is maintained by the Canadian government.

After an interesting visit with the Corbetts we went up town, as they expressed it, to Cutler, landing in the skiff at a float and climbing icy steps to a wharf. Of the 2,300 or

more Christmas packages distributed by the Mission, about one hundred and fifty go to children in the Cutler area. Each package is made up for the individual, and contains three presents. One is something useful, one is something non-utilitarian, and the other is usually candy. Everything

is brand new, and in many cases the Mission presents are the only presents a child receives. Children remain on the Mission Christmas list until they are sixteen.

On the way back to Jonesport we made another stop. It was snowing horizontally when we slipped in behind Cross Island at the lower end of Machias Bay and anchored off the Coast Guard Station. We had passed outside the island on the way to Cutler, and all we could see was the skeleton lookout tower with a watch room at the top, which from a distance looked like a bird house perched high above the island. We had no occasion to launch the skiff here, because the moment they saw we wished to land the doors of the boathouse flew open and down the marine railway came a large dory with men in it, their oars poised to start pulling the moment the boat was in the water.

It slid in smoothly without a splash, and before we knew it we were ourselves being run up the railway into the boathouse. It was an odd feeling to be in a boat moving on dry land.

Cross Island Coast Guard Station is a lonely one, and the shore beat probably the hardest one on the coast. But sitting in Captain Herbert Carr's office, with its polished floors and desks and its telephone, it was difficult to realize that we were on an unfrequented island away Down East. Inevitably, a Coast Guard Station acquires something of an institutional atmosphere, which makes it all the more difficult to realize where you are, as it is natural to associate an atmosphere of that kind with institutions in civic centers rather than in remote places. After we had talked a while Mr. Bousfield called up the keeper at Libby Islands Light, where we had hoped to land, but with the sea making up it would have been difficult and risky to attempt getting on an offshore station. While the superintendent talked with the keeper, I asked about a cave which I thought I had seen from the *Sunbeam* on the southerly side of Cross Island; and I learned that there is a cave about fifty feet deep which can be entered at low tide. A man can walk in about half way before it becomes too low for him to stand upright.

Learning that the wife of one of the men was living on the island, we went to see her. She was occupying a tiny house by the edge of the sea. A big fir tree stood near it

and the wash was flapping on the line. The house had one room upstairs and one room downstairs. It was papered and painted inside, and was as neat and clean as it possibly could be. But living there must have been a lonely existence for the girl. There were no women for her to talk to, and her husband could only see her when he had time off. He had to sleep at the station to be on hand in case a call came for help and one of the boats had to go out. So she was alone most of the time.

We walked back to the boathouse through the snow, rode down the marine railway into the water, and were soon rolling across Machias Bay in the *Sunbeam* in the direction of Jonesport.

Jonesport will probably be associated for many years with the famous Down East radio character, Seth Parker, the creation of Phillips Lord. Signboards on Maine highways used to point the way to "Jonesport the Home of Seth Parker," and thousands of Sunday night listeners who thought Seth was a real person visited the town in the hope of catching a glimpse of him. How did Jonesport take to this free advertising? At first, I gathered, they did not think much of it, but when the souvenir postcard trade and the fan mail pouring into the town raised the classification of the post office a notch or two, they thought better of it. Phillips Lord, who was Seth Parker, owns Bartlett's Island in Blue Hill Bay, just across from Pretty Marsh Harbor on the western side of Mount Desert Island. It is a large,

wooded island, a place which the Budini, whom Herodotus mentions, would have loved. They were a red-haired, blue-eyed Slavonian race, who dwelt in the regions of the Dnieper and ate fir cones.

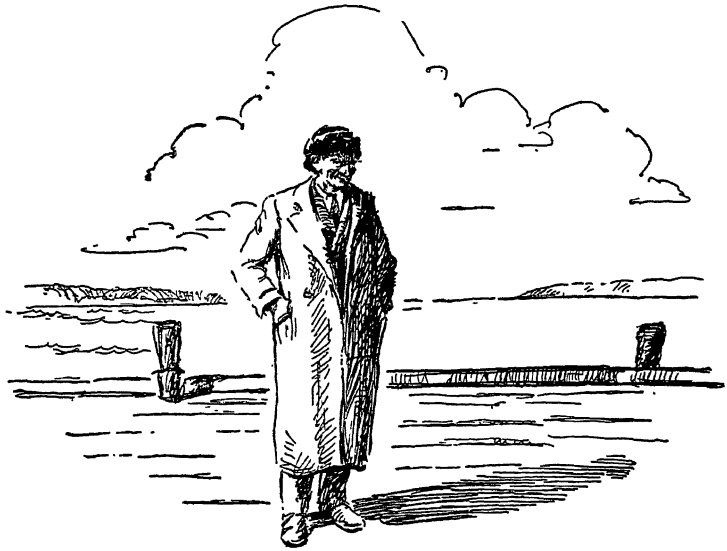
The Jonesport area is historic ground for the Maine Seacoast Mission. It was here that Alexander MacDonald, the founder, really began his work. Jonesport, as I can testify, is a friendly and democratic place, where everybody speaks to you, and its attitude toward the Mission has from the first been one of encouragement. The Mission built a church at Head Harbor Island, which lies across Mooseabec Reach from Jonesport. On Crowley's Island in the Indian River—it is Moose Island on the charts—the Mission at one time had a house and a resident worker. In the early days Mr. MacDonald took Ma Peasley in the Mission boat to Crowley's Island, and putting her ashore told her to go up to a certain house on the island. Then without a word he sailed away, leaving her there all winter.

"I shall never forget standing on that bleak autumn hillside," Ma Peasley said to me, "watching the Mission boat beat her way down the bay to the sea."

Arriving in Jonesport, we did not anchor, but tied up to a wharf near the old Custom House. Over the door of the building on the wharf was this sign:

SAILORS' SNUG HARBOR
S. T. OPENSHAW
Lobsters *Clams*

That night we had a sky pilot in the pilothouse. After supper Mr. Sargent, the missionary pastor for the eastern end of the coast, came aboard for the night, and when it came time to turn in he elected to occupy the berth in the



pilothouse. It must have been very light up there, because when we walked up into the town during the evening the weather had cleared and it was bright moonlight. Moosebec Reach was a broad band of polished silver, and there were millions of stars. I had been on the point of falling back on the old notion that the weather is a reflex of human passions, but there was no need to do so now, although Orion with his old-fashioned Civil War sword and belt was aloft, a reminder of wars and rumors of wars.

Mr. Sargent, who is greatly respected and liked on the coast, ministers to about two hundred families around Jonesport. I was to visit a part of the Mission field here the next day and the Mission library at Mason's Bay, but better than any report of mine on the work is Mr. Sargent's own report. This is contained in his diary, from which I should like to quote three or four entries.

"Thursday, December 21, 1939. Christmas trip began with journey to White District, Jonesboro, where first Christmas service of the season was held at the home of Mr. and Mrs. White. Attendance was fifty-four. Mission gifts were distributed to forty-three children, all but three of whom were present. They had a beautifully decorated tree.

"Friday, 22. Seventeen Mason's Bay homes were visited in the daytime; and in the evening we had a service at Upper Mason's Bay Schoolhouse, with attendance of twenty-two. Measles made the attendance smaller than it otherwise would have been. Hymns chosen by the people were *Beautiful Garden of Prayer*, *It Came Upon a Midnight Clear*, *Joy to the World*, and *Silent Night*. There was no tree.

"Saturday, 23. In the daytime I left the car and walked to eight homes in the Quarry District and Bayview, as roads were frozen into ridges, like plowed ground. Third Christmas service of the trip was held in the evening at the Basin Schoolhouse, with attendance of twenty.

"Sunday, 24. A bright winter day was spent at Moose Neck and Cape Split. I started from the Basin and came by way of Indian River and the East Side (thirteen miles to get five) on account of frozen mud. In the afternoon we had Christmas service at Cape Split, Thompson home, with attendance of fifteen. Evening Christmas service at Moose Neck had attendance of thirty-seven. Frank Cirone (blind) played the violin. Mrs. Margaret Crowley accompanied the hymns on the organ."

Mr. Sargent, as was noted in the last chapter, was at Eagle Island for New Year's, but he was soon back in the Jonesport region.

"Thursday, January 11, 1940. Ice in the salt-water river between Crowley's Island and the Basin gave my plans a jolt. Crowley's Island meeting was to be at the home of Charles and Rita Alley at three o'clock. When I reached the Basin and learned that the ice made passage dangerous, I drove back to Indian River, parked the car there, and crossing over walked the three miles to the center of Crowley's Island, arriving more than an hour after the time set for the meeting, and found the group of twelve still waiting for me. Charles Alley had crossed the ice with a skiff on a sled soon after two o'clock to help me across. I don't remember such persistent efforts to have a religious service anywhere else."

At breakfast the next morning Mr. Sargent said that he slept well in the pilot house. Neither the moon, nor the

stars, nor anything else had disturbed him. It did not seem as if he were on shipboard.

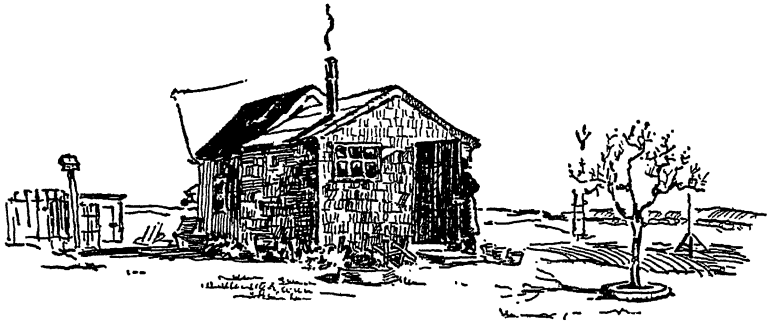
"She lay pretty to the wharf last night," said Captain Frye. "What wind there was was drawing off the wharf, and she didn't bump once."

After breakfast all hands helped hoist out a portion of the *Sunbeam's* cargo of magazines and lug the bundles up the wharf to where Mr. Sargent's car stood in the laneway swathed in blankets and quilts. Removal of the wrappings revealed a Hupmobile, vintage of 1929, piled high with cartons of books, which Mr. Sargent had been accumulating at his home in Ellsworth, and was taking to the Seacoast Mission Library at Mason's Bay. But as the magazines were to be delivered first, and there was not room for both, we unloaded the books, stacking the cartons in the lee of Mr. Openshaw's Sailors' Snug Harbor, and after stuffing the car with magazines, somehow managed to squeeze in ourselves.

It was too early and too cold for many citizens of Jonesport to be stirring, as Mr. Sargent drove his amiable car tactfully through the town. One shop not yet open for the day's business had a sign advertising chameleons, turtles, horned toads, and goldfish for sale. One might suppose that the people of the Maine coast had enough fish in the waters around their homes without having them swimming about in bowls inside their houses. But almost everywhere I went there were goldfish. It was as if a wandering magician had

visited Maine, and wherever he stopped had produced a bowl of goldfish from beneath his cloak.

We drove into a Shell filling station, where there was a pile of clamshells ready to spread around the pumps. The shells were easily procurable because of the vast quantities of clams dug around Jonesport to supply the large clam factories on the waterfront. They make excellent roads, of course, though in damp weather when first put down they are apt to have a strong odor. The rapidity with which the shells accumulate may be judged by the fact that a good clam digger will unearth from half a bushel to six bushels on a tide, depending on the grounds. For these he is paid at the rate of about a dollar a bushel. He can get more by shucking them—"shocking" it is called—and selling them by the gallon. This sounds as if the clam digger did pretty well, but when I was in Jonesport the average digging was said to be about two bushels. With the help of his family, a man might make from a dollar to two dollars and a half a day for the most back-breaking kind of labor.



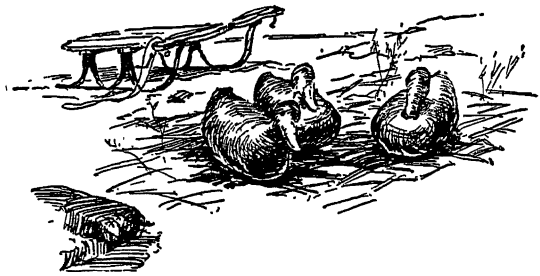
We passed a number of clam diggers' homes, some of which were pocket-size, unpainted places that looked scarcely large enough for one person, let alone a whole family. Here and there along the way we stopped at these houses while Mr. Sargent delivered magazines. At one place no one appeared, so he left the periodicals beside the door. A goat, its hair rumpled by the wind, showed immediate interest, and was just about to breakfast on a *Saturday Evening Post* when a small boy opened the door and snatched the magazines inside.

"It's the clamming tide," said Mr. Sargent, "so almost everybody is out."

At length after a jolting ride we came to a crossroads store, where the bulk of the magazines was left for later delivery. Although I should have liked it better had the day been milder and the wind less cutting, it was fortunate that the roads were frozen, as we should not have been able to visit some of the districts we did on account of the mud. At Cape Split the children were enjoying a month's vacation from school because it was the mud season. To judge from the way the roads were cut up, I should say that in the spring some of the peninsula communities are as isolated as the islands.

At Cape Split we called at the home of Harry Wass on the western side of the Cape, but found him across the road at his daughter's house on the eastern side. This is a beautiful section of the Cape, and every year in June

the meeting of one of the men's organizations of the Mission, the Brotherhood of the Coast, is held here. Although the wind was sloughing through the evergreens and the snow under them was a cold blue, it was easy to see that in summer it would be an ideal place for a picnic and outdoor meeting.



Mr. Wass smiled when I asked him if he was any relation to Great Wass Island on the southern side of Mooseabec Reach. He said that the island had belonged to his ancestors, and that his grandson was a member of the crew at the Coast Guard Station there. Jonesport, incidentally, has supplied more men for the Coast Guard and light stations than any other place in Maine. In some communities of the coast, religious doctrines separate the people strongly, but Mr. Wass has gotten away from the fine points of doctrine. Without much travel he has found great things right around him. He has discovered more of interest on Cape Split than the average person does in a journey round the world. The loyalty of a man like Mr. Wass is a great asset to the Mission.

From Cape Split we went to Moose Neck by a long

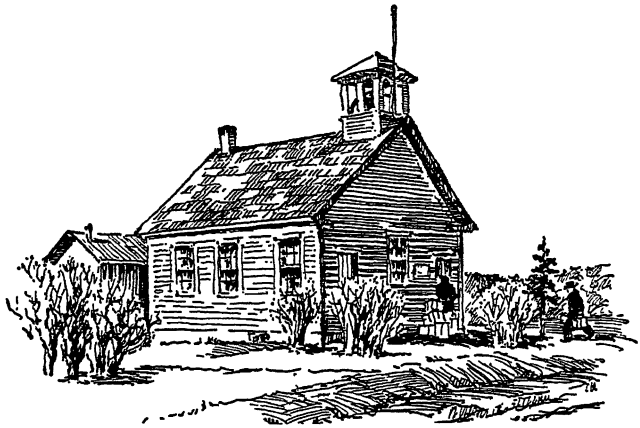
detour up the Pleasant River road, which took us almost to Columbia Falls. Pleasant River is full of curves, which are not gradual bends, but hairpin turns. It is said to twist around one man's barn three times. Swinging back, we cut across to the head of Wohoa Bay and down onto Moose Neck, where we left the car and went down on the bank of the Indian River opposite Crowley's Island. There was no boat we could borrow to get to the island, but Mr. Sargent said if we looked pretty someone might come across and get us. Prodigious cakes of ice two feet thick were strewn along the banks, reminding me of Washington's passage of the Delaware and Eliza leaping from cake to cake with the bloodhounds in full cry after her. We stood on the bank for some time in the perishing cold, but no one saw us, and finally we got cold feet and gave up.

We went into a house to get warm, stepping over an old coat on the floor, which was used to keep the wind from seeping in under the door. The woman was sorry she didn't have a boat to lend us, but the men were out in the boat. She had seen the scholars from Crowley's Island, seven of them, row across the river that morning. Evidence that she had been to the county fair or to a carnival was a collection of dolls of the kind you take chances on, sitting on the organ.

As soon as we had warmed ourselves, we left for Jonesport to collect the books, which we took to the library.

Few New England libraries can be so beautifully situ-

ated as the library of the Maine Seacoast Mission, which is literally a seaside library. The books are kept in an old schoolhouse which stands beside the road on the shore of Mason's Bay. It is a clapboarded and cupolaed place that



clamors for a coat of paint, but otherwise is in good repair. It could be reopened as a school tomorrow, for the scholars' seats and desks are all there, and the stove, with its pipe extending the length of the room, is still in working order. The only necessary new thing would be a rope for the extravagantly large bell, hanging in the peaked belfry. The old rope must have rotted away, because when I sought to test the tone of the bell, whether sweet or harsh, I could find no way to ring it, except by going out in the school yard and throwing stones at the old thing, which I didn't like to do.

I was reluctant to enter the library at first because I

knew it would be cold inside, and I was sure I should find nothing but a lot of stupid, cast-off books of the kind you see in the ten-cent boxes beside the doorways of second-hand bookshops; while outside the day had turned fine and the view was extremely colorful. The air was still sharp, but not nearly so keen as it had been, and the wind was no longer the cruel wind of early morning. The waters of Mason's Bay and of Englishman's Bay beyond were a Caribbean blue-green, with streaks of purple and an edging of snow. Colors reminiscent of Winslow Homer's Nassau watercolors, but with what a difference in the temperature of the water!

When finally I did go inside it was as I feared, as cold as a crypt, and at first glance the books looked as dead as the tiered skulls in the catacombs. But Mr. Sargent, before unpacking the books we had brought, touched off the stove, which soon made the room more comfortable, though it was still too chilly to loiter for more than a moment or two at any one place along the shelves. And the books in the library proved an agreeable surprise. Ranged round the room in improvised bookcases, grouped according to subject matter and arranged alphabetically by authors, were nearly 5,000 volumes, comprising a collection of which any village library might be proud. Since many of the books had come from summer homes, fiction predominated, though there were many other categories, with a minimum of those old-fashioned classics which are now more talked about than

read. Nor was the place cluttered up with old school books and similar attic and guest-room rubbish. Here were the outstanding successes of the past twenty years by Willa Cather, F. Scott Fitzgerald, P. G. Wodehouse, Aldous Huxley, and a host of others. Book after book was one I

had sworn some day to read, but had never got around to reading. I could spend a pleasant summer on the shore of Mason's Bay with this library to draw from on rainy days.

It occurred to me as I looked along the shelves that it is in just such collections that valuable first editions are often found. It wasn't so many years ago that an engineer on the frozen shores of Hudson Bay wrote to a Toronto

dealer for an expert in old books to check thousands of them left in isolated settlements by traders, many of whom were adventurous spirits of literary taste, who used books to while away the long bitter evenings. The engineer was sanguine that there were many valuable items waiting to be discovered by somebody who knew something about first editions. Extremely valuable books have been picked up in the most outlandish places. But I never heard whether or not an expert was persuaded to make the long trek to Hudson Bay. Like so many things which you read in the paper, no sequel seems to have been printed.

It is from the Mason's Bay library that the Mission makes up selections of books to be left in various mainland and island communities. The usual number of books deposited in a neighborhood is one hundred and twenty-five. Smaller lots are loaned to the light stations. As the library was miles from the port side at Jonesport, I was certain it was in another town, but the schoolhouse is the property of Jonesport, which has refrained from selling it so that the Mission can use it for a library.

A haddock chowder when we returned to the *Sunbeam* at noon thawed everyone out, and at one-thirty we said good-by to Mr. Sargent and sailed for Winter Harbor on Frenchman's Bay. It was almost supper time when we reached the wharf on the Grindstone Neck side of the harbor, and a few minutes later Ma Peasley, who is stationed on the Gouldsboro peninsula, climbed down the

ladder to the *Sunbeam's* deck. That evening she told me many things which I have already incorporated in this book. Of the many evenings I spent on the *Sunbeam*, the one at Winter Harbor stands out as the most memorable.

Easter was then only a little more than a week away. It proved to be an extraordinary Easter on the Maine coast. Here, in Ma Peasley's own words, written, as were all the Mission diaries which I read, without any thought of publication, is what happened in her vicinage from Good Friday to Easter Monday:

"Friday, March 22, 1940. Up to the church by twelve. The women came early, and we decorated, cleaned and dusted. After finishing there, I made calls on the sick and by the time I was ready to go home the storm was raging and home looked good.

"Saturday, March 23. Bitter cold and drifts of snow. It looks more like the Arctic than Maine in spring. Went to West Gouldsboro and found the church had been nicely shoveled out. A good fire was burning and the women came to help decorate and clean up. Had a rehearsal with the children and made calls, arriving home at 7:30. Wind high, snow drifting, and mercury near zero. Rather a hard outlook for Easter.

"Easter Sunday, March 24. Easter morning at five—the mercury two above, the wind high, and the roads drifted. Mr. Hammond says the car cannot get through, because the drifts are packed so hard. This means no sunrise service

at Winter Harbor. Went up to our church to find a fire going and the path shoveled. The church was still quite cold.

"The car had a hard time getting through to West Gouldsboro, for the wind was packing the drifts back a few minutes after the plow passed. We got stuck twice and had to shovel through. Finally arrived there and found the church warm around the stove. Bitter cold everywhere else. The men had filled the stove at intervals through the night, that is, at 6 P.M., 11 P.M., 1 A.M., and 6 Easter morning. But the wind raking in kept it very cold. Side roads not broken out at all. Folks right around the village came to service. Two of the women brought hot soapstones for their feet. Some of the children in ski suits waded through drifts up to their hips to come, the girls retiring behind a screen to remove their pants and shake out their skirts.

"We had a beautiful service.

"Rushed home to get dinner as I had some people in to eat who are alone and feel quite forlorn at holiday time.

"Intense cold, drifts, and high wind made us postpone the home services until Easter Monday. In the evening at South Gouldsboro forty people were out and the service was good. None of the older folk could come out because of the weather. Before the service I was able to call at three of the homes where there is illness.

"So ends this early and cold Easter. No flowers and none of the usual folk at services. Yet in many ways a

strong, impressive, and lovely day. I have a feeling we shall long remember it.

"Easter Monday, March 25. Made a huge kettle of lamb and pearl-barley broth and did up some glasses of jelly in gay paper napkins. Armed with these, I started out for the Easter calls and services. At each home of an aged shut-in I left a glass of jelly and had a brief service. Then I told them all about our Easter. How we all but froze; how people smiled when the children recited gaily about the lovely flowers, the gentle breezes, and the warm spring. It was really funny. I was calling all day and arrived home at 5:30 chilled and windblown and with aching hands. Made a fire in the open Franklin and at 6:30 the high-school group came, bringing with them visiting academy scholars. We had a discussion about maintaining the *status quo* in political and economic life. Ended in a lively discussion started by one of the girls asking if the Finns were more wicked than most folk that God punished them so severely. Had hard work convincing them of the goodness of God. To them He holds the whip.

"Today twenty-five men from Winter Harbor, West and South Gouldsboro went into the Bunker woodlot and cut, hauled, and sawed eight cords of wood for Frank Gerrish, who is in the hospital with a badly smashed leg."

The sea could not have been smoother when we crossed Frenchman's Bay the next morning from Winter Harbor to Bar Harbor. Captain Frye took a narrow haul around

Grindstone Point, which a person without his local knowledge would not have taken. It brought us out abreast of Ironbound Island, on which there is said to be a cave. There are many holes and pockets along its precipitous sides which look as if they might be the entrances to caverns. And Ironbound's neighbor, Bald Porcupine, is also said to have a cave high up on one side. Ironbound and the Porcupines are among the most forbidding but most beautiful islands on the coast.

We passed one of the keepers of Egg Rock Light pulling a peapod to Bar Harbor. It must be a three- or four-mile pull. The peapod is very popular along some parts of the coast. It is double-ended and rounded like a canoe, but broader bottomed. One of the keepers from Egg Rock was lost a few years ago while pulling in from the light to Bar Harbor, and Llewellyn Damon said that for awhile they had a section of his boat on the old *Sunbeam*.

"Did they ever find him?" I asked.

"No, they never did," said the engineer. "Frenchman's Bay never gives up its dead."

12. MOVIES AT LOUD'S ISLAND

WE sailed from Rockland Saturday morning April twentieth. It was a clear day and the sea calm. As we came out of the harbor past the breakwater, we saw a tug towing a four-master across Penobscot Bay toward the entrance to Muscle Ridge Channel. The tug's smoke slanted backward and upward above the towering masts of the schooner, and then changing its mind slanted forward and upward ahead of the tug, forming a great horizontal V in the sky.

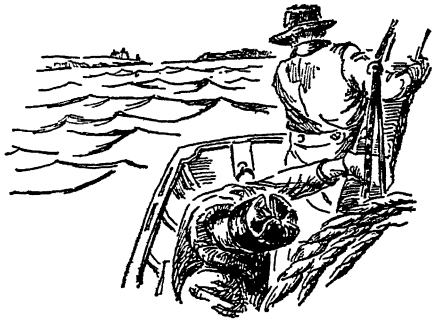
"When you see smoke like that," said Captain Frye, "it shows there's more velocity overhead."

"It's too bad we don't see more of the old sailing vessels," I said.

"They're getting scarcer than ambergris," said the captain. "In Vineyard Haven I have seen a hundred sail waiting for a wind. It was a pretty sight when they got out over Nantucket Shoals."

We entered Muscle Ridge Channel ahead of the tug and its tow, and as we approached Sprucehead, the captain said, "There's Metinic just coming out by."

An indigo island four or five miles away was swimming out from behind another island. At Whitehead Light, where a boy accompanied by a dog rang the bell in answer to our salute, we hauled southward directly for Metinic, the first island on the day's agenda. From there we were to go to Monhegan, where we were to leave Mr. Sargent, who was to preach the next day in the Monhegan Community Church, and then we were to run up into Muscongus Bay to Loud's Island, where motion pictures were to be shown at the church that night.



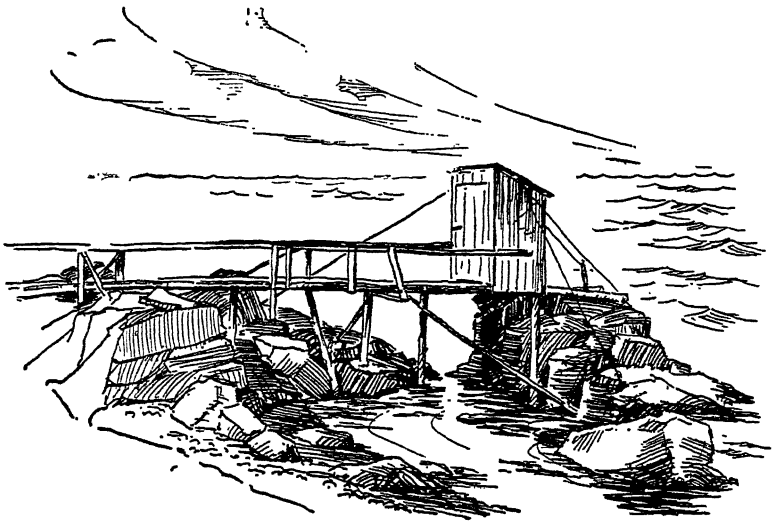
Metinic Island, which must not be confused with Matinicus, is about two miles long and partly wooded. It was once wholly wooded, but the southern end is now bare, and the rest of the trees seem to be going. After a little difficulty we managed to land at the southern end, where

some sheep were grazing along near the water; walking up past an old house and along the curving margin of an open cove, we reached a small collection of small houses. There was driftwood along the shore of the cove and many sea urchins and curious stones. The driftwood is used for fuel, but it is so salty that it quickly rusts out any stove. It doesn't pay to have a good stove at Metinic.

There were four men in the settlement. Seven is the most ever there. They were overhauling their gear. There was a tarring outfit in which they had been dipping the twine heads of their lobster traps, and one young fellow was painting lobster buoys. He was new at lobstering, he said, and was going to tend a line of eighty traps in a peapod boat until he became familiar with the grounds. He was working near what he called his castle. It was the old deck-house of a boat that had been on the island for years. It could not have measured more than eight by twelve feet. It was shingled, and a sturdy tile chimney stuck out through the almost flat roof. Inside was a bunk hung against the wall with ropes; a galley stove on top of a box, and dishes on the shelves in the corner. Another little house with bulgy sides was originally a houseboat. It put me in mind of Peggotty's house in *David Copperfield*. A pretty little girl named Cynthia and her brother who was older lived in the biggest of the little houses. They had a fine Maine cat.

Very unusual in its situation was an outhouse perched on a rock high above the water. A bridge extended out to

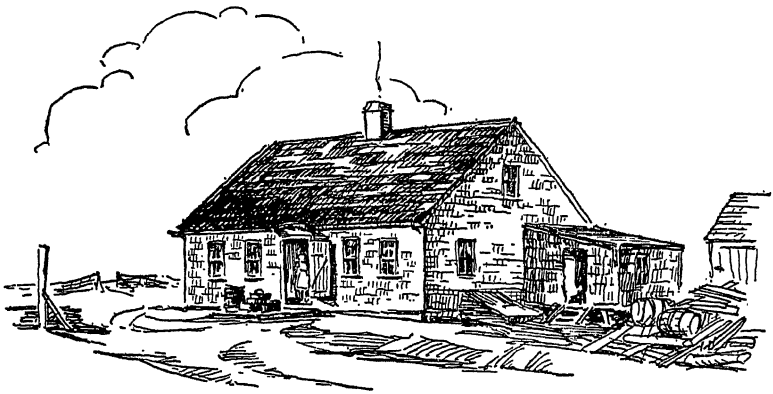
it, like a drawbridge across a moat, and wires kept the house from being blown into the ocean. It was an ingenious sanitary arrangement which would have delighted Sir John Harington, the Elizabethan poet and godson of Gloriana,



who wrote a panegyric on these little institutions called *The Metamorphosis of Ajax*, which is mentioned by Lytton Strachey in *Elizabeth and Essex*.

The largest house on the island is the oldest. This was the one we passed soon after landing, and on our way back to the skiff we stopped, as Mrs. Ralph Post, who lives there with her husband, was kind enough to offer to show it to us. The house has been in Mrs. Post's family—the Snow family—since it was built in 1814. The date is known because

Mrs. Post's great-great-grandmother climbed up on the framework to watch the naval engagement between H. M. S. *Boxer* and U. S. S. *Enterprise*, which was fought near Monhegan in September 1814. Those must have been anxious times for the people on Metinic. Joshua Thorndike, who lived on the island at the time of the Revolution, was visited by the British. "They killed his cow, took his tea-kettle from the fire and smashed it, and ripped open his feather bed." Recently the large central chimney had to be removed because it was unsafe, but the house is still an attractive and interesting home. I went up into the attic to look at the old pegged beams. It was a fascinating place.



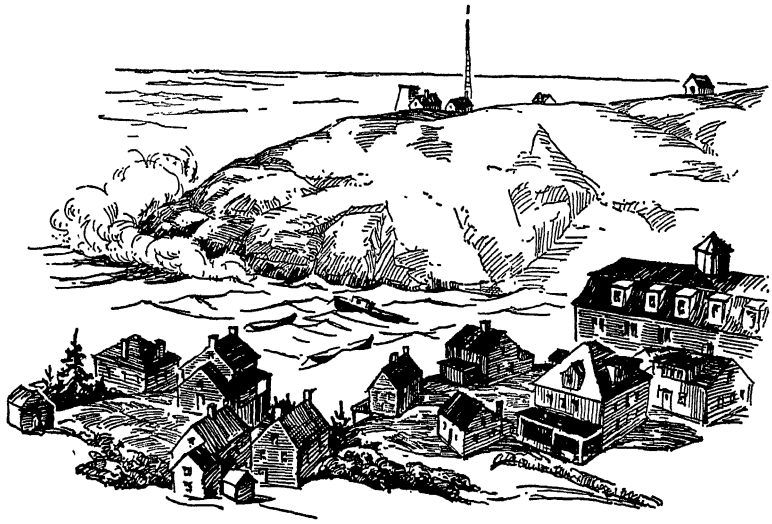
Hanging from the beams were coils of rope, blocks, bait bags, and a pair of oars that looked large enough for a whaleboat. Under a window at one end was a workbench, and several well-made ship models. A man who liked to

work with tools could spend many happy hours in that attic.

The run from Metinic Island to Monhegan Island was brief and uneventful, except that the approach to Monhegan is always in itself something of an event, for Monhegan stands out from the rank and file of Maine coast islands. Since the days of the Elizabethan adventurers this island lying three leagues from the land has been an important landmark for vessels coming on the coast or bound along it. It possesses height, beauty, and a romantic past. Coming into its presence you do not wonder that it has attracted artists and writers. Its satellite, Manana Island, which lies close alongside and forms one side of the roadstead, is much smaller. It is high, bare, and rocky. Its rocks grow bigger and blacker the closer you get to them, and when you are in the roadstead they seem to hang over and dominate the place, not in a protective way, but menacingly. The weather may have had something to do with this. It had undergone a change while we were at Metinic. A breeze had sprung up, and the sky suddenly looked baleful.

We rowed over to Manana from the Monhegan wharf to see the people at the fog-signal and radio-beacon station on top of the island. We landed on the skids extending from the boathouse into the water and walked up the mountain railroad. We met the keeper, F. E. Singer, coming down with his mother, who was leaving to get the mail boat. She had been visiting her son and his family and

was now returning to Orr's Island. Two of the Singer children were also coming down to see their grandmother off. These children have to be rowed back and forth to Mon-



hegan to school, but there were only a few days, they said, when they couldn't get across. The schoolhouse, which overlooks the water, has a gold quill pen for a weathervane.

There was plenty of wind on top of the island, but we didn't stay outside. We went into the house to see Mrs. Singer. The baby and the cat were asleep. I should have thought the keeper would have felt the need of sleep, as the assistant keeper was in the Marine Hospital at Portland for a general overhauling, and the keeper had been having a double dose of work. There is a lot of equipment

to look after at this station, to say nothing of transmitting radio signals. March is not a particularly foggy month on the Maine coast, nor is there so much fog at Monhegan as at many other places, though it averages more than a thousand hours a year.

The keeper took me up to see the old fog bell bolted to a rock. It was a huge thing with a cracked lip. Cast in 1855, it has been out of commission for half a century or more. One of the old keepers during a long spell of fog used to hire boys to ring it for him. They would ring it for a while and then quit and tip the bell and tripod over. The keeper would become very angry, but the boys would soon get back into his good graces, and the same thing would happen all over again. Manana now has a horn, and a bell is used only if the horn is disabled. Above the bell on the highest part of the island is a reservoir with pipes running to the houses. Near the chicken coop is the rock on which are the alleged Norse inscriptions. There is no evidence that the Norsemen ever visited the Maine coast, and the inscriptions have never been deciphered. Someone with a sense of humor must have placed the henhouse near the writings, because they look like chicken tracks.

An excellent idea of the work of the Mission at Monhegan in winter may be gained from Mr. Sargent's notes of his visit to the island a month earlier.

"Saturday, February 17, 1940. Mail boat brought me from Port Clyde to Monhegan, where I got settled at the

lighthouse home of Mr. and Mrs. Vinal A. Foss, prepared for children's meeting, went across to Manana, and called at a number of homes.

"Sunday, February 18. Three services in Monhegan Community Church chapel. Had attendance as follows: 11 at Children's Church, 10 A.M., 19 at Public Worship, 11 A.M., 36 at Evening Service, 7:30 P.M.

"In children's meeting a little boy told this story: 'David went from house to house praying; so they put him in a den of lions. The lions roared loudly; but he was not afraid. He just took a slingshot and killed them all.'

"Monday, February 19. Day was spent pleasantly on Monhegan, enjoying society of Foss family and their neighbors at the lighthouse, and calling at thirteen other homes.

"Tuesday, February 20. Forenoon. Heavy snowstorms kept mail boat from going to Port Clyde, so I remained at Monhegan. I called at three homes. Now I have called at 32 of the 33 homes that are occupied on Monhegan this winter. According to Linwood Davis, there are 95 people on Monhegan now."

As the motion-picture show at Loud's Island was to be an early one, we left Mr. Sargent at Monhegan and headed up into Muscongus Bay, where we went first to Round Pond to pick up Joseph Smith of the staff of Colby College, who was joining the *Sunbeam* for a few days to make some colored motion pictures for the Mission, and then we went to Loud's Island, which lies off the entrance to Round Pond.

The films were to be shown at six-thirty. The reason for this hour was that the people of Loudsville are among the earliest risers on the coast. They get up at three or three-thirty in the morning. By four everybody is up. By nine or ten the men are back from the fishing grounds. And because they get up early they go to bed early. Few lights are visible on Loud's Island late in the evening. A possible explanation of this custom was supplied by Llewellyn Damon.

"If I am going to be on the water," he said, "I want to be out early. The weather's better then."

Arthur Poland of Loudsville, who was ship's carpenter on the *Sunbeam* during the first voyage, had told me a good deal about the island. Sixty-three people lived there, he said, and this figure, I think, included the people on Marsh Island, which lies next to Loud's Island and forms with it what is known as Marsh Harbor. He also said that there were six cows, three dogs, and one horse. One of the many duties of the horse is to draw the hearse that was procured for the island by the Mission. The church, which stands in the middle of the island, contains some material from the old schoolhouse at Malaga Island. Years ago conditions became so bad at Malaga, as a result of close intermarriage, that the state stepped in and removed the whole population. Alexander MacDonald chartered a schooner, went to Malaga, and took a lot of material from the school for the church at Loud's Island.

I am not sure when it was that the weather became ac-

tively bad that Saturday at Loudsville. As soon as we anchored in Marsh Harbor, Mr. Bousfield went ashore, but he returned soon to say that we would have to land the moving-picture equipment at Prior's Cove at the north end of the island, because the mud was so bad that a truck could not get through to the church. From the cove the lone horse of Loudsville would carry the equipment a mile down the island to the church. It was not the projector, or the screen, or the films that bothered us, but the generator, which weighed a hundred pounds. There is no electricity on the island, so we had to take the generator, which was hoisted out of the glory hole and, when we reached the cove, was lightered ashore with the other things. When we rowed in ourselves after supper it was raining and blowing hard. Halfway to the church we passed the horse coming back. He was hitched to an old-fashioned, covered-top buggy. By that time the rain had changed to sleet.

In spite of the storm the vestry of the church was filled, and the last comers had to sit on the stairs. All but the very young and the very old were there, a total of more than forty islanders. The projector was placed on the top of a sewing machine, and the generator, which on account of the storm could not be left outside, was placed in the entry, where it roared like an airplane engine. The oil lamps were extinguished, with the exception of one hand lamp, which was turned up to change the reels and then turned down again. The program consisted of a Mickey Mouse

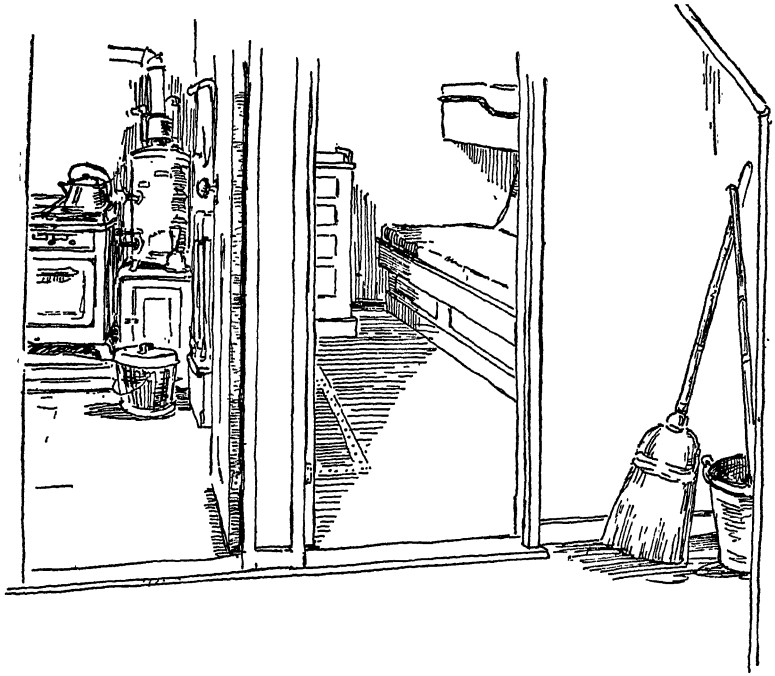
picture, a Hal Roach comedy, an Our Gang film, and a thrilling horse opera in six reels. They were all silent pictures, and none was either faintly or deeply dyed in technicolor.

The western picture was a fine, lusty melodrama, and we cheered the hero and suffered with the heroine. There was an exciting checker game between the hero and the villain. The loser was to kill the old father, and the winner was to get the girl and the gold mine. The islanders, who are all checker players, concentrated on every move, holding their breaths when the villain made a smart move and sighing with relief when the hero jumped three kings. There was a simplicity and directness about the picture, a shooting of the things that mattered, which showed that the old reliable type of entertainment, strong and silent and free from tricks, still has the power to grip an audience. In it were some of the best studies of horses I have ever seen. And all the time it was going on, one of the island dogs wandered around from person to person to be petted. It was a good dog, part collie, but very wet. The horses in the picture stole the show.

The films which the Mission uses come from a film library in Ohio which is maintained by a retired minister who specializes in supplying films to organizations like the Mission. Sea pictures are popular with the Mission audiences, and among those which have been shown are "Captain January" and "The Wreck of the Hesperus" with a

happy ending. There are children on some islands well along in their teens who have never been to a commercial motion-picture theater. No religion is mixed in with the films. The Mission in showing them just wants to give the people a good evening's entertainment.

After the show we left the generator and walked up the island. Although we picked our way carefully with the aid of the lantern and flashlights, it was impossible to avoid slipping on icy rocks and sinking in the mud. It was the kind of weather in which the witches in *Macbeth* would



have reveled. The gale roared through the trees, and we found the cove in a turmoil of uproar. The tide was high and was pushing the skiff back and forth. It was half full of water and we had to haul it out and tip it on its side to empty it. The darkness may have affected my sense of proportion, but the waves seemed monstrous, and I could not see how it was possible for a small boat to get off. But the superintendent and Joe Smith got away, though for a minute or two it was touch and go. Not long after they disappeared in the darkness, I heard Llewellyn Damon shouting to know where to land; he brought the skiff in to the place on which I shone the lantern. He did a marvelous job getting me out and up to the *Sunbeam's* boarding ladder. The *Sunbeam* had dragged her anchor, so the captain had run out of the cove to wait for us with engines running. We started at once for Marsh Harbor, where a berth was chosen between the two islands, and both anchors were put out. And there we swung, occasionally jarred by a heavy sea, from Saturday night until Monday afternoon. The storm was a genuine northeaster, with snow and sleet thrown in for good measure—the spring blizzard of 1940.

During what appeared to be a lull Sunday morning, Mr. Bousfield decided he would try to get across the two hundred yards of water which lay between the *Sunbeam* and Loud's Island. He did not think anyone would be at church, but he wanted to go, and Joe Smith went with him. They got ashore all right, but at noon, when they started back,

they ran into trouble. Twice the oars were blown out of the locks, and, rowing as hard as he could, the superintendent lost ground steadily, missing the *Sunbeam* by a hundred and fifty feet. There was a Thermopylae element in the unequal contest which was exciting, particularly when they passed astern of us and it looked for a minute or two as if they would be swept out to sea. But Mr. Bousfield held to it as the skiff sagged away across the harbor and managed to bring it in to the lower end of Marsh Island. Here they went up in the lee of some spruces to rest and warm their hands. Finally, Joe Smith with a long line towed the boat along the shore of Marsh Island while Mr. Bousfield rowed. When well above the *Sunbeam* they started out once more. They were better protected here and were able to work their way out from the shore. As they came down by us, Llewellyn Damon caught the skiff with the boathook. It had taken them exactly one hour to get from shore to ship. Mr. Bousfield said there were a number of people at church, and he was glad he went.

Monday afternoon the superintendent and the engineer went ashore to get the generator. They cut down a tree, lashed the generator to it, and carried the machine down to the skiff on their shoulders. The seas had lengthened out, so we headed for Boothbay Harbor. There was heavy surf all along the shore. The harbor was full of fishing boats that had taken refuge there.

The next morning we continued to the westward. A girl

in a bright red skirt standing against the ancient white tower of Burnt Island Light at the western entrance to Boothbay Harbor waved as we passed, as did the two keepers of the Cuckolds Light off the end of Cape Newagen. One keeper was on the hurricane deck, the other leaning out a window. The wash, a day late on account of the storm, was on the line. We rolled across the mouth of the Sheepscot River and headed for Seguin, passing our old friend the No. 1 Lighted Bell Buoy near the entrance to the Kennebec River, which was out of commission the January night we were running this same course to the eastward and nearly landed us on the Sisters. We had planned to land at Seguin to visit the lighthouse, but the old sea was breaking all around it, and we could find no place to get on the island. Close to, the island looks very high and barren, with only a few trees and bushes growing in sheltered places. The following paragraph about an accident which occurred at Seguin I found by chance in a file of old newspapers. It is from the *Boothbay Register* of February 27, 1885.

"On Thursday of last week, Mr. Henry Day, First Assistant Keeper of Seguin Light, was walking around the island, when he slipped from the top of a cliff and slid over ice and rocks sixty feet to near the shore. His dog with him followed and was so severely injured he was killed. The Third Assistant saw Mr. Day fall, and going across the

island got a boat and rowed around to his rescue. He was severely but not dangerously injured."

Napoleon Bonaparte Fickett is the keeper of Pond Island Light two miles north of Seguin at the mouth of the Kennebec River. A veteran of the service, he and Mrs. Fickett have lived at a number of important lights. At one time they were at Matinicus Rock, where, Mrs. Fickett told me, the wives of the keepers have always cared for the grave of Keeper Grant's small daughter, who died at the Rock many years ago. There was no way at the time to bring the child to the mainland, so she was placed in a natural

tomb under a ledge which was then walled up. Later the body of a child, probably lost from a sailing vessel, was washed ashore, and the tomb was opened and the body placed with that of the keeper's daughter. The identity of this child was never learned. One of the keeper's children

at Pond Island perished when the lighthouse was swept away in the great storm of April 16, 1851, which also destroyed the light on Minot's Ledge. Mr. Fickett pointed out to me the cellar hole and foundation stones of the house, a little to the northward of the present house. Mrs. Fickett said there was a cave under Pond Island, the entrance to which could be seen on a low run of tide. The last family at the light could not find their cat when they came to leave, but Mrs. Fickett could hear it mewing, apparently underground, and later it appeared. She was sure it had been in the cave and may have found a hole leading to it. She had a tourmaline which came from the cave. In the chasm which almost cuts the island in two are many garnets. The keeper said that most of the Kennebec River traffic now consists of tankers and coal vessels.

Across from Pond Island at Popham we called on Captain Miles Cameron at the Coast Guard Station, and then walked over to see the Osgoods, who have the Kennebec River Station, a green light, at the old granite fort opposite Gilbert Head, where Stephen Etnier's white house high above the river is a prominent landmark. In the Osgoods' parlor is a painting of the light station which Stephen Etnier made and presented to them in 1935. Mrs. Osgood has an interesting mineral collection.

Uncle Lyman Oliver, on whom we next called, is eighty-five years old. He was sitting in a Boston rocker by the window with his grandfather's wooden spyglass handy. The

original owner had burned his name on the side by taking out the lens and using it as a burning glass. In his younger days Uncle Lyman used to build boats for the Kennebec River pilots. He said competition was keen among the pilots, and they would row as far as Seguin to pick up a ship.

"What kind of boats did you build for them?" I asked. "Peapods?"

"No, not peapods," he answered. "Square-enders. Peapods put their noses under."

Everybody at Popham was out gathering driftwood. Vast quantities of it littered the beaches. A freshet had sent a lot down the river, and the storm had washed it ashore. This river driftwood is not so salty as the driftwood at Metinic, so it doesn't rust the stoves.

We tried Seguin again, but with no better luck than before, and returned to Boothbay Harbor. The next morning we picked up Mr. Sargent at Monhegan, went on to Criehaven, and then to Rockland. It was a perfect day on the water, and when we reached Rockland I hated to leave the *Sunbeam*.

It was small wonder, I thought, as I drove homeward along the coast, that such men as Dr. Henry Van Dyke and Rev. Samuel S. Drury, both of whom served as president of the board of the Maine Seacoast Mission, should have labored for years in behalf of this unique enterprise, with its continual record of fulfillment and justification.

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