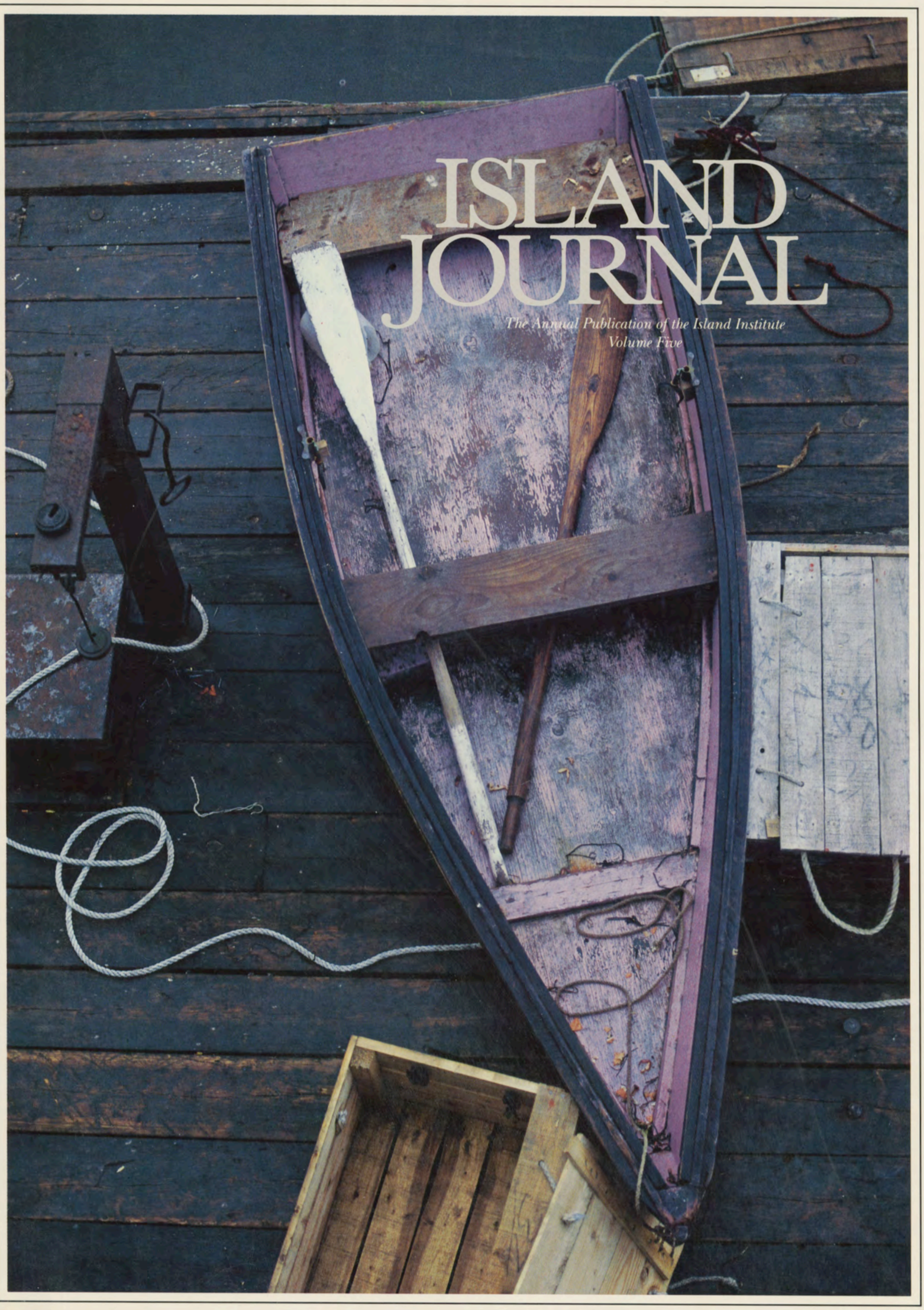

ISLAND JOURNAL

The Annual Publication of the Island Institute
Volume Five

WANTING

Coastal rain, an iron sky.
Granite mainland, granite island.
It's too cold, I'm too cold,

to row across to the mainland.
The pick-up needs an inspection;
I ought to row over across and

drive her to Gray for a sticker.
Let it wait. There's still time.
There's time this morning to

read the whole day, to read
the cold rain, the old sky, the who-
do-I-think-I-am. Between five

and seven, the crown of the day
no matter what weather, who can afford
less wonder. Or bear any more?

I'm in the kitchen, belonging
with what doesn't know me, so far
as I know: pots and pans that

heat up and cool, belonging by how
I feel about them, not how they
maybe feel about me. Beings who

differently breath, we humans
contract—in and out—to expand
all our lives. Who in hell would I be

if I couldn't imagine, imagine
the range of this moment in
the spun flight, the spun life

of the planet? It's here, when
anyone pays attention:
here now, there then in the now

where anyone opens to feel it.
Now, shaving, I long to pay back
what I owe, however much, in

the mirror, I find myself
wanting. Wanting in all
directions, across distance

measured in minutes as well
as degrees. Now, out doors,
out under ospreys wheeling over

a tidestream, searching the shallows
for alewives, I look up with
my own hunger. *Hunger:* how

can I mean it, given
lives starving? I want to mean
how-can-I-not, to have

their lives at heart, stretching
not reaching as their lives
contract, while my life

is weighed with alternatives.
How can I possibly mean,
give what to whom, given

this glassy sea I cannot
see much beyond, this island
that embraces my waking: this spruce,

deermoss, this lichen, and you
in time I want far from here
to touch, the you in far different light

who is differently focused, more
or less caring or careless, while
I move under the high pitched birds

and—by long inclination—lift
myself over a dark march of ants
crossing the bedrock granite.

—*Philip Booth*

Hay Island 1986, by Nicholas Snow.

ISLAND JOURNAL

The Annual Publication of
The Island Institute

The Island Institute is a membership-based, non-profit service organization that advocates the balanced use of Maine islands by supporting year-round and seasonal communities, by promoting conservation of the beauty and uniqueness of these islands, and by gathering and offering information and services in regard to the community health, cultural, environmental, economic, historic, and recreational resources of island life. The Island Institute carries out the above goals through publications, research, resource management, and community service programs.

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AFTER - YOU

PEOPLE WHO HAVE TRAVELLED all over the globe to visit the world's great coastlines—the Mediterranean, the South Pacific, the Inland Passage of Alaska—often say that none can match the strong attraction of Maine's island coast. Those lucky enough to have awakened on a quiet morning to watch the early sun burn holes through a ghost fog scaling up over a spruce shoreline while someone hauls traps from a small boat, understand the islands' powerful hold on our imaginations. Even though there are dozens of other moods the islands conjure, including some terrible and bitter, few deny their magnetism. But like magnets, Maine islands also seem to repel many of those who, by design or happenstance, are shaping their future.

It's remarkable that so few mainland Maine people seem to believe they have anything at stake in what happens to these islands. On the other hand, a large majority of Maine residents probably have never been to a coastal island—unless it's one that you can drive to over a bridge. Thus it is perhaps not surprising to find so few sympathizers for the islands within Maine's vast interior.

But this kind of unfamiliarity has all the signs of breeding a kind of contempt. In hundreds of mostly hidden ways, the future of Maine islands rests in the hands of people often far removed from the experience of ever having awakened on an island on a July morning in the Muscle Ridges or Fox Islands or Merchant Row or Casco Passage. Island futures are now and will increasingly be determined by people like Boothbay Harbor charter boat captains, Portland bankers, Lewiston legislators, and Augusta bureaucrats, some of whom believe they know what is best for Maine islands and many of whom don't particularly care.

Islanders are isolated, dispersed, and suspicious of representative government beyond town office. With only 5,000 year-round residents scattered across a dozen different legislative districts, they constitute, in the best of circumstances, the smallest of footnotes in the political calculus of who wins and who loses when decisions come down.

But there is a more frightening side to this kind of political under representation. It's not just the sense that islands and islanders don't really count, it's a feeling that they don't have any right to count. The undercurrent of this rarely spoken thought goes like this: The Maine islands are home to two kinds of people. First are the quaint but hopelessly unrealistic types who choose to ignore greater economic opportunities on the mainland and then expect public transportation, housing, and education subsidies to help maintain an uneconomic way of life. The second group is a rich elite made up of out-of-state summer people who maintain private estates that have combined to exclude average Maine people from island life. A pox on both their houses, mutter the mainlanders, they deserve any fate they receive.

Into this kind of vacuum move all kinds of opportunists who know what they want for the islands. All you have to do is to look to windward—to places like Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket—to see what lies in store for Maine's rich treasure of islands. In the absence of the emergence of local and state leadership committed to a future that values working waterfronts, productive waters and mudflats, uncongested islands, and the spiritual resources of wild shorelines, the islands will become like everywhere else that people have escaped from.

To those moved by their kindred spirits, Maine's islands present all kinds of dilemmas. On the one hand, islanders should be able to control their own fate, but when their fate slips out of their hands, as is surely happening, then what? It means that the islands must then be able to draw on sympathetic help from Augusta, from the mainland, or wherever, as the going gets tough and the choices hard. Like all the rest of us, islands need a lot more friends.

Philip W. Conkling, Executive Editor

DURING THE PAST YEAR the Island Institute has hosted two meetings on the future of Maine's working waterfronts, one at our annual members' conference on Hurricane Island last September, and another last winter at the Samoset Inn in Rockport. Both gatherings attracted more interest than we had anticipated. In his hard hitting "Kittles Cargoes" column in the Belfast *Republican Journal,* Mike Brown wrote the following in response to our second working waterfront meeting:

"...(A) glance around the mainland of the state reveals that a diminishing way of coastal life is taking place on the former working waterfronts of Maine as developers large and small, local and foreign, chisel away with money hammers at the rock-bound perimeter of Maine...

"The tangible issue is small in a gigantic concept. There are only about a dozen total miles of commercial harbor frontage among the islands of Maine. And on the mainland, just a few more of wharfside frontage on a coastline of some 3,000 miles.

"But the problem for most who have lived a life of comparative easy access to wharfage (is)—will those who go down to sea in rubber boots still have a path in the future? It is a classic David and Goliath struggle of monied developers pitted against the unsophisticated hometown workers and their volunteer, part-time system of government...

"We can be certain of one thing and that is the twin pressures of capital and opportunity will scour the waterfronts of Maine looking for a break in the dike. Whether local governments will be equipped to plug the holes or leave it to the opportunistic bureaucracy to decide is something that organizations like the Island Institute are asking.

"We all should be, too."

When a town, certainly an island town, depends on maritime industries, not just for its economic base but also for its way of life, then the availability of a deepwater harbor and an uninterupted, unobstructed shoreside infrastructure for work seems to us to fall within the concept of the public trust.

The public trust idea is that some resources are inherently public and no private interest has the right to usurp, betray, or compromise them. Concern over nuclear safety and acid rain will certainly soon begin to enjoin the public trust concept over our common atmosphere. If the public trust concept is applied to working waterfronts then, gentrified and lubberly developments must be located elsewhere, at least be well set back from the places a mariner's work must be done.

Meanwhile, back at your most comfortable chair, enjoy this issue. And remember, in order to co-evolve with our readers, we need to hear from them. If you are a member, do not forget to renew. If you are not a member and like this publication, please join. In all respects, islands are windows on the world, and the islands of Maine are lights on islands worldwide.

George Putz, Senior Editor

WE HOPE YOU WILL share the pleasure and sense of discovery felt as we prepared the Rockwell Kent folio in this issue. There was initial concern that so many pages of "art" would overshadow other important facets of our editorial statement, but we decided this addition only serves to highlight the overal strength and diversity of island creativity. Kent was a consistently conscientious man who refused to compromise his immensely strong sense of right and wrong in the face of often deadening censure. He made friends and he made enemies, but everlastingly, he made his mark. If you leave these pages wanting to know more about this remarkable man, then we will have succeeded.

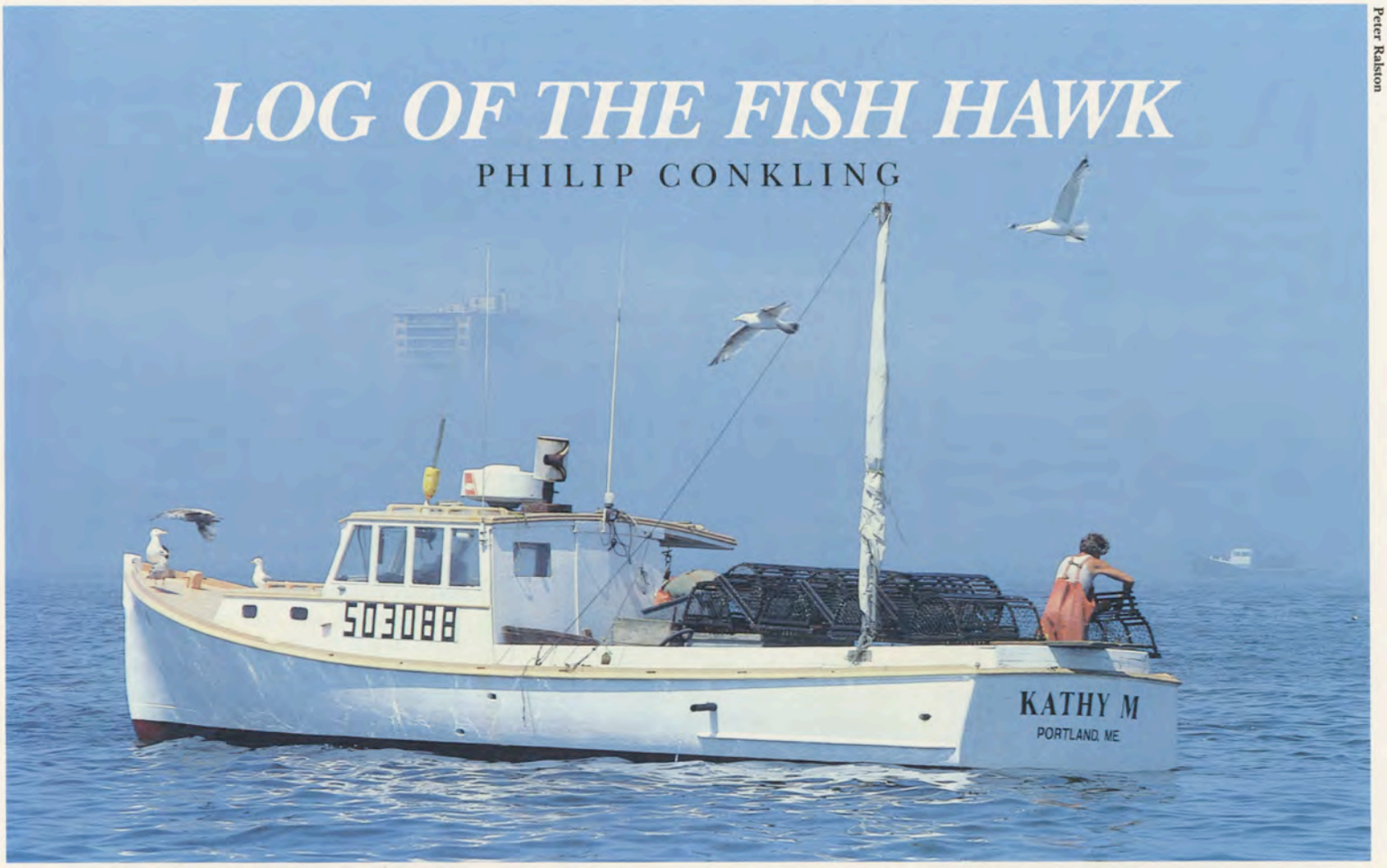
We want to thank all the artists and writers whose work graces these pages. To those who would like to contribute, don't be shy—Get in touch! Special thanks are due Sally and Chellie Pingree for making the Kent folio possible.

Peter Ralston, Art Director

Frenchboro Harbor, Peter Ralston photo.

LOG OF THE FISH HAWK

PHILIP CONKLING



Peter Ralston

LAST DECEMBER when icy fingers of sea smoke rose from the surface of Maine's inshore waters like ghostly reminders of so many mariners pulled into their grip, we began to think that *Fish Hawk's* season was over. For one thing, she was due back at her owner's, the recently reorganized Seaway Company of Winthrop, Maine, and besides, the stacks of paper back at the office suggested we were (ahem) somewhat overdue. But we had also just signed a lease to set up a year-round research station on Allen Island off Port Clyde and had hired a research director to live out there who would obviously need a boat. Hmmm... what should we do?

Through Seaway's generosity we had used the 26′ *Fish Hawk* as a donation for the previous six months, and she had performed well. Although no one would claim she was an all-weather, all-seas boat, we were confident of her capabilities and understood her limits. We had anticipated the need for a diesel powered supply vessel to carry out the new Allen Island research agreement, and we ended up at Seaway's doorstep, commissioning them to build a new 26′ inboard powered by a 230-h.p., six-cylinder Volvo diesel. But in the meantime we needed a stand-in for Allen Island until we could take delivery of the new boat. So we took a deep breath and also bought *Fish Hawk*, financing her by leveraging a year end wish against a New Year's prayer.

Several months later with the delivery of the new boat, *Archangel*, named after the vessel that Waymouth had anchored off Allen Island in 1605, we took *Fish Hawk* ashore for reconditioning. It had been a long winter; she had performed superbly mostly because we never pushed her luck in the four-mile stretch between Allen and Port Clyde.

Fish Hawk went back in service in June equipped with a brand new R-20 radar unit donated by Raytheon of Waltham, Mass. Using a new radar unit for the first time in a Maine coast pot of pea soup, when you're used to running timed compass courses on dead reckoning, is like walking blindfolded through New York City with a seeing eye dog. It feels funny until you realize the dog is your best (maybe your only) friend. The new generation of small, affordable radars such as Raytheon's, equipped with bells and whistles, makes island navigation a brand new game that even the complete idiot can play.

A month later on a bright July afternoon we left Broad Cove, Cushing, to get ourselves down toward Casco Bay. Although Monhegan is not exactly on the way as the crow flies, that afternoon, with the sea so calm and tame and Monhegan so bold and near, we put the helm over at the last moment to go see old friends, knowing *Fish Hawk* could make up the extra miles later.

At Monhegan we rafted up at a lobster-boat mooring and rowed into Fish Beach. Taking in the mid-afternoon airs, we passed through town and wandered out to the cliffs. The trails on the way out were worn deeper than we remembered from the last visit, and the dry witch-broomed spruce crackled in the afternoon heat. Tag ends of visitors were tramping toward the wharf to catch the afternoon boats back to Boothbay, New Harbor, and Port Clyde. Up on Monhegan's White Head cliff we felt like tiny specks looking out to sea, but looking back over our shoulders, we felt like part of an army of ants at a church picnic.

Later over dinner we discussed with one of Monhegan's assessors the state of siege feeling that was beginning to descend on the island and what options their plantation form of government might have in controlling its future.

The next morning we cast off and made for Seguin Island. Off Boothbay, however, we couldn't resist a visit to see how the renovation of Damariscove Island's spectacular life saving station into a private residence was faring in the hands of the capable young men who had taken on the project. The building is obviously in good hands. We were sorry to see across the harbor that the old, tilted watchtower had collapsed during winter storms and lay in ruins.

Less than an hour later, when we were abeam of Small Point's stunning beaches, the dinner bell rang. A quick check of the chart and tide calendar lured us into narrow, protected Small Point Harbor, as neatly sutured a deep cut harbor as you can find on the Maine coast.

After a desultory Saturday lunch with the entertainment provided by some little sailing dinghies tacking about the harbor, we decided to poke around the nether reaches of Casco Bay before making over to Great Diamond Island to discuss the politics of island development.

With high water approaching, we ran up the New Meadows River to begin a circumnavigation of Sebascodegan Island. At a place the charts depict as Gurnet, we crossed under the bridge that has released the island from the world of boats and connected it to the world of automobiles. At Long Reach the channel was marked only by a single spindly row of stakes, making it hard to know if they're meant to mark the port or starboard side of the channel. A lobsterman, hauling a string of day-glow orange buoys, obligingly deciphered the riddle of the stakes, and we proceeded out into the cottage lined shores of Harpswell Sound and on to Hussey Sound.

We tied to a guest mooring near the Casco Bay Lines wharf off Great Diamond Island and a short time later were walking down the island's quiet country roads just beyond the loom of Portland's waterfront condos. After a potluck supper at the Great Diamond Island Association's grand old building, we headed up the hill to the porch of a cottage where a score of islanders had gathered. They were there to discuss the merits of appealing the 40,000 gallon-per-day overboard discharge permit granted to developers on the other end of the island by the Maine Department of Environmental Protection.

For the past three years, since the Great Diamond Island development was first unveiled, these tenacious islanders have firmly maintained that a proposed 238-unit condominium and luxury home development on the north end of Great Diamond Island is too big to be environmentally reasonable. The development will mean a large privately operated sewage treatment plant emptying into inner Casco Bay's badly polluted waters, the destruction of a stand of 125-year-old pine and hemlock, and the addition of hundreds of more cars to downtown Portland's daily parking gridlock. As the moon rose over the earnest discussion on the porch, it was clear these sincere and frustrated islanders will do what it takes to press the issues at the federal level.

The next morning was a quiet sunny Sunday, and we hastily organized a picnic with a few of Great Diamond Island Association members. An hour later we were anchored off one of the handful of state-owned islands in Casco Bay, and were soon steaming blue mussels in seaweed over hot coals on a little pocket beach. After the intense politics of the evening before, the simple pleasures given like gifts on this tiny Maine island owned by all her citizens, reminded us of just what is important in the high-stakes development game.

The next two days were filled with meetings on Cliff and Chebeague islands where islanders are faced with uncertain futures. On Cliff Island, the fate of the island's largest undeveloped parcel of land, which includes a long stretch of shoreline, hangs in the balance between its immense market value and its traditional uses that include deer hideout, hiker redoubt, and forest reserve. On Chebeague Island a 30-acre parcel fronting on the long, sandy, arcuate Rose's Beach has been subdivided, and conversations are underway between Chebeague's Land Trust and the developer to preserve access to the beach and to create a 250′ setback zone for all construction. If such a deal is struck, it will provide another example of how islanders can help shape their future and not simply be the victims of big-time real estate transactions.

Robert Hahn

The one comic interlude in all the otherwise serious Casco Bay business was spent with a local television personality interested in an evening news story on the Island Trail (see *Island Journal* Vol. 4), the proposed small-boat waterway between Portland and Jonesport. We met the reporter at the public landing in Portland and headed out to one of the small, beautiful state islands. Dressed in a neatly tailored suit, wingtips, and London Fog, he was dismayed when we anchored in a small cove and proposed to get ashore by skipping lightly over an elegant little mussel bar. We quickly exchanged his wingtips for a pair of oversized sea boots and set up the camera shots for the interview. Somewhat overdressed for this occasion, the reporter's only instruction to his cameraman was to show him only from the shoulders up—no panoramic shots of this gemlike island showing him in his suit and seaboots to amuse the folks back home at 6 o'clock.

We also spent some time prowling about Portland's working waterfront, talking to fishermen at wharves under the loom of towering new condominiums. The fishermen, along with a coalition of community activists, had recently stunned Portland's political establishment by passing a referendum that rezoned the entire Portland harbor to exclude all future residential uses, most notably condominiums. With an electrifying 2-to-1 margin of victory in the referendum vote, Portland's working waterfront coalition sent a firey signal along the entire Maine coast that shutting off access to the waterfront in working harbors will not pass uncontested.

Before leaving Casco Bay we stopped by an unassuming looking warehouse structure on Portland's waterfront where Maine's Fresh Fish Auction had been held daily for the past year. Its stunning success in attracting buyers and sellers, in paying quality premiums to fishermen who handle catches carefully, and in providing an "open" market where prices are fairly set, has given working waterfront advocates a powerful economic symbol of Maine's fishing future. Instead of Maine fishermen hauling their catches to Boston or New Bedford, Portland's "display" auction is a place where fish, sorted by species and size, are out in plain view and the bidding is free and open. Too often in the past, New England fish markets have appeared to be places where prices were set arbitrarily in a shadowy world and where there were no financial incentives for fishermen to land quality fish.

Jim Salisbury, the Portland Fish Exchange's first general manager, was in his office in the Marine Trade Center when we stopped by. Salisbury was in the process of hiring his replacement as he had just been appointed by the State Department as the U.S. trade representative for fisheries at the Tokyo consulate in Japan. We reminisced a little about our initial acquaintance over a decade ago when Salisbury, a college educated lobstermen fishing out of Pigeon Hill Bay south of Milbridge, was shaking up the small harbor by rigging his lobsterboat with a harpoon stand for tuna fishing. "Damn foolish waste of time," most of the harbor's fishermen said. When he brought in his first 800-pound bluefin a few days later, the conventional wisdom was that anyone could get lucky enough to iron the fish. After four more had been landed, the doubters were silenced, and the next year there were several boats with tuna rigs.

Salisbury also remembered the bitter experience of selling that first tuna years before the idea caught on that fishermen might work together to create a fair market. He had ironed the giant bluefin on the opening day of the season with the price set at $1.10/lb. That night he iced down the tuna in his truck and left at 3:30 a.m. to be in Portland at 7:00 a.m. when the buyers arrived. Knowing that no one with tuna caught on the first day of the season could keep the fish fresh beyond the second day, the buyers offered him 10 cents a pound that morning. Salisbury didn't argue much, but instead backed his truck up to the end of the wharf and, under the incredulous stare of the buyers, heaved the giant fish overboard.

It's a different era now that Japanese tuna buyers fly directly to Maine and station themselves aboard tuna boats to buy these highly prized fish as they come out of the water. And with men like Salisbury going directly to Tokyo, Maine's fisheries will increasingly be competing in premium global markets and not just in the mass markets of frozen fish where the product is too often treated like pet food. But unless we protect our working waterfronts in hundreds of harbors and coves along the coast and islands, and maintain the water quality that nurtures all marine life, we won't have much to sell in Tokyo or anywhere else.

DOWN *AND* DIRTY

The Intertidal Subculture

MIKE BROWN

THERE WAS A TIME in the once slow pace of Maine history when digging clams was a fairly respectable job. Oh, diggers never made much money, even by downeast standards, but they were independent as the hinges of hell and had an uncanny sense of nature's time clock.

You could take a Maine clam digger to Chicago for lunch and when the tide ebbed on Vinalhaven he would get mighty antsy. Being a true clam digger meant that you were born with gnarled hands, an incredibly strong and flexible back, and a tide calendar gene good for 65,000 tides or 90 years, whichever came first.

There is no generic clam digger although families tended to dig together until one kin found a good bed, and then it was every brother for himself.

There were mainland clammers, island clammers, hoe clammers, and raw hand clammers.

Clam diggers from the mainland were always trying to get to the islands where they "grow big as horse turds." The island diggers resented this invasion with good reason. In the first place, clams were meat on the table for many rock nation folks and bucks in the mattress for the second.

Historians tell us that from the early 1800's to the 1870's clams were the number one bait of the hook and line fishery. Islanders dug for clam factories which shucked (shocked is the real and forever more word) clams by the thousands of bushels and salted them down in hooped barrels for the tub and handline fishermen who were headed out to the Banks.

Maine was one of the first states to can clams for the table. About this time the name "steamer" appeared and has been with us ever since. Clam diggers rarely use the word, but then most people don't use clam digger words either.

When the Bostonians stole the recipe for a real Maine clam chowder, the flat workers were on their way to respectability. Following the chowder caper, other bivalve apparitions appeared such as fried clam stands and the clam bake, the latter better known as a shore dinner in the more toney environs.

With clam stands springing up all over, the clam digger found himself creeping up on the Maine lobsterman in downeast character polls.

There was a vast difference, however. The lobsterman was a businessman, of sorts. After all, he had to make a modest investment in a boat what float, plus gear and a serviceable pickup to transport any lucky catches.

The clammer's total possessions were a clam hoe, usually inherited, and a thing to put clams in, correctly called a hod or rocker. Both could be chopped from the woods. With these meager possessions, the clam digger had to lay the character stuff on pretty thick to stay up with the lobsterman—and has generally succeeded.

Take the docket case, for instance, of the five mainlanders returning from a day of clamming on an inhospitable, alien island. When the boat was finally overtaken by a squad of informed clam cops, it contained five stubble-faced clam diggers in a splendid array of stiff-wooly garb, ten bushel of fat and squirty island clams, one many-fanged flat dog (saltwater version of the junkyard type), two cases of empty Narragansett pint beer bottles (returnables), and a mysterious fat lady who said she was mother to the whole crew.

The boat was 12 feet long, which was about the length of the citation issued by the clam cop.

Then how about the young mainland clam digger whose outboard motor conked out one very cold and blowy winter day in

Seining pogies, Boothbay Harbor, Peter Ralston photo.

Peter Ralston

Outside of their silhouette, the most distinguishing feature of a clam digger is his hands. They are wider than long. They look like door stops with thumbs. There are actually diggers who do not use hoes at all, but rather spy a telltale siphon hole and jam their hands down in the mud and gravel around the clam. This incredible feat defies the anatomical fact that human hands are made of flesh, skin, and bones.

mid-bay? He drifted close to a gong buoy and got aboard but lost his clam skiff in the hasty transfer.

All night long he sat huddled on that clanging, jangling, rocking spike of metal, his knees tucked up under his jacket which was hauled over his head. Every few minutes he would tear off a piece of his rubber boot and burn it under his mackinaw tent for warmth. When the Coast Guard found him he was sooty and blackfaced, a bit frosted, but otherwise one tough cookie of a clam digger.

Clam diggers are always in court. One, who worked around Northport, had a very official highway department detour sign he had stolen and a similarly acquired highway sawhorse. He effectively detoured travelers, including clam cops, around his digs and sold contraband clams to the most elegant fish markets on the coast for years before the coppers caught on.

The same innovator told the judge that he was digging kitchen stove driftwood for his family when he got bagged on illegal flats. The judge only gave him a warm warning.

Clammers originally came in all sizes and shapes just like normal people. However, they set-mold to a general digging dimension after a few years on the job. Probably this is because they work with their heads between their knees all day long. Eventually they become pear shaped.

Outside of their silhouette, the most distinguishing feature of a clam digger is his hands. They are wider than long. They look like door stops with thumbs. There are actually diggers who do not use hoes at all, but rather spy a telltale siphon hole and jam their hands down in the mud and gravel around the clam. This incredible feat defies the anatomical fact that human hands are made of flesh, skin, and bones.

Despite their sometimes scruffy demeanor, clam diggers are rather peaceful, docile workers of the flats. One reason, and this has been confirmed by several native Baptist clergy, is that clam diggers drink considerable amounts of beer. Having a hangover and working daylong with your head below your bladder makes for peaceful clam flats.

However, there are instances of clam mayhem when two diggers arrive at a prolific clam bed at the same time. Spectators who have witnessed such encounters say nothing, absolutely nothing they have ever seen, and this includes all of Charlton Heston's Roman epics, can compare to two clam diggers duking it out with bare tines.

Another enigma encircling clam diggers is that they never seem to bring their lunch to work. It's keeping with their character of traveling light, but also—they really like clams. A clam sandwich, however, means something different to a flat worker than to Joe Pinstripe. Joe will have his clams deep fried on a toasted sesame roll with tartar sauce and a side of kosher pickles. The digger splits open a biscuit from his shirt pocket, picks out two of the largest clams in his hod, shucks them right on the biscuit half and squishes the whole together. His sidedish is three pints of Narragansett.

Times are getting pretty rough for clam diggers. The state fishcrats started messing with the clam diggers in the 1940's and the business has been screwed up ever since. Regulation is the name of the clam trade today.

The fishcrats played yo-yo with a minimum size law for years but basically claimed that none was needed. When diggers reported scratching rock piles for a couple pecks a tide, the state finally agreed that clams under two inches were probably better left alone. The state also let clam towns make their own laws, which means itinerant clammers have to shell out for several town licenses. A hundred bucks here, a hundred bucks there, adds up.

In the 1950's the fishcrats rediscovered red tide, which had been around since the oceans. This amazing find gave birth to a burgeoning bureaucracy, a virtual gummint army/navy aimed at extinguishing all clam diggers. The armed 'crats claim that red tide is a deadly killer and one of its hosts is the flat worker who digs clams from places he shouldn't.

The clam digger tries to understand why red tide is now closing down his livelihood with alarming summer frequency when the spooky stuff has been around for eons and clam eaters haven't died like flies on sticky paper. The rationale in gummint thinking is that every fisherman needs a fishcrat. Sort of a buddy-buddy, sock-it-to-me system.

At one time, the biggest threat to the clam digger's health was his ambition and clam digger's itch, the latter being caused by some weird mud-dwelling parasite that could actually penetrate the impenetrable clam digger's hand.

Now, in addition to red tide, regulation, and total gummint, the digger is faced with the closing of the heretofore open gates to the flats. Shore frontage access is fast dwindling away as flat-frontage real estate changes hands from the natives to the out-of-staters. The native owners knew what it was to make a living and allowed unfettered access. The from-aways bar the door Katie, I got mine. The recent closings of historical boot paths to the clam flats have ignited some interesting and nasty home-and-away confrontations.

But even if the diggers do get to the flats, there is probably a gummint sign saying the place is closed because of pollution. Despite millions upon millions of bucks being expended in Maine in the last three decades on pollution clean-up, more flats are closed than before, and the state sticks doggedly to its outdated criteria for opening and closing waters and shores. Maine, like all shellfish producing states, kow-tows to the feds who hold an interstate embargo threat over their heads.

Even the embattled clams seem to have given up. They propagate less and less each year even when given a chance. Some entrepreneurs are trying the husbandry of softshell clams, but the past record is dismal. Clams are one animal that doesn't take too well to captivity. The diggers think state clam nurseries would be a crock, and they are probably right.

And so like the shore bonfire embers, the independent, lovable clam digger characters are slowly dying out, one by biscuit/clam sandwich one, expiring on the banks of curried shore lawn condos amidst a pile of empty Narragansett bottles and toothless flat dogs.

But all endangered flat workers are not clam diggers. Wormers are fairly new—in Maine time, anyway—but highly visible trodders upon the mud flats. There are two species, man and worm, the latter divided into blood and sand (or clam) worms. Pound for pound, they are the most valuable marine product in the state. Marine worms are used by sports fishermen to catch the really big ones down Cape Cod way. As is sometimes the case in this strange, strange world we live in, very few sports fishermen in Maine use marine worms for bait.

Blood worms are the favorite, probably because they have a pale, translucent skin allowing the red body fluid to show its pulsating color and drive stripers and bluefish completely mad. For that reason they bring twice the price to worm diggers than do the more plentiful Christmas tree-colored clam worms.

There seems to be a division among wormers—blood and clam. Maybe a status cleavage, if that is possible in the worm business.

Whatever their worm preference, the diggers have a few things in common with their clam colleagues. Wormers don't use hods, of course, but rather a small plastic bucket to hold their daily harvest. These containers can be found most everywhere for nothing.

The wormer does need a hoe—a cousin to the clam hoe, but with longer tines. Most wormers have an assortment of hoes with tine lengths and widths to suit the particular mud flat where they are working. They carry them stuck in their belts like bad Turks.

That's about the wormer's total assets, excluding transportation. which can be anything from a sidecar Harley to a sawed-off 1952 Buick.

Whereas the clammer is regulated to where he can go, the wormer has unbridled riding upon all the flats of the state. Nothing is out of bounds because nothing is worm polluted. He pays his modest license fee and is a free spirit. It's an absolute miracle that the wormer hasn't come under barbed wire fire from the red tide armed forces. Seems they could make up something like red tide in red worms.

Wormers, like clammers, succumb to Maine winters because of ice-locked flats and the decreased demand for bait. But worms are an ideal ice fishing bait so the hardy hang tough—and worming in January is mighty tough.

There are a few other flat workers.

Musseling is now big business with leases and large dragging boats. But at one time it was an intertidal bread-on-the-table drudgery. The blue bivalves were harvested with dung forks from the flats and tidal ledges into dories and punts. The big guys have nearly wiped out the dung fork boys, but an occasional foray to the flats takes place by an exasperated iced-out clammer.

Also nearly gone are the Irish moss rakers who harvested the purplish red weed from the fringes of low tide and half-tide rocks and ledges. They sold their moss to Kraft and other companies who extracted the carrageen for the likes of toothpaste and Jello puddings. Alas, the punt raker is gone and the moss is imported from Canada in hay-like bales all dried and ready for processing to the gooey loving consumer.

The rakers left a heritage, though, and some enterprising new coastal folks are gathering other seaweeds to dry and process for the yuppie trade. There's nothing like a steamed tofu bun sprinkled with toasted nori seaweed to ward off the January chill of a Maine log cabin.

That's pretty much what's left of the flat folks. Like the car block moorings, they have either rusted out, been outlawed, or replaced by new-form molds designed for looks, not holding power.

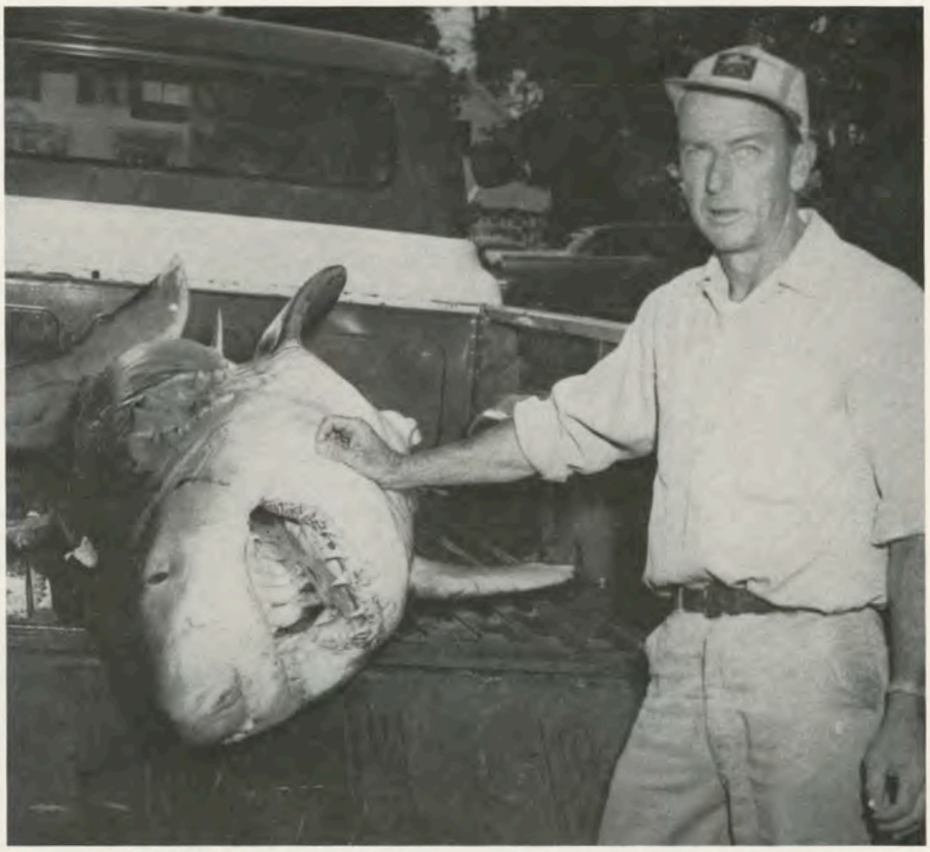
But damn, if the old flat workers gave us nothing else, it was keeping open the bridge to the sea from whence we all came—and may have to return.

Mike Brown

"Dear Geo.—
Thought you might use this photo of mine for the flat story illustration. Taken at Hutchins Island, Islesboro, winter of 1952. Horse (Chub) owned by clam buyer Ralph Leach. Shown are Harrison Leach and Marilyn (Herberts) Pendleton. Diggers got $3 a bushel. They would hit Chub on the ass, and he would tow the scoot all the way to the buyer's house by himself.
—Mike"

SHARK ALLEY

JANE DAY



Lou Moore

Harry Goodridge is best known as the trainer and companion of a harbor seal named Andre. The long friendship of this unusual pair was the subject of a book and innumerable stories, articles, and television programs. Much less known is Harry's self-taught skill with a harpoon and the relentless hunt he carried on so successfully for great white sharks in that most unlikeliest of places—Penobscot Bay. Here is Island Journal *Contributing Writer Jane Day's account of Harry's shark hunting days, the tragic loss of his first seal, and the swift retribution he inflicted on its killer.*

HARRY GOODRIDGE calls it Shark Alley, the stretch of Penobscot Bay from the lower end of Mark Island to the "groaner"—the red whistle—off Robinson's Rock. The name stuck although Harry hasn't seen a shark there for a good 20 years and doesn't know of anyone who has.

Shark to Harry means the great white shark, the maneater. This is the shark that he hunted for 10 or 12 years until the mid-1960's, harpooned by the dozen and towed home to Rockport harbor lashed to his 19' wooden boat. Like most of his friends and neighbors thereabout, he didn't expect to find great white sharks as far north as Penobscot Bay, nor did he ever think that one day he would be involved in a very personal battle with a shark on terms not unlike those of Hemingway's "Old Man and the Sea."

Harry remembers distinctly every close encounter he's had with a great white shark. He recalls the weather conditions, who was with him in the boat, how the shark behaved, how much it weighed. One 900-pounder he caught remains a bad omen in his memory. On the way home with the shark, Harry cut off a piece of its meat and tossed it to Basil, the pet seal that had come along with him in the boat. Looking back on events that followed, Harry now says, "That was bad luck."

Not everyone takes a pet seal with him—anywhere. But Harry, a born observer of animal behavior, has developed an uncanny rapport with wild creatures throughout his life. From his days as a young boy, he kept some bird or animal he caught and tamed in the house with his family. Most notable was Andre, the harbor seal he trained to give performances that delighted thousands of harbor visitors. By the time he died in 1986 at age 25, Andre had become a national celebrity.

Basil, who predated Andre by several years, was the second seal Harry had raised. He adapted happily to the playful nurturing of the entire Goodridge household—his wife Thalice, and their five children. Basil was one of a succession of creatures who, along with domestic pets, enjoyed the run of the house, seeking out their special place to bed down for the night. Seals slept in the basement where the surface differed only slightly from a rock ledge. Grey squirrels nested in the clothspin bag behind the kitchen door, and a feisty robin named Reuben flew about free as the proverbial bird.

Basil was three months old when a prominent summer resident asked to bring her grandchildren down to see him. Harry set the visit for 3:30 that afternoon and set off with Basil aboard to spend the morning shark-hunting. It crossed his mind that he might have something besides a baby seal to show the kids.

Before long Harry spotted a shark, but it got away. Basil, meanwhile, was squirming around in the cockpit, growing restless. Harry knew he wanted a swim, but Shark Alley was no place to turn him loose. He gunned the boat for Robinson's Rock.

"Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a big splash," recalls Harry.

"What the hell...? I spun the boat around and then I saw blood. I turned to look in the cockpit—and Basil was gone. He got out of the boat. I didn't think he could. That shark had him...it couldn't have been a minute after he got out. I had the harpoon ready, and damned if that shark didn't come up for a little ball of intestine that was floating. I got him beautifully. It took me an hour and a half to subdue that sonovagun. He tried to attack the boat once." The emotional fury of vengeance and remorse fed Harry's adrenalin on that kill. "I was upset all right." Back in Rockport, he had to tell the children waiting at the waterfront there would be no seal to look at.

It required six or eight men to help Harry hoist the shark on shore. There he cut him open and Basil fell out in three pieces along with three sections of another seal the shark had eaten earlier. That great white weighed 1,000 pounds and was just under 12′ long.

BY THE TIME HE LOST BASIL, Harry knew when and where to find sharks in Penobscot Bay and how to catch them. But when he towed his very first one into the harbor, he wasn't sure what kind it was.

"Aw, nothing but a mudshark," a local lobsterman volunteered. That failed to convince villagers clustered around the catch. Rockport writer Lew Dietz then dug out a book on ocean fishes, and there, looking for all the world like Harry's catch, was the great white shark. Harry's brother-in-law True Spear, who had helped catch it, remained skeptical:

"You can tell that to the summer people,"

he said. "Don't tell me." Later, a fisheries biologist came up from Boothbay and after one look said it was a great white, sure enough.

The white shark (*Carcharodon carcharias*) is one of the largest of the 250 species of shark. It matures at 12′ to 14′ and reaches a maximum length of about 20′ although one measuring 36.5′ is the longest reported. Great whites are not particular about their food. Big fish, little fish, seals, other sharks, and all manner of inorganic flotsam have been found in their stomachs. Primarily a warm water shark, it nonetheless has been recorded as far north as Newfoundland. But most astounding, there have been more reliable reports of maneaters in the southwestern Gulf of Maine than from any area of similar size on the Atlantic coast of North America.

Harry's first shark caught that August day in 1960, an immature 8-footer notwithstanding, created quite a stir in Rockport. News reporters, photographers, and villagers trooped down to the harbor to look a killer shark in the mouth at close range. Then Harry and his companions hauled it in the pickup to the scales in Camden and found that it weighed 735 pounds.

He caught that first one on an overnight expedition he had arranged with True Spear and a friend, David McPheters. They camped on Mark Island the night before and the next morning scooted over to North Haven for breakfast, eyes peeled for a telltale fin. It was True who spotted it. But before Harry could bring the boat into position, the shark dove. In a flash, Harry threw the harpoon, and as luck would have it, hit the mark. "We had him up to the boat in 12 minutes. He wasn't much of a fighter."

This is typical of the great white. Fierce as they are, they do not put up the leaping, spectacular fight of the tuna or the mako shark. That is not to say that they don't put up a dogged resistance to capture, even to the last flick of the tail—delivered in this instance with comic results. At Harry's direction, True had grappled the shark's tail out of the water as they were making it fast to the boat. "That's what Heyerdahl says in Kon-Tiki," Harry told him. "Get the tail out of the water and they're helpless."

The next instant, True lay sprawled against the opposite gunwale. Wet and smarting where the tail fin caught him, he roared: "They're helpless, all right!" Harry still doubles up laughing every time he thinks about it.

Landing this shark was no mere matter of happenstance. Harry, a professional tree specialist, had been a shark hunter from the moment he saw the first fin four years earlier. The day is etched sharp in his mind, although he's less sure about the year, probably 1956, he says. He had borrowed True's boat that summer, bought a 12.5-h.p. motor and was doing some fishing. He cites the precise conditions: "hot sun, calm sea, with the tide coming." Off Mark Island, he spotted something sticking up quite high in the water, zoomed over for a look, and found a huge shark. "It spooked—gallied as the old whaling people used to say. Frightened him even though he was almost as long as the boat."

Back on shore, he lost no time. From a tuna fisherman in Newburyport he learned how to rig a harpoon. He got darts and irons from the Rockland Boat Shop. As a tree man, he had plenty of poles." The harpoon was easy." He topped a 14′ pole with an iron called a lily and set a swordfish dart on the end with a line attached. Harry developed his own technique.

"I'd come up on his tail, off the left side—I'm right-handed—and try to harpoon him from there. The best place to get him is just ahead of the dorsal fin, the one that's prominent." When the shark sounds with the dart and line attached, the pole shoots to the surface. Harry usually tied a keg to the line to help tire the shark before hauling him in. For the tow home, he secured the tail to the bow cleat and the head to the stern cleat with the harpoon line.

The two years after he rigged his harpoon he spent long summer days scanning the waters from Owls Head to Northport and beyond without seeing a single shark. But his skill as a shark hunter increased. He learned to the knot, the direction of wind, and the degree of temperature what constituted an "ideal" day for sharks.

"You don't go out when it's rough, or even a little ripply. You go when the tide is coming, and has been coming for two or three hours. You got to go out on a flat calm, and you gotta have hot sun. The ideal day is to have those conditions when a fog lifts and the sun goes, Pow!" The third year he spotted a couple, but his gear was in poor shape from disuse and fell apart both times he tried to use it. At least it confirmed his suspicions that the sharks "were still hanging around."

Sharks are attracted to moving objects, be it boat, seal, or man, and are guided more by smell than sight. But it is the structural shape and placement of the shark's mouth that determines how likely it is to attack. Although that may come as small comfort to many who shudder at the mention of Shark Alley or the sight of pink-fleshed fillets at the fish counter, none has "man" written at the top of his diet.

Harry Goodridge is not so sure. He's been too close to a number of great whites that appeared overly eager to make a meal of him. Sharks have attacked his boat, even sunk their teeth in the bottom planks. Throughout the entire range of the great white, enough teeth have been found embedded in wooden hulls to prove that the white is the only shark known to make unprovoked attacks on small boats.

"Every shark I came upon, my stomach would turn over. The day that shark did a number on the boat, that was a little scary."

Harry and a friend had harpooned the shark, but worked him too fast. "We should have played him a little more, tired him out," says Harry in retrospect. "He turned and came at the boat the way you hear about—just like that." He demonstrates with his elbows together, opening and closing his forearms. "He came up under the boat and grabbed it. I thought, 'Well, the minute he sees that's wood, he'll let go.' He didn't. I could hear him go crunch. So I gunned the motor and washed him free. Then he bit the boat on the stern." Harry's been thankful ever since that this shark weighed no more than 850 pounds.

The biggest shark Harry ever latched onto took him for a four-and-a-half-hour boat ride in an erratic course from Rockport to Owls Head. It was powerful enough to pull the boat in the opposite direction, even though Harry had the engine going full bore for home. Once he broached and Harry got a look at him. "I could have cut him loose, but I wanted him."

A couple of lobstermen fishing nearby saw Harry's predicament and agreed to haul the harpoon line on their winch so Harry could get another line on the shark. As they started to hoist the fish, the dart fell out and the big one got away. The fishermen, who got a closer look than Harry, said the shark was a good 17′ and easily 1,700 pounds.

Harry dates the drop in reports of shark sightings from the close of the chicken factory in Belfast. "They used to throw everything—feathers, guts—in the bay. The minute that was cleaned up, I never saw another one." That's a logical deduction. Sharks go where the food is. And the maneater is known to feed on garbage and slaughterhouse waste like that from the broiler factory. But it does not necessarily follow that a lack of confirmed sightings indicates great white sharks no longer frequent Penobscot Bay. Perhaps no one now is hunting them with the fervor that Harry once did.

Despite the ever-present taste of fear, the surge of blood, the total absorption of a shark hunt, Harry's greatest adventure with a wild creature remains the quiet drama of his 25-year relationship with Andre.

"I'm so bored without him," Harry says. From his office window, he can see the place at the end of his property where he buried Andre. "I used to dream about him, have nightmares. All the time when he was free I'd wonder where in hell he is now...When he was in the pen I'd wonder what is he doing. Year in and year out I'd think that. I'd say to Thalice, 'Poor Andre, down there in that damn pen.' She'd say, 'For heaven's sake, if he didn't like it, he wouldn't come back, would he?' The minute he died, I haven't dreamed about him since."

It seems more likely that Harry would have had nightmares about great white sharks. But no, he says, he never did. He fishes for pleasure these days in a fiberglass boat—19-footer with 85-h.p. motor—but with the incessant eye of the hunter, he continues to scan the water. And he never goes anywhere in the boat without taking his harpoon and line.

"Never know when I might need it."

FARMING SILVER

Salmon Aquaculture: ACT TWO

Peter Ralston

PHILIP CONKLING

YOU MIGHT NOT think of Eastport as a good place to get a glimpse of an economically robust part of Maine's future, but then your idea of Eastport is probably dominated by images of the collapse of the sardine industry and of the doomed efforts to locate mega-industrial energy projects there.

To get a better idea of what has been quietly happening way down at the eastern edge of the U.S., you might wander down to Harris Point to listen to George, Lee, and Butchie Harris talk about their new fish farm.

Harris Point, on the back shore or eastern side of Moose Island, better known as Eastport, makes out into Friar Roads to create the kind of intricate point and cove geography where for millennia herring have mysteriously appeared inshore in huge schools to feed. And for about half a millennia, it seems, members of the Harris family have been devising all manner of means to catch and process the slippery herring using brush weirs, stop twine, and lately large purse seines. Their catch has been smoked, canned, or salted on local wharves for either lunchbox fare or lobster bait.

George Harris with his two sons Lee and George, Jr. (or Butchie), are mending nets that are strung like holey laundry between the end of the house and the rear fender of their Ford pickup when we arrive to talk about finfish aquaculture. Thinking back over the long and winding road of events that led to their raising salmon and trout in ocean pens from tiny smolts to eight-pound adults, George says simply, "We've been in the fishing business for a long time, and we've done about everything you could do." Squinting his eyes in recollection, he recounts the family's fish fortunes:

"I started by going groundfishing—a little trawling, a little handlining. But that's completely gone. Then we went into weir fishing 40 years ago. Eleven sardine factories were here then, plus the places they put up vinegar-cured fish. At least five or six places were here in Eastport and another seven over to Lubec," gesturing across to the other shore on the neck just north of West Quoddy Head. "Then there were all the smoked herring places. Way back, every cove had a herring smoke shack or box; you'd skin them, smoke them, and trade them for groceries." He adds somberly that their 15 weirs haven't seen a single herring in three years. With Lee and Butchie listening in to the *Book of Harris*, George says with finality, "We've come along with the times and changed with the fishing; and now we can see the change coming with aquaculture."

A little later when George excuses himself to go feed his fish out at Treat Island, we go with Lee and Butchie across Moose Island to Deep Cove to see how the largest salmon aquaculture business in the United States, Ocean Products Incorporated (OPI), grows fish.

When we arrive at OPI's Eastport headquarters at the old Mearle Corporation plant that used to fillet, steak, and pickle herring, Production Manager Del Manning is supervising the unloading of large boxes of Atlantic salmon. These have just been scooped out of their large net pens in Broad Cove and are ready to be processed for shipping. Inside the plant five women wait in white aprons and gloves to receive the 300 seven-to-12-pound shimmering salmon that OPI's Portland sales office has received orders for today. Mary Wentworth and Mary Jebo, who once packed hundreds of cases sardines per shift for "the Mearle," now carefully insert long fillet knives into the fish, which are cleaned with great care on stainless steel tables and then laid in thick Styrofoam boxes and packed in ice for shipping. Even the boxes are state-of-the-art, designed not only so the top and bottom fit tightly together, but with an absorbent cloth in a lower chamber that holds a gallon of water so that after the ice melts, the chilled water keeps the fish cool, but not wet. Watching these women, who for years had packed case upon case of sardines with blinding speed and now reverently handle individual fish worth $60 each, seems to capture the powerful changes which are affecting all of Maine's fishing industry.

Lee and Butchie have brought their skiff around to OPI's wharf so we can watch the next feeding out at the ocean pens in Broad

Above left, the Harris' at Treat Island.

Above, Ocean Products' corporate farm, Broad Cove, Eastport.

Peter Ralston

Cove. We pass by the four-pen complex in Deep Cove where OPI's precious egg producing brood stock salmon are kept to supply eggs to the company's two fresh water hatcheries at Deblois and Gardiner Lake. As we round the headland, Lee points the skiff into a short chop caused by Cobscook Bay's legendary rip tides and heads over to OPI's main grow-out site. It is noontime and the huge 64-unit pen complex is a hive of activity. OPI's feed supply boat has just come alongside the pens, and a few of the 14 or so men who work on the water begin unloading with a forklift a portion of the 16,000 pounds of herring-based feed that the 80,000 salmon on this farm will consume today.

Manning, who doesn't get out on the water every day, is along for the show and digs a shovel into the bin of feed OPI manufactures at the plant. As if reenacting every fisherman's most wonderful dream, Del heaves the pellets into one of the cages, and immediately the surface breaks white with thrashing fish. We catch a glimpse of the large powerful forms of silvery salmon snapping greedily at the feed, which is supplemented not only with vitamins, but also with imported Japanese krill to give the salmon flesh its pink hue. "No one wants to buy a salmon that ain't pink," says Del matter of factly.

Looking over the ocean pen rigging, Lee and Butchie modestly describe how OPI had hired them and their large herring boat to set up the mooring system for the complex, consisting of some 17 anchors weighing 2,000 pounds each. OPI also depends upon the Harrises to periodically change the double nets hanging from each floating cage. These nets not only encircle the salmon, but also protect them from the clever seals, which over the years have harvested more than their share of OPI salmon.

When we return to OPI's plant, Lee and Butchie offer to take us out to their pens, but first they need to borrow a few "Xactics" from Del—the ubiquitous fish containers that are used for everything from holding feed to hauling ice and fish. Del explains, "My boss Wally (Stevens) says help these guys out some." Lee responds, "In small towns you got to work together; you might give them a hand one day, and need a hand the next," to which Butchie adds practically, "You might need a job."

In fact it is clear that cooperation between the Harrises, as independent fish farmers, and OPI, the "big" company, extends a bit further. Lee explains how he and Butchie along with their father and two partners thought they could use the pieces of OPI's old wooden pens. These had ended up on the Deep Cove Beach after a winter storm drove the rigging beyond its tolerance, allowing seals to harvest 60,000 of OPI's 80,000 fish. "We took the old cages and reconditioned them," says Lee. "Stole them," says Del with half a wink.

Soon we are back in the skiff headed for Treat Island where the Harris' cage system is moored. Their floating wooden cage, from which four net pens are suspended in Cobscook Bay's rich swirling water, are tucked ingeniously behind a small half tide ledge. A ring bolt drilled into the ledge serves as one of the mooring points; a stake

OPI Production Manager Del Manning with 10-lb. salmon.

pounded into the soft bottom mud serves as a second, saving the Harrises the cost of two of the four huge anchors and mooring floats necessary to keep the pens in place.

"You see, we're fishermen that've got into it," says Lee, "so we've got experience with the gear, making up the nets, setting the moorings, and such. Plus we already owned a lot of this gear," he adds, gesturing out over the 100′ by 100′ four-pen site which holds 16,000 of their fish. From a quick calculation, it appears that this might have cost these men between a quarter and a third of the $150,000 it takes to gear up and stock an aquaculture operation from scratch.

Because the Harrises work on shares with Horace and Gary Small, which is the way they've always done business in the herring fishery, they are able to further reduce costs and to spread the risk. "When it's your own business you take a little more of an interest," says Lee, as he begins the second of the three daily feedings and comments with some pride to Butchie on the look and activity of the fish breaking the surface in silver flashes. As Butchie stares into the watery pens looking for tell-tale signs of disease, he compares the risks and rewards of maintaining their 15 herring weirs with the unknowns of their new aquaculture enterprise. He sums up his feelings: "You do all that work and get nothing with the herring. With this, you do all the work and you might..."

When we join George back at Harris Point over coffee, Horace Small has arrived, and the men begin talking about markets, prices, and the politics of the aquaculture business. Their Treat Island enterprise is one of 11 active fish aquaculture leases in Cobscook Bay that total 185 acres, including OPI's two large sites. The five-acre Treat Island operation is one of perhaps a half dozen leases where independent fishermen have started fish farms, although there are an additional eight or nine salmon lease sites pending in Cobscook Bay, and perhaps an equal number elsewhere on the Maine coast, totalling an additional 238 acres.

Internationally salmon aquaculture is big business and the United States and Maine are brand new players on the scene, uncertain whether to embrace this approach as the Harrises have done, or to oppose it as environmentally unsound or disruptive of existing traditional fisheries, navigation, and riparian or upland shore owners' interests.

The Norwegians dominate the salmon aquaculture business world wide, and their record is astonishing. Total world production of ocean penned salmonids (including trout) doubled between 1981 and 1983 from 12,000 to 25,000 metric tons, and doubled again by 1986. Eighty percent of this salmon was produced by Norway, and three quarters of it was exported to the United States. Although this represents just 10% of the total world catch of 550,000 metric tons of salmon, consisting almost entirely of Pacific salmon caught by Washington State and Alaskan registered vessels, pen reared salmon production is expected to increase to 125,000 metric tons, or about a quarter of the world catch, by 1990, as existing salmon farms reach their licensed production capacities.

Salmon aquaculture techniques aim to duplicate the natural salmon cycle. In the wild, three-to-five-year-old mature Atlantic and Pacific salmon return from deep ocean haunts to the fresh water rivers where they previously hatched to lay the eggs from which the next generation emerges. When the eggs hatch the tiny salmon fry spend the next one to two years in their natal rivers until they undergo a physiological change called smoltification that adapts them to salt water environments. The 6″-8″ smolts weighing a few ounces then move downstream to the Atlantic or Pacific Ocean where a small percentage of them will develop into adults in the next two to four years. They then return to the coast and the rivers of their birth to be caught by commercial or sport fishermen, to be blocked by dams, or to lay eggs upstream.

In salmon aquaculture eggs and milt (or sperm) are stripped from selected "brood stock" adults, then mixed carefully by hand to produce fertilized eggs. When hatched, the salmon fry are raised in fresh water hatcheries until they become smolt. At that point the smolt are released in rivers to swim downstream to the ocean, hopefully to return several years later to be caught. This approach to salmon raising is practiced widely throughout the world, including here in Maine, but the return is estimated to be no more than 1-2% of the number of released smolt. On the East Coast such wild stocking primarily benefits sport fishermen. In 1986 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released approximately 700,000 Atlantic salmon smolt raised at government expense into Maine rivers for sport fishermen.

It is the farming or pen rearing of Atlantic salmon in salt water that the Norwegians have pioneered. The difference is that the hatchery raised smolt are transported by boat or truck to the carefully selected ocean pen sites. The important criteria for selecting these sites include water quality and temperature characteristics, and protection from wind and wave action. Norway's highly indented coast—fiords and islands with little industrial development, good water quality, and water temperatures which fluctuate between 40° and 55°F.—offers an abundance of ideal salmon farm sites. With generous government support in the form of guaranteed loans and research, Norway has established 600 salmon and trout farms, and 300 smolt farms.

The Norwegian success has attracted the attention of a number of other countries, including Great Britain (Scotland), Ireland, Canada, and the Faroe Islands, all of which have recently established thriving pen-reared Atlantic salmon industries. In the Pacific, Japan, Canada, Chile, and New Zealand have also set up a similar industry with a combination of coho, chinook and Atlantic salmon.

This worldwide activity might have escaped the notice of all but a few Maine entrepreneurs, such as OPI's President Wallace Stevens, were it not for the passage of a 1983 Norwegian law that limited the size of Norway's salmon farms to relatively small lease sites. Suddenly some of the big Norwegian companies could only expand by going overseas. Since approximately $90 million worth of Atlantic salmon was exported by Norway into Boston and New York last year, it is not surprising that the Maine-Canadian border area has become a locale of great interest to international salmon aquaculture companies. Two Norwegian firms have already moved in. Sea Farm A/S has established a salmon hatchery in New Brunswick, and has a 20-acre aquaculture lease site in Cobscook Bay near Lubec. Atlantic Salmon (Maine) is completing construction of a hatchery in Oquossoc near Rangeley, and has had a

George Harris mending salmon nets.

lease site approved for Northwest Harbor on Cross Island off Cutler. The latter 30-acre application was bitterly opposed by local fishermen and town officials from Machiasport, who cited environmental impacts and conflicts with established fisheries.

There are two important reasons—one environmental, the other political—why the extreme eastern end of the Maine coast has witnessed the first commercially successful and now rapidly expanding salmon aquaculture on the Atlantic seaboard of the United States. Marine biologists have generally considered that winter water temperatures off the Maine coast are too cold to grow salmon. The fish are highly susceptible to mortality when temperatures fall below 34°F., and in Maine, where seawater can fall to as low as 28°F. during "superchill" conditions, the risks are high. But in Cobscook Bay, an upwelling current brings warmer bottom water into most of the bay, greatly enhancing winter survival.

Politically, opposition to salmon aquaculture comes from a combination of commercial fisherman who informally control potential sites; from environmentalists who fear that the antibiotics used by growers and fecal build-up from intensive feeding pose unknown risks to the marine ecosystem; and finally from some shoreland owners who object to aquaculture on the basis that it mars their view and reduces property values.

Since Cobscook Bay has virtually no existing lobster fishery, commercial fishermen have not actively opposed lease applications. Most environmentalists have also been largely quiet about salmon aquaculture, perhaps because the huge 18′-20′tides and resulting swift currents provide more tidal flushing action than anywhere else on the Maine coast. And well-heeled shoreland owners capable of hiring lawyers to intervene in the formal lease hearings are scarce.

Cobscook Bay's salmon aquaculture enterprises have therefore developed quickly. There are now 15 fish farms that have either begun operating, or have announced intentions to do so. Across the border, the Canadian government has licensed another 25 salmon farms in the adjoining waters of Passamaquoddy Bay, primarily around Deer Island.

Outside of Cobscook Bay, however, salmon aquaculture proposals have played to audiences ranging from skeptical to hostile. Fishermen, environmentalists, and shoreland owners have combined to defeat salmon aquaculture proposals (which require the approval of Maine's Department of Marine Resources) in Somes Sound and Winter Harbor off Mount Desert and in the Muscle Ridge Islands off Sprucehead.

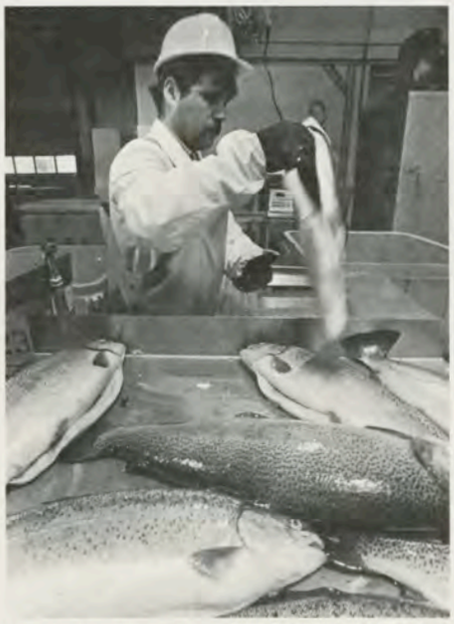
Frank Gjerset, president of Atlantic Salmon (Maine), a subsidiary of a company headquartered in Trondheim, Norway, is betting several million dollars that there are more locations than Cobscook Bay on the Maine Coast where suitable environmental conditions for pen reared salmon exist. A studious looking Norwegian with an accented and ponderous English speaking style, Gjerset was clearly unprepared for the hostile reception his salmon raising proposals have thus far met.

Gjerset was dispatched from Trondheim with a good deal of experience in negotiating joint ventures with local fishermen in Norway and a number of other countries. The company arranges to supply smolt, feed, veterinary services, technical advice, capital and marketing information in exchange for local site knowledge, day-to-day feeding, monitoring security and gear maintenance. In the hundreds of salmon farms Atlantic Salmon has set up across the North Atlantic, his biggest problem was to select the optimal site from among the dozens of competing communities and individuals.

With this as a background and with no experience with suspicious and cagey Maine natives, it is not surprising that Gjerset was stunned by the chorus of Bronx cheers that his proposals have generally received during the past two years.

During the winter of 1986-1987, Gjerset traveled extensively along the Maine coast collecting water temperature profiles in adequately protected sites to test whether killing water temperatures occur everywhere except for the eastern Washington County coast, as has been generally believed. What Gjerset's temperature investigations turned up, if proven operationally, suggest that the debate over salmon aquaculture is likely to intensify in places further west along the coast, particularly on and around the islands between Mount Desert and Pemaquid Point.

Gjerset believes that superchill conditions, when sea water temperatures drop below 32°F., develop either where there are significant fresh water inputs, such as near the mouths of major rivers or in shallower water areas. In areas with deeper waters, he thinks that only the top 40′ or so is highly vulnerable to superchill conditions that would kill salmon. Although Atlantic Salmon (Maine) found few potential salmon sites between Machias and Mount Desert Island, Penobscot Bay offers a number of attractive possibilities. Putting two and two together, it appears that most of these possibilities are associated with islands.



Cleaning salmon at OPI's processing plant.

Vinalhaven is the most recent island community to weigh the merits and demerits of a proposal to establish a Norwegian-style corporate fish farm in its waters. Atlantic Salmon (Maine) applied for 25 acres of lease sites in September 1987 off Vinalhaven's island-studded western shores.

In a non-binding town referendum in March, Vinalhaven residents voted 357-29 to oppose Atlantic Salmon (Maine)'s application. Fishermen felt they were being asked to relinquish informal rights of 25 acres of productive fishing grounds in order to establish a large corporate fish farm that might provide half a dozen or so wage paying jobs. In the face of the town's united opposition, Atlantic Salmon (Maine) withdrew its application.

It is safe to say that with an existing market for imported fresh pen-reared salmon, now valued in excess of $100,000,000, fisheries entrepreneurs will continue to be attracted to the Maine coast. Salmon aquaculture representatives suggest that with other countries such as Canada, Chile, and New Zealand heavily committed to establishing salmon farms, there is a five-to-seven-year window of opportunity for U.S. operations to get established and recognized in the market place. Maine will always enjoy a natural competitive advantage over all foreign production due to high transportation costs inherent in importing fresh salmon. As George Harris puts it, "Without a doubt we've got an advantage over the Norwegians in the shipping when it costs us 35 cents to send a post card over to Pembroke."

The question is: Do Maine fishermen want a piece of the action, and if so, can they get it?

Couched within this piece about Matinicus Island is reference to a fundamental, ironic social hiatus between different kinds of islanders. It has always been the respectable middle class who sing loudest the praises of the true ardor, stamina, sacrifice, and courage of the hunters and warriors who preceded them. Yet when the latterday's new order is established, tolerance for the raucous, profane, and heroic values of the warriors recedes, even as their memory and oral arts are further elevated to a revered heritage. Meanwhile the displaced heroes are reduced to envy and often bitterness. It is wrong to want everyone to be the same. We call all islanders our friends. Lord, protect us from some of our friends....

Peter Ralston

MATINICUS

HAROLD HOLMES OWEN, JR.

LETTER TO Spencer Phipps, Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, April 25, 1753:

Brother you did not hearken to us about the Englishman on the Island; he hunts [hurts] us in our sealing and fishing; its our livelihood and others too for what we get we bring to your Truck masters. We don't hinder him from fishing; If you don't Remove him in two months we shall be obliged to do it ourselves. We have writ to you before and have had no answer, if you don't answer we shan't write again, as its our custom if our letters are not answered not to write again...

We salute you and all the Council in behalf of the Penobscot Tribe.

Cosemes.
Noodobt.
Chebenood.
Nugdumbawit.

(As quoted on p. 22, *Matinicus Isle: Its Story and Its People*, by Charles A. E. Long, Lewiston, Maine, 1926 o.p.)

Like many busy administrators, refusing to take seriously the urgent (and reasonable) plea of his unacknowledged constituency, Gov. Phipps failed to answer his mail, and the results of his cavalier irresponsibility were severe for the Englishman. Several years later (1757) the Indians attacked Ebenezer Hall's house, set it on fire, killed Hall, and departed with all his family but one, Joseph Green, Mrs. Hall's son by her first husband, who climbed out a back window and remained hidden until he attracted the attention of a passing schooner some days later, and was rescued.

His son later returned and set up housekeeping on the island, Matinicus by name, a comfortable and sunswept tract of land several miles long and nearly a mile wide. Like most of the islands of the Penobscot, Matinicus stretches from northeast to southwest, revealing the direction of the powerful ice sheet that bulldozed over the island, leaving giant glacial anomalies in the form of strange stones, some 30′ or 40′ in diameter, lying today on the rocky shores or the floors of the deep spruce forests. Much of the land is fertile, there is fresh water, and it is a sanctuary (and flyway) for birds. Since Bertha Gerhmann left, however, there have been no Indians.

Today Matinicus is quiet, beautiful, compelling, an island for many years removed from both the frantic world of tourism and the world of condo speculation. Both worlds menace it now.

Peter Ralston

Collection of Douglas Watson

Most fishermen took a dim view of "hiring money"—borrowing, that is. To build a boat or a house, one took what cash one had and approached a boatbuilder or a carpenter and arranged to get built whatever the cash would buy. The money gone, the fisherman returned to his traps and nets until he had sufficient cash to build some more. The result: a house (or boat) solidly built and no mortgage. Positively un-American.

As a place to live, Matinicus is a microcosm of many towns, large or small, rural or urban, in the United States or many other countries. Its responsibilities include, in diminishing order of importance, the generation of power, the education of its young, the enforcement of law, and the disposal of waste. It has a nucleus of people who have lived there for a long time; it is highly suspicious of people who haven't. It has a small constellation of summer people, some of whom have been coming to the island for many years, quietly paying taxes on the places they own, relying on the advice, wisdom, or skill of the islanders, old or young, to help them with maintenance, construction, and transportation. These people now own over 60% of the taxable land, and most of the shore property.

Several years ago, a large grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and a lot of hard work on the part of the Head Assessor and recent resident, Betsy Burr; then long-time summer resident, Frank Bowles; lifelong resident, Charles Pratt; and many others, resulted in the installation of a state-of-the art generating system: three General Motors diesels driving three Kohler generators, one or more operating at any given time, depending on the demand. Entirely compatible as far as repair parts are concerned, they also are capable of responding in microseconds to changes in demand. Electricity is expensive —perhaps the most expensive on the East Coast—but under the supervision of Charles Pratt, who was also responsible for the installation of the power grid (and poles, by hand!) in 1965, it is thoroughly reliable. Charles is ably assisted by Paul Murray, whose father made the original official installations of electricity in 1965 and bought an island place upon his retirement. Paul gave up a steady job with CMP and a home on Cape Elizabeth to move out to Matinicus, throwing in his lot with the island. "I want to be useful," says Paul, when asked why he is out there. And he is.

I have been using a word-processor for several years now. Two summers ago, using one on the island for the first time, I was delighted and not entirely surprised when I had a phone call from Charley, who knew I was using one. "If you've got anything you want to save," he warned, "save it. I'm shutting her down for a while to change the oil."

Many of the islanders, second- and third-generation fishermen, have made good livings in the past and now find it increasingly difficult to extract a living from the sea, the main source of income for island people.

It has always been fashionable to resent the "summer complaint"—those who come for a few days, or a week or so. But when some buy property and become taxpaying neighbors who demonstrate a love for the island and a concern for the land, the islanders become their firm friends, looking after their interests and watching their property, albeit never loathe to borrow a piece of lumber or tool when the need arises. "Looking for them two-by-fours of your dad's? Believe they never got beyond Austin's."

One hundred years or so ago, Matinicus was a community of close to 300 people, almost entirely self-sufficient, with farms, gardens, livestock; large families (as many as 17 children were not uncommon, although one notices that frequently several wives were involved in the produc-

tion of such progeny); there was a store, a post office, a one-room school, a church; there were socials, dances, bees, and practical jokes. The first year for the new (male) school teacher was often Hell, as older students tested him. On Halloween local pranksters of any age delighted in turning over outhouses—the only plumbing—onto their front doors, leaving the occupant just one way out.

It was necessary to import only salt, rum, and molasses, traded for the abundant cod, well salted. Rum they imported surreptitiously, for the island wives knew even then that alcohol was a male predilection, attractive and demonstrably counterproductive. The few recorded drownings over the year were almost always alcohol-related.

In 1863 the second one-room school house was built, in part from timber salvaged from the bones of several ships like the brig *Mechanic*, wrecked on the west side of the island. There were some three dozen children in eight grades; during harvest time they were released to dig potatoes, a custom which persisted will into the 1930's when the Depression years took their particular toll of the outer islands.

Then, as now, life away from their insular and narrow confines seemed extremely attractive to many of the young people, and the population slowly diminished despite the prolific production of children. Furthermore, there is a natural limit to the number of fishermen the waters around the island can support, and the group who fished, being naturally territorial, tried to protect their fishing rights.

World War II found most of the islanders in the Navy, although some joined the Coast Guard, and one or two especially cantankerous souls ended up in the Army. Matinicus lost no one in uniform in the conflict, although one islander lost an arm investigating a large, interesting object washed ashore on the west side—a mine, as it turned out. It exploded.

The islanders returned with a sense of relief and of mission. Mostly thrifty, they had cash, savings, mustering-out pay, and in certain cases gains from poker games, which immediately went into boats, fishing gear, and the households delayed by the war.

In 1945 building a house on Matinicus was a noble enterprise. Planning was the least of the challenges. Land was cheap, but to get concrete, lumber, nails, shingles, and other building materials to an island 25 miles from the mainland was an exercise worthy of the Seabees—no problem for the Matinicus fishermen whose seaworthy boats were manned by skippers ready for nearly any weather.

Most fishermen took a dim view of "hiring money"—borrowing, that is. To build a boat or a house, one took what cash one had and approached a boatbuilder or a carpenter and arranged to get built whatever the cash would buy. The money gone, the fishermen returned to his traps and nets until he had sufficient cash to build some more. The result: a house (or boat) solidly built and no mortgage. Positively un-American.

The dependable income from lobster fishing and the occasional but considerable cash from herring kept the serious and foresighted fishermen of Matinicus prosperous and independent from 1945 until the early '80's. They managed to weather the last energy crisis despite a leap in the cost of fuel and related petro products that could have crippled less resourceful souls.

In this decade several somewhat alarming trends were obvious. First, expenses were rising at a much faster rate than income from lobsters. Bait, rope, gear, fuel, and the cost of maintenance and repair to the often expensive and elaborate boats climbed steadily, though the price of the lobsters caught remained almost constant—a phenomenon many attributed to manipulation by wholesalers along the coast and some shrewd empounding by Canadian fishermen.

Lobstering is a mesmerizing occupation. It is both capital- and labor-intensive, but one can start simply with a skiff and a few secondhand traps. The traditional and appealing image is of the small boy (or girl) with skiff and outboard, fishing traps first in the harbor, then in the shallow water immediately outside the breakwater. Later comes a larger boat, more gear, more time, and a sternperson.

Fishing for lobster is the only respectable occupation. Carpenters, painters, electricians—except for Paul Murray—mechanics, and even schoolteachers come to the island, pursue their trades for a while, and then succumb to the lure.

Fishing for lobster is hard work whether it's a single person rowing a peapod and tending traps by hand or a fisherman with a $90,000 boat with Loran C, radar, radio, and fish finder. The captain works hard, in his head, doing time-motion studies and worrying about his $800/month boat payments; the sternperson simply works hard.

Island lobstering is a privilege. Established fishermen are territorial—paranoid about it. Some areas have seasons: Monhegan closes its season six months a year; Matinicus closes on Sundays during the summer; Criehaven has a limited number of berths. For someone who for some reason is not welcome on Matinicus (maybe he doesn't own land or maybe someone holds a grudge, real or imagined) the signals are very clear. When he goes out to fish his gear he may find the doors on his traps open. Maybe there is an old rubber boot inside, or a cooked short. The next time he will not find his traps, and he will have lost up to $30 a copy, while the cut-off pots will join the thousands of ghost traps on the bottom, quietly collecting lobsters until they fall apart.

Washed ashore and misshapen by the storms and tides, the vinyl covered wire traps sink into the sand beach, tangled in their polypropylene lines. Adding to the litter are Clorox bottles (used to wash marine growth off Styrofoam buoys), and empty plastic containers of outboard oil and bilge cleaner. Nearby are various dark green plastic bags of waste and garbage, the contribution of passing fishing boats and yachts.

The southern end of Matinicus, facing Criehaven and looking beyond that island to Matinicus Rock, consists of high grassy meadows, rocky banks, gravel beaches, and a long sandy strand that stretches for a quarter of a mile. Much of the time the beach is empty. A few summer people use it, and from time to time island people hold beach parties. Once in a while a group from Vinalhaven comes over in a lobster boat for a monster picnic. It is easy to tell if the party has been one of natives or of summer people. The summer people usually leave it neat. The natives usually leave their trash, including redeemable beer cans and foam cups, which some of the summer complaints clean up, along with the trash which has washed ashore.

Redeemable cans are redeemable, but what to do with the Styrofoam? And the other plastic trash? Although there are many places which could compete for the honor, a high point of land midway between South Sandy Beach and the southwest point is perhaps the most beautiful location on the island, the most magnetic tourist attraction, and the place where for many years the islanders have deposited their trash: garbage, cans, old refrigerators, washing machines, automobiles, pickup trucks, car parts, wrecked motorcycles, bottles (booze and otherwise), animal carcasses, furniture, strollers, lawnmowers, magazines, brush, disposable diapers, almost-empty cylinders of propane, spray paint containers, and indeed all the detritus of civilization that future genera-

Peter Ralston

tions, conducting a "dig" through the midden, will delight in finding and identifying. It's a mess, but we at least know where our trash goes, unlike most of the people in other villages and cities.

Several times we have attempted to have hauled away the deposit of trash on this bank; calls to Rockland and Augusta are fruitless, like the Penobscot Tribe's letter to Governor Phipps (and expensive: calls from Matinicus are long distance). We've burned it over several times, the most recent being when several watches from the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School came out for their community service project. Reinforced by these students, the town fire engine, Indian pumps, and shovels, we touched off the dump in the morning and watched it burn. Several summer people, the head assessor, and the fire wardens, were present. No other fishermen. Many were out hauling.

It stank. Several unidentified items exploded. About midday the wind shifted from the north and the acrid smoke from plastics and garbage blew in our faces. A propane tank became briefly airborne. We tried to watch so that the burn did not get into grass. Several Hurricane Island students were overcome. We set a night watch and called it quits. When we looked at it the next day we had reduced the bulk by about 80%.

It was several weeks before the dumping began again.

Matinicus, according to my son when he was 10 years old, is the Indian word for "Land of the Rusted Automobile." Each time the state ferry comes—more and more rarely, one must add—it brings the latest crop of "beaters," vehicles that will often no longer pass inspection, making the one-way trip to their final destination.

The island is littered with the remains. When my daughter and her husband cleared land on the west side for their house nine years ago, among other obstacles they had to remove were several of the vehicles he had left years before as a teenager, now impaled by spruce many years old.

The woods, "lovely, dark, and deep," make good resting places for old pickups and muscle cars. Not all of them end up there. Some remain quietly in driveways or on lawns. Some are towed to sea and cut loose to sink to the bottom where they will slowly bleed their oil and gasoline. When my family opened up a gravel pit 20 years ago, we agreed to provide a graveyard for any wreck that could be hauled there. The way to move a station wagon carcass sans wheels, we discovered, was to flip it over on its roof. When we had 50 or so such carcasses, from Hillman to Lincoln, voters at a town meeting approved our request for enough money to cover them.

In an adjoining pit, we have started another collection, now numbering eight, in which foreign cars, especially Volkswagens, are well represented: progress, of a kind. Our next door neighbor also boasts a gravel pit with auto bodies, and the well-worn road to his pit goes across the field where my daughter used to grow oats.

Although no one on the island enforces Maine motor vehicle laws, Matinicus, classified as part of Maine's wildlands, has a simple form of government. Three elected assessors function as selectmen. Over the years they have proved a dedicated group devoted to the island, trying to cope with mainland bureaucracy, balance the budget, and with other elected officials—road agent, town clerk, tax collector, fire marshall, and constable—manage the town affairs. Edwin Mitchell, Vance Bunker, Rick Kohls, Mark Ames, and Victor Ames, to mention only a few, as well as Betsy Burr, have worked for the town and endured the hostility of those who don't like the direction local government has taken. Mostly they toil at their own expense. Some wear several hats at the same time. There is no mayor, no planning board, no zoning board, nor are there likely to be.

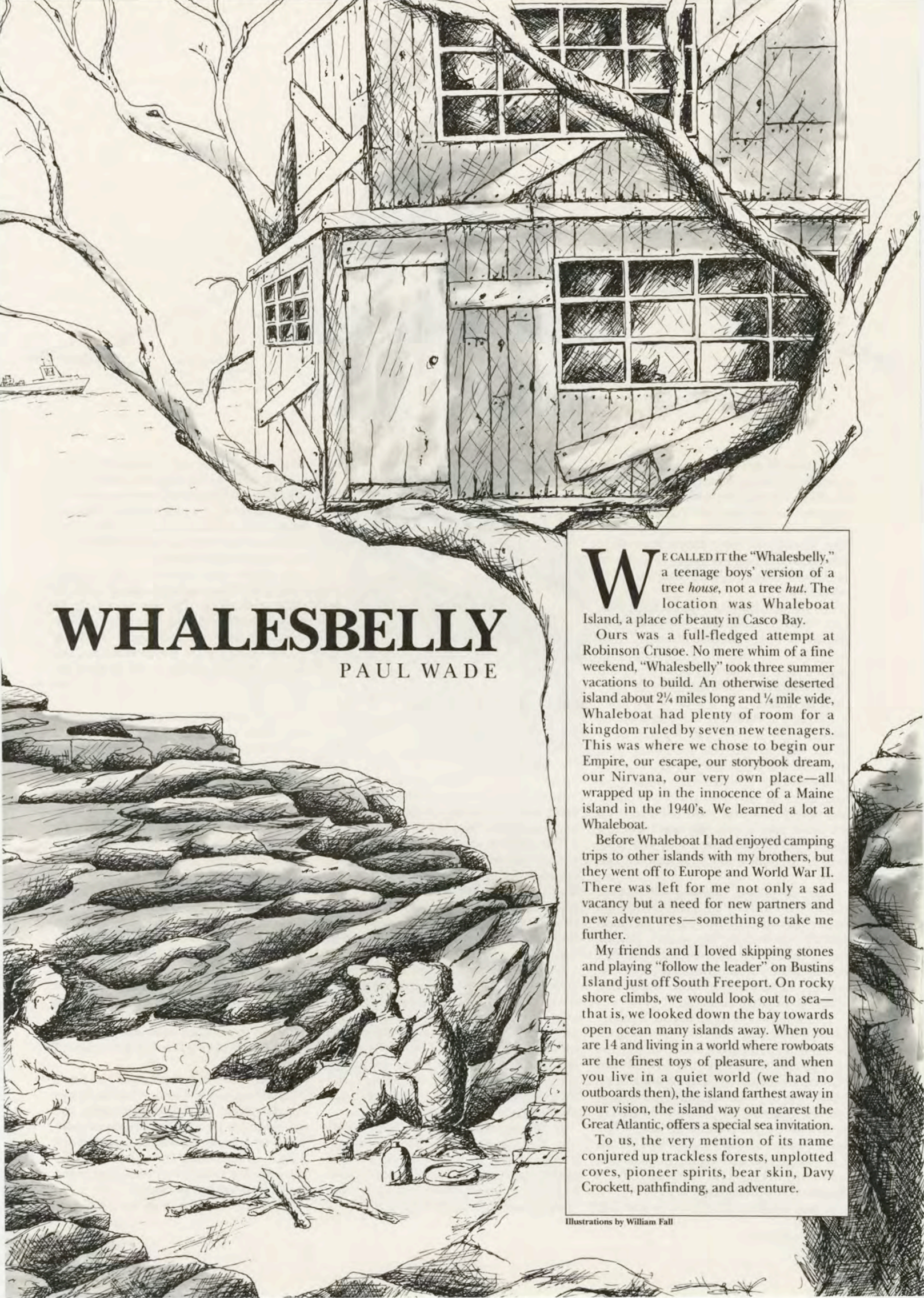
For a while it was an island tradition to elect as constable the person who had caused the most trouble, or was likely to. More recently the island has elected both a man and a woman to the position. On an island as small as this the constable(s) may well be related to half the island, and enforcement of existing laws—traffic, disposal of waste, identification of thieves and vandals—is, at the least, difficult, and sometimes results in the island's favorite form of retribution for real or imagined slight—tire-slashing. Angry at someone for building too close? Slash some tires. Angry because a town official refuses to allow the town bucket truck to be used for personal purposes? Slash some tires. Angry because you didn't pay your power bill, and the representative from Matinicus Electrical Company pulled your meter? Trash his kitchen, sprinkle shingle nails in his drive. Eastern Tire in Rockland does a brisk business in providing cheap replacements, when one figures out how to get the rims back and forth. (Penobscot Air Service, Ltd., an efficient, friendly, and reliable outfit which flies the mail in five times a week and provides charter service for people, has a special rate for wheels.)

"We have our own laws," says a third-generation islander. And our own lawlessness, one might add. A haven for drifters, who join the bottom of the social scale as sternpersons, fugitives, or occasional housing squatters, Matinicus has a criminal element, usually known to someone on the island, that enjoys a kind of sanctuary, sometimes by virtue of family. Lately more attention has been paid to island misdeeds by mainland officials. The person who broke into the house at the head of Old Cove bought by the Ancliffes was apprehended. Not so the person(s) who trashed Frank Bowles' house. After years of serving the plantation, helping with the new power grid, among other things, he gave up and sold out.

The last two years have seen an extraordinary turnover in property, including houses vacant or for sale for years. The new owners are seldom fishermen. They are people from away, struck by the beauty, the isolation, the chance to make a statement about land and conservation. They endure the warts, the waste, the junk, the vandalism, the thefts of fuel, the retribution for slights which in addition to tire-slashing has included arson and an attempted murder. They have been turning up in increasing numbers at town meetings, now scheduled late in May so that people who have major commitments at other times on the mainland may attend. Despite this, last-minute registration resulted in more votes than voters at the meeting last May 16—and a motion to stock the tiny island with deer was passed despite the anguish of parents with small children, and gardeners, among others. Those voting for the measure included some notorious poachers, one of whom is said to have spotted moose by air, and another who is one of the few Maine residents convicted of poaching a Belted Galaway steer.

The islanders are capable of extraordinary generosity and thoughtfulness. They are resourceful and resilient. Their selfless responses to emergencies are chronicled. However, in the words of a fourth-generation fishermen, whose sons are also fishermen, "We are fouling our own nest." So are we all, so are we all.

For 33 years a teacher of English and theater at Phillips Academy Andover, ***Harold Holmes Owen IV*** *has been an earnestly committed seasonal resident of Matinicus since 1950. His sabbatical years were spent year-round in the community; kids in the school, sternman on fishing boats, substitute town moderator, and so on. Retirement in the near future will find him a permanent resident where his heart has always been.*



WHALESBELLY

PAUL WADE

WE CALLED IT the "Whalesbelly," a teenage boys' version of a tree *house*, not a tree *hut*. The location was Whaleboat Island, a place of beauty in Casco Bay.

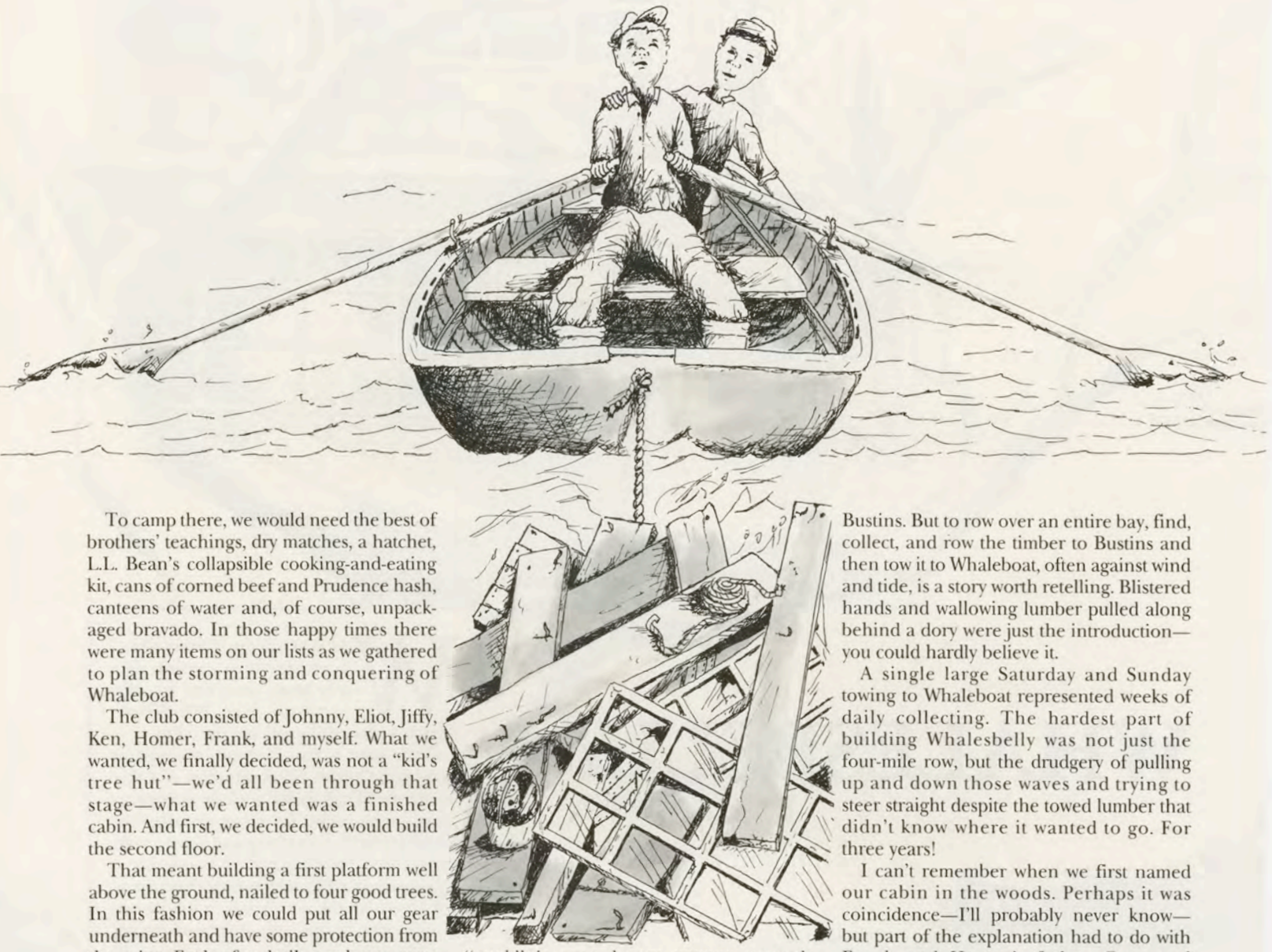
Ours was a full-fledged attempt at Robinson Crusoe. No mere whim of a fine weekend, "Whalesbelly" took three summer vacations to build. An otherwise deserted island about 2¼ miles long and ¼ mile wide, Whaleboat had plenty of room for a kingdom ruled by seven new teenagers. This was where we chose to begin our Empire, our escape, our storybook dream, our Nirvana, our very own place—all wrapped up in the innocence of a Maine island in the 1940's. We learned a lot at Whaleboat.

Before Whaleboat I had enjoyed camping trips to other islands with my brothers, but they went off to Europe and World War II. There was left for me not only a sad vacancy but a need for new partners and new adventures—something to take me further.

My friends and I loved skipping stones and playing "follow the leader" on Bustins Island just off South Freeport. On rocky shore climbs, we would look out to sea—that is, we looked down the bay towards open ocean many islands away. When you are 14 and living in a world where rowboats are the finest toys of pleasure, and when you live in a quiet world (we had no outboards then), the island farthest away in your vision, the island way out nearest the Great Atlantic, offers a special sea invitation.

To us, the very mention of its name conjured up trackless forests, unplotted coves, pioneer spirits, bear skin, Davy Crockett, pathfinding, and adventure.

Illustrations by William Fall



To camp there, we would need the best of brothers' teachings, dry matches, a hatchet, L.L. Bean's collapsible cooking-and-eating kit, cans of corned beef and Prudence hash, canteens of water and, of course, unpackaged bravado. In those happy times there were many items on our lists as we gathered to plan the storming and conquering of Whaleboat.

The club consisted of Johnny, Eliot, Jiffy, Ken, Homer, Frank, and myself. What we wanted, we finally decided, was not a "kid's tree hut"—we'd all been through that stage—what we wanted was a finished cabin. And first, we decided, we would build the second floor.

That meant building a first platform well above the ground, nailed to four good trees. In this fashion we could put all our gear underneath and have some protection from the rains. Each of us built our home away from home in our dreams all that summer and through the next winter—a time when the whole project was only beach talk and glances to the southwest, a long four miles away, an eternity of rowing against tide and wind.

Little did people, meaning our parents, suspect the extent of our plan; it was years before they realized how big we dreamed. And in our yearning for secrecy, privacy, and delight in big suspense, we were most sketchy about why we always kept picnicking further and further away from Bustins, and always in the same direction.

Whaleboat would make anyone a magnificent home site. It is really two narrow wooded peninsulas connected lengthwise by a completely open and unexpected blueberry meadow. Around the island are a hundred coves, all remarkable for their ease of approach. Surprisingly, only a few feet offshore the water is 90′ deep! The open meadow prompts the question of why it is not forested, and our only only answer was that sheep grazed there by the hundreds in another foggy era.

It was not long before we hit the first "rock" in our dream voyage towards Whaleboat: If we were to be allowed to camp away for a couple of days, who could be trusted? Who would be "in charge"?

The solution wasn't easy for young boys, especially where fire could be a threat to ourselves and to "invaded" private property. The talks and the agony of this were resolved finally because, as it turned out, Homer's brother Frank was turning 17, and Frank was one who commanded the trust of both camps—ours and our parents'.

Neither Whaleboat nor the parental accessions came to us all in one day; rather, it was an evolution of successive occasions where parents carefully measured our possible anarchy and hoped their trust would provide responsible behavior after a few trial occasions. For them, the project was not an easy "yes." Gradually, the extended picnics became overnighters, and overnighters became weekends away.

In that first summer, the biggest problem was finding timber. Locating enough flotsam—logs and planks—for an eventual building of 2-3-4-or-more rooms would have been formidable even if we had planned just to build in a quiet corner of Bustins. But to row over an entire bay, find, collect, and row the timber to Bustins and then tow it to Whaleboat, often against wind and tide, is a story worth retelling. Blistered hands and wallowing lumber pulled along behind a dory were just the introduction—you could hardly believe it.

A single large Saturday and Sunday towing to Whaleboat represented weeks of daily collecting. The hardest part of building Whalesbelly was not just the four-mile row, but the drudgery of pulling up and down those waves and trying to steer straight despite the towed lumber that didn't know where it wanted to go. For three years!

I can't remember when we first named our cabin in the woods. Perhaps it was coincidence—I'll probably never know—but part of the explanation had to do with Frank and Homer's father, Reverend Wolfe, a Medford, Mass., minister. As part of his doctoral thesis, he decided to write about Jonah and the Whale and there's little doubt that in his mind he wondered about what might proceed from the depths of the "Whalesbelly."

Johnny Smoker was another big builder of our camp. His father was the best known man on Bustins. Eugene Smoker owned the Ship's Inn, one of Casco Bay's finest restaurants, with a full-time and very talented chef. But he was more than an innkeeper. Bustins had his store, "his" post office, his kerosene and gas pumps. And every noon it seemed as though 100 people gathered to see their mail and to breathe and buy Smoker's famous hot oatmeal bread.

Johnny was his father's right hand and for him to go out with us to Whalesbelly was a real problem. He delivered groceries and met the noon steamer from Portland. John filled the Islander's kerosene cans and at 6 each morning poured the rock salt into the pans needed to keep ice cream cold in the days before gas refrigeration.

While the rest of us were out a-building,

Johnny would be working late, finishing the restaurant dishes or some other job. But he would row out at night by himself, to our dreams.

In the frigid mornings only Johnny could muster a laugh at the early morning high tide and swim to gather in the 16′ rowboat we anchored offshore to keep it safe. It was, in fact, a most difficult anchorage at Whaleboat since we had picked a site without a cove. Our front porch was a hillside of rock, hardly the place to haul up a skiff. But if you wonder why we had selected so unwisely, remember secrecy of location and privacy were high on our list of architectural features.

By this time we were making sunny progress. The piles of lumber grew so big it was a pleasure to have the affluence of selection. The game plan now was to screen in the vacant holes of the windows and to begin the kitchen; namely, the first floor.

Lumber continued to be no problem in the second summer. But by this time fathers at home were cursing their missing saws and hammers. And our tastes reflected new sophistication—we dreamed of fresh mattresses, our own ice box and a complete set of china dishes. Planning went on for hours in our stuffy upstairs room.

Since I was the Bustins Island garbage collector, lighter of the Coleman road lamps, and truck driver assistant to Frank who hauled junk to the famous island dump, there was no shortage of available pickings. And the day came when during the second summer we towed out a mountain of lumber, a huge throw-away icebox, and double-bed mattress replacements. That was a row against wind and tide I wish to entirely forget, here and forever.

About this time, Homer let on that he knew where to find what we had talked about and hoped for, for a very long time—a fine set of bricks. Homer was younger than Frank, so Frank sent Homer off with the short, square flat-bottomed punt to bring over the first load.

By the end of Year Two, the Whalesbelly began to look pretty homey to us 16-year-olds. We even sinned and went out and *bought* tar paper for the roof! How smug we felt as we talked till 2 a.m. while the rain purred through the spruce and fell atop our uppermost heaven.

Do you recall how nice it is after basics in homebuilding to start dealing with arrangements? Indoors: "Well, Frank, where should I build the sink?" Having ice cubes was second only to the glory of having parents who, instead of objecting to Whaleboat, now praised our cleverness!

We would stop our sawing and talk of the days when square-rigged ships sailed by this way, and dwell on the traditions like the fabled story of "The Dead Ship of Harpswell" or Freeport's famed ship, the *Dash*. Truly, we were "Casco Bay Boys" now, for we had made with our own hands a kind of pioneer settlement.

Fresh water we never found, though lobstermen insisted we would find old wells on the other side of the island. Lobstermen, of course, we mostly avoided, being afraid of their "discoveries." But as recently as 1985 I met a fisherman who told me about some boys on an island in 1940 and how he had made use of their enormous stockpile of timber.

Besides searching for old wells, we explored the whole island. We were proud of our network of cut paths. We made a studied decision to build close to the sea end of Whaleboat, the point furthest from Bustins. The sea end is higher, more ruggedly beautiful, and always gave us that look around the corner of the bay that we wanted and needed. In the midst of the protected bay side of Whaleboat's outer forest section, we built. We picked a site with an enormous shoreline ledge that not only protected us from some bigger waves as we landed, but also provided us with a shallow, underwater shelf. Here we could walk up to a tiny flat rock area, where we placed our gear and materials before starting the long, exceedingly hard journey up a 35′ banking of parallel rock shelves. Above this, we came to a 50′ sloping path and then another low ledge that bordered our fort. These hurdles passed, we had a steep climb upwards before getting to the gently sloping, almost flat area that we cleared of ragged bayberry bushes so we could dump our prizes and build.

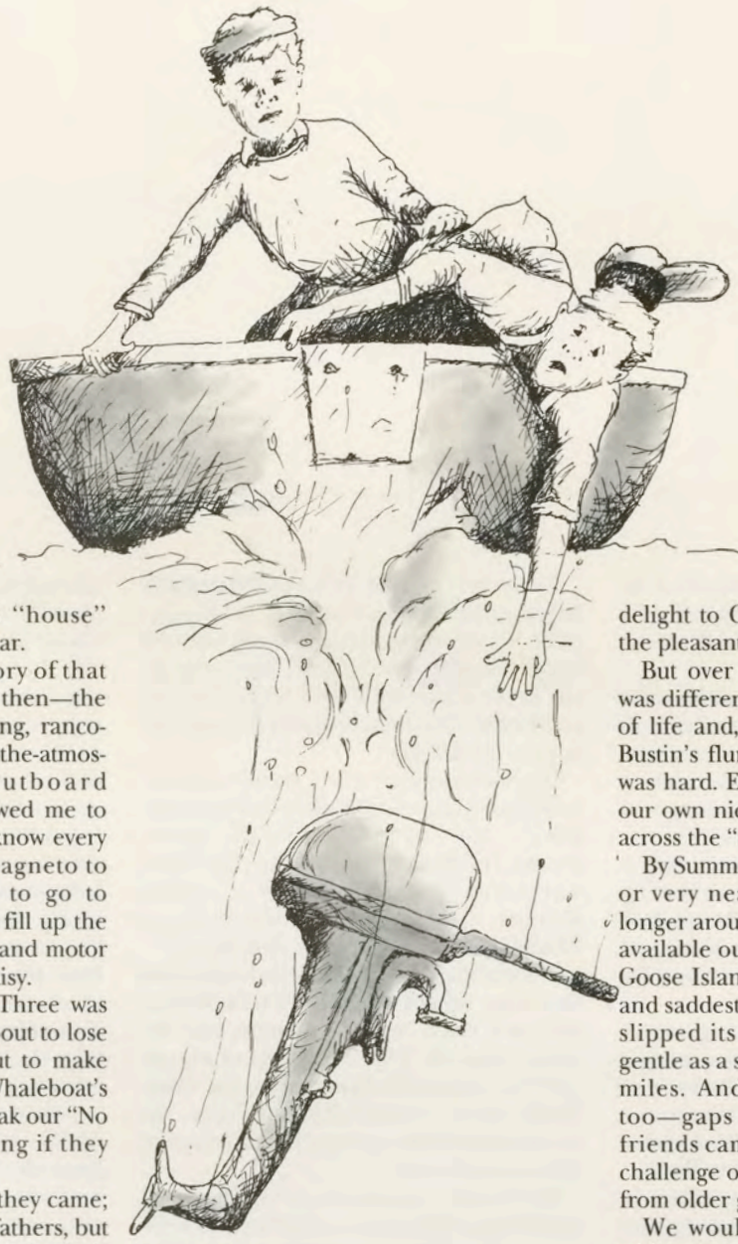
Just below our four-tree cabin was an area that was ideal for our fireplace, and its ledge outcrops gave us a ready-made set of eating tables. The particular joy of cooking bacon outdoors was ours. Frank had to have his cereal each day with Whaleboat blueberries. I remember his highest expression of joy wasn't "Oh gosh," but just plain "Garsh,"with a mysterious, midwest "R" intruding into the breeze.

I don't recall a single serious accident, which must have been a miracle of parental, if not ministerial, prayer. But we were prepared for it to happen. So we built, and explored, fished and cut paths, and rowed, and rowed, and rowed.

By the end of Summer Two we were well ensconced in the Whalesbelly. But back at Bustins we danced at the Community House on Tuesdays and Thursdays, played Monopoly and ping-pong, and sat on the front of the dark store porch much too long for the standards of some concerned parents. We carved our initials on the steamer dock, now long since wrecked and cleared. Over 30 years of initials went down when a hurricane tore it away.

I spent afternoons sometimes sailing, hoping for a real challenge from the smokiest, toughest sou'wester to show the girls and myself that I could get the lee rail down as low as any and still feel safe. Still, the longest days were those spent waiting for Friday night and those outward-bound smiles.

The third summer we finished the job—although great things are never really finished. Though there were other years and other visits, the great fires of youth and



our work on the three-room "house" reached their zenith this third year.

The most outstanding memory of that summer is as clear today as it was then—the addition of a huge, loud, snarling, rancorous, powerful, exhaust-open-to-the-atmosphere 5-h.p. Johnson outboard motor! Mother and father allowed me to learn its secrets, and I came to know every screw and adjustment from magneto to shear pin prop. What a joy to go to Whaleboat now! We could even fill up the 16′ Pow-Wow sailboat with gear and motor all the way, arriving fresh as a daisy.

Another feature of Summer Three was The Visit. Here we were, now about to lose all those years of secrecy, about to make public our hidden entrance on Whaleboat's most unlikely shore, about to break our "No Girls" rule. Parents were asking if they might be allowed to "board."

On a fine, windy Sunday, out they came; unfortunately, not many of the fathers, but nearly all the mothers. What caught their attention was something we had lived with for years—the wetness of the crossing, the banging of the boats on the ledges, the arduous climb, our ancient wall-to-wall carpet, and the house.

They were surprised to know we could see Mount Washington on clear days with certain backlit sunsets. The choice hardware and tools once thought missing from Bustins kitchens and garden were not unnoticed. The quantity and quality of the pile of lumber seemed beyond their belief. We loved the "Oohs" and "Aahs" and talked of a third story sometime and possibly a "wing." The bathroom they asked?

It was off on a sunny hill not too many yards away, a lovely old green lawn chair with the finest western view. Sitting there was outdoors at its best, though on rainy days somewhat wet.

Their picnic and comments over, and our weekend, too, we clambered down the steep hill to go home. In a way it was a kind of ending for the Whalesbelly—though we really didn't know it then.

In the '40's we had this special place, our very own Island Kingdom. Back on Bustins, things were as we wanted them to be: the pleasant walks, the feeling of community, the singing of evening crickets, moonlight sails, and Sunday softball games. Teenage years as we experienced them—lucky, isolated, and extravagant—were exceptionally rare, and we never did know the sadness of poverty. The bitterest enemy at Bustins was gossip, and there was plenty of that, but teenagers mostly escaped those thorns.

The young people got to know every man, woman, and child, and this kind of familiarity was a delight I never knew elsewhere in life. On Bustins' roads you met mostly teachers, lawyers, doctors, and ministers. Bustins would have been a delight to Chaucer—a place rather out of the pleasant part of the Middle Ages.

But over at the Whalesbelly everything was different. Over there was another slice of life and, in its way, the reverse of the Bustin's flurry. At Whalesbelly everything was hard. Every inch of our dry cabin was our own nickel, our own toil, our own row across the "moat" from Bustins.

By Summer Four most of us were already, or very near to, shaving. Frank was no longer around, and I had dropped the only available outboard into a 60′ deep hole off Goose Island. That was one of the hardest and saddest days of my life. The engine just slipped its screws and drifted down, as gentle as a snowflake. My shock was felt for miles. And there were other changes, too—gaps in the "Old Guard" as new friends came along, and the ever hostile challenge of more responsibility, especially from older girls.

We would get newer engines after a while, and we even tried to speed up our trips to Whaleboat by digging a channel through the reefs at Frenchs Island, quite a feat in the face of Atlantic tides. But there were changes of interest, too, and though we all swore a Whaleboat's allegiance, the Friday night magnet began to lose its power.

This story of some boys and some 1940's joys is not the recollection of a past made happier by the passage of years.

It was and is very real.

The beauty of the Whalesbelly was to have reached and captured it. And in a fine sunset, who would rather be anywhere in God's heaven than on that rugged bluff high above Casco Bay?

Paul Wade, *an engineer for most of his life, knew from the time he was a small child that he would one day live in Maine. Four years ago, he moved to Topsham, where he is now semi-retired, collaborating with his wife in dried flower arrangements and writing.*

Art Paine

WINDOWS

Through a Glass Lightly

GEORGE PUTZ

WE ARE BOUND to find places that powerfully affect us, places that without complication or thought manifest an undeniable power. Most people who are drawn to Maine's islands experience this power at least once during their island lives in a way that is frankly mystical. Afterward they put much time, effort, and fortune into whatever corner of this experience that can be preserved in memory. A commercially distracted people, we do not easily admit to mystical experiences. But this feeling is precisely mystical, and in thrashing about to discover what moves sensible and practical people to invest so heavily in islands for such short periods of time, or under such essentially deprived circumstances as islands present, I discovered a passage by W. H. Auden. In the prologue to a book entitled *The Protestant Mystics*, Auden describes four mystical traditions among Northern Europeans, one of which he calls the "Vision of Dame Kind."

"The basic experience is an overwhelming conviction that the objects confronting him have a numinous significance and importance, that the existence of everything he is aware of is holy. And the basic emotion is one of innocent joy, though this joy can include, of course, a reverent dread. ... In the vision of Dame Kind distinctions between the beautiful and the ugly, the serviceable and the unserviceable, vanish. So long as the vision lasts the self is 'naughted,' for its attention is completely absorbed in what it contemplates; it makes no judgements and desires nothing, except to continue in communion...In some cases the subject speaks of this sense of communion as if he were himself *in* every object, and they in him."

Auden goes on to say that we are privileged in this way rarely, if at all, in a lifetime; that very few people ever get the full blast, and that most who do, distrust or explain away their sensations—they were tired, had a few beers, were in love, and so on. It apparently takes some investment in time and nature, along with a voluntary vulnerability to accept such an experience; that is, being open to natural events and not too concerned with other matters.

COLLECTIONS

Once we have this numinous vision, we hunger for its renewal. It can never be recaptured completely, but every once in a while some portion of its feelings are

recreated as we search for and collect relics of the place. Just as mementos and souvenirs of a visit can regenerate the sense of it to some degree, the beachcombers' and photographers' arts reach into memory to tweak a deeply valued time when we and where we were merged as one.

Aspects of the crow reside in every island spirit. Discovered objects shine in our eyes. We are small thieves and our larceny grows in every camp and home from Portland Head to Roque. Stones, shells, and driftwood are the basic stuff, but they are nearly always joined by old bottles, figured china and crockery, native American artifacts, and the tools of archaic industry—fishing, boat building, quarrying, aquaculture, and plain living. Given the enormous odds against their survival, our good luck in being here, and finally our discovery of them, the objects become blessings of a kind, even as we bless them by caring for them. These become mystical icons of place, and to have and to hold them is to conjure thoughts of a conscious universe.

Conjuring is all that they can do, however, and so we show and tell them for their beauty and rareness. We place them in their own communities—our rocks are smooth and symmetrical, all white or black or green, or have perfect rings through them. Our beach glass goes back 50 years and all is evenly worn. The driftwood looks like animals. All the lobster pot buoys are handmade of wood, each different. Pieces of wrecked boats and a two-foot high collection of rope languish in a back corner of the shed. Whatever their state, they all affirm the island and our relationship to it, almost as a sanctification. To see is to feel. To notice is to bless. To be noticed, even by accident, is to be blessed. Things collected may not know this, but island collectors do.

The small hitch in this small religion is that these significant objects pale when brought home. The magic of discovery no longer attends them, and most become mere gew-gaws and nick-nacks, crowding window sills with vaguely remembered junk. To remain vital, our collected blessings need to be renewed, for no one else seems really to appreciate them as we do.

Satisfying as it may be, collecting remains a mortal matter. As soon as we are gone, our survivors disperse with these collections, first thing, selling them if at all valuable, but most usually dispatching them to a dump. Island collections are hapless and soon orphaned. People who are compelled by islands know this, but such honest emotional work is harder for mainlanders whose cosmopolitan vanity efficiently tricks them into ignoring the fact of mortality. People who earn their living out of small boats on big waters may too be vain, but they don't ignore the end of things or their importance. Nothing really is very important. Things have to be tight and run. Pay no attention to meteorologists. Bait and fuel before fun, and give time to the family unless you like focs'l living. In a kind of protest against these plain virtues, things get picked up and stashed, anyway.

Add to the above collections pressed wild flowers, seaweeds and sponges, bird sightings and counts, and sketches and drawings. They bring home memories of a beachy time, a metaphor for what else occurs on islands. People have always collected things, especially as they felt themselves changing. Collecting is a response to fear of change. The blessings escape us even as we reach and grasp for them.

WINDOW SILLS

What is important here is how island people use their windows. Traditional island architecture in the form of farm houses and village frame-built "capes" and "mansards," with or without various 19th and early 20th century sins of commission, usually followed general rules of form, including size and placement of windows. Though most of the windows let in light and allowed visual access to the outside, they were not specifically designed for such. Indeed, the usual use of windows was to cover them over, not only with often used pull-shades, but also various sorts of curtains and draperies. Some windows would be esteemed for their particular visual offerings—who is parked out front, the children's play area, the neighbor's flower bed, etc.; but almost never were windows used as art, save those that surveyed harbor views. Even then the aquatic panes were technically employed in the business of wanting to know other people's business or the weather.

Most windows were indifferently obscured by fabric textures, and if embellished by objects at all, the items were from essentially non-island contexts. Trinkets of exotic origin were as much coveted in island breasts as in any other. Truth be told, most traditional island domiciles were designed to neutralize uniqueness of geographical place, special aspects of the lot site, and sometimes the eccentricities of the occupants. The major exception to this is that older farm homes were located and oriented to make maximum use of winter sunlight, but even in these cases window form and location followed proportional conventions. With the proviso that island houses were often a bit narrower and with more loft, they still conformed to architectural practice common throughout the rest of New England, including window placement and view.

After the Second World War, when history allowed an entirely new kind of American personality to be constructed, domestic architecture flourished into many new styles that previously were the domain of only a few rich and frankly eccentric artists and their clients. It became not only possible but acceptable to express inward sensibilities outwardly in one's domicile. Houses, whether primary or seasonal-recreational, became almost conventionally unconventional as people built homes such that outward vision from within could reflect one's own self regard and preference. Personal vision may have had to adopt a conventional form of sorts, but the views out of windows were unique, and constituted for many the primary value of the houses. Where traditional homes were designed and used to exclude what was outside, the new structures were purposely built to allow in what otherwise would be excluded. The psychologies differ utterly. Not only do the form and purpose of windows differ, the way new islanders use them constitutes an artistic and domestic revolution, one that pushes the notion of ownership into the very soul of rocks, wood, and water.

A newly emerging American ego is coming to extend the idea of ownership *in personum* out to the boundaries where only judicial ownership once applied—ownership *in rem*, merely legal. Where once one's home was one's castle, the castle grounds had at least some tacit public rights of use—minimally an understanding that "you can harmlessly cross my land whenever you wish, if I can do the same across your land." These days this traditionally agrarian ethic of mutual passage is superceded by an urban, or at least suburban, ethic wherein expectations that used to end at the castle doorstep are extended to the property bounds. The modern size, placement, and use of windows reflects and encourages this change in ownership values. It may even be a primary cause!

Islanders of any tenure worth mentioning are generally enraged by the new ethic, for the idea that one ought to have proprietary rights over what one can see is a betrayal of the ancient maritime value system wherein one must know other people's business as a matter of safety and social responsibility. To their minds, privacy, or at least security, ends with domestic walls, not property bounds. To think otherwise is to exclude oneself from the local network of mutual regard and care—a misdemeanor in a community that earns its living out of small boats at sea and whose citizens often hunt. Complaints to the contrary, islanders must be gossiped about, for otherwise they are excluded and thus endangered. Gossip, after all, means God's Family. The habit of parvenus to post "No Trespassing" signs around their property and to become huffy when their bounds are violated without ill intent, is personally crazy and socially moronic in an island context.

In any case, a window on an island becomes a window on the island. Long before contemporary interior design dictated windows without visual obstruction or habitable sill, islanders kept some windows gin clear and without curtains or junk to obstruct the changing picture that it offered. Still, the usual old fashioned glazed island prospect is wonderfully embellished even in these sterile times, often in chintz and cotton print, and the sills are lined with antique and natural finds, cherished against a background of the optically dynamic transfer of light and image that only the old glass lights and panes provide. Opinions vary, but the riparian lookers-out-

Peter Ralston

Aspects of the crow reside in every island spirit. Discovered objects shine in our eyes. We are small thieves and our larceny grows in every camp and home from Portland Head to Roque.

of-windows cherish their old windows and regularly use an idle moment to again retest how a certain place in a certain pane distorts its prospect. They would not trade it for a dead clear modern window for anything.

Embellishing a window that looks out over an island scene with old found items is many things: a reinforcement of place, a reliable visual anchor, a nick-nack shelf, and a static counterpoint to the dynamic interior and exterior of the household. Hated for dust, cobwebs, and dead flies, the old windows with their semiprecious booty are rapidly going out of fashion. The old man never did and the new women won't clean them.

FOSSIL SELVES

On the beach, I found an elongated shalelike stone. Both surfaces were pocked and impressed with the forms of half a dozen different species of 400-million-year-old life forms. It was a stunning specimen, so satisfying in its shape that it might have been collected for that alone. Even more startling were the clarity and jewel-like quality of the fossils. It is, without a doubt, a first-rate piece, and I take considerable pride in showing it off.

But there is more. Seven years after making this discovery, I was walking along the same stretch of beach with a friend, telling him about finding this extraordinary fossil. Looking down, he replied, "Oh, do you mean like this?" So saying, he extracted from between his feet not just a similar fossil but an identical fossil, in fact the facing surface of the very specimen I had found years before.

Can you comprehend how unlikely this discovery was? After all, this is a storm beach, pounded by gales, its stony surface resculpted every winter by the gigantic surge that inundates it, casting debris far back behind the normal high tide line. Not even plastic objects survive this shore, so utterly are its objects ground and reground into pulp, sand, and grit.

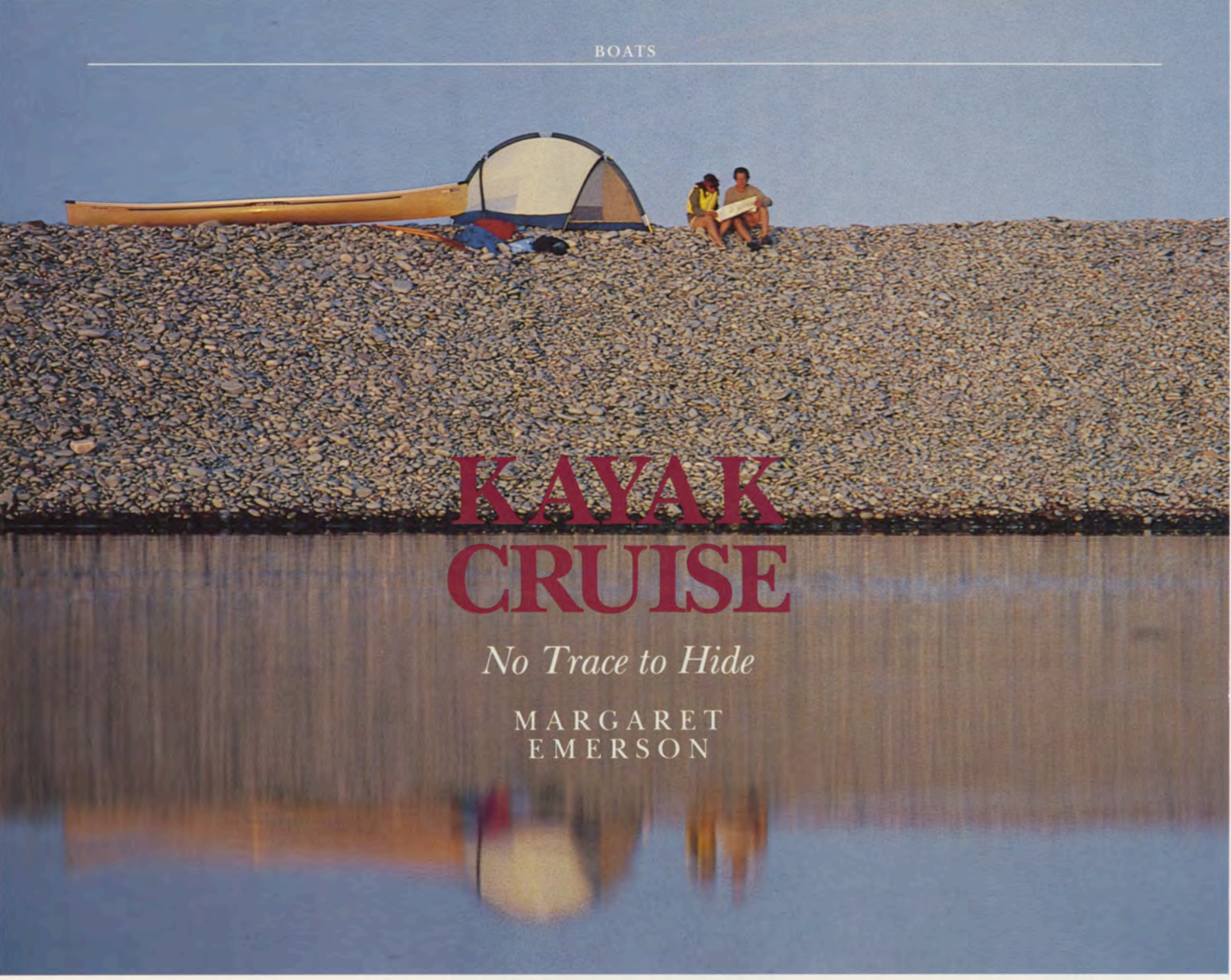
Think of the number of organisms that have existed and the chance that any of them will be geologically preserved. It verges on a mathematical nil. Then think of the chance that a particular fossil will be cast up 400 million years later on a nonfossiliferous beach only rarely visited by people. We are now well beyond mathematical nil. Finally, try to calculate the odds against two friends finding two halves of the same fossil.

So with no real intention, my friend and I became fossil brothers—a foolish designation perhaps, but no more or less foolish than any of those other irrational foundations on which our most important human relationships are based.

We do not really choose our living mates, our children, our professional colleagues, our neighbors. It is not so much that we are pulled, pushed, or directed as it is that circumstances simply drop us—albeit with some influence on our part—into life's conditions. Real planning, on which so many of us pride ourselves, has relatively little to do with it.

The fact is that we share a planet that quite regularly reveals how contiguous we all are: not just next to and piled atop one another, but existing within one another. While not a vision of Dame Kind, events such as this remind me of the first time a numinous islandness overwhelmed me by its sheer and utter elemental beauty. Later came the fellowship, the complications and betrayals, the special life-lessons of island living.

But all the while that the collections accumulate in a fellowship of collectors, an understanding grows about those who feel excluded from the wonder, about adaptation, and most especially about the extraordinary luck of the draw, the coincidence that so many precious things glint on the window sills of others, on the island, harkening back to a mutual, wondrous few moments when we and the islands knew we belonged, one in the other.



KAYAK CRUISE

No Trace to Hide

MARGARET EMERSON

Sea kayaking is a growing sport on the Maine coast and across the nation. Some island owners fear the sleek boats will bring intrusive hordes to their shores. The editors of the Island Journal *publish the following account by an island owner and kayaker to stimulate further discussion on the topic of island access.*

OUR MAIN PROBLEM was where to camp. Knowing that Frenchboro is both steeply-sided and heavily populated (by island standards), I had proposed camping on Harbor Island, never having noticed that there is a cabin there. We landed on the island, for starters, to think this one over. No usable coves were in sight; those on the chart looked a long, rough paddle away with no guarantee of good landing or camping terrain when we got there. While I pondered, Mary peeked in the windows of the cabin. It was apparent that the owners were not expected home for awhile. Everything was clean and neat, refrigerator doors stood open. Nothing said, "Keep Out," "Go Away," or even "No Trespassing." So, feeling very much like trespassers, but also that the alternatives were rather grim, we stayed.

As an island owner myself, the above decision required a fair amount of mental wrestling off and on during the rest of that trip, and it was not until I had returned to my more normal summertime way of life did I resolve the problem in my mind.

Of course, had we heeded the weather forecast we might not have been on Harbor Island at all:

"Southeast winds, 10-20 m.p.h., with rain" was the NOAA weather radio prediction for Monday, August 9. I didn't have to twist my daughter Mary's arm very hard to make her decide to put off our proposed kayaking/camping trip to a Tuesday departure.

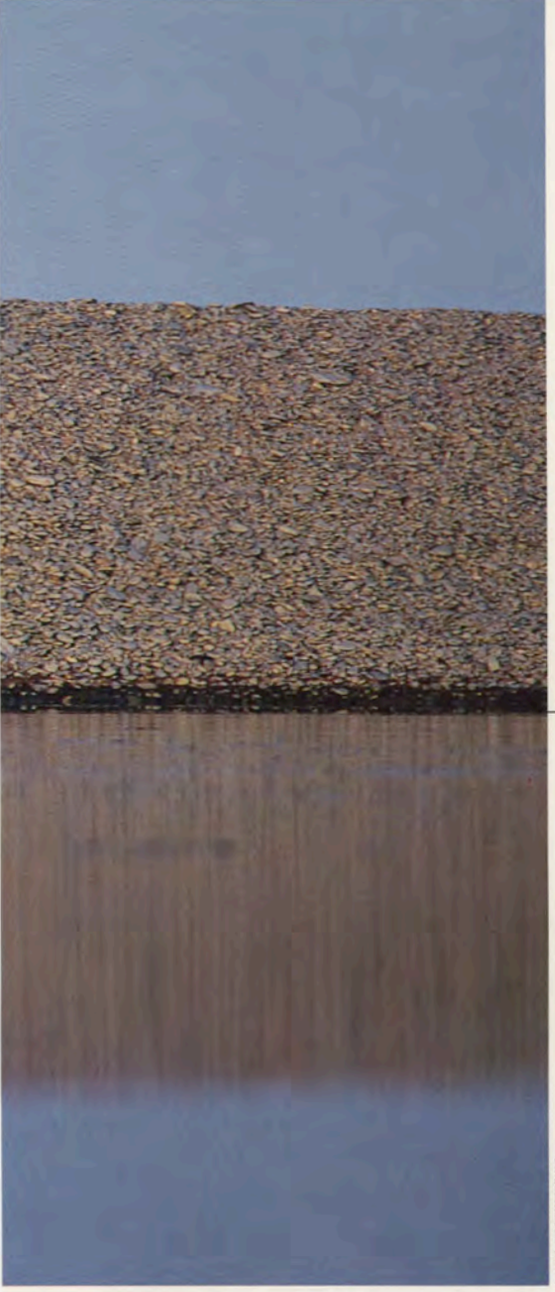
So, how was the weather on Monday morning? Hot, sunny, and dead calm, a kayaker's dream day! We hardly dared to believe it. Even the updated 6 a.m. report—"light southeast winds and possible showers"—was less pessimistic than earlier, so we began to toss together our equipment.

The pile of gear grew to such an impressive size my husband began to doubt if we could fit if all into two kayaks. But Mary and I had done a little experimenting and had found that my kayak, the Eskimo model of the Easy Rider design, easily held the three-person dome tent, stove, my sleeping bag and pad, all pushed well aft, leaving room enough for personal gear behind the seat and the water jug and fruit juice boxes forward. Mary's kayak, an Eddyline Calypso, has hatches in the deck fore and aft, and comfortably held most of our food and all her sleeping and personal gear. Our boats are "ocean touring" models, each measuring a few inches shy of 17′.

Conditions remained perfect for our 11 a.m. departure from Oceanville, on the east side of Deer Isle. Our course was a bit east of south toward Swans and Marshall islands.

This trip was Mary's idea. She had proposed it over the telephone to me when calling from her home in New Hampshire. My enthusiasm was tempered only by qualms about my ability to paddle any great distance at a stretch, but Mary assured me that she had done no more than I had, and this would be a relaxed island hopper. Mary is 36, keeps quite fit, and is far more adventurous than her mother. I am 62, keep moderately fit, and find my age most convenient for being too old to do those things which really frighten me, but young enough to try the things that tempt me.

I have paddled kayaks of one design or



R. Hamilton Smith

another off and on most of my life, but always on quiet, inland waters, and have seldom done any camping anywhere. I have, however, spent much time on salt water in boats of varying sizes, and I have deep respect, often mixed with terror, for the speed with which the sea can change her moods.

It had been my suggestion, therefore, that we keep our trip very loosely planned, going with the wind and not worrying about the return leg. My husband had promised to pick us up with truck or work boat if we called from some reasonably convenient spot. Since the wind is predominately southwest in the summer, we figured we might get as far as Mt. Desert in our allotted three days. As far as campsites went, we would wing it, relying on finding secluded areas or obtaining permission from owners.

Our first objective was Shabby Island, a well-named half acre of rock and grass in Jericho Bay. Even in a dead calm there is always a swell there, and as small boat handlers know, the best way to land in a swell is to ride a wave in, hop out (62 year-olds don't hop out too well), and pull your craft up on shore before the next swell arrives. So Mary and I rode up on Shabby's gently sloping ledges, hopped out, grabbed our kayaks and, umph! Our normally 50 pound kayaks now weighed about 75 pounds, and we weren't lightly pulling them anywhere. "Lesson One," we laughed, and were glad it had been learned with such a slight sea running.

A hasty lunch was eaten sitting near the kayaks. Shabby is a nesting ground for gulls and cormorants and many of the youngsters still wore patches of baby down, so we kept as low a profile as possible.

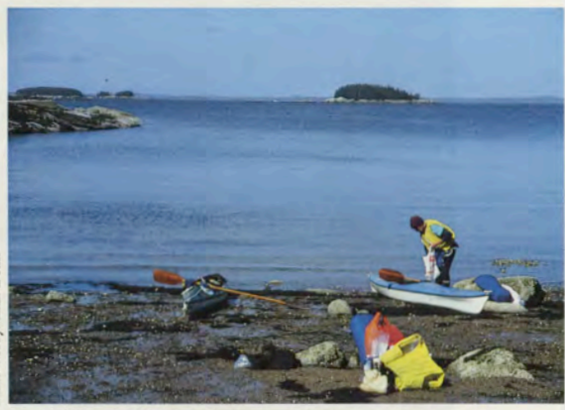
"Where to?" asked Mary.

"Hat Island," I replied, pointing to a spruce-covered derby hat about three miles away. Hat is an especially attractive island with nice sand beach, some open meadows, fragrant stands of spruce, hidden cliffs, and granite outcroppings on its high south side from which you get a grand view both east and west.

By mid-afternoon an easterly breeze sprang up and the predicted clouds began to gather, but Marshall Island, at most a mile across Toothacher Bay, looked easily attainable, and a sheltered cove inside Ringtown Island looked like a good spot to camp. The current really pours through Toothacher Bay creating tide rips in several places. Mary, well ahead of me as usual, got involved in one of these, and seeing her take some spray from sloppy seas I hastily pulled on my cockpit skirt before I, too, was battling the current. A little determined paddling soon brought us safely to our appointed beach, having covered a total distance of about seven and a half miles. However, Lesson Two, that day, was the lack of visibility when touring in a kayak. We had heard the tide rip well enough but had been unable to spot its exact location until we were almost in it. And if there was any kind of sea running, finding each other over any distance was very difficult.

The beach, which had looked like sand from a distance, turned out to be cobbles. The tide was dead low and it was a long climb to high water mark, but there was a comfortable campsite among spruces that crowded to the edge of the beach.

By the time the tent was up and supper cooking on our little propane stove, a few



Mike Perry/L.L. Bean

sprinkles had developed, but they never amounted to anything. Dark came early under the spruce trees. We suspended the electric torch from the dome of the tent for a little reading in the comfort of our sleeping bags. A whip-poor-will entertained us at intervals throughout the night, the only time I have heard one in Maine.

I think neither of us slept much that night. Mary's back was bothering her and I always need a period of adjustment to a new environment before I sleep soundly. From about 2 a.m. to dawn there was a steady repetition of heavy diesel engines going by, apparently fishing boats heading for offshore waters.

The next morning, weather radio promised fair skies with light northwest winds, so we were off by 8:30. Figuring the tide rips were still out there, we put the kayak skirts on, snapping their shock cord bases around the cockpit coaming and tying the tops under our arms before paddling across Toothacher Bay towards Hockamock Light at the entrance to Burnt Coat Harbor on Swans Island. If the wind was to be northerly, our plan was to stay on the south side of Swans, then probably run with the wind to Long Island.

Off Hockamock we decided to make a foray up Burnt Coat Harbor. I thought I remembered, from years past, a store in the tiny settlement called Swans Island, where perhaps we could buy some margarine, the most missed item of a number of things we'd forgotten in our hasty departure.

Mike Perry/L.L. Bean

The northwest wind was picking up, whistling down the narrow harbor and providing the first challenging paddle of the trip as we fought a half mile against it and landed at the float of a building that said "Restaurant" on a banner across it's front. "Mmm," we thought, "food!" It was a keen disappointment to find the restaurant served dinner only!

A fast walk a mile or so up the road revealed no grocery store, but did a lot to loosen up tight hip and back muscles and work up an even healthier appetite! It also reinforced my liking of Swans Island with its unpretentious beauty and friendly people.

Back at the kayaks, I embarrassed Mary by trying to cadge a cup of coffee from a man who had the audacity to walk by me while sipping on a steaming hot cup! Hastily he explained that this was the last night's coffee, heated up, and not very good. Glumly, I settled for a drink of water.

A fair wind took us quickly back down Burnt Coat Harbor and through a cut on the west side of Harbor Island. From there we hugged the south shore of Swans, protected from the wind, which was now in the 20-m.p.h. range. A small cove with white sand beach (at high tide anyway) soon presented itself and we made the most of this sunny spot for lunch and a long rest and reading period.

Soon after two we were ready to tackle the trip to Long Island. Or at least Mary was. I was worried about what kind of seas we might find a mile offshore, but put my faith in Mary's accounts of how well her kayak had ridden all kinds of nasty conditions in Woods Hole, and in my ability to keep my craft right side up when the alternative was so terrifying. Paddling close to Swan's rocky south shore for another mile, we kept an eye on the lobster pot buoys. When they all seemed to be aiming toward the spot on Long Island where we guessed Frenchboro Harbor to be, we pulled on the cockpit skirts and headed southeast. The farther we got from Swans Island, the more the northerly direction of the wind made itself felt, so it turned out to be a quartering run rather than directly with it. This is more work as far as paddling is concerned, but usually a safer way to take the seas if they are building. A hasty glance upwind showed plenty of those gleaming white teeth. It looked scarier than it felt, and though the going was just sloppy enough to make us glad we had waterproof skirts, the kayaks rode the sea like happy ducks. By about 3:30 we had made our landing on little Harbor Island. Thus the day's trip ended and my guilt trip—mentioned earlier—began.

We pitched our tent in the woods behind the cabin and used its pleasant porch to set up the stove. It was a sunny, protected spot to relax, read, and as the afternoon waned, to watch the harbor fill up with visiting yachts. No whip-poor-will entertained us that night; instead we listened to the strains of "Speed Bonny Boat" floating down to us from a bagpipe skirling away in the harbor. Neither of us had trouble sleeping that night.

With unheard thanks offered to unknown hosts, we were on our way by 7:30 a.m. The wind was still northwest, a brisk breeze of perhaps 12 m.p.h., so we paddled out the east entrance to Frenchboro Harbor and back toward Swans, keeping in the lee of the Sister Islands on the way. NOAA weather radio had predicted these winds for most of the day, eventually shifting to "onshore breezes" which, in our area, means southwest winds anywhere from 5-20 m.p.h. I was reluctant to tackle the trip to Mt. Desert in winds sweeping the length of the bay so we decided to head for Harbor Island in the lee of Swans Island for a rest and then make a decision.

By the time we were ready for the next leg, the wind was very definitely dropping. NOAA radio even admitted as much but still predicted onshore breezes for the afternoon, and southwest winds for the following day. We looked at the chart again. If we paddled back across Toothacher Bay and lunched on the northern end of Marshall Island, we could then continue west southwest to Fog Island across the mouth of Jericho Bay. If the wind piped up from the southwest the next day, it would be a more or less fair wind run from Fog to home.

There is a lovely sand beach on the northwest end of Marshall and there we landed for a leisurely lunch. During the paddle across Toothacher, the wind had

Our own island has a sign which says, among other things, "No camping without permission." Yet I know, for sure, that we would have no objection to an individual or couple arriving in a small, non-motorized craft, quietly camping on our Sheep Island as long as they were considerate of the wildlife there and left no traces of their occupancy behind.

Mike Perry/L.L. Bean

dropped away entirely, and the day had become increasingly hot. Once again we encountered a tide rip, and I was surprised to find that it produced its own, tiny breeze, felt nowhere else.

By noon we were underway again on a glassy calm, and by 2 p.m. we had landed in the little cove on the east side of Fog Island. Our day's total mileage was about 11 miles. Mary felt she could have easily doubled that, but I was ready for a respite.

Next to Russ, Fog is my favorite island. A large flock of crossbills had been there in late July, and I was pleased that some still remained. How they do sing! Savannah sparrows joined in at the open, south end of the island. Some years ago there used to be a huge patch of jewelweed on the west side, and from mid-August on for several years in a row a big flock of hummingbirds could be found feasting on this favorite flower. A large flock of sheep keeps the island meadows open, but there are also thick stands of spruce and more open woods with little, sunny glades hidden among them. For camping, a more ideal spot could not be found.

Being unsure about exactly how much fuel was left in our propane cylinder, we cooked that night over a fire on the beach. Besides, it gave us a chance to burn most of the trash we had been carefully packing from island to island in a rapidly disintegrating plastic bag.

Departure time a bit before 8 Friday morning found us ankle deep in the mud, packing the kayaks in the lowest tide yet. Once again we were blessed with a glassy calm. Even from my kayak I could spot with binoculars a sliver of white two miles across the bay on Gooseberry Island, and a spot of red moving nearby. My husband, in red teeshirt, was hard at work raking Irish moss in his favorite location, but without his helper who was off on a kayak cruise! Loons were calling again, over towards Isle au Haut.

With such a lovely morning, we felt no need to hurry. An easy paddle took us past Colby Ledge (where the Irish moss looked excellent), past No Mans, between Ram and Spruce, and on to Coombs where we stopped to stretch cramped muscles and chat with an anchored yachtsman. For those who love islands, this archipelago off Stonington has to be one of the beauty spots of the world. Back in the kayaks, we continued on between Devil and Camp, past Bold, across the Deer Isle Thorofare, another mile to Little Sheep, and a last mile to home.

For Mary this trip had been a shakedown cruise for a more ambitious solo trip at some later date. For me it was a high adventure, one I hope to repeat some day, before I really am too old.

AFTERWORD

Thinking about this trip from the point of view of an island owner, I am wondering how I feel about kayaking campers who "wing it" when it comes to campsites. Our own island has a sign which says, among other things, "No camping without permission." Yet I know, for sure, that we would have no objection to an individual or couple arriving in a small, non-motorized craft, quietly camping on our Sheep Island as long as they were considerate of the wildlife there and left no traces of their occupancy behind. For larger groups with more impact, we like a phone call ahead asking permission. Times may change, but certainly at the moment there are not enough kayakers, canoeists, or small sailboat operators swarming along Maine's coast to make them a threat to any island owner.

So I'd say, yes, if you're a cruising kayaker, go ahead and wing it. Most of the islands are uninhabited; finding out who owns them takes time, and tracking down the owner takes longer still. If the islands survived all those Indians, sitting around and gorging on clams while honing their arrowheads a few centuries ago, they'll survive a few kayakers today.

***Margaret Emerson**, a Camden resident, summers in Oceanville on Deer Isle where her husband Ed continues as one of the few remaining Irish moss harvesters on the Maine coast. An avid kayaker and bicyclist, Margaret is active proof that you are only as old as you think you are.*

WINTER PASSAGE HOME

JOE UPTON

WHEN WE DREW IN the frozen lines and moved away from the dock, the young ice shattered with our passage. It was January 5th and the ice had come to Casco Bay; another cold night and we'd be trapped in the Harraseeket River, perhaps for weeks.

So we broke out and steamed east toward the offshore island of Vinalhaven, where we might yet find a few acres of mussels to fish, maybe enough to keep us going through the hard months when the mainland beds were iced over and inaccessible.

That passage, made effortlessly before on a shining September day, took on a different cast in January. The wind was hard and northwest, and when we cleared the shore and made Broad Sound, between Stockman and Whaleboat Islands, Mt. Washington, a distant pink and shining citadel, rose above the snow blasted trees in the stark morning light.

Off Eagle Island we passed a single lobster boat, inbound for Chebeague or Portland, throwing spray clear over his house. Ours was a 37-footer, an inshore boat, really, and that January day my partner and I felt small and vulnerable to be traveling offshore. By Bailey Island the wind swirled the snow down around us. Of life there was no sign, only the haunting submarine watch towers looming over the land and the sea.

The northwest wind drew down the length of the Kennebec River, roaring out between Popham Beach and Georgetown Island. It drifted and sculpted the new snow on Seguin Island, and then found us, alone on the vast waters, for the prudent fishermen had fled the sea.

In the past there had been many who were relieved and glad for Seguin's great light and horn, guiding them in from the deep and the fog. But for us that day, from a mile offshore, from a crooked and mean patch of water, with the wind coming on, and the prospect of a hard day ahead, Seguin seemed so wild, lonely and cheerless, with her steep, forbidding sides that she gave us little comfort.

My partner came up, and I went below, seeking the meager heat of the engine warm foc'sle. We were rolling heavily in the trough of the seas. I cuddled into a ball and edged myself in the best I could. But now and again a sea more violent than the rest would slam into the boat, like the slap of a huge hand, and rest was impossible. When it was my turn to steer again I put on thick gloves, drew my collar up, wool hat down, and stepped out into the windy cold in our open pilothouse.

There are bleaker, more dismal places on this coast of ours. Machias Seal Island or Mt. Desert Rock, both rising from the winter wasteland of the North Atlantic, would be wilder places to be on such a day, I suppose.

But for barren, austere beauty, give me Damariscove, Outer Heron, and Pumpkin Islands, seen on the top of a swell, then lost in grey, white capped seas and racing clouds. I had a glimpse of Damariscove's lonely and abandoned watchtower, shuttered by buildings, little visited in winter, and miles from the nearest human. It made me feel keenly once again, even while the sun was still high, the precariousness of our position, the distance to our destination, and the coming of the night.

When I looked east for some sign of Monhegan, our next waypoint, for the longest while there was nothing. Then for an instant, dancing on the top of a sea was the tiny silhouette of the lighthouse, something to steer for. I hoped the Monhegan boys'd be out, that we could pass close, wave as they rose and fell on the seas and hauled their gear. We'd have, if even for a moment, the reassurance of seeing another human, another boat close by.

But the wind and the cold must have kept them in. We passed outside of Manana, inside of Duck Rocks, and there were no boats moving. On the shore, but for a wisp of smoke torn from a single chimney, the island could have been abandoned.

The sun dipped lower in the sky and there was no warmth in it. The wind came on a little harder, bit through long johns, insulated coveralls and oilskins. When it was my turn again to go below, I was glad for it. Even the noise and cramped quarters of our foc'sle were better than that wild and cold world on deck. But now and again, I'd look out the little window to see how we were coming along. Our passage took us a mile east of Metinic Island, then slanting northeast, in between Big and Little Green, before swinging north for the final leg into Vinalhaven. The big ledges—Roaring Bull, Southeast Breaker, Southern Triangles—were all booming and smoking in the sea with spume blown far downwind—awful, desperate looking places. And Metinic itself, like a great long iceberg carved by wind and snow, looked incredibly desolate and inhospitable.

When I thought the bleakest part of our trip was behind us, we came to Big and Little Green Islands. The red ball of the sun touched the horizon far to the west. In warmer times I'd fished herring close to those isolated dots, approaching them in

Art Paine

the black, stepping out of the pilothouse to smell the warm scent of land waft distinctly out of the damp sea air.

This time there was a little shelter from the seas in the passage between the islands, and for a few minutes the boat ceased its heaving and pounding. We had a chance to knock some of the ice off the rigging, re-lash the skiff and gear on deck, and look out at that awesome and bleak sight.

Treeless and low, perhaps 50 acres each, with the flow of the snow and wind broken only by a fish camp and outbuildings, they appeared more like rafts of ice than rock and grass islands. Beyond them, a mile to the northwest, we could clearly make out where the sea humped up and broke on another bad set of reefs, the Northern Triangles.

"Bleak old spot, isn't it?" my partner murmured, and then we were out of the lee and into the seaway again, chasing the thin last light of day to our destination eight miles away.

On a winter afternoon, on the lonely ocean, in a small boat, there is something about the going of the day, the fading of the light that makes you both humble and somber. The cold, the wind, the seas seemed like malevolent forces just then. I shivered involuntarily.

When finally, with a magenta sky behind us, we made land, it was with inexpressible relief. I'd never thought that the austere shapes of Little Hurricane and the White Islands, dark spruce looming above the pale glow of bold granite shoulders, would be so welcoming. After the low, muddy shores and mixed soft and hardwood forests of Casco Bay, they seemed stark and pure.

There's something about the homeward trail that makes the heart sing. So it was when we picked up our old mooring after four months away, shut all down, got the skiff overboard and rowed for the shore.

The sudden silence rang in our ears, but what was overwhelming was this thought: when on that shining and warm day we'd let go our mooring and set off so hopefully to the west'ard, the grass had been green, the leaves still on the trees. Now the shore was rimmed with heavy ice pans. The land and the trees, the woodpile, our children's playhouse were all snow blasted, disfigured by the wind and the white.

After we'd gotten ashore, hauled the skiff up over the ice and made it fast to a tree, we stopped for a minute together, my partner and I, turned and looked out at that lonely and cold place we'd just come in from.

Only the very last of the color was left in the sky, and in the western bay the fairway buoy blinked now and again, a short and a long flash. Off to the north a bit there was a glow in the sky from Rockland, but other than that it was pretty much all dark.

"Ohhh," I sighed at last. "Could have been worse, I suppose..."

My partner only nodded, moved off through the snow towards the path to his house.

The drifts were thigh high in places, and when I made our cottage at last, I took a shovel, uncovered the woodpile, drew back the tarp, and brought an armload inside. When I found the light, my breath was white before me. On the lobster crate that held the kindling were Golden Books and children's toys from the summer.

I built a fire, put some rum in a glass, and sat for a bit, savoring the heat after our bitter journey. The flames flickered in the darkened room, while outside the thin light from the moon played eerily across the dark water and the snow blasted land. And finally, when I lay in my sleeping bag, the wind came on again, hard and cold, more than it had during the day, and I was keenly grateful again for that brief pause between storm systems that let us slip east.

The gusts swept across Old Harbor, hammering again and again at the house. At times the building shook; outside the roar of the wind was like a great sea breaking on the shore.

I couldn't help but think once more of all those outer islands we had passed, lifeless now and dark. And of the northwest wind, baring its arctic teeth, blowing mercilessly from the mainland, across the bays, re-sculpting yet again, in desolation and darkness, the snow and the islands and the shore.

BIG HOUSE *ON THE* FERRY

EDGAR ALLEN BEEM

WITHOUT A BOAT of one's own, there are three ways to get to Matinicus. The Maine State Ferry Service runs out once a month, maybe. Penobscot Air Service flies the mail out daily from Owl's Head, but if the fog rolls in the planes are grounded. That leaves Offshore Freight and Passenger Company, or, to give the operation its more familiar name—Dick Moody.

When I arrived at the state ferry terminal in Rockland, Moody's boat, a buff and white 40-footer crowned with a puffin silhouette and named *Mary and Donna*, was tied at the Matinicus slip, but Moody himself was nowhere to be seen. A long line of cars and trucks had lined up for the North Haven boat, but no one else seemed to be going to Matinicus. While I waited for Moody, I stood in the freezing November rain and studied the lines of the *Margaret Chase Smith*, the newest and most controversial vessel in the state ferry fleet. What caught my eye was the big red rose emblazed on the *Smith's* housing (former U.S. Senator Margaret Chase Smith had spent a lot of time in Washington lobbying to have her favorite flora designated the official U.S. flower) and the extremely unlikely home-port painted on the ferry's stern. How many ocean-going vessels call Augusta home these days?

As I pondered this and other absurdities, Moody pulled up in a pickup truck and dropped off Emery Philbrook, the *Mary and Donna's* relief captain. Just as soon as Emery got the cargo of baked goods, diary products, and mail loaded and Moody fetched his wife from the doctor's, we would get underway.

Moody, a burly seaman from Belfast who once worked as a Penobscot Bay pilot, moved to Matinicus in 1978 and purchased the island's only store, the Offshore Store.

Because he was also the island postmaster, he explained, he was forbidden from holding the mail contract, but today he was delivering as well as sorting the mail anyway. Earlier that morning, Penobscot Air had taken off on the mail run, immediately iced up, and turned back. With the U.S. Weather Service predicting northwest winds of 25 to 40 knots and up to 6″ of snow, my chances of flying off Matinicus that afternoon as I had planned were not particularly good. If I were going out with him, Moody suggested, I'd better plan to stay the night.

Offshore Freight and Passenger Company is a suitably 19th century-sounding name for a company with commercial antecedents in the days of sail. What the company does is ferry freight and passengers back and forth across the 23 miles of Penobscot Bay which separate Rockland on the mainland from the island of Matinicus. For $25 Offshore Freight and Passenger will get you to and from Maine's most remote year-round island community—though not necessarily all in the same day.

The Begats: Matinicus has had regular boat service (more or less) since 1874 when Capt. Henry Philbrook began sailing the schooner *Everett* between the island and the mainland. In 1879 Capt. Philbrook replaced the *Everett* with the schooner *Julia Fairbanks* and made 2,850 crossings with her before calling it quits in 1908. In 1888, however, the mail run was taken over by Capt. Hiram Smith who made the crossing in the schooners *Ida Grover* and *David Osier* and the steamer *Jessie* before the steamer *William G. Butman* (named for her skipper) took over in 1897.

On a placid day in May, 1915 (or 1916, depending on whose history you read), with the sea as smooth as a mill pond, the *Butman* set out on a routine run to Rockland, settled unexpectedly, and sank. Capt. Butman and his five passengers managed to save the mail and make it back to Matinicus in two lifeboats. Capt. Butman persevered for a few years with the motorboat *Palm*, but was eventually relieved on the mail route by Capt. Burton Wallace in the motorboat *Beatrice*.

On the night of January 29, 1920, the *Beatrice* set out for home from Owls Head with Capt. Wallace and two passengers aboard. They never reached Matinicus. Speculation later was that the *Beatrice* had foundered on the Hurricane Ledges. Wreckage washed ashore later, but the three islanders were never seen again. Obviously, there is no such thing as a routine trip when the road between here and home is liquid and consists of cold North Atlantic waters.

In 1921, the Rockland, Matinicus, and Criehaven Transportation Company began operating the 60′, 50-h.p. *Calista D. Morrill* under Capt. Stuart Ames. In 1938, the *Morrill* was replaced by the 65′, 165-h.p. *Mary A* that served Matinicus under Capt. Ames until 1960 and under Capt. Norris Young until 1977. Then, despite several years of state subsidy for repairs, the *Mary A* was unable to meet Coast Guard standards for certification, and the Matinicus lifeline was severed. For eight years, until Dick Moody purchased the *Mary and Donna* in 1986, the island had no regular boat service. Between 1977 and 1987, the year-round population of the 700-acre island dropped from 120 to around 60. At one point in the winter of 1987 there were reportedly only 18 people living on this island which had once been home to 800.

Moody hadn't really wanted to get into the transportation business when he took over the island store in 1978, but when Norris Young, operating a smaller boat, found it necessary to double the freight rates, Moody had to do something. The first thing he did was approach Herb Jones of Stonington Flying Service who agreed to fly freight in at the old rates. For heavier cargo like firewood and bottled gas, Moody had to resort to hiring large boats, at times chartering a state ferry at a cost of $450 a run. In 1979, he and fisherman Vance Bunker persuaded the state legislature to provide once-a-month ferry service to Matinicus. The Maine State Ferry Service was established in 1960, but Matinicus was not one of the islands served.

I stood in the freezing November rain and studied the lines of the *Margaret Chase Smith*, the newest and most controversial vessel in the state ferry fleet. What caught my eye was the big red rose emblazed on the *Smith's* housing and the extremely unlikely homeport painted on the ferry's stern. How many ocean-going vessels call Augusta home these days?

Even with token ferry service and a fair-weather air link, however, an island community cannot sustain itself without regular boat service. Thus, in 1986, Moody purchased his own boat and began making weekend trips ashore.

"If I can just make this boat pay for itself, get stuff to the store, pay the expenses, that's all I ask," Moody told me. "I'm not looking for a profit."

At the moment the *Mary and Donna* was not paying her way, primarily because of the cost of insurance, the curse of modern litigious American life. Moody was paying $6,000 a year for liability alone, and a good thing he was; not long ago an errant tourist had slipped on board, cracked some ribs, and sued Moody for $200,000.

As Matinicus loomed ahead, Emery Philbrook, a short, weathered old seabird, concluded, "It's gonna blow." What he saw was a sliver of grim, grey-green mainland being overcome by a grey-white glacial cloud bank. If I hadn't realized it before, I knew now that we had passed the point of no return.

Two hours and 15 minutes from the time we left Rockland, the *Mary and Donna* motored into little Matinicus Harbor. The fishing village clustered around the harbor proved to be the sort of raw, unlovely, working waterfront that romantics find "picturesque." The rawest element in the harborscape was the dock itself, a new concrete structure belonging to Moody but recently repaired with $25,000 worth of state money after a state ferry damaged it trying to unload a cement truck. Here, as on the other five islands served by the Maine State Ferry Service (Vinalhaven, North Haven, Islesboro, Swans, and Frenchboro) the ferry is a sore point.

What griped Matinicans was not so much that the ferry came only once a month, but that it did so unpredictably, both because of the damaged dock and the exigencies of tides, weather, and scheduling (state ferries can only dock at Matinicus at high tide, and since the Matinicus ferry must be pulled off the North Haven run, that high tide must fall in the middle of the day when there is good weather). Matinicus was visited by the ferry only twice between November 1986 and June 1987. In June, the ferry came three days in a row to make up for not coming at all in December, February, March, and May.

Ferry complaints on Matinicus (where only 140 passengers and 92 vehicles rode the ferry in fiscal 1987) were (and are) as nothing, however, compared to those of the bigger, more populated islands. After two years of study, I was only beginning to fathom the depths of this complicated problem. If I started on Matinicus, I reasoned, perhaps I could unravel the insular Gordian Knot.

Matinicus had a simple problem—irregular ferry service. Some folks on North Haven were put out when their ferry was pulled for the monthly Matinicus run. But the bigger beef on North Haven was the fact that residents of neighboring Vinalhaven paid only about half as much per ferry ride by virtue of having a higher volume of traffic. North Haven, it seemed, objected to a state ferry service accounting system that put each line on its own budget; some folks on North Haven believed a system-wide accounting system would be more fair. To folks on Vinalhaven that looked like they would be subsidizing service to North Haven.

Even with low fares (or perhaps even because of them), Vinalhaven was experiencing tremendous backups with people putting cars in line several days in advance of their departure day. Now Swans Island had the same complaint against Frenchboro that North Haven had against Matinicus, namely a trip to Frenchboro meant one less trip to Swans. The problem on Islesboro, the busiest run (151,000 passengers, 68,000 vehicles), was congestion and gridlock.

Somehow, the answer to all these problems, or at least the first step toward a solution, was supposed to be a big new ferry capable of serving any of the islands as needed. That ferry, of course, was the *Margaret Chase Smith*, a vessel that has made the Maine State Ferry Service officials island laughing stocks. Indeed, even before going into service, the *Smith* had come to be seen as a sea-going symbol of bureaucratic bungling. To explain the *Smith* problem, however, would require time, patience, and intelligence far in excess of my own.

The $3.1 million *Margaret Chase Smith* is a 166′ white elephant designed to carry 30 vehicles and 226 passengers at a time between Lincolnville and Islesboro as a replacement for the aging *Governor Muskie*. Having on occasion been 50th in line for the 24-car (125 passengers) *Muskie*, I could see why Islesboro needed a bigger boat, but many islanders were insisting the *Margaret Chase Smith* was not the boat they needed. Critics saw the *Smith* as a luxury liner where a harbor ferry was called for. Islesboro didn't need more passenger capacity, it needed more vehicle capacity. Six more cars per trip wouldn't make a dent in the problem.

To add insult to injury, the *Smith* did not fit into the ferry pens designed to accommodate the *Muskie*, a squared-off, double-ender. So there she sat as I found her in Rockland being tarted up with red rubber fenders, prosthetic falsies that reminded some island wags of bosomy songstress Dolly Parton. Talk around the bay also had it that the *Smith* would require more turn-around time than the double-ended *Muskie*, raising the prospect of the new boat making fewer runs and thus negating her already negligible gain in car-carrying capacity.

As I understood it, disenchanted islanders liked to have people believe that the state had paid $3.1 million for a ferry that wouldn't fit its pens, but state officials knew all along the new ferry would not be compatible with the oddball Islesboro pen. Originally, the state had planned for the *Smith* to service Vinalhaven while the Vinalhaven boat, the *Governor Curtis*, was "stretched," but then a state bond issue to do the stretching failed at referendum, and state ferry service officials decided the Vinalhaven boat was too old to be renovated anyway. (The architect of the *Smith* had told at least one person on Islesboro that he had designed the new ferry specifically for Vinalhaven.) Now the *Smith* had been fitted with falsies to fit the Islesboro pen, but wouldn't fit Rockland. She'd have to sail only the Islesboro-Lincolnville route, but the state was planning to renovate the Islesboro ferry pens to accommodate the *Smith* without fenders. Of course, the money to reconstruct the Islesboro dock was supposed to come from another bond issue, but that measure failed largely because it got thrown into a grab bag referendum rather than into the transportation bond issue where it belonged.

Confused? Well, so was I. My immediate problem, though, was figuring out how I was going to get off Matinicus. But first things first.

Borrowing Dick Moody's pickup truck, the sort of burping, sputtering, coughing jalopy that is the very soul of Maine island transportation, I drove Nellie Bladgen to her cottage on Burgess Cove. Nellie, a free-lance journalist, seemed to be of two minds about the problem of island transportation.

"I rant and rave when I can't get a load of firewood out here," she told me, "but the rest of the time I realize that the reason this island is still as marvelous as it is is because it is so hard to get here. I would be perfectly happy if we had reliable once-a-month service."

Islanders up and down the Maine archipelago long cherished the notion that fog and ferries (inhospitable weather and inaccessibility) would keep their little offshore paradise from being overrun by huddled masses to the south yearning to be free, but in recent years that notion has proven to be a pipe dream. Even Matinicus, the most difficult Maine island to reach, has experienced a real estate boom with island properties changing hands at a rate and at prices never before seen. The proximate cause of this boom was a combination of events in the summer of 1986—the establishment of Offshore Freight and Passenger Company (access) and the appearance of an article in the *New York Times* (publicity) declaring the natural beauties of Matinicus to the world. Now I found Matinicus residents fearful that their island might become "another Monhegan." As best I could tell, however, on this particular November day I was the only tourist on

THE DESPOT OVERBOAT

AGATHA CABANISS

How paradoxical that a ship that wins recognition for excellence in the national maritime trade press should be the object of scorn by her constituency. The Maine State Ferry Service's newest and largest vessel, the 30-car ferry *Margaret Chase Smith*, serving the Islesboro-Lincolnville route, was named one of outstanding passenger vessels of 1987 by *Maritime Reporter* and *Engineering News* and featured in an article in *Marine Log*.

At the same time, islanders' derisive jibes at the cruise-ship mien and inordinate (seven) number of restrooms were cited in an article in the *Maine Sunday Telegram*. The spectacle of islanders deriding their $3 million vessel travelled on the Associated Press wire around the nation and at least as far away as 400 miles north of Tokyo in the *Pacific Stars and Stripes*. The State of Maine was ridiculed for building a boat which could neither fit her pens nor satisfy her ridership.

Before the ferry's keel was laid, a tug of war over the vessel by the Penobscot Bay islands of Vinalhaven and Islesboro stretched all the way to Augusta's legislative halls. After viewing the ship, once lustful Vinalhaven said, "No thank you," leaving Islesboro to ask, "Why can't you just stretch our good o'le *Muskie*?"

Islesboro is not ungraciously demanding more than the best the state has to offer. Although the trade had seen the vessel, islanders had only glimpsed her briefly during her christening visit last fall, when

Matinicus, the only strange face in a population of some 40 friends, relatives, and neighbors.

"If tomorrow fetches up disgusting," Nellie Blagden warned me, "you're not going to get off here. You'd better be prepared to hunker down and enjoy it. What's real on the mainland is no longer real out here."

And so in the gathering unreality of late afternoon, having worried Dick Moody's balky pickup back to the harbor, I made my way on foot to Tuckanuck Lodge, the only overnight accommodation on Matinicus, which turned out to be a comfortable, ship-shape little cottage in the center of the island.

Proprietor Bill Hoadley, born and brought up on Nantucket, proved to be an islander both by birth and inclina-tion. A confirmed bachelor who required little more of life than peace and quiet and a dog for company, he had long ago been driven from his native isle by congestion and exclusivity. For the past 10 years, while working as a court clerk in Portland, he had been living on Peaks Island, the most suburban of all Maine islands.

"With 16 boats a day," Hoadley said wistfully, "Casco Bay Lines provides better service to Peaks than the Metro does to most Portland suburbs."

Here, then, was a man who had been chased further up the East Coast in search of a real island. Indeed, here was a man so independent as never to have bothered learning to drive, so individualistic as to stick to Daylight Savings Time after the rest of the world returned to Standard Time. Hoadley was not about to complain about the inaccessibility of Matinicus.

The new day dawned clear, cold, and windy, but the isolating storm had blown itself out to sea. Yes, Penobscot Air assured me on the phone, they would send a plane for me at 11. Thus buoyed in spirit, I ate a big breakfast and trudged down to Moody's store in hopes of running into Clayton Young, the unofficial island historian. Young, a tall, distinguished man of 70, collected me with his morning mail and we set out in his jerry-rigged pickup for a tour of the island, during which he dutifully recited the Matinicus boat service begats.

As it happened, Clayton Young's father had been one of the five passengers who survived the sinking of the *Butman*. Descended from a long line of Matinicus Youngs, Clayton was educated at Kents Hill, Hebron, and Colby College before the war, after which he returned to Matinicus to run the island store for 25 years. When his wife became ill, he sold the store to Dick Moody in order to care for her in her final years. A widower now, he had become a world traveler. Like his contemporary, Emery Philbrook, Young was simply nostalgic for the good old days of the *Butman*.

"If we had a scheduled boat three times a week in the spring, summer, and fall, and twice a week in the winter, that would be ideal," said Young. "Everything we do here is entirely dependent on weather and tides. Most people don't really understand that."

Islanders think of themselves as islanders... We who live ashore, however, do not think of ourselves as "mainlanders." We are only mainlanders from an island perspective. When it comes to islands, we tend, therefore, to be insensitive to the point of unconsciousness.

Young trucked me out to the airstrip at Northeastern Point and waited with me until Mike Slingluff buzzed out of the blue in his little Cessna 206. Mike purchased Stonington Flying Service from Herb Jones and changed its name to Penobscot Air Service. Now he is the vital link between Matinicus and the mainland.

With a deafening whine, the plane wound up on the dirt runway, accelerated, and then leapt into the air like a family car suddenly free of gravity. All sensation of speed dissipated with altitude. At 135 knots and 2,000′ we seemed suspended in midair, blown and buffeted by the winds. From up here, the mainland, which yesterday had seemed unimaginably distant, was instantly at hand.

When I asked Slingluff about medical emergencies on the island, he used almost the exact words Emery Philbrook and Clayton Young had used to answer the question.

"Nobody ever died on the island for lack of a doctor," he bellowed over the noise. "We can take the seats out of this plane and install a stretcher and cardiac unit in three minutes. A guy fractured his skull on Vinalhaven not long ago. Between the time we got the call and the time we had him on the ground in Portland was 37 minutes."

Islanders think of themselves as islanders. They are actually sensitized to the special conditions, the inconveniences, the elemental rhythms of island life. We who live ashore, however, do not think of ourselves as "mainlanders." We are only mainlanders from an island perspective. When it comes to islands, we tend, therefore, to be insensitive to the point of unconsciousness. The Maine islands enter our consciousness as the same romantic vapors that cloud the minds and mist the eyes of cityfolk and summerfolk when they think of Maine generally.

Escape. Vacationland. I have frequently succumbed to these vapors, I'm afraid. I have listened to my island friends complain about the inefficiencies and incompetencies of the state ferry service, insisting that a ferry is no different from a road or bridge, and thought, "But don't you realize, the harder it is to get to you the better? Access means development. Development means losing a way of life. Be thankful for unpredictable fogs and ferries."

But then I don't live on an island. It is entirely possible that I have no idea what I am talking about. What's real on an island is no longer real on the mainland.

Dropping down toward Knox County Airport, the Cessna seemed to slow to a stop and hang over the backyards of Owls Head like a mechanical kite. A two-hour voyage out, a 24-hour layover, and an eight-minute return flight. With the ground inching up beneath us, Matinicus no longer seemed all that remote.

"It's only as remote as you want it to be," said Mike Slingluff.

"What? I'm sorry, I couldn't hear you."

"I said it's only as remote as you want it to be."

she loomed out of the fog, surged onto the ramp, and broke the apron pin. All we really knew about her was that she was too narrow and tall for the pens, there would be little or no ferry service when the pens were modified, she would not sail at high tide, might not sail at low spring tide or in rough weather, and would carry more day trippers than the island is interested in seeing.

The island did vote for new ferry pens to hold the *Smith*—at least we tried to. Islanders voted for the bridge and highway improvements bond issue, thinking the ferry is a bridge/highway and part of the state's transportation system. Unfortunately, islanders did not know the funds for their pen and terminal were lumped with asbestos removal from state buildings in a bond issue.

The state was not so obtuse it accidentally built a vessel which could not fit its pens. The wide, double-ended *Muskie* has always been the "odd duck" of Maine's Great White Fleet and the ferry service wants all its ships to be interchangeable. The *Smith* was designed to fit the pens on all the islands.

But planning the misfit seems to be the only planning the MDOT did. Engineering studies to devise a method to fit the narrow peg into the wide hole were not performed until after the vessel began her five-month sojourn in Rockland. The slips could have been raised and the fenders, which enable the *Smith* to fit the wide pens, could have been ready before she arrived. The state could have had some realistic plans for funding the pen modifications, rather than relying on a bond issue which even MDOT personnel said had little chance of success.

It seems ironic that after more than half a century of excellent ferry service, Islesboro, with an elegant $3 million vessel, should now find itself in a similar situation with offshore Matinicus, which is never sure if and when the next boat is coming.

**I'm kind of a loner.
I enjoy people but
I like it when I'm alone
and it's peaceful.
This island stuff,
it's born in you, that's
all there is to it.**

Author's Collection

FAMILY ISLAND

Graffam Anchors Four Generations

GEORGE CAREY

The Muscle Ridge Islands in the southwest corner of Penobscot Bay have a special place in the hearts of those who know them well. Granite-walled on their seaward sides and laced with narrow, shoal-water passages, sun-drenched coves, and clam flats on their inner reaches, they have served as summer bases for both local fishermen and island owners such as P.L. Smith, pictured above.

ONCE IN HIS LIFE a man should concentrate his mind on the remembered earth, I believe. He ought to give himself up to a particular landscape in his experience, to look at it from as many angles as he can, to wonder about it, to dwell upon it. He ought to imagine that he touches it with his hands at every season and listens to the sounds made upon it. He ought to imagine the creatures that are there and all the faintest motions of the wind. He ought to recollect the glare of noon and all the colors of dawn and dusk.

N. Scott Momaday
The Man Made of Words

Tenants Harbor drains east. If you run out with the ebb on an easterly course as I have done more times than I can remember, Graffam Island lies dead ahead, four nautical miles from the bell buoy off Southern Island. If you hold on 90 degrees, by and by you'll pass between the Old South Breaker bell off to starboard and Whitehead Island with its green occulting light on your port hand. The mile run from there to Graffam takes you by the Yellow Ledges and the pungent odor of a waterfowl rookery. That passage also cuts across the entrance to the Muscle Ridge Channel, a nasty sluice of water when a fresh sou'wester sets up against an ebbing tide.

Approach this southwestern corner of Penobscot Bay on a fair June morning with the fullness of the day in your face and Graffam sits green and shimmering in a sunlit sea, redolent, alluring. View it again in the thin angular light of a narrow December afternoon or in the steely gray grip of a March equinox and the island hunches on the horizon, cold, black, forbidding. The place has other nuances, many others, each one shaped by the season or by the eye of the beholder and his particular affection for insular retreats.

My grandfather, P. L. Smith, apparently held a strong affection for Maine islands. At one time he owned three. In 1890 when he was 16 he came Downeast to rusticate with his family, and the coast took a fast hold on him. Later with a family of his own and money made in the bull market of the 1920's, he set himself up with a small Gatsbian fiefdom on the south side of Tenants Harbor. He acquired 13 farms and cottages, built a dock and a tennis court, set some formal gardens round about, and outfitted a small fleet of different size yachts.

Then he went to buying islands—"places to get away to," he called them. He bought Little Hen and Penobscot Islands on the east side of Vinalhaven. In 1929, just two months before the stock market fell flat on its face, he purchased Graffam from the Underwood Company which had trafficked in herring in the Muscle Ridge archipelago for a number of years. The Underwood people let the island go for $5,000. If P. L. had waited a bit longer he could probably have got the place for a low whistle and a handful of change, such were the fluctuation of island prices in the first half of the 20th century. In 1934, for instance, one Rockland realtor wrote a prospective client that ten prime acres on Hurricane Island, which in 1913 would have fetched $37,000, could now be had for a meagre $2,500.

The first thing P. L. did after he bought the island was to change its name. On 19th and early 20th century charts it had been listed as Grafton, "a careless spelling...by an early cartographer," according to Charles McLane in his *Islands of Mid Coast Maine.* Perhaps, but I like to attribute such errors to the vagaries of Maine dialect. "What do you call that island over there?" says the cartographer to the fisherman tending his weir. "That? Why that's Graftum," and so the map maker writes down approximately what he hears. It's the same kind of thing that has Tenants Harbor designated variously as Tarrants or Tallants Harbor on 18th century charts. Local dialect plays havoc with our labels. It's what allows the people in southern Maryland to cut the grass with a "paramour."

Whatever, the old man knew of the Grafton/Graffam error. Being a curious and meticulous sort, he had doubtlessly researched the records and discovered that one of the original owners had been Pierce Graffam, a yeoman of Lincolnville, who conveyed the island to Solomon Peabody. Peabody, in turn, in 1811 conveyed "Weston Musriges or Graffam's Island" to William Rackliff Jr. for $275. P. L. simply informed the geodetic survey authorities of the facts, and after 1930 Graffam appeared on charts with its original name.

After Rackliff and before P. L. Smith, the island passed through a number of hands, most notable those of Horace Beal. Beal rolled over a fortune in granite business in the late 19th century when he turned Dix Island (just a mile northeast of Graffam) into a quarrying community of no less than 2,000 employees. He obviously had an eye to developing Graffam along the same line when he bought it in 1857, but for whatever reason the noon whistle never blew on Graffam, and its stone remained undisturbed during those feverish times.

Over the years Graffam has had year-round inhabitants periodically, never the owners, just fishermen for whom island dwelling simply brought them that much closer to their place of business. For instance, the census tells us that in 1880 Oliver Spear lived there with a family of eight. Four years later he had apparently been replaced by a family named Pool as indicated by Horace Norton, who ran the Life Saving Station on Whitehead, in his journal entry for January 24, 1884: "Went to Grafton Is. and borrowed of Mrs. Pool, 'King's Family Physician.'"

What, you may well wonder, did my grandfather get when he plunked down his $5,000? He got approximately 70 acres of land pinned down with granite, an island forested largely in fir and spruce with occasional clumps of white birch, here and there a mountain ash, and standing by itself with some distinction, one white pine. Off the northeast shore a low-water sand spit makes across to neighboring Bar Island, and sloping down towards the northwestern shingle, a meadow of an acre or more commands a panorama stretching away up the Muscle Ridges to the Camden Hills beyond, "the finest view in all the world," as subsequent family members have come to call it.

When the old man took possession, the island also had for structures two fishermen's camps, an old barn, and a primitive wharf at the northwest corner. The barn collapsed God knows when, fire took off one of the camps in the 1940's, and ice has long since gnawed away the wharf. In the early 1930's, P. L. built his own structure at the head of the meadow, a substantial log house of five large rooms and somewhat gloomy interior which brightens noticeably when a fire burns in the enormous open fireplace.

Graffam came with a built-in caretaker, which must have suited the old man just fine. As any island owner knows, a caretaker bucks up the blow-downs, keeps the trails passable, the place tidy, and runs potential vandals off the premises. In return he gets free housing in unparalleled surroundings, and in that unwritten but unbending tradition of the coast, he secures the fishing rights to that island's territory, rights which he can pass on to his offspring.

Maurice Escorcio who came with the Graffam island package was of Portuguese extraction, a native of Porto Santo in the Madeira Islands, neat, hard-working, "thrifty and well-esteemed," as the *Rockland Gazette* noted. And the *Rockland Gazette* had reason to take note, for on August 19, 1933, Maurice Escorcio drowned off the northeast corner of Graffam in one of those bizarre and pointless accidents not uncommon to people who live on islands and follow the water.

Escorcio's eleven-year-old son, fishing off the stern of their lobster boat near the old wharf, struck a skate with a spear and was dragged overboard. In the frenzy that followed, the father jumped in, hip boots and all, to save his child, and both were dragged to death in the current that runs hard over the sand spit at the northeast corner. Meanwhile, the young mother watched the tragedy unfold from the shore, then took her six-year-old son and waded the waist-deep waters of the sand spit to Bar Island where she blew wildly on a horn until the fishermen on Mink Island heard her, and so the news got known.

Steve Smith

Walter Drinkwater baiting a trap off Graffam.

I have no idea whether my grandfather was in residence at Tenants Harbor when the accident occurred, but he wasn't long in getting a replacement for Escorcio. Walter Drinkwater moved out onto the island in 1934, and he is the caretaker I remember. With occasional breaks for other callings, Drinkwater lived on Graffam, sometimes year round, until his death in 1982.

When P. L. chose Drinkwater, he chose wisely. In effect he secured a man who came from island stock, someone who understood island culture and rhythms and who appreciated solitude more than most. Drinkwater's father had moved out to High Island to fish in 1911 when Walter was only three. There were ten in the family and the younger ones soon learned to make the most of their surroundings.

"We never spilled a minute back then," Drinkwater told me. "Oh my God, my brother and I and a couple three other kids, we had projects of all kinds, like playing lobstering, building traps, playing with boats. Lots of imitating the older ones, you know. Of course we were in double-ended rowing boats just as soon as we could lift an oar."

Getting the nod from my grandfather must have set well with Drinkwater. It came at the breakup of a short and foolish marriage, and if what he told me sitting over coffee in his cabin one morning was true, he saw himself as genetically suited for the job. "Most fishermen around here are just the same. You can't get them to stay out on these islands. You either like it or you don't, and it's something that I like and my father loved: the solitude. I'm kind of a loner. I enjoy people but I like it when I'm alone and it's peaceful. This island stuff, it's born in you, that's all there is to it."

You didn't have to talk with Drinkwater long before you realized just how well he understood Graffam Island and the Muscle

Robert de Gast

Author George Carey and Walter Drinkwater.

Ridges. He did not grasp it formally the way I might by trying to possess the place intellectually. No, his understanding came intuitively, wrung out of occupational necessity. He might not have been able to write a sentence to express his island wisdom, but Drinkwater could do more practical things, like lie a-bed in the predawn of a summer's morning and simply by listening, get a meteorological fix for the day. Whistle off Junkins Ledge, easterly, fog probably. Two Bush bell, wind to the south'rd, smoke up for sure.

Drinkwater was no zoologist, but he knew the habits of the "fisher martins" that shuttled about on the rocks in front of his cabin. He was no ornithologist—he lumped all waterfowl into one generic species: sea pigeon—but he drew an incredible number of tree swallows to his condominium-like bird houses each summer, and they helped rearrange the mosquito demographics.

More than once deer had come ashore on the island with the weight of those Muscle Ridge currents heavy on their limbs. "Most every time I've seen deer come ashore here, it's been foggy. Dogs are at 'em awful on the mainland, and they take off and they miscalculate in the fog. Well, this one time I was sitting right here in the cabin, and I look out and here comes this head of antlers right up to the beach. That poor son-of-a-bitch was really pooped. He hardly got clear of the water and he laid down. He laid there about 20 minutes, then he got up onto his feet and took out into the woods."

IN 1943 MY GRANDFATHER DIED and Graffam passed into the hands of his four children, my mother being the third of that line. Their generation did little with the island so busy were they squabbling over P. L.'s other holdings in Tenants Harbor. They used Graffam, all right, just as it had always been used, for day trips and picnics and an occasional overnight. But the nicely manicured trails that P. L. had cut and maintained closed in quickly, and the cabin fell on hard times as the bats took over.

In the mid '60s the family rented out the cabin to a man named Pritchard from Brunswick who with his wife and children spent most of their two weeks there cleaning the place up. Nonetheless, at the end of their stay Pritchard made an offer to buy the island. Mercifully the family withdrew from its squabbling long enough to turn him down.

I should like to tell you that my generation has handled things with more elan than our parents. I should like to tell you that we have banded together to form a land trust with the property, that we have set building strictures, that we have implemented inheritance stipulations so the island will not one day be owned in a set of 75th undivided interests. I would like to tell you that the island's future looks secure, but I cannot.

I say mercifully because at that particular time the family seemed to have been in a selling mood. They sold Penobscot Island for a farthing in what now seems an unbelievable gesture, and I'm sure they might well have let Graffam go had not the younger three siblings prevailed upon their older brother who at that time wanted to divest himself of anything surrounded by water. That formidable foursome has now passed on into the great outback and so Graffam has dropped down another generation, left in a one twelfth undivided interest to myself, two siblings and nine cousins.

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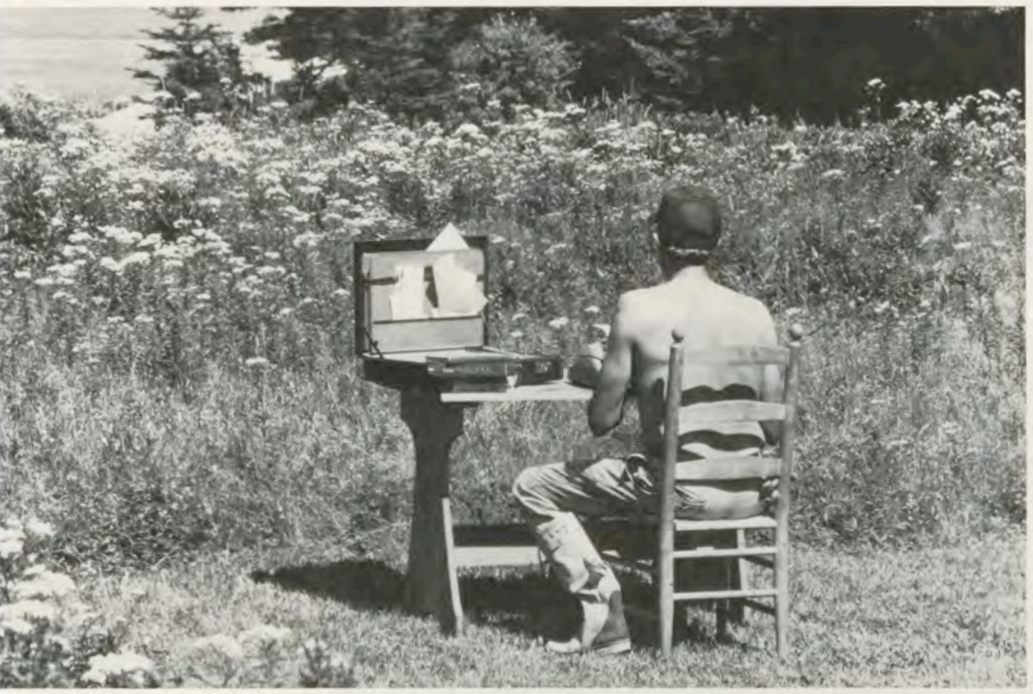
If you notice a change in tone here, I confess it. The voice always seems to go up a register and take on some edge whenever I speak of family matters. It is a voice touched mostly with frustration over our inability to confront island problems (or any problems at all, for that matter), as if by not talking about them they might just go away, or not be there at all the way they didn't seem to be when we were kids. It's an age-old frustration, mine; I know that, the same kind of impatience and anxiety that arises when any group of people tries to agree on a heartfelt issue. But in our case the disagreements always seem more intense, the solutions increasingly elusive, for blood seldom lubricates with much efficiency.

Yet at another level our inability to talk and act could be construed as a kind of decision in itself, one that says to our progeny, in effect: O.K., you who are younger, stronger, wiser, you make the decisions for us when we're gone, and we won't even have to know what they are. Hardly activist thinking, I grant you, but there you have it.

Despite the curious way my generation handles its island affairs, there is some strange chemistry at work among this "unholy twelve," as our children have come to call us. Each summer all 12 cousins return to the family compound in Tenants Harbor, and each summer, almost without fail, as if drawn by some strange magnetic field, we make the pilgrimage out to Graffam. We never come all together, that would be more than the animosities could bear, but we trickle out individually or in twos and threes to walk in the coolness of the cathedral spruce or eat our roast beef sandwiches on the shingle in front of the best view in all the world. In my romantic way I like to think that on these visits we secure a piece of the place—our metaphysical one twelfth, if you will—which we stow away. Then, come late February, we might trot it out: a bright island landscape to hang a hope on at the heart of a long winter seizure.

WHEN YOU COME RIGHT down to it, owning an undivided twelfth of anything seems a bit ludicrous. In fact if you hold with the native American viewpoint, any ownership as we know it seems preposterous. In the Indian view we have a brief guardianship



Steve Smith

Author George Carey in a moment of contemplation on the family island.

over the land, a certain responsibility for it, and then it passes on to another trustee. But there are ways to possess a place spiritually. Thoreau knew this. He never "owned" Walden Pond, but Oh my God, did he ever. So to set things straight in my own mind I moved out onto Graffam in the summer and fall of 1984 for long chunks of time. I wanted to see if I could possess the place, or better yet, let it possess me. To my knowledge no one in the family had ever done anything like this, not even P. L.

I wasn't out there very long before two things became quite clear, one practical, one philosophic. I discovered right away that island living is an edgy experience. When you live alone offshore without communication there are no second chances. Your ear and eye are always cocked for weather signs, particularly when your only recourse to the mainland is a 16-foot boat moored in poorly protected waters. And I nudged up hard against the notion of second chances while splitting wood with a maul in late September. In mid swing the head of the maul came off and went spinning away into the woods. The unexpected release drew the handle down into my groin with considerable force, and I lay there next to the woodpile sweating out the agony for a good five minutes or more. I escaped with a lot of pain and no major injury, but I knew then that with certain instruments like axes and mauls and chain saws I was going to have to be very careful if I wished to carry this island experiment to any length at all.

Philosophically, it didn't take me long to understand what Thoreau meant when he talked about living deliberately. I realized that there were only a handful of things that I had to do to survive. I had to have something to drink, and I got that from a well at the northern edge of the meadow. I had to have food which I'd brought from the mainland, and I had to have heat which I got from the wood I'd split—albeit sometimes haphazardly. And yes, I had to feed the dog, a young Brittany bitch I'd brought along for companionship. Other than that, what I elected to do each day I elected with unfettered deliberation.

I might say to myself of a morning, "I think I'll go over to the southwest side of the island today and have a look at the heron rookery." And I would do that. For the last 25 years or more, the blue heron have come to Graffam to procreate. In 1984 the rookery had shrunk to only a few nests, but the defoliation and dead trees from what had once been a large colony were still quite visible.

When you come right down to it, owning an undivided twelfth of anything seems a bit ludicrous.

And so my visits continued on into the fall. Five days here, eight days there. I sat out at noonday amid the Queen Anne's lace and read. I watched the monarch butterflies cover the meadow and drive the dog mad. One warm September afternoon I saw a migrating marsh hawk working the meadow, low, steady on, and the next morning I discovered a yellow-shafted flicker in the pathway, badly ravished. The double crested cormorants gave way to bufflehead and goldeneye. The loons called out of the cove darkness. Then they were gone. Each night a great horned owl announced his solitary presence on the south side of the island. By dawn he had worked his way to the northeast corner. In December he too was gone.

I did not stay long in December, only three days. The snows had not yet come and the island had about it a denuded look. With no foliage to speak of, there were vistas of the water unimaginable in summer. A bed of lady ferns, still green, stood out against the bracken brown landscape in a corner of the forest behind the cabin. Daylight was in short supply. Dusk came on at 1530 hours, dawn some 16 hours later. On the last morning of my stay, two days before the winter solstice, I stood in the cabin by the fire and watched a gray northeast day work its way into the channel.

A northeast wind in December is not something you fool around with, not in a 16-foot boat. I wanted to get underway early before anything really unpleasant made up and I wanted to return with a nice island fir for a Christmas tree.

By nine o'clock I had the tree and the dog and was headed out across the lumpy channel, the four gray miles seeming a lot longer than they did in the summer. Set in these waters at this time of year, I couldn't help but think of Walter Drinkwater once more. In his late 60's he had been living year round on the island and on a December afternoon he was returning from Sprucehead, a day much like this one, the wind northerly, the tide running out, a dark overcast spitting snow.

He drove an outboard skiff much smaller than mine, loaded full with supplies and a large dog. In mid channel the engine quit. For half an hour he tugged and pulled on the old Evinrude without response and by now he was down off Two Bush, the southernmost island in this archipelago, with the next port of call perhaps Metinic, but more likely the Dominican Republic.

Drinkwater cast about in the bottom of the skiff and found a single oar. He wedged that in between the motor and the transom of the boat and began to scull all the long way back to safety. At ten o'clock that night he reached his point of departure, stumbled into a phone booth and called his grandson. "Johnny," he said, "I've just sculled the punt back here from Two Bush. Now would you do me a favor? Come down here and fetch the body."

My old Evinrude worked better than Drinkwater's coming across the channel, and once underneath the lee of Whitehead, the seas eased considerably. Periodic flights of old squaw lifted off the water at the boat's approach, and offshore I could see two lobstermen taking in their traps. It was not until I was inside the bell buoy off Southern Island that I felt completely secure again.

As I approached the family compound, the dock so alive in summer with the sound of bare feet running, looked spare and gaunt, its floats all gone and its wooden walkway above the huge granite caissons seasonally silent. I unloaded my gear from the boat onto the shore and carried it up to my harborside cottage.

That evening in early dusk I walked out to the end of the pier and looked east. I could see the green light on Whitehead occulting gently on the sea, and beyond it, hunching darkly on the horizon at the edge of those familiar waters, the island, that island, Graffam. I shut my eyes against the night and against the thought that a family island really was, after all, no more than a slice of land surrounded by a frame of mind, a place for journeys of the heart.

PHILIP BOOTH

Peter Ralston

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE IN HARD COUNTRY

Philip Booth, poet, was born in Hanover, New Hampshire, in 1925, and grew up summers in Castine, Maine, where his mother's family had lived and worked since 1797. In between his busy life as an educator at Bowdoin, Wellesley, and Syracuse, Booth has published eight volumes of poetry, including Letter from a Distant Land *(1957),* The Islanders *(1961),* Weathers and Edges *(1966),* Margins *(1970),* Available Light *(1976),* Before Sleep *(1980), and* Relations *(1986).*

Booth's work has been recognized in a large number of poetry awards, fellowships, and prizes, including in 1987 the Maurice English Poetry Award. Poet Maxine Kumin, in honoring Booth's work for the award, wrote:

"Booth's work has a wonderfully consistent tone; he has pursued his destiny as a poet in an understated and unswerving way. In this collection which spans a lifetime, his deeply rooted sense of place is reflected in poem after poem—not so much about the landscape of coastal Maine, but about its outreach, its human dimension. I find in the later poems a tenderness that is not new but stands more fully acknowledged. If anyone can teach us 'to give to how life takes us,' it is Philip Booth."

IJ: Your mother's family, the Hookes, have been here in Castine a long time. What was it like growing up here with such a venerable group of people who went before you?

PB: I had an imposing Victorian grandmother who was a rather fearsome presence in this house, and yet was a very engaging and intelligent woman. She'd gone to school in Portland before she married my grandfather—a marriage that was somehow arranged; I'm not sure just how. He was ill in this house a long time. I think he wished to be a carpenter, and my grandmother didn't feel it fit her standing in Gardiner. So I think he went into depressions and stayed in the house mostly—although I remember him as the man I called 'Oman'; (as in 'Oh, man, oh, man, pay attention to me!') when I was a little boy.

IJ: Your father was a professor at Dartmouth?

PB: That's right. So I cannot claim to be native. I came here *in utero* on the Boston boat, as a matter of fact, like a thousand other people. But I'm reminded every day by appropriate friends here that I am not native. And I don't pretend to be.

But one of the great things about growing up here was having a man come out of the post office one day, 20 years ago, and say, 'Aren't you Jean Hooke's boy?' 'Yup, yup.' He said, 'Your name Philip Hooke?' I said, 'No, Philip Booth, but that's the right Hooke.' He said, 'He was your grandfather?' I said, 'No, he was my great-grandfather.' 'Well,' he says, 'I want to tell you, he was the person that came down these steps right here at the post office and told me they'd sunk the *Maine*!'

That's lovely. I like that a lot. That does resonate for me, the way sailing up the bay does and knowing that, although not in my direct line, my great-great-uncles and people like that saw pretty much this same coast as it still is (or was until 15 or 20 years ago). And that I saw the last of sail in the bay.

IJ: When did you know that you wanted to come back and spend a lot of time in Castine?

PB: I was temporarily struggling to get away from it. We were married early, Margaret and I—the year after I got out of the Air Corps, where we met in Georgia. But by the time Mother died in 1954—let's say, by 1956 or so—Margaret and I had three children and we were more than ready to come back here for summers. It was a wonderful place to come back to. But I don't think even then I had a sense of how much I wanted to come back until I had sort of written my way down into it. By way of *The Islanders*, I suppose, as much as anything.

IJ: Poems like 'Storm in a Formal Garden' seem to be part of writing your way down to Castine, into your family's history.

PB: Yes, that poem, from *Letter from a Distant Land*, my first book, was a poem about clearing my own path, or raking my own path to free myself somewhat from family history and my mother's illness. She died in a mental hospital.

Perhaps it was more writing my way 'through,' to use the psychoanalytic term, and to use the term as Lawrence does in a poem, 'Look, we have come through.' I didn't know I was writing my way through, but I think I was. With my second book, *The Islanders*, I probably began to realize that this was the territory that is sufficiently native to me to be mine as a poet.

IJ: You spent a year teaching at Bowdoin. It seems that when you left there, you 'put the helm over.'

PB: I liked teaching at Bowdoin. But I realized that I probably wanted to write a novel. I went back to New Hampshire and Vermont, where we lived a couple of years. It was there that I realized I was not a fiction writer; I was a word man.

IJ: So it was during that period that the idea of calling yourself a poet started settling in your mind?

PB: No, I think I sort of wanted to resist that. A friend of mine at the time said that he put himself down on his tax forms as 'poet.' I told that to Robert Frost once. Mr. Frost said, 'He does? I don't!' And I thought I'd be one of the people who didn't.

IJ: Speaking of Robert Frost, you became acquainted with him at a formative stage in your life, isn't that correct?

PB: I did. In the fall of 1942 I was away at school in Vermont Academy, beginning my senior year. Because the war was on, we took the first week of school to help harvest the apple crop in southern Vermont. That was hard work of a kind I'd never done. My father (bless him!) sent me a typed copy of a Frost poem called 'After Apple-Picking.' I'd been mildly interested in poetry before, but not very much; about one-third as much as most high school students who became poets. But here was a poet who didn't talk like Shelley or Byron or anybody. Here was Frost saying: 'My instep arch not only keeps the ache; it keeps the pressure of a ladder round.' And it suddenly occurred to me that poets could tell the truth! I was hooked on that realization. My instep arch hurt from the ladder, and the poet was telling me something I only half-realized there were words for.

My father (bless him!) sent me a typed copy of a Frost poem called "After Apple-Picking." I'd been mildly interested in poetry before, but not very much; about one-third as much as most high school students who become poets. But here was a poet who didn't talk like Shelley or Byron or anybody. There was a line or two in that poem: "My instep arch not only keeps the ache; it keeps the pressure of a ladder round." And it suddenly occurred to me that poets could tell the truth!

Mr. Frost sent me a book when I was in the Air Corps. And when I came back, the first thing, I went to see him.

IJ: He sent you a book? That was a little rare, wasn't it?

PB: Yes. My father had asked him to sign a book for me. Mr. Frost said, 'Who's it for?' And my father told him. And he said, 'Is he the one I talked with in the library last year?' My father said, 'Yes.' He said, 'I'll go and buy him a book myself.' And he went stumping across the street to the Dartmouth Bookstore and bought it and sent it to me. That was nice of him.

After the war I went back and saw him. Mr. Frost asked, 'What did you do during the war? Did you kill anybody?' I said, 'No, about the only thing I did was meet the girl in Georgia who I'm going to marry next summer.' He said, 'You're going to marry her, huh?' I said, 'Yup.' He said, 'When she gets accustomed to it, have her ask me to tea!' So he was very kind to both of us during those early years.

He was a visitor when I was at Bowdoin. And I saw him at Wellesley. He was a presence for me—always showing up at odd times and telling me it was all right if I left Bowdoin; that I ought to leave Wellesley, yes. Where was I going? Syracuse? He said, 'Go!'

IJ: Did he have an influence on you?

PB: Certainly. He had to. I've tried to sort out in my mind what I learned from him. I think Richard Wilbur said, while being interviewed about some poems, that Mr. Frost in effect let poems 'come in on him' rather than going out to them through complex formal structures. I hadn't thought of that being a Frostian thing particularly. I think Dick is right in the fact that Mr. Frost allowed himself poems. I think that's the hardest thing for a poet today. Obviously, I have moved from writing rather formal poems, highly structured poems, early, to opening myself to much different kinds of poems as I've gone on. That brings me back to Maine, in a sense, in that I learned here how language is inherently used. As it is at its best in Maine; although we're now losing it, God knows.

IJ: A sense of place comes through in many of your poems; I'm thinking of poems like 'North' and 'Hard Country.' When did you start living here as much as you could and start writing about the place?

PB: I think I started writing about the place while I was away from it—as a way of getting back to it.

IJ: Such as in poems like 'Deer Isle.'

PB: Yes, that's a poem exactly about that, which was written in Lincoln, Massachusetts, where we lived when I was teaching at Wellesley, where I wrote most of the poems in my first book, *Letter from a Distant Land*. But I think *The Islanders* is the book through which I was writing myself not only back to where I had been as a boy, but back into depths below the surface of this town, below the surface of my life as a boy, below the surface of the bay itself, in a way.

IJ: It seems like a lot of your poems are written about or during the hours of darkness.

PB: I guess that's true, although the time of darkness in my poems has moved. When our girls were young, I certainly had to wait for night before I could write very much. I simply cannot imagine now how I wrote *Letter from a Distant Land* in a small house when we had three children and I was teaching at Wellesley. The answer is Margaret, I'm sure. I wrote mostly at night for many years. A good number of poems in *Available Light* were certainly written in the early morning dark. Also the *Dreamscape* poems, because I did, somewhere along there, begin to log dreams, which I still do—not for the reasons of poetry; I just want to keep in touch with my inner self, so that when I'm in hard weather, I'll know where it's coming from.

IJ: There's another feeling of darkness in your poetry that seems to come from the realm of psychological terror.

PB: Yes, there's that. There's a realm of darkness in all of us, or in most of us. I guess I actually believe it's in all of us. Most of us know some of it. Which, being part of

our lives, seems to me as worth exploring as any other part, although I'm less interested in it now, having written *Before Sleep*.

I've even put some newer poems aside because they seemed to me to be unduly dark. I think the fact that many of my poems are written in literal darkness—sometimes about real or symbolic dark—but have more recently been written on the edge of light, toward dayrise, says that I have been through certain kinds of night. Whatever 'the dark night of the soul' is, to use the conventional phrase of St. John of the Cross, I do not choose that my poems inhabit that realm any more than they will. And I would prefer that they didn't will.

There is so much sociology around, socioeconomics, local politics, all of which are bad realms for poems. Damn poor country for poems. In that sense, Town Meeting is damn poor country for poems.

IJ: It seems that many of the writers and artists who appear in your poems, like Robert Lowell, Mary McCarthy, John Marin, and Andrew Wyeth, also inhabit a similar kind of 'Hard Country.'

PB: I hadn't thought of that in those terms. I haven't ever thought about writing about these people for that reason. But I think it's true, now that you mention it. To each in his/her own darkness. The ways through. Lonelinesses. Isolations.

But all of those people have a much different perspective on this part of the world than I do; and each one, one way or another, has enlarged my view. And so they have been part of taking me beyond my roots. They have been 'my Harvard and my Yale,' so to speak.

IJ: Do you think of yourself as a Maine poet?

PB: William Carpenter, a poet, who teaches at The College of the Atlantic, said that my poem 'Phone,' set in a phone booth east of Machias, is the prototypical Maine poem. Not only my prototypical but the prototypical Maine. I think of that since you're talking about other people who have given voice to their experience here, one way or another. I think one of the pleasures of that poem for me is that I know what the phone speaks. I speak for the silences, so to speak. Maybe, now that I've said that much better than I could have planned, it occurs to me that maybe my poems speak for a lot of silences.

But it's increasingly hard for me to be open to poems—particular poems about Maine or poems that are grounded in Maine—simply because there have been so many superimposers coming in on this. There is so much sociology around, socioeconomics, local politics, all of which are bad realms for poems. Damn poor country for poems. In that sense, Town Meeting is damn poor country for poems.

IJ: You've said elsewhere that many new people who are coming to Maine don't spend enough time listening to find out what is here, what is native and what gives Maine its special character as we hear in your poems like 'Eaton's Boatyard,' or 'Refusing the Sea' or 'Maine.'

PB: I just lucked into the fact that I was early taken by how men made things well in this town and on this coast. It's hard to see that working element of the coast get lost, if it is indeed not lost already. The people who are new to the coast may themselves have wonderful skills, but what skills they bring here—let's say computer skills—are as far as possible from how wood is chopped, how a boat is primed. And they have no one to go to to learn.

Who knows how to hang a handle on a hammer? Writing a poem which invokes that image, I had to go to Ormond Bowden, a long-time carpenter/handyman around here, also a lobsterman before that, to talk to him about how that worked, what kind of wood he used. And I learned from him all sorts of things about what the different shapes of the claws were for. He explained to me how he always offset his handle a little, so if he were roofing he could use the claw as an ice axe.

That's wonderful kind of knowledge. That's the kind of knowledge about tools or work that is local knowledge.

IJ: Many of your poems are deeply sensitive to the special knowledge that working people have of this coast.

PB: I'm quoting Mr. Frost this morning, I guess. He says poetry or a poem is 'words that have become deeds.' I must have learned from that. So that perhaps some of my poems are a kind of deed to the coast.

Frost also says, in 'The Gift Outright,' the famous poem at the Kennedy Inauguration (though he didn't write it for that, it was written long before): 'The deed of gift was many deeds of war.' I like that double sense of 'deed.' You give somebody a deed to land. Words that have become deeds are gifts too. The amazing thing about poems, like the amazing thing about islands: to people to whom they matter, they matter a very great deal. That they are there, that they exist.

IJ: Speaking of islands, images of islands appear and reappear throughout many of your poems such as in 'Barred Islands,' 'Matinicus,' and 'North Haven.' Are they a metaphor for something else?

PB: The word 'island' is, of course, in itself a metaphor for itself—by the very nature of language. But the work itself is for me a way of getting to the real island. Using the metaphor to get to the reality. Mr. Frost has a poem that says (I may not be quoting accurately): 'I knew a man who took an axe and went alone against a grove of trees.' And I know a man who once thought he'd like to make love to his woman on every island in Penobscot Bay. That's one way to think about islands. There's a sexual vector to them—as in the poems 'Seaweed' or 'Barred Islands.'

I think I am, literally, here in Castine, a

peninsula man, not an island man. I've thought about that quite a good deal lately—maybe the past five or six years—not knowing what it meant exactly. I don't want to draw on John Donne and talk about being part of the main in the literal sense, because I increasingly do feel that none of us is an islander, that we all are part of all the continents, part of the planet. But I want to belong to that community more than I want to belong to a given island as such.

I think there is something immensely exciting about the fact that an island is self-contained.

I was trying to look at the poem, 'The Islanders,' to remind myself what I thought when I wrote it. I might have been out to McGlathery Island. A storm came up so we couldn't go home to Castine but stayed overnight on Deer Isle. You could see it was a hell of a storm. We climbed up on the roof of this old summer cottage at the top of Green Head. And we sat up there in this incredible thunderstorm coming out of Camden. We just stayed up there until it started raining hard. Could we have seen Saddleback? I think probably we could. It seems to me it was Saddleback that was, in effect, going under as the storm came over us: Saddleback, 'the island farther out than ours.'

Peter Ralston

I wasn't back here very long before I began writing that poem, which is about being an islander. We saw an island farther out than ours. An island is something more than we are, something other than we are, something we aspire to be or to be in contact with.

Cruising people or picnickers landing on a small island used to be almost in temporary possession of an island—as long as nobody had built on it. That's one of the great things about keeping islands free of habitation—being able to find uninhabitated islands is a great joy. And you can do it still and own the island, so to speak—possess it for that moment, for that hour... What's at stake is keeping the nature—in the sense of the character—of the coast and the state as a whole intact long enough so that people who think they can *buy* that character won't destroy it in the buying.

IJ: What do you mean you're a peninsula man more than an island man?

PB: When I go down to the end of a peninsula I feel that lovely sense of being at the farthest place. If there are islands out beyond me, they seem much less interesting than they do when I'm sailing near them or around them, because they represent an otherness to me of such intensive identity that I wish them to be as they are—and not to intrude upon them. I want islands to have their own identity and to have some context for that identity. The sea off, say, Small Point, is a context that, for the minute, I have no wish to violate to get to the island. But being in a boat is itself a kind of island. So one is sort of spiritually permitted to land on the island by having come by way of an island. Something like that.

The amazing thing about poems, like the amazing thing about islands: to people to whom they matter, they matter a very great deal that they are there, that they exist.

IJ: What kinds of islands do you like most?

PB: The smaller they are, the better I like them. That's sort of intuitive. I love those little pieces called Crow Island or whatever it may be. I like Crow Island just east of Deer Isle very much and I envy the man who inhabits it. That size island does have some very special attraction to me, where North Haven does not.

A new poem I finished in December titled 'Wanting' gets at what I am saying. There is a peninsula man recreating himself, fictionalizing himself onto an island for the purposes for the poem. This is a poem that needed to go just slightly offshore, off the mainland, but not very far. The poem questions how the speaker does or does not belong to the world beyond the island. I think that's a question which concerns me very much.

IJ: Is that your role as a poet?

PB: A poet's 'not telling lies' doesn't mean that one does not tell fictions. Indeed, fiction may be necessary to tell the truth—whatever the truth may be. I certainly have always wanted to have the surfaces of my poems be clear. And, I would hope, increasingly transparent, so that one can look down into them. But at the same time, I don't want to avoid the depth—which in this case is not darkness so much as the complexity, the ambivalence and maybe the enigmatics of what may lie below the clear surface.

I don't want to speak for anybody else. but I think that the poet has a very small public role, if any role, in the life of this country, this year. The role of the poet is to live his own life and to write his own poems. But that means, to me, at this end of the century, that he must live with the world in mind as well as having the planet at heart.

SHRIMPING AT THE EDGE

The Life and Times of Pandalus Borealis

SPENCER APOLLONIO

FOR GOING ON 50 years, northern shrimp have provided an important winter fishery on the coast of Maine. Shrimping has had its ups and downs, but over the years it has filled an important seasonal gap and has meant good money in the pockets of fishermen when other fisheries are dormant.

Northern shrimp are primarily a subarctic animal. They are found and fished off Korea, Alaska, Greenland, Iceland, Spitsbergen, Scandinavia, Newfoundland, Labrador, and in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The Gulf of Maine is their southernmost limit in the western hemisphere, which puts the shrimp on the edge of their environmental tolerances. Because of the last point, one can't understand shrimp in our region—their distributions and their fluctuations—unless one knows something about the gulf itself, particularly its temperatures, for Gulf of Maine shrimp are very susceptible to the small, natural, temperature variations that are part of the dynamics of this body of water.

Northern shrimp are found in greatest abundance in the southwestern quarter of the Gulf of Maine where the coldest bottom temperatures are found. Normally these are about 1-4 degrees C. (33-40 degrees F.). Shrimp are landed primarily from Penobscot Bay west into Massachusetts Bay. Although some may be found along the eastern Maine coast, they are not abundant, and the reason for that often surprises people: the bottom water off eastern Maine is too warm, particularly in winter. It is notably warmer than that of the York County and New Hampshire coasts, and shrimp seek the coldest water available. For the same reason that salmon farming finds eastern Maine favorable—because of warmer winter temperatures—so shrimp fishing way downeast will always be marginal.

The annual migrations of our shrimp are well known to fishermen; they are found a good distance offshore—say, 30-50 miles—in the summer, and may be found close inshore in the winter. This migration is explained, as is shrimp distribution, by the patterns of temperature variations. The coldest waters in summer are deep offshore, the same waters that tend to be warmer in midwinter. Adult shrimp migrate offshore or inshore to the coldest water available in a given season.

Peter Ralston

Friendship's Preston Carter, captain of the* Christy J.*, winter shrimping at dawn in outer Muscongus Bay.

In addition to the inshore/offshore migration of adult shrimp, there is another that is just as important. Immature and adult shrimp under certain conditions migrate vertically, moving off the bottom at night and returning there during daylight. (The female, egg-bearing shrimp, incidentally, do not migrate vertically, simply because their swimming legs are so encumbered with eggs that they lack sufficient swimming capability.) This is a common phenomenon in marine animals, the general significance of which is a continuing debate. The biological function of the migration in our shrimp, however, seems clear and important, and we'll look at this in more detail in a moment.

First, though, it is helpful to know that northern shrimp belong to a family

Peter Ralston

Pandalidae of crustaceans quite distinct from southern or tropical shrimp *Penaeidae*. Their anatomy, reproduction, life history, age at maturity, and other essentials are different from those of the larger southern shrimp—the latter more familiar in restaurants—which are now being cultivated in many parts of the world. Northern

Peter J. Auster

shrimp reach commercial size at three to five of years of age, in inverse relation to prevailing temperatures, as opposed to a year of less for southern shrimp. This is one reason why the farming of northern shrimp would be a difficult endeavor; one would have to carry a large inventory at high risk for several years.

Southern shrimp reproduce through the normal bisexual process, the sexes being quite distinct. Several species of northern shrimp, including our commercial shrimp, *Pandalus borealis*, are *protandric hermaphrodites*. In the Gulf of Maine, most (not all of them) function first as mature males and then, a year later, as mature, egg-bearing females. The biological consequence of this reproductive strategy seems to be the ability to take maximum reproductive advantage of favorable but unpredictable environmental circumstances as they may occur. Thus in the 1960's there was an explosion of shrimp in the Gulf of Maine just as the bottom waters reached the lowest temperatures on record, a biological response not surprising for a subarctic animal at the southern limit of its range, but remarkable in the rapidity with which it occurred. Protandric hermaphroditism is a reproductive strategy which makes such rapid response possible.

Commercial fishing for the northern shrimp began in the fjords of Norway in the 1890's. Some exploratory fishing in the 1920's in the Gulf of Maine was not encouraging, but in the late 1930's commercial quantities were found and marketed. An otter trawl fishery was pursued in Maine waters through the winters of the 1940's and early 1950's but did not land great quantities. The shrimp practically disappeared from our waters in the mid 1950's as water temperatures approached the highest on record. As the waters cooled in the early 1960's, the fishery revived, growing remarkably, with Massachusetts and New Hampshire boats joining the harvest. About 14,000 metric tons, the highest ever from the Gulf of Maine, were landed in 1968. The fishery again declined in the early 1970's as the Gulf of Maine warmed. Since 1976, with somewhat cooler temperatures, there has been an increase in landings with a relatively stable catch of 3,000 to 5,000 tons a year for the three states.

Because of the seasonal migrations of shrimp, fishermen of the midcoast islands are in a favorable position. Their island base makes trap fishermen centrally located for the harvest as shrimp move inshore toward the coast in early winter and again offshore in late winter and spring.

While the coldest bottom water is found in the southwestern quarter of the gulf, so also is the warmest summer surface water. In places where there is a great difference between the top and bottom temperatures, thermal layering or stratification develops. In the Gulf of Maine stratification reaches a maximum in the southwestern quarter. Conversely, on the Nova Scotian shore and off Passamaquoddy Bay, thermal stratification is minimal or nonexistent.

It is interesting that the abundance of shrimp coincides with maximum temperature layering as well as minimum bottom temperatures. And it is interesting that negligible shrimp populations are found where the thermal stratification is small. One possible biological explanation of these facts is linked to the daily vertical migrations of our shrimp. By feeding in warmer water at the top of the migratory path and by assimilation of that food in the colder water at the bottom, shrimp may acquire an "energy bonus" which can be transformed into greater egg production and thus greater reproductive capability.

The energy bonus hypothesis seems to be supported by what we know of shrimp biology and distribution. Northern shrimp feed on pelagic, or floating, food during their nightly migrations off the bottom, and their center of abundance coincides with the maximum differences between surface and bottom temperatures in the Gulf of Maine. Also, we know that the average number of eggs per female varies substantially over the years, and that maximum egg numbers per female were found at the time of lowest bottom temperatures in the late 1960's when thermal stratification was greatest. Significantly fewer eggs per female were found in the 1950's and 1970's when bottom temperatures were warmer and when differences between surface and bottom temperatures were least. While it remains to be confirmed, it also appears that in any given year more eggs per female are found on shrimp from areas of the gulf with large thermal stratification.

The temperature layering of the Gulf of Maine—a very easily-measured parameter—thus appears to provide a ready index of the reproductive potential of northern shrimp. And when this index from each of the past 20 years is applied to the known landings of shrimp four years later—commercial shrimp are four years old at harvest—there is a close correlation. There seems in fact to be a readily available method of predicting shrimp abundance four years into the future. Whether management or industry will take advantage of this capability remains to be seen.

Management of Gulf of Maine shrimp began in 1973 by agreement among Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts, and northern shrimp fishing is now limited by law to a winter and spring season.

Most of the catch is landed by several hundred otter trawl vessels from the three states, but in Maine a surprising number of traps designed specifically for shrimp are also set. Trap-caught shrimp tend to command a premium price because they are uniformly of desirable commercial size and because they are clean and undamaged by mud or pressure from the cod end of an otter trawl. Some fishermen say that traps permit them to fish in the lee of islands on blowy days when other forms of fishing would be difficult or impossible.

There is a case to be made that northern shrimp should be harvested in the gulf only by traps. These produce an excellent product, and by and large retain only the marketable size, thus serving a conservation purpose by releasing juveniles and immatures for next year's crop. A large proliferation of shrimp traps in winter, however, might conflict with the inshore scallop fishery, exacerbating an existing hassle between scallopers and lobstermen. Undoubtedly, otter trawl fishermen would object to a ban on their traditional harvesting method. Thus, in spite of the advantages of the trap, it is unlikely that the shrimp fishery will be limited by regulation to traps alone. There is room, however, for an expansion of shrimp trapping in central and western Maine, to the advantage of the fishermen, the market, and the resource.

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Commercial shrimping in Maine supports small lobster boats rigged with 40′ otter trawls fishing in the shelter of the islands. In fact, efficient and lightweight trawls are available, even though not used by Maine boats, which would permit even 30′ boats to take a few shrimp. The fishery supports offshore stern trawlers up to 90′ in length, and it has attracted a controversial 130′ freezer trawler reminiscent of the foreign fleets of the 1960's, and raised fears of overfishing of this small resource.

In the boom days of the late 1960's, after an hour's tow the cod end might hold 1,500 pounds of shrimp, and a day's catch could be 6-8,000 pounds. It was easy fishing then, even in winter, with a large part of the catch taken close inshore under the lee of the headlands and well into the Sheepscot River estuary. Anything that would float was rigged up to share in the bonanza. Some venerable slabs, hardly fit for serious offshore winter fishing, showed in the fleet. But the revival of the fishery in the late 1970's was a different story. The shrimp don't come inshore now to the degree they did 20 years ago, probably because of the somewhat warmer winter water temperatures inshore. And so the bulk of the catch must be taken further out where the boats ought to be the finest kind.

Shrimping is a nearly invisible fishery in Maine. Vessels leave the dock well before dawn to get offshore for the day's work, and the long runs mean that they get home well after dark. Hard winter weather and dangerous freezing spray cut the fishing days to perhaps one—or maybe two—days a week. The boats have to push their luck to pay the bills, maybe chancing an extra tow or an extra fishing day when rising winds tell the prudent skipper it's time to run in or stay home. Thirty fishing days in a four-month, midwinter season are about all one can expect with a small boat.

Under such harsh conditions in the 1980's, a boat may take a few hundred pounds or, on a very good day, perhaps a ton of shrimp. But instead of the price of 8-12¢ of the 1960's, now the boats can expect $1 a pound, enough of a difference to meet the much higher costs of fuel, insurance, and gear.

Because our shrimp is a small resource, some restraint on fishing effort is desirable. The diversity of effort—small boats, large vessels; traps and trawls; inshore and offshore—together with the fishermen's need to fish whenever the weather permits, means that fishing limits would be difficult to devise and enforce and would probably create unreasonable difficulties. The natural limitations of rugged winter weather have, in fact, been considered by managers as useful restraints on fishing effort and more effective and acceptable than artificial catch quotas or vessel limits. The advent of big freezer trawlers, capable of fishing without regard to weather, could easily upset these restraints and jeopardize the resource or result in burdensome limits of questionable effectiveness.

Because shrimp are quite tiny creatures, small-mesh nets are required. But the otter trawl catches almost everything in its path. Even though the shrimp mesh is now regulated by law, there still is considerable concern about the impact of shrimp catches upon the well-being of other fisheries. In particular, shrimp trawls have been accused of doing damage to the whiting, redfish, and flounder fisheries because of the alleged high catch of the juveniles of those species. Whether or not this is so, the otter trawl is a very unselective method of harvesting and consequently makes difficult the conservation of overfished species such as haddock and redfish.

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A strong reason, but not the only one, for not permitting summer shrimping is the high probability that the necessary small shrimp mesh would take unacceptably large numbers of the juveniles of finfish, particularly whiting or silver hake. Shrimp trapping in the winter is an excellent way of avoiding the problem. It is a good example of why we should be exploring new fishing methods that would allow us to replace the unselective otter trawl.

In theory, there is little doubt that such techniques can be developed, since animals of all kinds respond to particular stimuli such as various kinds of light, sound, electrical impulses, or chemicals. Using these stimuli it should be possible to selectively attract or repel those particular shellfish or finfish which we do or do not wish to harvest and to leave the unwanted kinds in the sea for the benefit of the resources. This approach to effective management depends upon a sound research program and the technical development of new harvesting gear based on the research results. The effort eventually could replace the unselective and largely unmanageable otter trawl. Until that is done, effective management of bottom-dwelling species living in mixed communities is doubtful.

In the meantime, despite the problems of the otter trawl, the prospect for Maine is encouraging. The Gulf of Maine shrimp fishery has become part of the world economy, and international demand is strong. Maine's prices and demand are directly affected by the condition of the resources and landings in Alaska and Scandinavia. Maine shrimping opened in 1987 with a high price of more than $1 per pound, and because world demand remained high, it did not fall as in the past. In large measure the price of shrimp sold locally from the back of a pickup truck will be determined by overseas conditions, and since world demand shows no sign of slumping, prices to fishermen will only increase.

Peter Ralston

If the bottom of the Gulf of Maine warms again to the temperatures of the 1950's and 1970's the resource will decline. But if the waters stay cool, as is expected, we may anticipate a respectable harvest. Since science has given industry a predictive mechanism for forecasting four years in advance either a decline or increase in abundance, compared to the conditions of other fisheries, Maine's winter shrimp fishery is in good shape for the future.

Spencer Apollonio *is an ocean scientist and former Commissioner of the Maine Department of Marine Resources. He has done a great deal of research on the Maine shrimp, while his long tour in government gave him special insight into the politics and management of this important commercial fishery.*

KENNETH CROWELL

HERE TODAY

Peter Ralston

THE DYNAMICS OF ISLAND INTRODUCTIONS

A CLAMMER IS CONFRONTED by a bull American bison on Long Island in Blue Hill Bay; a picnicker gathers rose hips from an island beach; a hiker stumbles upon a perfectly white rabbit on a Monhegan bluff. The plants and animals involved owe their presence, one way or another, to the hand of man. For the past 25 years I have roamed the islands talking with trappers, lobstermen, summer residents, and historians in order to measure the pulse of island life, and in my travels I have found that animal and plant introductions are notorious for their effects on islands.

Purposeful introductions of plants and animals to Maine islands were made by colonial settlers and Indians. Plants were introduced for crops and as ornamentals; likewise, animals were introduced for husbandry, pets, food, or fur. Island residents have repeatedly told me of introductions of deer and snowshoe hare to Vinalhaven after native populations were eliminated. Fur-bearers were among the first to be wiped out, and in recent times have been reintroduced for commercial purposes. Beaver, which disappeared from the Maine coast in the late 18th century, were reportedly reestablished this century on Mount Desert Island. On Kent Island, site of the Bowdoin College Scientific Station in the Bay of Fundy, both snowshoe hare and muskrat were introduced to provide meat and pelts, respectively. The raccoon, introduced to the Fox Islands for sport in the late 1950's, has since reached pest proportions. The ring-necked pheasant, a hybrid of two species native to Asia, has become naturalized on Matinicus and Vinalhaven.

Intentional introductions are not just limited to birds and mammals. A summer resident released several species of turtle on Isle au Haut, and the eastern painted turtle is found in at least two ponds on Deer Isle. Because of their inability to disperse on salt water, the presence of turtles and frogs on any island is probably the result of intentional introductions. Another possibility is that they represent relict populations dating back several thousands of years when landbridges connected most Maine islands to the mainland (see *Island Journal Research News*, Summer 1987).

Exotic plants on islands pose interesting mysteries and sometimes sticky problems. Many island light stations are surrounded by patches of rhubarb and caraway as testimonies to the families who once lived there. Residents of Cushing Island in Casco Bay are currently battling bittersweet, an Asian exotic. This plant was cultivated on Cushing by a Portland garden club to "pretty-up" the bunkers and other military emplacements. Now the question is how to wage war and get rid of this plant that is choking the trails, invading the lawns, and shattering residents' idea of a "natural" island.

Some introductions have a way of just happening. Weeds and rodents frequently stow away on boats or cross over bridges. The house mouse and Norway rat, natives to Europe, have been dispersed around the globe by ships. Because the house mouse cannot compete with our native mice in the wild, it is limited to larger towns; but the Norway rat is common along the waterfronts of most large islands. Incidental plant introductions abound on the Maine coast; in fact, most of our open land is dominated by weeds of European origin. Roadside weeds, such as the hawkweeds and ox-eye daisy, came with settlers from Europe in their food seeds, rootstocks, ballast, or animal feeds. Adapted to disturbed habitats, these weeds abound in meadows and roadsides and bear witness to former human habitation. A cosmopolitan beach bum is the rugosa rose, native to Asia. Tolerant of salt, it colonizes sandy soils above the mean high water mark.

During the past few decades some species which were previously eliminated have returned to the Maine coast under their own power. With the abandonment of farmland in the late 19th century, regeneration of forest on the larger islands began a new cycle marked in recent decades by the return of such species as the deer, bobcat, and black bear. Some of the seabirds that once suffered depredations for meat, eggs, and feathers for the millinery trade are on the rebound as well. It is hard to imagine there being no gulls, but by the mid-19th century the great cormorant, double-crested cormorant, common murre, common eider, and greater black-backed gull had all been eliminated as breeding species in Maine. In 1900 only three female eiders and one pair of Atlantic puffin could be found on the entire coast of Maine. The black guillemot and herring gull survived only in small colonies. After the First World War, the herring gull began to increase, followed by the great black-backed gull. The reestablishment of gulls was only a temporary triumph, for supplemented by fish offal and garbage in burgeoning landfills, gull populations soared to pest proportions. The double-crested cormorant and common eider have also spread southward (Maine is the only nesting area for the eider in the lower 48 states). Since 1983 the great cormorant has bred on Spirit Ledge off Swans Island, restoring it as a breeding species in the United States.

In recent decades several species of birds and mammals have been expanding their ranges in the Northeast. While the reasons are not completely understood, they seem to involve a response to a combination of habitat change and climatic moderation.

Peter Ralston

Long Island in Blue Hill Bay, with over 4,000 acres of forest, is the largest island off the coast of Maine without a year-round community. However, it is now inhabited by a herd of introduced woodland buffaloes, a situation that has led to a number of dramatic man-and-beast encounters.

The northern cardinal, tufted titmouse, and northern mockingbird, once found only south of the Hudson River, moved into southern Connecticut in the early 1960's, reached southern Maine in the 1970's, and are now common on the larger islands. The house finch, a southwestern species released in New York, now outnumbers the native purple finch in many areas. In addition to the moderate maritime climate of the coast, bird feeders probably have played a role in the spread of many of these species.

About 40 years ago the eastern coyote began invading the Northeast. The coyote is now established on Deer Isle and Mount Desert Island. While it fills the niche vacated by the timber wolf, the coyote may also depress populations of the red fox, itself a species absent from the Fox Islands for more than a century.

Through an intimate knowledge of an animal's life history, several populations of locally extinct species have been restored. Stratton Island, off Prouts Neck, once supported over 1,000 pairs of common and roseate terns, but in the mid-1980's the terns were displaced by herring and great black-backed gulls. In 1987, following gull control measures, terns were enticed back by decoys and tape recordings. Similarly, terns have recolonized Petit Manan Island and Eastern Egg Rock since the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service poisoned the gulls. In 1987 the 1,400 breeding pairs made Petit Manan the largest tern colony in Maine.

In the early 1960's the number of nesting ospreys and peregrine falcons nose-dived—the result of bioaccumulation of DDT and related toxic compounds. Subsequently, the eastern peregrine became extinct. In recent years, through a cooperative project between the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and the Peregrine Fund, the peregrine falcon has been reintroduced to Mount Desert Island. These individuals have provided the nucleus for the first nesting peregrines in Maine since the mid-1950s.

The Puffin Project is an equally ambitious scheme, spearheaded by Dr. Stephen Kress of the National Audubon Society. Like other pelagic sea birds, the puffin used to nest on offshore islands along the coast. However, hunting pressure at the turn of the century wiped out six of the seven Gulf of Maine puffin colonies. Between 1975 and 1987 some 1,500 puffin chicks (pufflings) were flown from Newfoundland to Maine, where they were hand-raised on Eastern Egg Rock (see Puffin Redux, *Island Journal* 1984). After spending two or three years maturing at sea the transplanted puffins began returning to Eastern Egg Rock. Now 18 breeding pairs are firmly established at this former nesting island, and the reintroduction techniques are being applied to Matinicus Seal Island, which a century ago was Maine's largest puffin colony.

In an effort to establish a new colony of Leach's storm-petrel on Old Hump Ledge in Muscongus Bay, Dr. Richard H. Podolsky dug 32 artificial burrows in the peaty soil. Eight pairs of these nocturnal nesters were successfully lured to the artificial burrows with tape recordings of their courtship calls. This technique is now being applied to the very endangered dark-rumped petrel on the Galapagos Island of Santa Cruz.

Most introductions to Maine islands have not had the disastrous impact typical of oceanic islands. But neither are all introductions benign. Leach's storm-petrels nest in burrows in the peaty soil of outer islands, and predation by Norway rat and trampling by sheep may be responsible for the reduction in the number of Maine colonies since the early 1900's (down from 26 nesting islands in 1900 to only 17 at present).

A long-term view of the flora and fauna of the Maine coast reveals a pattern of continuous change. Changing weather patterns and rising sea level in the past several thousand years have altered vegetation communities and thus the distribution and abundance of birds and mammals. Although there have been some unwise introductions, the status of many species of mammals, raptors, and seabirds on the Maine coast is improving. But the future is clouded with increased development pressure for second homes, growing recreational use on unoccupied islands, and by the impending exploitation of the continental shelf. Maine's islands will need to be watched and thoughtfully managed to prevent colonization by opportunistic species of plants and animals, and the techniques of restoration ecology will be necessary if many native species are to persist.

Dr. Kenneth L. Crowell, *Professor of Biology at St. Lawrence University, is always interested in information and anecdotes on island animals. He can be contacted at Department of Biology, St. Lawrence University, Canton, New York 13617 or Sunset, ME 04683.*

RICHARD H. PODOLSKY

GONE TOMORROW

Art Speiss

A REQUIEM FOR THE SEA MINK AND GREAT AUK

THE COMPLEX ECOLOGICAL fabric of the North Atlantic did not unravel when the last great auk and sea mink slipped into oblivion. The extinction of the great auk and the sea mink was not so much an ecological loss as it was a spiritual one. Sometimes, in my mind's eye, I see a winter day when I am looking offshore from the southern tip of Isle au Haut. In rapid succession six great auks pop to the surface. They are nearly two feet long, black above, white below, with a large white spot in front of each eye. Two birds have large silver fish still struggling in their bills and another bird comes nearly vertical out of the water to reveal a pair of ridiculously small wings or more accurately, flippers. In the next moment they all disappear beneath the gray-green surface. Next, a large sea mink slips out of the water and into the rocky intertidal with a large rock crab in its jaws. Its thick red-brown fur glints in the winter sunlight as it calmly cracks the crab's carapace with its large sharp teeth.

The last confirmed sighting of the great auk was on June 3, 1844, on Eldey Rock off the southwest point of Iceland. The two birds were taken alive and their remains now reside in the Royal University Museum, Copenhagen. Sightings of great auks in 1852 and 1853 are considered of doubtful authenticity. The fundamental cause of extinction was human hunting, first by aboriginals inhabiting the shores of the North Atlantic, then by a more severe and final blow delivered by 18th century mariners, who literally herded great auks into boats as a source of protein for long voyages. Now, all that remains of this most singular of all auks are 22 museum skins, three taxidermy mounts and six eggs.

The loss of the great auk, referred to as garefowl in Old English or geirfuglasker in Icelandic, is a particularly unfortunate extinction because of how recent it was. The great auk missed by only a few decades the army of conservation organizations that now run to the aid of a plant or animal on the verge of extinction.

The great auk is a member of the alcid family, which includes puffins, razorbills, and guillemots. Alcids are entirely restricted to the Northern Hemisphere but are strangely reminiscent of southern hemisphere penguins. Both share an upright posture, are similar in size and shape, dive for fish with the aid of reduced wings, and are strikingly similar in coloration. These similarities were compelling enough to fool early European explorers. The name "penguin" is actually derived from the latin name of the great auk, *Penguinus impennis*. *Penguinus* is from the Welsh "pen" for head, "guinnus" for white, and refers to the large white spot located just forward of the eye of the great auk.

No matter how compelling, these similarities are deceptive. Truth is that alcids and penguins are only distantly related. Alcids are allied with gulls and terns, and penguins with the albatross family. Their similarity in size, shape, color, and diet is an elegant example of "convergent evolution," the process whereby two totally unrelated organisms evolve similar structures and adaptations to survive a similar environment. For auks and penguins the cold polar waters, the rock and ice bound shorelines of islands, and the exploitation of fish as a primary food have exerted similar selective pressures, resulting in the evolutionary convergences we observe. Penguins and auks are ecological and morphological counterparts with remote common ancestry.

The security and benefits of island life are many, but it can lead to an evolutionary letting down of the guard. After millions of years of a secure island existence, the great auk's wings became obsolete, as did its fear of intruders to their nesting islands. Consequently, great auks had no innate fear of predators and did not try to escape when approached by humans with the worst intentions. This, combined with their flightlessness, rendered them both behaviorally and morphologically unprepared to escape hunters. Great auks were taken in the Orkney Islands by fishermen who enticed them to the side of a boat by holding out a few fish and then striking them with an oar. The St. Kildans in the Outer Hebrides collected their eggs as food. In all cases, the introduction of an exotic predator (humans) shattered the auks' evolutionary utopia.

Great auk bones are common in island shell heaps along the Maine coast, indicating that the great auk may have been a regular visitor to the Gulf of Maine. According to Dr. Arthur Spiess, prehistoric archaeologist for the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, great auks were once common along the Maine coast. Spiess has found great auk bones comprising up to 10% of the avifauna in some archaeological samples. Of the 2,000 bird bones found at an archaeological site on North Haven, 97 were identified as great auk. The oldest bones come from a site occupied about 4,200 years ago and the youngest from an occupation dating to 1,000 years ago.

The nearest known nesting site for great auks is Funk Island north of Newfoundland, but Spiess has data indicating that auks may have nested on a Maine island or somewhere in the Gulf of Maine. Some of the auk bones Spiess has found contain a calcium rich deposit called medullary bone. This boney material is deposited in the long hollow bones of females just prior to egg laying, presumably as a source of calcium destined for the egg shell. The presence of

medullary bone at an archaeological site is usually interpreted as indicating nearby nesting. Comparisons of the timing of medullary bone deposition in a near relative of the great auk, such as the razorbill or Atlantic puffin, may be fruitful in gathering support for this idea of locally nesting great auks.

The sea mink, a species whose entire known range was along the Maine coast, is another major extinction that occurred in the northeast. In fact the handful of Maine islands named "Otter Island" probably refers to the presence of local populations of sea minks. The sea mink is closely related to the mink which is common to both inland and coastal Maine, but because the sea mink was 25% larger, it is recognized as a distinct species. Skeletal remains indicate that the sea mink was also more heavily muscled and much more powerful than the mink. Little is known of the life history of this lost mammal, but we do know that it lived at the sea/land interface and probably exploited both environments.

Being a carnivore, the sea mink must have been an engaging and colorful member of the intertidal zone. A typical day for a sea mink could have been spent preying upon colonial seabirds, swimming out to islands or diving down through kelp forests in pursuit of urchins, crabs, lobsters, and perhaps fish. The closest ecological equivalent to the sea mink is the sea otter found associated with kelp forests along the shore of the eastern Pacific. In California, sea otters prey heavily upon urchins and abalone. If our sea mink preyed heavily upon sea urchins perhaps the current population explosion of urchins is the result of the loss of this intertidal predator.

Like the great auk, the primary reason for the decline and eventual extinction of the sea mink was hunting pressure. It is not hard to imagine how highly prized these large mink pelts must have been to early coastal inhabitants trying to keep warm in a northeast winter. Arthur Spiess believes that sea mink pelts may have been so valuable as to have been part of an established trade system that linked the Maine coast with Labrador and Newfoundland. By 1910 the only remains of the sea mink were a few pelts and mounted specimens. However, like the great auk, sea mink bones abound in archaeological sites on Maine islands. Spiess found that out of a sample of 4,000 mammal bones found on North Haven, 650 were sea mink, indicating that this species may have been abundant throughout prehistory.

The disappearance of the great auk and sea mink is intimately tied to their island existence and is one of the early warning signs of a trend that currently threatens islands world-wide and the biodiversity of the entire Earth.

Extinction is a simple fact of organic evolution. The history of life on earth is punctuated by bursts of mass extinction. At the end of the Permian period 230 million years ago nearly half the animal species on earth disappeared. The ends of the Cambrian, Devonian, Triassic, and Cretaceous periods were also marked by peaks in the extinction rate of plant and animal lineages.

John James Audubon

The sea mink jaw, left, is typical of the faunal remains unearthed at archeological sites along the Maine coast. This John James Audubon reproduction of the great auk was based on field observations made by the artist on Funk Island northeast of Newfoundland.

These episodes of extinction were the result of environmental changes brought about by catastrophic shifts in global weather patterns. But now extinction derived from human activities is driving and accelerating this natural and inevitable process. Of the planetary stock of species, we could easily witness the demise of one quarter to one third in the foreseeable future. The principle reasons, all caused by human activities include: loss of habitat; introduction of predators, competitors, or diseases; overexploitation through hunting or fishing; and broad scale pollution such as the buildup of gases due to the "greenhouse effect," acid precipitation, toxic waste, and heavy metal accumulation in the environment.

Island biotas are among the most extinction-prone on Earth. Plants and animals on islands have evolved relatively free from predation, competition, and disease and are consequently more vulnerable to each. Small, sedentary, island-bound populations are much more likely to disappear than large mobile ones on the mainland. Even without the impact of humans, islands have a higher species turnover rate than the mainland. Compounding this, islands are often populated with unique life forms. The Hawaiian honeycreepers and silverswords, and Darwin's finches of the Galapagos Islands are prime examples. These endemic species are typically very specialized to the particular conditions on the island. Even slight changes to habitats can jeopardize the existence of these small, sensitive, and irreplaceable populations.

The statistics speak for themselves. Islands make up only one percent of the land area of the Earth, yet an estimated 75% of the recent vertebrate extinctions have occurred on islands! In the last five centuries 75 birds, 60 mammals, and 30 reptiles and amphibians have become extinct. All of these except one amphibian, 12 birds, and fewer than 30 mammals lived on islands. Among birds only 20% of the existing 8,600 species are island dwellers, yet 90% of the birds driven to extinction in historic times have been endemic to islands.

Of the 60 island birds recently extinct, about 30 succumbed to introduced predators, including rats, cats, dogs, foxes, mongooses, and minah birds. Human hunting is responsible for the extinction of an additional 12 island birds. The Hawaiian Islands and New Zealand, taken together, are the site of over one half of the known avian extinctions; 24 for Hawaii, and 18 for New Zealand. Island life forms are simply the least tolerant of human induced environmental changes.

The lessons to be learned from the great auk and sea mink are clear and of global significance; islands are sensitive ecosystems supporting populations of plants and animals predisposed to extinction. It is crucial that islands everywhere be recognized and treated as the fragile and vulnerable ecosystems they are. There is no bringing back the sea mink or great auk, but listening to them and managing islands accordingly is still possible.

Dr. Richard H. Podolsky, *Research and Academic Director of the Island Institute, has studied the natural history of islands in Maine, the North Atlantic, Florida Keys, Bahamas, Hawaii, and the Galapagos Islands.*

SIGN *OF THE* CROSS

Lifesaving East of Machias

ANNE HOWELLS

Deeply down east lies Cross Island, where islandness runs a bit thicker and the stories possess a sepia poignancy, as if long-kept in a treasured attic box. We place Anne Howells' account of Cross Island here under "Lighthouses" for its centerpiece on the Life Saving Station, which for most of a century served mariners of the region with extraordinary duty. Just as do the lighthouses, life saving stations constitute a national public treasure and have an obvious place in our maritime heritage. The Island Institute is pleased to share with the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School responsibility for the care and productive use of the Cross Island Station, which serves both as Outward Bound's Downeast Base, and the Cabot Biological Station for naturalists and researchers.

BETWEEN KITTERY AND Quoddy, the rugged fastness of Cross Island, 1,500 acres of craggy volcanic headlands and deep dungeon spruce stands, is the easternmost island sentinel off the Maine Coast. Located at the southeast edge of Machias Bay, Cross Island is separated from the Cutler mainland by the Cross Island Narrows that for centuries has offered a short-cut to and from the Maritimes, doing away with the need to run outside Cross' long lee shore where heavy seas break and deep water offers no safe anchorage.

Although Cross Island has had many owners with plans to wring wealth from its secret gifts, the island's most consistent citizens over the past centuries have been mostly nameless fishermen who built camps and worked the waters until they, like the Indians before them, moved on to other fishing places.

The most enduring organization on this often sold and re-sold piece of real estate was the U.S. Life Saving Service (later to become the U.S. Coast Guard), which opened its first station on Cross in 1874. The building itself, at the eastern end of the Narrows in a tiny, protected cove, was an attractive, if slightly romantic structure, which nevertheless proved to be practical with a few additions. The model, called the "1874 one," had flaring eaves with the Life Saving Service logo, sea otters, cut into the gable soffits to celebrate the slightly amphibious life of the crew.

The logs of Cross Island's second keeper, Lyman S. Wright, are still available and give a picture of the man and his discipline in the service. He served from 1879 until the end of 1901, and no doubt spent more time on the island than any other human being to date.

During his tenure as keeper he stayed at the station year-round while his crew were off duty to be with their families, homes, and gardens from April 30 until Nov. 1. When the Life Saving Service devised this system, it apparently didn't consider the heavy fogs during the warmer months along the northeast coast as a foe to be considered. Such a schedule meant that the keeper, whenever a wreck was sighted, must round up his men until he had a full crew for a rescue mission. When the men signed out they were to give their addresses as well as the distance from the station. As time went on the Life Saving Service hired men who were expected to serve for 12 months.

What a sight it must have been when only oared boats were launched from the station and the crew rowed in unison, their 12′ oars flashing in the breaking seas! Study of group pictures of the crews shows that few of the men appear to be giants, and the rigor of daily drills of launchings, swimming, and rowing, as well as night patrols around Cross' rugged perimeter, meant that they were in good shape physically.

The men at the station performed scores of rescues, although there were few drownings on record. The crews were responsible for a great deal of stevedoring since it was their duty to save cargoes and vessels as well as human lives. They hove vessels off nearly every island in Machias Bay—Round, Salt, Chaunceys, Yellow Head, Bear—all without benefit of a motor.

On a foggy day in August of 1882 Keeper Wright, alone during the "inactive season," saw at 4 in the afternoon a piece of wreckage racing past him. Afraid that a vessel was in trouble nearby, he rowed across to Thornton's Point and mustered a crew from his men who lived along the road to North Cutler. This might prove to be a wild goose chase, but the keeper thought an attempt should be made to find the wreck. They launched the surf boat and pulled to the eastward, the direction from which the wreckage had come.

Shortly afterward they found the schooner *Hugh Ross* of Parrsboro, Nova Scotia, wrecked on the rocks of southern Double Shot Island. Her crew of five had reached the small island, but having lost their boat they had waited through the night and the lifting of the fog to be rescued. The ship, on her way to Plymouth, Mass., was in ballast, so the life savers had no cargo to contend with and had only to row her crew to the mainland to provide them with transportation to Eastport where the British counsel would make plans for their return to Parrsboro. Although not the most heroic of their rescues, nor the most arduous, it was quite typical of their service since a great many Maritimes vessels passed near Cross Island with cargoes of coal, lumber, lime, and gypsum.

The 1874 Station was abandoned in 1916 when a new station was built on the Narrows, but for the Life Saving crews life went on in similar fashion even after their service became part of the Coast Guard 33 years later in 1939.

It was the Second World War that brought changes to the island, as Navy personnel were added to the regular station crew. Most were young men "from away," so very far away that many had never lived within sight or sound of the sea and who missed the bright lights of a city. They found the Cross Island Station life difficult to accept and vented their feelings by "mollyhocking" the older of the two station buildings considerably.

During the summer months for most of the early decades of this century, the northern end of Cross must have looked like a small resort. Whole families, including babes-in-arms, came over to join fathers and husbands in the Life Saving Service and later in the Coast Guard. For the women it was a change and a simpler life. For the men it was a chance to see more of their wives and growing children.

They lived in small camps, with the exception of Keeper Alton Thompson's wife, who pitched a tent.

CROSS ISLAND'S history predates the Life Saving Service, of course. The name the Indians gave to the island—Seebhooch-gouet—was translated as "the place to which things are carried," suggesting that the island might have been a trading place from pre-Colonial times.

Historians believe that the English name for the island, Cross, dates from John Rutt, an English fisherman aboard the *Mary of Guildford*, who left a map he drew depicting an "Island just West of Quoddie" where he wrote that he "had erected a cross thereon."

But the island has a more enduring mark. A geologically older and more unusual cross still shows on the 100′ cliffs of Cross Island Head. One of the two lines forming it is a 25′ natural cleavage; the second, a horizontal line crossing it, appears to have been cut by humans. These lines, if highlighted with bright paint, would form a highly visible day mark and an aid to mariners seeking the island. Among Bucks Harbor fishermen this other cross was well-known and used as a mark in locating halibut grounds. They used it to "Lay off the Cross" when handlining. If cod began biting and then suddenly quit, it meant that aggressive halibut had driven off the smaller fish and it would be worth setting gear for halibut.

In 1785 Rufus Putnam bought Cross Island from the Commonwealth, and thus began a rapid change of owners through the 1820's. For a time John Peck was the owner; later Phineas Bruce, and in the 1880's Isaac Wilder and Moses Stevens were co-owners. It is doubtful if many of these people actually lived on the island for any length of time; the land was far too rocky and rough to support a family farm. It did indicate that many who lived on the island for part of the year were fishermen, usually squatters who built camps near Northeast Harbor.

But by 1865 a Cutler school-site map tells us that there were children enough there to warrant a school. Cutler voted that "the Inhabitants of Cross island Shall have Their Proportion of the School Money according to the no. of schoolers on said Island." The school was built on Northeast Harbor near the shore, called to this day "the Coffin shore," after a family who lived there.

By mid-century a store was established on Cross for trading with coasting schooners as they passed through the Narrows. Since at that time the two island owners were Moses Stevens and Isaac Wilder, and both Stevens and Wilder families owned stores at Cutler Harbor, it is not too wild a guess to think that it was these two men who set up the island establishment.

One of the most unexpected episodes in Cross history was a copper mining venture. After the Civil War there was a burst of mineral prospecting all over the state, and even seafaring Mainers invested money in the search. One such investor was Capt. Charles Deering, master of the steamer *City of Richmond* which plied the waters between Boston and Machiasport. He admitted to a *Machias Union* correspondent that he had owned the Cross Island copper lode since 1879 and that during the two years of his ownership it had been explored. The copper, he claimed, was found to extend for some 1,500′ feet across the island, and what was more "this richly mineralized vein is 12 feet wide," with a pay streak that "increases in size and thickness as it deepens." In addition, copper had been found on the western end of Outer Double Shot Island. The captain's dreams of wealth were rosy and for some time his hopes were bright. A camp was built for the miners and work began. It soon ended; not enough copper was found to make a profitable operation. Today there are no traces of the copper mining except for a small pit dug near Seal Cove on the island's southern end. As for the camp building, no doubt its timbers

Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc.

were used to build smaller ones for the fishing community.

The most memorable of the fishermen who were on the island for part of the year were the Dobbin brothers of Jonesport. Will built a camp at Northeast Harbor, Ramie at Northwest. They were implacable enemies, warring fiercely over territorial rights and plugging ballast rocks at each other over what they thought were incursions into their territories. Raymie was a trap line cutter, hanging the buoys of those he had cut from the limbs of a highly visible old spruce where they swayed in the breeze like the scalps on a pole before an Indian wigwam.

Will had a special reason for staying at the island. His son Sheridan (Sherdie) was a giant of a man with great strength and enthusiasm, but with the mind of a child. Will feared that his strength would get him into trouble on the mainland and lead him to attack a teasing tormentor. On the island, however, his strength was put to good use. He could do chores such as carrying firewood, and he was helpful in hauling lobster traps.

Sherdie's proudest possession was his watch, and he was pleased to give the time to anyone who asked even countless times a day. His miniature lighthouse at the head of the harbor was another pride and joy. It was a sad day during the Second World War when he was told that because of the kerosene shortage, he could not be allowed any for the lamp in his lighthouse at the head of the harbor.

Sherdie liked to dress like the Coast Guardsman, in blue shirts and small round white caps. One day while he was playing his favorite pastime, pretending to be driving a car, the Light Saving Service Commissioner came on the island when Sherdie was imagining driving near the stations. Startled, the commissioner said to the skipper, "I think one of your men has gone crazy!"

Keeper Christopher Hanson during his tenure from 1927 to 1935 enjoyed entertaining groups of friends and neighbors at the station. He dispatched the surf boat to pick up his guests in Machiasport. Once at the island the entertainment was a review of the usual drills that the crew had practiced for some time, but rarely with audiences so enthusiastic. When it came time for the exercise with a breeches buoy, several guests might be asked to participate as shipwrecked sailors or passengers. Two young Machias girls recall stepping into the breeches buoy, which looked much like a pair of cut-off pants. Their trip took them not from the mast of a vessel in distress, but rather from a tall spruce tree, and wafted them safely to another part of the shore. The guests were fed a fish chowder meal, and, when the time came to leave, sent home in the surf boat, full of food and fresh air and ready for a good night's sleep. When Keeper Hanson's daughter Grace graduated from Machias Normal School, her classmates were all feted in this manner.

Thomas D. Cabot

"Cross Island, Maine
April 17-19, 1943
T.D.C. & T.D.C. Jr.
Took faltboat to Machias by train, paddled to Cross Is. in rain, camped in cabin on Grassy Point for two nights and explored island and mainland opposite—posted signs and negotiated leases with squatters."
—from the scrapbook of Thomas D. Cabot

Often, in the days when the first station was in use, entertainment came to the crews from the mainland. It took the form of surprise parties. At the full of the moon a Cutler group came out from Thornton's Point with baskets of pies, cakes, cookies, and a fiddler, Willie Corbett, to play for dancing. The boat house was emptied and the fun began, that is it did for all those not on patrol that night. But even for these men it must have been a pleasure to know that friends and gaiety were with them.

Author E. V. Mitchell, travelling the coast aboard the Maine Seacoast Mission's *Sunbeam*, stopped in at Cross Island during the winter before 1940. In his book *Anchor to Windward* he wrote that "the station is a lonely one and the shore beat probably the hardest on the coast." He was speaking of a day when Cross had a telephone and the surfboats were the last word in construction. From this we can surmise how much harder was life in earlier times. But even in the 1940's night patrols were daunting. Sheep ran loose and the path to be patrolled skirted the steep southern cliffs.

When the Coast Guard left in the early 1960's the island settled down to dormancy. The fishermen, even those who went out to Machias Seal Island to set their traps, no longer needed an island base. In their faster, more powerful boats they could cover more shore than their grandfathers did in peapods, spritsail-rigged open boats, or make-and-break motorboats. Now uninhabited, the Coast Guard Station began to fare poorly, for any unoccupied island structure along the coast seems fair game to looters and vandals. A couple enjoying a picnic one fine summer day near the woodcutters' old stone dock witnessed one such example. A man came staggering down the slope from the Coast Guard building. He carried a white toilet seat in his arms. Only his legs were visible beneath it, which gave him the look of a hermit crab in a borrowed shell. A friend waited for him in a small motorboat, and they whisked off with the seat in the direction of Cutler. Similarly, generators, stoves, boat house gear, and finally windows began disappearing from the building.

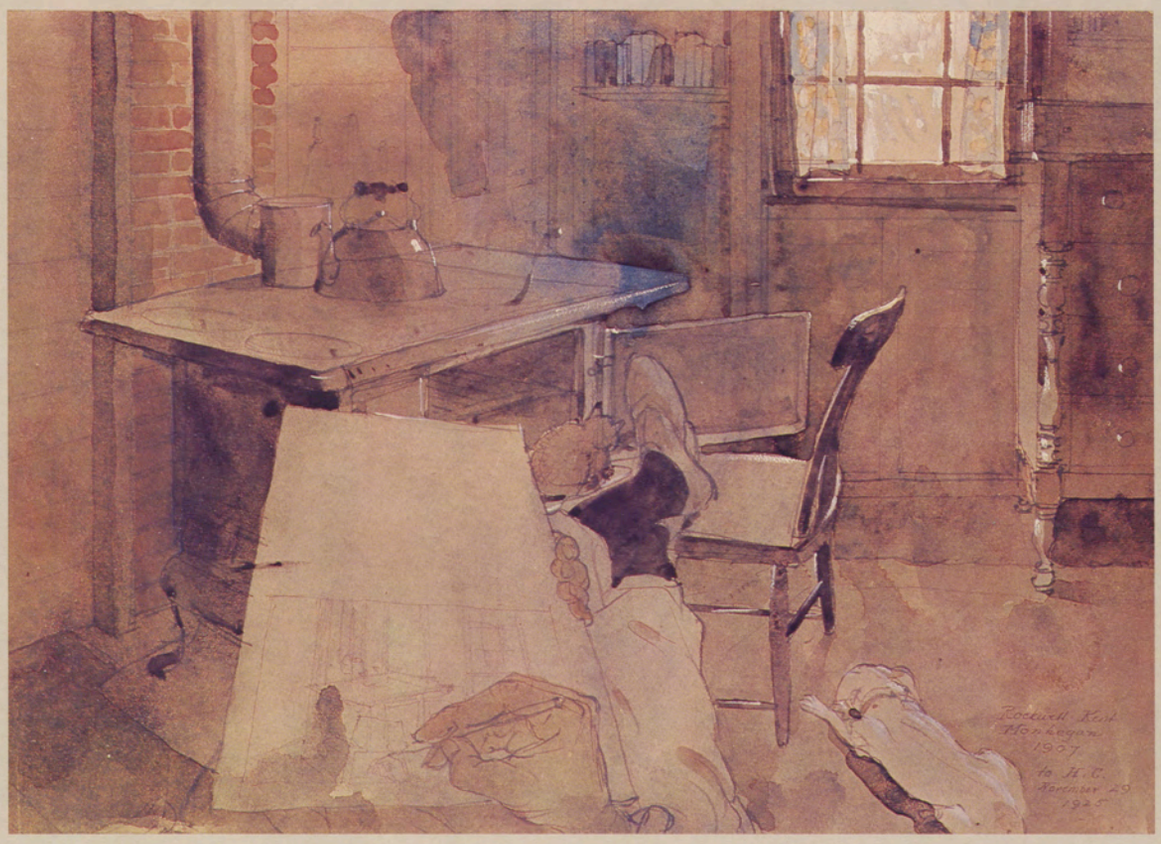
When the Coast Guard left Cross to a seemingly hopeless fate, all of the rest of the island was owned by Thomas D. Cabot. This venerable yachtsman of the Maine coast had made a habit of being in the right place at the right time with cold cash in hand when island property was at stake. He had purchased most of Cross in 1942 from a couple who had bought the island from Pejepscot Paper following two periods of lumbering: the first between 1917 and 1921, and the second between 1939 and 1941. The couple's dream was to create a private deer park where hunters could come, either in legal season or out. But apparently they did not find any "sports" for Cross, and so they sold to Cabot.

Cross Island's wild beauty charmed Cabot, and after a five-year delay because of a flawed deed, he was able to acquire the remaining five acres upon which the Coast Guard Station stood. Then the whole island and its archipelago were his.

Of the whole, he gave 29 acres to the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School to use as the destination of their downeast voyages in open boats. Today, thanks to Cabot, the island is a nature preserve. Working through the Nature Conservancy he was able to give it to the Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior. All the small camps have gone, and only the roof of Raymie Dobbin's lies where it fell; a family of raccoons has denned up beneath it. Cabot's gift means that the deer herd will be safe from hunters' guns, that the harbor seals will be able to haul out in the cove bearing their name, and that bears and even porcupines will be undisturbed. Herons and eagles will now be able to nest there year after year, and osprey feed their young in their top-heavy nests.

For several years Simmie Dobbin, now retired from lobster fishing, has lived during the warmer months aboard his immaculately kept boat in Northeast harbor. He keeps a weather eye out for what might "go on" at the island, but when be goes ashore to the mainland for good, who will replace him?

A seasonal resident of Bucks Harbor, ***Ann Howells*** *has published some 25 children's books, many placed in Maine coast settings, and including the popular* Celia's Lighthouse. *All were written under the pseudonym "Anne Molloy." She is currently working on histories of the lighthouses at Libby Island and Avery Rock and the Life Saving Station at Cross Island, of which the above article is an excerpt.*



ROCKWELL KENT: A MONHEGAN LEGACY

The following special Rockwell Kent folio addition to Island Journal *is made possible by a generous grant from the Charles Engelhard Foundation. The woodcuts and excerpts from Kent's* It's Me, O Lord *are reproduced courtesy of the Rockwell Kent Legacies.*

Interior of Cottage, Monhegan 1907 Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Lola Downin Peck Fund from Carl and Laura Zigrosser Collection.

MONHEGAN'S MOLD CAST KENT

ELIOT STANLEY

Rockwell Kent Gallery and Collections, State University of New York, Plattsburgh

Rockwell Kent first came to Monhegan on the advice of his mentor, Robert Henri, who described Monhegan as "...a place in Maine where I think you'd like to paint." Over the next few years, and throughout a lifelong association, Rockwell Kent would be shaped by, and would leave his imprint upon, Monhegan, the place he called "unique along our Atlantic coast for the majesty of its headlands; and for the goodness and unworldliness of its people."

When Kent stepped off the Monhegan mail boat from Boothbay Harbor in June 1905, his baggage included two years of architectural studies from Columbia University, an additional two years of art classes under New York artists William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri, and an intellectual fascination with socialism, the latter a rebellion against his upper middle class origins in Tarrytown.

Kent' studies in New York focused on realism in art which Henri taught to his students who included not only Kent but also Edward Hopper, George Bellows, and George Luks. Collectively they helped provide the foundations of what came to be known as The Modern School. Hopper and Bellows stuck largely with the urban scene while Kent went first to Monhegan, then to interior New England, Newfoundland, Alaska, Tierra del Fuego, Ireland, and Greenland, before finally coming home to the Adirondack region of New York. After leaving the city for Monhegan in 1905, Kent never again used urban settings in any of his paintings.

As Yeats once advised Synge to go to the Aran Islands to rediscover the traditions and language of the old Ireland, so Henri sent the young Kent to Monhegan to find the elemental in both the natural and human landscape. Henri had painted along the Maine coast, including Monhegan, and Kent's early works there show the influence of bold color and strongly contrasting forms typical of Henri's mature work. *Winter, Monhegan* from 1907, considered one of Kent's major works, was given to Henri in acknowledgement of Kent's artistic debt to his teacher. It now is the sole example of Kent's painting on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

A 1928 essay Kent wrote for *Creative Art* magazine reveals the island's impact in developing his artistic and social consciousness:

"...Probably for no better reason than that I was born in Westchester County which has practically no seacoast, I wanted more than anything to live on the ocean; so I went to Monhegan Island. Because I had never done any work with my hands I was most impressed by the strength and potential power of people who did work with their hands. Seeing fishermen at work in an element that was terrible to me, I felt my own inferiority and the necessity to restore my self respect by learning how to work.

"So I became in course of time a laborer and earned my two dollars a day by heavy work. I was intelligent and learned to use tools. I built my own house. I became a carpenter. I had a chance to work at lobstering. It was winter work, getting up before daylight, going down to the harbor in oil skins that were as stiff as sheet iron from the cold, rowing out to the dory moorings, chopping the ice off the gunwale of the dory and, with another man, rowing out to the sea just as the first light of morning appeared."

In the painting *Toilers of the Sea* (1907) we feel the straining of muscle against the sea in the daily work of the Monhegan lobstermen. His intellectual interest in socialist theory was bolstered by his growing awareness of the harsh reality of life faced by working people; he identified his artistic craft with the work of the common man, and throughout his life he joined unions and worked with his hands at all stages of the engraving or printing of his own works.

Physically, Kent was not an imposing figure. He was of medium height with dark intense eyes; talkative and playful with those he liked and brusque with others. His amorous adventures, which began at Monhegan and which interwove with his three marriages, are material for a book in themselves. He espoused personal freedom and practiced it, remarking once that although he advocated socialism politically, such regimentation would not suit his artistic life style.

Kent's philosophy of art, however, was deeply influenced by his politics. Ultimately, he believed that art would be measured by its social value:

"Art as a social force has grave responsibilities and will be judged by its discharge of them. It can enliven or depress us, foster our hopes or deepen our despair; it can build our faith or destroy it. By awakening us to the beauty of our world and to the dignity of man it can be a powerful factor in human progress; or it can lure us apart from this world into the sterile, loveless solitude of never-never land."

Man at Mast

Again and again over his long life Kent objected to the dehumanization of modern art, which embraced abstract art forms concerned more with light, color, and design than with the natural world as perceived through man's eye.

Kent's first Monhegan period lasted off and on from 1905 to 1910. During those five years he produced about 120 oil paintings or preliminary studies for them—one of his most prolific periods of work. As a group, the Monhegan paintings won immediate critical recognition in New York (despite little sales success before 1919), and are increasingly regarded as comparable in stature to Winslow Homer's seascapes. In those early years he also designed and constructed four buildings on the island —his only known architectural work in Maine. One of these houses, the Sara Kent cottage (for his mother's use), is now owned by artist Jamie Wyeth.

Kent's second and last Monhegan period consisted of summers there between 1947 and 1953. Again he was moved to paint, but the 40 intervening years of highly publicized adventures, world renown as artist and book illustrator, and political controversy had brought him back to Monhegan seeking a refuge from the world rather than a jumping off point for more excitement. Kent completed 36 paintings during his late 60's and early 70's.

If the artistic fire had cooled somewhat by the time Kent returned to Monhegan, the social conscience and political activism that had burned brightly since youth had, if anything, intensified in his later years. His ardent socialism and membership in Communist-front organizations, while hardly unusual among American intelligentsia before World War II, exposed him to increasing criticism in the Cold War era. This country, his beloved country, which had claimed him as one of its remarkable artistic personalities, now seemed determined to punish him for sticking to pro-Soviet convictions most of his fellow artists had abandoned. Still, his combative nature seemed to thrive on such battles as his celebrated confrontation with Senator Joseph McCarthy in 1953.

But there were also hurts associated with his high profile as a famous and politically outspoken artist. Of these, none was more poignant than the 1953 decision by the Board of the Farnsworth Museum at Rockland to cancel plans to build a special Rockwell Kent wing; in return, Kent was prepared to give the museum his own personal collection of more than 75 canvases and hundreds of graphics, drawings, and manuscripts. This would have been the largest collection of his works under one roof in the world. When Kent heard that Boston banking interests on the board vetoed the plan based on his politics, he was outraged. Maine, and the nation as it turned out, had lost a collection whose greatness is now appreciated in part because it was kept intact—in the Soviet Union.

Drifter

The years of Rockwell Kent's association with Monhegan and with Maine thus came to an abrupt end in 1953. The security of his "unworldly" refuge had been violated by its own provincialism—even on Monhegan he felt the sting of suspicion and rumor.

Bitterly, he returned to Asgaard, his home since 1928 near Au Sable Forks, New York. In 1961 he gave to the people of the Soviet Union the vast art collection he had hoped to have at the Farnsworth; they in turn accorded him the Lenin Peace Prize in 1967, the Russian "Nobel." Only now, as we approach the 30th anniversary of that gift, are serious efforts underway to bring back the Kent Russian Gift on tour to the United States. Richard V. West, Director of the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, who has previously organized two major Kent exhibits in this country, is director of this project, and Jamie Wyeth has agreed to head the national advisory committee.

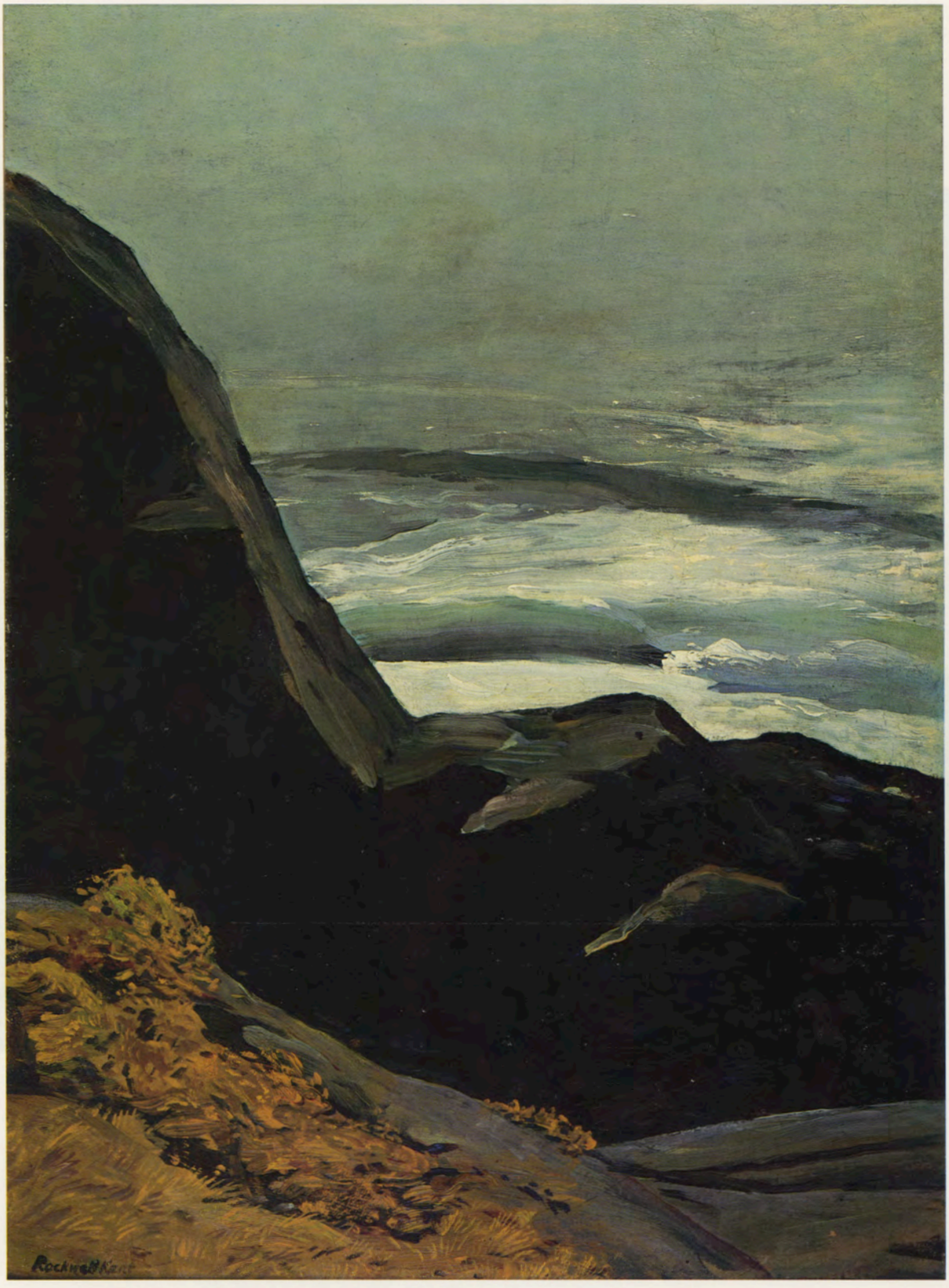
Shortly before his 89th birthday in 1971, Kent died of natural causes in Au Sable Forks. He had cared deeply and passionately about art and about people, and he had worked hard over a long life both for his art and for the advancement of his political ideas. His art, a powerful instrument, and his radical thinking made him a threat, and a fearful country ostracized him. But his association with Maine and Monhegan has undeniably enriched all of us, on both sides of the cold North Atlantic.

"The village of Monhegan in those days consisted of hardly more than twenty-five or, at the most, thirty houses, of which by far the greater number were lived in by the year-round residents whose occupation was fishing and, in particular, lobster fishing. Being an old settlement, its white man's history dating from some years prior to the Plymouth landing, many of the houses, though not of great antiquity, had inherited the character and fine proportions of New England architecture at its best—although, in keeping with the island's windswept situation, they were simple and unadorned to the point of austerity."

Island Village 1909 Collection of The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. Photograph courtesy: Rockwell Kent Gallery and Collections, State University of New York, Plattsburgh
(*Island Village* is published here for the first time outside the Soviet Union.)

"Truly I loved that little world, Monhegan. Small, sea-girt island that it was, a seeming floating speck in the infinitude of sea and sky, one was as though driven to seek refuge from the impendent cosmic immensity in a closer relationship to people and to every living thing."

Late Afternoon 1906 Collection of Jamie Wyeth



Rocks, Monhegan 1906 Collection of Jamie Wyeth

"As the day for setting neared—the date unspecified but dependent on what was felt to be the market's peak—the tension grew. Some man would start, someone would try to jump the gun; but who? And when? One thing was sure: the break would come at daybreak or before; and every man slept with one ear listening for the tramp of rubber boots on the frozen ground. Then suddenly it happened. Lanterns moved about the beaches and the harbor like giant fireflies; there was the tramp of men, the thumping of traps as they were loaded into dories, the sound of oars in their holes. They're off!—with every dory racing for the favorite grounds."

Toilers of the Sea 1907 Collection of the New Britain Museum of American Art/Charles F. Smith Fund

Winter, Monhegan Island 1907 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, George A. Hearn Fund, 1917

"(As) I was returning from my day's hard manual labor on the island of Monhegan, Maine, I was hailed by my good friend, the artist Frederick Dorr Steele, all clean and tidy in his flannels.

"'Why in Heaven's name, Rock,' he called, 'do you keep on wasting your time at such work?'

"I stopped and answered him—and I will give my answer, though I blush now at its pompousness: 'Fred,' I said, 'art is no more than the shadow cast by a man's own stature.' The length of the shadow, I would now have added, depending on the position of the sun."

North (Greenland) 1931 Peter Brady Collection.
Courtesy of The Rockwell Kent Legacies

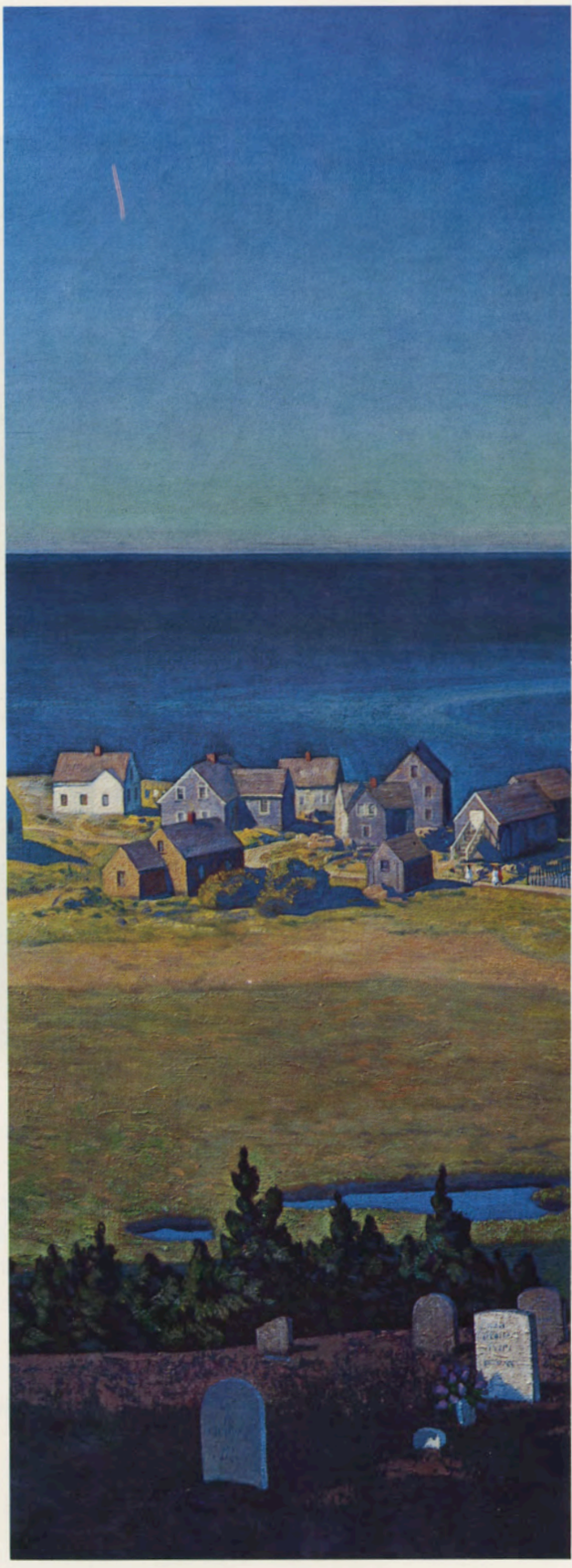
"Of that world, whose simple facts of rocks and grass and trees, of plains and mountains, of sea and sky had always moved me,I now felt myself to be no longer a mere spectator but an integral part—like beasts and birds and fishes, and bugs and earthworms if you like, and working men and women—an indigenous inhabitant by natural right. I earned my living, I belonged. It is a great, proud feeling—to belong!"

Men and Mountains 1909 Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio/Gift of Ferdinand Howald

"The most successful of the pictures, to my mind—
if the conveyance of a mood of despair may be termed success—
was 'The House of Dread.' Upon a bleak and lofty cliff's edge, land's end,
stands a house; against its corner and facing seawards leans a man, naked
even as the land, and sea, and house; his head is bowed as
though in utter dejection; and from an upper window leans a
weeping woman. It is our cliff, our sea, our house stripped bare and stark,
its loneliness intensified. It is ourselves in Newfoundland,
our hidden but prevailing misery revealed."

House of Dread c.1915 Rockwell Kent Gallery and Collections, State University of New York, Plattsburgh. Courtesy of The Rockwell Kent Legacies

"Fundamental to all consideration of art is its purpose. To be entitled to the honor that society bestows upon it, it must unquestionably have a social value... Art as a social force has grave responsibilities and will be judged by its discharge of them. It can enliven or depress us, foster our hopes or deepen our despair; it can build our faith or destroy it. By awakening us to the beauty of our world and to the dignity of man it can be a powerful factor in human progress; or it can lure us apart from this world into the sterile, loveless solitudes of never-never-land. Whatever course a man's art takes depends upon himself."



Burial 1941 Marjorie and Charles Benton Collection

Memorial Day 1950 Rockwell Kent Gallery and Collections, State University of New York, Plattsburgh. Courtesy of The Rockwell Kent Legacies

Excursion Boats 1982, by Jamie Wyeth.

MONHEGAN'S DILEMMA

PHYLLIS AUSTIN

WHEN ROCKWELL KENT leaped off the mail boat onto Monhegan for the first time in June, 1905, he was seized by not only its beauty but the wildness the island unleashed in him. Kent's mentor at the New York School of Art, Robert Henri, spurred him on to Monhegan, 10 miles off the Maine coast from Boothbay Harbor. Henri had discovered the island's wild landscape and small but thriving art colony two years earlier during a summer's stay at Boothbay in 1903. He described to his student, Kent, a visual scene of such dramatic proportions that Kent yearned to see it for himself. In his mind's eye, 23-year-old Kent anticipated the remote, fishing-dependent island as a "land of promise," and happily, it met his expectations.

"It was enough for me, enough for all my fellow artists, for all of us who sought 'material for art,'" Kent wrote in his autobiography, *It's Me O Lord*. "It was enough to start me off to such feverish activity in painting as I had never known." From dawn to dusk, he painted with such intensity that he developed a bad case of insomnia.

Eighty-four years ago, Monhegan was truly an Atlantic frontier in a vast sea empty of land until the shores of France. Everything was "artistic": the rock-strewn shores, the precipitous headlands, the crashing surf, the foggy days, the enchanted forest, the meadow wildflowers; the unpretentious village of wind-beaten houses, general store, schoolhouse, and two hotels; the robust fishermen in their bright yellow oilskins.

Although the hotels catered to the summer visitors and artists—"rusticators" they were called—the fiercely independent, sequestered character of the Monheganer was intact. Mainlanders and urbanites were tolerated, occasionally stimulating to have visit, but they weren't a force that threatened Monhegan's distinctive way of life.

Kent was so captivated that he stayed on Monhegan until winter. He worked as a laborer for $1 a day, studying and painting natural wonders and islanders who became

his friends, despite his public espousal of socialist philosophy.

Kent's first critical acclaim originated from his early Monhegan paintings. Off and on for the next 48 years he returned to Monhegan, and by the time of his final adieu in 1953, the island had changed little.

Celebrated on the canvasses of Kent, George Bellows, Edward Hopper, and other artists of renown, Monhegan was the indisputable jewel in the crown of Maine islands. Whether it remains so now is arguable.

Today Monhegan is less of an outpost and less quaint than funky. It has become the playground of tourists in unprecedented numbers and has changed to accommodate their expectations of fast food, gifts, day trips, and overnight accommodations. In turn, property values have soared to prices so high that young fishermen and artists can't afford to buy a home.

Lobsterman Sherman Stanley, a native who has lived on Monhegan for 62 years, has seen trends come and go, and he's worried about the island's new upscale popularity. "It's very disturbing to think property can be gobbled up by people very successful financially" and who, by their acquisitions, can wipe out opportunities for those who are vital to preserving Monhegan's character. Hotelier Bob Burton says if the fishing community goes, Monhegan will end up as an exclusive retreat for the well-to-do. "There is some point that the powers-that-be have got to recognize there's an erosion of our way of life because of money," he says.

Having an "island experience" is one of the latest travel fads, and given Monhegan's national notoriety, it is the island of first choice for many out-of-staters, even if their visit is just for the day. Although the tour boat rides are over an hour, the travel time and unpredictable seas are no deterrent to those anxious to walk the paths that Kent haunted or to snap a photo of its most noted current summer artist, Jamie Wyeth. Tourists ooh and ahh over what they see as offbeat charm—the narrow dirt paths, water pipes that cross the road, the lack of automobiles, the glimpse of deer that graze lawns, the rows of brightly colored lobster traps that are in use, not there just for show.

There is no official count of the 1987 visitors, but a figure bandied about is that more than 7,000 passed through the island museum. Compared with the 1986 museum figure, this is a 40 percent increase. Some islanders contest that figure, but no one argues that the number of day boat cruises jumped from three to seven, causing complaints from islanders ever edgy about the invasion of their privacy.

By the end of August 1987 Bill Payne, owner of the island's single gift shop, was so fed up with the extra boat landings that he closed the Island Spa just before the last crowd arrived in mid-afternoon. To underscore his protest, he nailed up a "Population Explosion" chart depicting the visitor numbers as they went from "tolerable" to "intolerable," depending on the number of tour boat landings. To Payne and others, Monhegan was outright being exploited, not by islanders but by boat operators capitalizing on the island's magnetism.

True, Monhegan still seemed wild, wet, and beautiful to most of the tourists who didn't seem to mind elbowing each other down the narrow lanes through the village and forest, where they found other visitors spread like seals on the high cliffs. But to most of those living on Monhegan, it seemed that "their" island was in danger of slipping away. "We are fouling our own nest," Payne said at the time.

Monhegan is less of an outpost and less quaint than funky. It has become the playground of tourists in unprecedented numbers and changed to accommodate their expectations of fast food, gifts, day trips, and overnight accommodations.

By the tourist season's end, residents were aware of how much such large numbers changed the island's relatively slow pace of life to near frenzy, at times. Moreover, the numbers of people raised serious issues: there was more trail erosion, more litter, more garbage to be dumped into the ocean, a greater strain on the island's limited fresh water supply, and increased fire danger from tourists smoking cigarettes in the aging, parasite-infected stands of spruce.

Simultaneously, businessmen reacted to the increased activity. Plans were begun by Bob Burton to open a new restaurant, and the owners of a closed pizza parlor said they would reopen in 1988—bringing to seven the number of eating places. Capt. Bob Campbell decided to replace the 69-passenger, wooden *Balmy Days* with a 95-passenger fiberglass vessel that will trim at least 10 minutes off the 95-minute voyage from Boothbay Harbor.

The situation left tough questions for island residents to answer: Would Monhegan cave in completely to the god of tourism, like Nantucket and Cape Cod? Or, would the island take control and limit the number of visitors?

There are no sure answers. Monhegan is divided on how serious a threat tourism is, how many day-trippers and overnighters is enough, and what options are realistic.

There are 1,200 summer residents and 70 year-rounders. Mary Beth Dolan, a fulltime islander, believes there's a consensus that "there are too many people on the island in the summer" and that the large numbers are "damaging the island." But John Murdock, who owns a restaurant, counters that the island "is fairly divided" on the issues and disagrees on what the potential is for losing the quality of life people hold dear. Lobsterman Stanley thinks the weather will be the ultimate arbiter of tourism unless an air strip or commercial helicopter landing is built to facilitate access. He thinks the unusually good weather in 1987 permitted the great influx of visitors who normally would be deterred by rain or fog.

Dolan says that if the island decides to take action, Monheganers don't want to do anything to totally block people from visiting the island, but, she insists, everyone must realize that its resources can be stretched just so far. "Over-visiting will spoil what people come to see," adds Ray Werbe, head of Monhegan Associates Inc., the non-profit group that protects two-thirds of the island in its natural wild state. Without regulating people numbers, other preventative steps would be pointless, he believes. Hotelier Burton agrees, saying that he, for one, is trying to keep the issues alive during the off-season: "We should be prepared and investigate all options and establish just what our position is."

Ways of legally controlling the throngs landing at Monhegan are constitutionally limited. But one option some islanders are exploring is asking the legislature to license commercial boat operators between the island and other coastal points, thereby restricting visitor numbers. Lawmakers have acted in such fashion before. They established a licensing system for white water rafting outfitters and set quotas on the number of weekend rafting customers who can go down the Kennebec and Penobscot rivers.

Another possibility being examined is leasing the public landing to a private corporation that would have the right to establish a schedule for tour boat visits. In that way, the island could restrict the number of tourists.

Balmy Days skipper Bob Campbell, who ran three trips a day at the peak season, doesn't apologize for answering the demand. If he hadn't, somebody else would have, he says, and the result in overcrowding would have been the same. It's up to the islanders to set the limits, not boat captains, he says.

In some ways, Monhegan's growth problems aren't any different from anywhere else on the coast, virtually under siege from developers taking advantage of the current Maine land rush. But an island—whether it's Monhegan or any other island—has an extra dimension: finiteness. When all the earth, water, and psychological space are used up, islanders can't pick up and move down the road to find more as mainlanders do. There is no more.

What Monhegan's carrying capacity is hasn't been established. But the island's physical dimension—one and a half miles by a half mile—is a strong determinant. Most of it is protected from development, leaving approximately 200 acres in a village zone where intensive use is allowed. There are only a few building lots left in the zone.

Although the awareness of tourism pressures seemed sudden in the summer of 1987, the changes didn't occur just in one season. Over the years the island modernized: there is now electricity, a microwave telephone system, and plenty of washing machines, dryers, and flush toilets. "There was very little talk about how [these things] might change the island," observed one islander. Interestingly, however, national publicity in 1975 did cause a reactionary move. Monhegan Associates disbanded their publicity committee after prominent articles appeared in the *New Yorker* and the *New York Times*. "To preserve it for everyone, we decided we ought not to publicize the island," says Werbe.

In hindsight, Monheganers say today that they should have woken up to the growth problems when property values started rising as much as on the mainland. Suddenly in the early 1980's prices jumped by the tens of thousands of dollars, with most any building starting in the $100,000 range. Hotels began filling up months ahead of the summer season. House sitting, which had been essentially on a neighbor or relative basis, changed to being strictly rental, sometimes through a real estate agent. Fish houses that lobstermen used for repairing and storing gear were converted wholly or partly to apartments.

The changes alarmed some islanders, who led approval of a moratorium on such conversions as a way to control overnight tourists on Monhegan. But the by-laws amendment had no effect because it was not approved by the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC) which has authority over Monhegan since the island is a plantation, not an independent town. LURC didn't oppose the by-law change; they simply never voted on the matter due to a bureaucratic oversight. And since the island never followed up on the moratorium amendment, Monhegan drifted casually into the dream weather of last summer.

Tourists fell onto Monhegan, says longtime summer resident Ray Werbe, like uncontrolled lemmings. In previous years, boats discharged 200 day trippers on a good day. But those numbers tripled in the summer of 1987.

Once on the island, the people flow moved from the dock down the hedged paths past the Island Inn, the Lupine Gallery, the post office to Billy Payne's gift store to buy post cards, candy bars or a Monhegan T-shirt. Then the pattern was to fan out to the left for the active but automated 1824 lighthouse and to the shallow, boulder-strewn coves at Monhegan's southern end. Others spread out to the right past the 20-acre swampy meadow (the island's fresh water source) and on to the heart of the densely packed village area of cottages, inn, hotels, eateries, the grocery store, and lobstermen's fish houses. From the village, 17 miles of trails wind through the stately Cathedral Woods and along the 160′ cliffs on the island's east side.

"It's very disturbing to think property can be gobbled up by people very successful financially and who, by their acquisitions, can wipe out opportunities for those who are vital to preserving Monhegan's character."

Whereas the islanders had once had Monhegan to themselves for a half day, now there were fresh crowds for most of the daylight hours. Some were intrusive. They peeked into residents' windows, set up easels across the path looking into their houses, gawked over their flower beds, and some even waited at Jamie Wyeth's back door to take video camera shots.

Although on the island for a maximum of four hours, the day-trippers needed toilets which did not exist for most of the summer. The lack of public facilities led to the island woods becoming a latrine, with toilet paper stuffed under the rocks and in tree nooks and crannies. By the time of the fall bird migration tours, three pay toilets had been made available for visits at the Central Monhegan Power Station. John Murdock, owner of Sea Hag Seafood, thinks some of his neighbors over-reacted to the crowds. While it's "good to look down the road," the island shouldn't act as if there's an emergency, he says. "When I was a kid, this place was always swamped with people."

Murdock doesn't see day-trippers as much of a problem as overnighters and the increasing number of conversions to efficiency apartments. It's overnighters who are putting increased pressure on the water system and garbage, he says.

There are about four times as many cottages on Monhegan (100) as were there when Rockwell Kent first visited, and more and more are being converted to tourist houses. Sherman Stanley is unsure whether he will turn over his fish house to a young fishermen or sell out for a high price, as have other fish house owners. "Seems to be everybody is looking for the God awful buck," he says. "I suspect 100 years from now, things around Fish Beach will look a lot different. I hope they hold it together, but I think the only way is restrictive zoning."

Young artists are also endangered. Housing costs are closing out the possibility they will spend their summers in the decades-old tradition of Kent and other venerated artists. To help out, the resident artists' group, about 25 in all, is promoting week- or two-week-long workshops to give up-and-coming painters some time on Monhegan during the summer.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, the fishing and tourist seasons don't collide on Monhegan as they do elsewhere. Lobster fishing goes on from January 1 to June 25; tourists take over from July to October. The split season naturally separates what otherwise would be a loud confrontation among fishermen, tourists, and pleasure-boaters competing for the use of the harbor.

Richard Farrell, an island zoning committee member, has asked LURC to approve two changes he believes would address some of Monhegan's problems: a fishing industry zone to prevent the Fish Beach area from being converted to non-marine

WHITHER MONHEGAN?

Martin Nerber

HOW DOES A COMMUNITY know when the number of visitors is having a negative impact on its environment or doing violence to its sense of place and quality of life? And, once it has this knowledge, what actions can the community take to limit the number of visitors and thereby protect its environment and life style? Monhegan is one of the first Maine islands to be dealing with "crowd control," but it won't be the last, and viable solutions there will certainly be helpful to others.

Several islands in other places have already solved the visitation problem. The number and timing of visitors to the 13 Galapagos Islands are carefully controlled by the Ecuadorian Government and are designed to tiptoe around fragile ecological events. Closer to home, Acadia National Park holds the number of visitors to Isle au Haut at 50 per day during July and August. Machias Seal Island at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy only allows 30 people per day to sit quietly in a bird blind and watch the antics of puffins and razorbills. The carrying capacity in each of these cases is uniquely defined by environmental constraints and a desire to ensure a quality experience for visitors.

Arriving at the correct number of visitors is at best difficult and at worst painful. Cumberland National Park off the Georgia coast limits the number of visitors to 300 per day, after which tourists are politely turned

uses, and population density requirements to restrict home conversions. There is no provision in LURC laws for protection of fishermen's access to the ocean and of adjacent areas of land for storing and repairing gear. LURC's land use standards have no language addressing conversions. Farrell says such changes would be a practical way to deal with growth.

But it's unclear how much help LURC can provide. Commission spokesman Fred Todd says the agency can't amend its regulations just to address problems unique to Monhegan. Any changes would have to be applicable to problems facing islands in general, and it will take time to see what can be done.

Balmy Days **skipper Bob Campbell, who ran three trips a day at the peak season, doesn't apologize for answering the demand. It's up to the islanders to set the limits, not boat captains, he says.**

In the meantime, Monhegan is on its own. To its credit, the island has shown in the past that it can act creatively and forcefully to protect itself. At the instigation of Theodore Edison, son of inventor Thomas A. Edison, Monhegan Associates was created to acquire land and receive gifts of land to keep it from being developed. A land trust sounded radical 20 years ago, but it was unusually foresighted. Earlier, there had been land companies, subdivisions, and lots laid out on paper.

The second unusual action came in the early 1970's after LURC was established. Citizens voted against expanding the village area where development is confined. "It was quite a startling action for a place where people pride themselves on independence," says Farrell.

Many years ago on its own initiative, Monhegan brought its fishery under strict control. Recognizing that the lobster resource is limited, and that the price is two to three times higher in winter, Monhegan fishermen decided to be content with lobstering only half of the year. To make it official and to keep others out of their territory, Monhegan successfully petitioned the legislature to set a two-mile boundary around the island. It has allowed Monhegan to have 12 to 14 fishing boats since World War II.

Besides tourists, the fishery, and housing, Monhegan has a handful of related problems—sewage and solid waste, water supply, and fire danger.

Monhegan legally straight-pipes its effluent into the ocean. The increase in the number of tourists means more pollution, and that worries some island residents. Maine's new overboard discharge ban has placed the island in a somewhat tenuous position for the future.

Two years ago, water supply problems demonstrated the limits of the island's fresh water resource. The water company cleaned out pumps and pipes and increased the system's ability to pull water out of the ground. But no more water was created, company president and island assessor Bill Boynton points out.

Richard Farrell doesn't think Monheganers have to lose Monhegan "the way it is now. It's not any easy place to live, not the most profitable. Even if Monhegan is developed more, it won't be as profitable here as it would be on the mainland." The chance to make greater profits will keep people away, he predicts, and he believes Monhegan business people are willing to limit their own development vision. But he agrees with Werbe that Monhegan can't be successful at controlling its future "if we're overrun by people coming out here."

If Monhegan is not on the edge, he thinks the island has "a fairly short time to come to grips" with its problems.

Phyllis Austin *is a writer for the weekly* Maine Times. *She escapes the unceasing challenge of political, social, and environmental news events on trips to her place on Matinicus Island.*

There are about four times as many cottages on Monhegan (100) as were there when Rockwell Kent first visited, and more and more are being converted to tourist houses.

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away. The magic number of 300 was arrived at by compromise. At first the park announced to the public that it would allow 1,400 visitors per day with overnight camping for 400. This resulted in an avalanche of more than 4,000 letters from the public demanding a considerable reduction in visitation.

Assuming Monhegan residents can arrive at a number that will satisfy all residents, guarantee a quality experience for visitors, and supply a reasonable return to island merchants and ferrymen, what will it take to make it stick? Because Monhegan is a plantation, its ability to regulate visitors or control zoning is through the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC). Working within the framework of LURC, Monhegan can petition the commission to make a special regulation controlling the use of the plantation-owned dock. Islanders can also petition the State Legislature to enact a law enabling the plantation to either control use of the dock, set limits on the number of day trippers, or to license boats with limitations on boat size, carrying capacity, and the number of trips they make per day. Another option is to ask the Legislature to make Monhegan a town so it can adopt ordinances that limit the number of visitors.

Regardless of the mechanism chosen, other Maine islands will be watching Monhegan as its residents explore ways to set limits that are compatible with the ecological and social carrying capacity of their increasingly popular island.

RADIO WAVES

As we seek out or create the writing that becomes the Island Journal, *various foams and precipitates form at the top and bottom of the mix, and these we combine into the potpourri called "Radio Waves." They are compelling small bites and tastes; short reads for islanders on the fly, literary dieters, or those at rest between bouts with the thick soup.*

A Look at the Past

The photos of the sailing vessels and old-time fishing scenes on these pages are from glass plate negatives made about the turn of the century. They are among the few survivors of a collection of several hundred plates that belonged to the H.J. Burrowes Co. of Portland, a post card and calendar maker. When the Burrowes estate was closed out, the plates were offered to local museums. The offer was refused, so hundreds of pounds of plates were sold to a contractor who washed off the emulsion for the Norwegian glass.

The remaining plates have been refurbished and identified by Rutledge Morton and Burrowes' granddaughter, Linda Hoppe, who are selling prints from the plates through their business, Schooners & Sails, on Farwell Avenue, Cumberland, Maine.

The fisherman in the photos has been identified as Quincy Marion Sterling of Peaks Island, who was the subject of a series of photos taken by Frederick Thompson, whose collection was acquired by Burrowes. Many of the pictures appeared on post cards and were popular sellers in the Portland area.

Allen Island

True Relation of Waymouth's Maine Voyage

WM. SHERWOOD COOK

GEORGE WAYMOUTH is said to have discovered and explored the St. George River in 1605, but a careful look at the evidence suggests his major exploration was of the Penobscot River, which had been discovered many years before.

Firsthand information about Waymouth's voyage in 1605 was written by James Rosier, a "gentleman" employed by Thomas Arundel to sail with Waymouth and report on the trip. After Rosier's return to England, his writings were published as *True Relations of Waymouth's Voyage*, but he omitted sights of latitude and information about the Indians that he did not want to make available to the Spanish. Several years later this information was published in *Purchas, His Pilgrims*.

William Strachey, in the second book of the *Historie of Travaile into Virginia*, copying from Rosier's report, described Waymouth's voyage as "...his discovery of that little river of Pemaquid and of his search sixty miles up the most excellent and beautiful river of Sachadehoc." (However, the Sachadehoc, or Kennebec, was explored in 1606 by Hanham and Pring, not by Waymouth.)

When he sailed in the *Archangel* from England in 1605, Waymouth's intent was to explore the coast south from 39 degrees latitude, probably the Chesapeake Bay area, but adverse winds drove him near Nantucket. Needing fuel and fresh water, he sailed with the wind to Monhegan, where his men landed to collect dry wood. It should be noted here that in *Purchas, His Pilgrims*, the direction of the "very high mountains" seen from the anchorage was given as north northeast, and could only be the Camden Hills, not the White Mountains, as sometimes maintained.

The next day Waymouth sailed to the Georges Islands near the mouth of the St. George River, where they "moored and anchored" in the lee of the Dry Ledges between Allen and Burnt islands on Sunday May 19. They stayed there for more than three weeks. Wells were dug (although water may also have been available from a nearby pond on Allen Island); wood was cut, and some of the party fished and explored. Rosier and other crew members traded with the Indians.

A pinnace, also called a "light horseman" or "shallop" in Rosier's account, which had been brought from England in pieces, was assembled on the beach. The boat was set to go on Wednesday, May 29, and on Thursday at 10 a.m., Waymouth sailed in the pinnace with 13 men and "discovered up a great river, trending along into the maine about forty miles...for by the breadth, depth, and strong flood, imagining it to run far into the land, he with speed returned intending to flanke his light horseman for arrows least it might happen that the further part of the river should be narrow and by that means subject to the volleys of Salvages on either side of the woods." (A quilted canvas extending above the bulwarks was used to "flanke" the boat as protection against hostile arrows.)

Less than two weeks later, on June 11, the *Archangel* sailed 26 miles "up the river" and anchored. The next morning Captain Waymouth with 16 men and a boy rowed ashore and walked towards the mountains which "we described at our first falling with the land... We judged ourselves when we landed to have been within a league of them" but after walking about four miles over three hills they returned to the ship. The men tired easily because "the water was parching hot" and they wore armor. The next day they rose at 2 a.m. to take advantage of the tide, and "We went from our ship up to that part of the river which trended westward into the maine," where a cross was left on the shore to be erected later.

Rosier continued: "But to returne to our river, further up into which we then rowed by estimation twenty miles...for the breadth and depth is such that any ship drawing 17 or 18 feet of water might have passed as farre as we went with our light horseman, and by all our men's judgement much further, because we left it in so good depth and breadth...for from the place of our ships riding in the Harbour at the entrance into the sound, to the furthest part we were in this river, by our estimation was not lesse than threescore miles."

The return down river was made with the help of the ebbing tide to the spot where the cross had been left. After the cross was set up, the light horseman returned to the ship. Starting the next morning at 4 a.m. the ship sailed and was also towed by the two ship's boats down river, anchoring at 11 o'clock. They returned to the Georges Islands the next day. After filling the water casks and taking sights upon the "rocke in the middest of the harbour," preparations were made for a departure June 16th. To quote Rosier, "...we waied anker and quit the land upon a Sunday."

Historians have differed in their interpretations of Rosier's account, and as a result there have been arguments as to which river is being discussed. While it is difficult to distinguish from Rosier's glowing descriptions whether he was writing about the river itself or its approaches, it would seem that Captain Waymouth went up the western side of Penobscot Bay in the pinnace. During the warm days of spring and summer, a brisk southwesterly breeze usually comes up by noontime, and Waymouth probably used this fair wind to sail up the bay. If his men had to row all of the way back to the Allen Island anchorage, the round trip still could have been made in 24-25 hours. As Rosier noted, "He with speed returned."

Then on June 11,the *Archangel* sailed 26 miles up the bay and anchored off Rockport. The following day, after their futile attempt to walk to the mountains, the men sailed an additional 14 or more miles to the mouth of the river, probably anchoring the *Archangel* near Fort Point. Starting at 2 a.m. the next day in the light horseman, Waymouth went up river 20 miles from the place where the cross was set up at Bucksport, or on the point where Fort Knox now stands. Strachey, describing this spot, wrote: "As the streame trended westward into the Mayne and at that height it beganne to narrow."

Eaton's *Annals of Warren* and Williamson's *History of Maine* describe Waymouth's voyage up the Penobscot River, but in 1858 Captain George Prince disputed these accounts, claiming that Waymouth had been exploring the St. George River instead. He convinced poor, blind Cyrus Eaton that the latter should rearrange the facts in his *History of Thomaston, Rockland and South Thomaston*, which was published in 1865.

To assume that the "great river" described by Rosier was the St. George or Ramassoc River, as the Indians called it, is at best a case of wishful thinking. From her anchorage at the Georges Islands, the *Archangel* could sail up the Georges a distance of approximately 13 miles. No captain in his right mind would try to go further in a 50-or 60-ton ship when he had a small boat that could be rowed and sailed in shallow waters. Nor is the St. George " a great river" at low tide, with its narrow channel winding for considerable distance between extensive mud flats. However, from the anchorage between the islands, one can see straight up the St. George to the Camden Hills. These mountains surely beckoned Waymouth's crew, and they must have responded.

In fact, in Volume 14 of Hakluyt, pages 424/5, *A Treatise of the Northwest Passage to the South Sea, through the Continent of Virginia and by Fretum Hudson*, the author, Henry Briggs, refers to "a map of that land which I have seen here in London, brought out of Holland." On this map, between the Pentegoet and the Sagadahoc (Kennebec) rivers, is a river entitled *Waymouth's R.*. The map was published after Captain John Smith returned to England in 1614 and named this area New England.

Waymouth's River described in Hakluyt could have been the Pemaquid, which Strachey and others said he discovered. It is also reasonable to assume that Waymouth explored the St. George River in his shallop. Nevertheless, his major investigation, described in detail by Rosier and related above, was along the western shore of Penobscot Bay and into the Penobscot River itself.

It must have been an exciting adventure to sail these wild and rugged shores—but others had been there before.

***WM. Sherwood Cook** is a graduate engineer from the University of Maine. After service in World War II, he continued the family lobstering business off Little Green Island in Penobscot Bay. He retired two years ago, but continues his interest in fishing.*

Muscle Ridges

In the Pocket with a Great Whale

MARIAN AREY

PAPA AND MAMA were taking a few people out deep sea fishing one day in July of 1938. Papa decided to look into the weir to see if there were enough herring to take out on the low water later on. He could estimate his catch by standing on the top of the pocket and looking down into the water.

On this day, much to his surprise, he saw a big shark in the pocket. There wasn't anything he could do about it until low water, so he went on his deep sea fishing trip. Late that afternoon a group congregated on the top of the pocket to watch. I was awful pregnant but couldn't miss this opportunity.

Raymond and Papa were in Raymond's little double-ended lobster boat, which probably was not more than 22′ or 23′long from stem to stern. We called make and break engines like hers "putt-putts," because that's what they did.

Raymond took the boat into the pocket while Papa rigged a harpoon with a lily iron attached to it. The lily iron was like an arrow point that fitted on the end of the harpoon and had a rope attached to it. When it was jabbed into the fish, the lily iron stayed there while the harpoon shaft was withdrawn.

The shark could be seen occasionally deep in the water but was down too far to hit. Ralph Colby was there in a small rowboat with an outboard motor on it, and he began circling the pocket faster and faster until he made a big whirlpool with the vortex going deeper and deeper. We thought this was highly dangerous, which it was; if the shark had decided to surface under the boat it would have been "goodbye Colby." His boat was almost over on its side, but it had the desired effect.

As the shark came to the surface, Papa drove the iron into it and pulled out the harpoon pole. They fastened the end of the rope, which was tied to the lily iron, to the boat and waited for results. The shark didn't take long to react. It grabbed onto one of the 8″-thick oak pilings with its jaws and went "cruuunch." The move almost jarred us spectators off into the water. The shark charged up toward Papa in the boat, with its jaws open wide. This was the opportunity Papa was waiting for. He took his brand new double-bitted axe and smashed the fish in the head. The shark rolled over and yanked the axe from Papa's hands, and that was the last that was seen of it.

The men got a loop around its tail—which I don't remember how—and tied the tail to the boat. After quite a bit of maneuvering they got the shark out of the pocket, and Raymond opened up his motor full blast, but the fish towed the boat instead of vice-versa for quite some time before tiring.

It didn't take long to do in the shark when Raymond could tow it backwards. They dragged it up on Waterman's Beach and cut it open to see what might be in the stomach. There was a lot of blackish stuff that somebody said could be ambergris, which would be worth a lot of money, but when they found a seal that had been sliced in two they decided the black stuff was probably partly digested seal fat.

Somebody had a big knife and proceeded to slice off pieces for those who wanted some for supper. Almost everybody did, including Weston and me, but we didn't really want seconds. George Snow, the fish man, said he didn't make many sales the next day.

The shark was 20′ long and was estimated to weigh 2,000 pounds. Some kids broke out the biggest front teeth with rocks until somebody told them to stop it. After that the teeth were cut out and given to people. I have two which are still fastened together. I also have two of the vertebrae. Papa brought home some of the vertebrae and put them in the hen yard for the chickens to clean the meat off. Mama noticed shortly thereafter that her egg sales were down, and eventually somebody told her the eggs tasted awful fishy.

The next day another smaller shark was found in the weir, but they got this one out without much fanfare. These were the great white sharks of the man-eating variety. Like "Jaws."

***Marian Arey** and her family have fished the Muscle Ridges for generations around Mink Island.* Mink Island Stories *appeared in the 1987* Island Journal.

Frenchboro

Homing In

JAMES HATCH

THE TOWN OF Frenchboro's effort to attract new homesteaders to the island to reverse its declining population received a major boost this spring with the announcement by the Maine State Housing Authority of plans to provide $250,000 in low-interest home financing. This funding, along with $100,000 in privately raised loans and contributions, will allow the Frenchboro Future Development Corporation to build eight single-family homes on the island. Housing payments for the families which qualify will be reduced to an affordable percentage of their income.

Frenchboro, located seven miles off Mount Desert Island, boasts a year-round population of 50 hearty souls. Residents have been fighting for years to preserve the rugged lifestyle in the face of a dwindling population.

In speaking to the Governor's recently convened Task Force on Affordable Housing, Maine State Housing Authority Director Elizabeth Mitchell stated, "The Frenchboro project is one of the most innovative affordable housing projects to be undertaken under the Housing Authority's New Housing Initiatives Program. It represents a creative partnership between the public and private sectors to deal with a community's unique housing problems. We are glad to be working with concerned citizens and town officials to help implement a plan which will insure decent, affordable housing for all residents for years to come."

The effort to attract and keep permanent

residents is made difficult by escalating prices of island real estate for seasonal use as well as the high cost of construction on a remote island. The local economy is based primarily on fishing.

The non-profit Frenchboro Future Development Corporation is a community based organization set up to develop and implement strategies to overcome these problems, and to insure the long-term viability of the year-round community. In response to national media coverage during 1986 and 1987, thousands of inquiries were received and screened for potential homesteaders. After visits to the island and intensive interviews, a group of self-sufficient families was selected to participate. With one family having already successfully resettled, the others are awaiting the construction of the affordable housing units this summer. Most plan to participate in the construction to reduce their housing costs with "sweat equity."

Funding from the State Housing Authority has allowed the Development Corporation to contract with the Island Institute for management of the housing project. Project Manager Jim Hatch says, "This is a truly exciting experiment in social engineering, an attempt to swim against the demographic tide. If we can succeed in Frenchboro, we will create a model which other island and isolated rural communities can use to help control their future."

Frenchboro's housing program, as we go to press, may still have room for more pioneering families. Interested parties can obtain application information by contacting:

Jim Hatch, Project Manager
Frenchboro Future Development
Corporation
c/o The Island Institute
60 Ocean St.
Rockland, ME 04841

James Hatch *is the Island Institute's Housing Specialist and Project Manager for the Frenchboro Project.*

Casco Bay Islands

Summer Conservatives

ELLEN GOODMAN

THE TALK ON this Casco Bay island is of change. People who have summered here two years or 20 greet each other on the road these days and swap tales full of the evil omens of progress.

Can you believe that the town hall has put a quota on clam licenses? Pretty soon you'll need a license to pick berries. Did you see the big-city papers for sale at the store? The *New York Times*, for gawdsakes. Did you hear about the old Hamlin cottage that sold to some highlander for $75,000? It's not even on the water.

There is much headshaking, followed by an exchange of memories of "what it was like when I first came here." Finally, one says to another in rueful parting, "Someday they'll be building condominiums down at the point." The word condominium is uttered slowly, like a five syllable obscenity.

The scene is reenacted up and down the Gold Coast of Maine and, I suppose, up and down the shorelines of the Atlantic and the Pacific. It's like this in every rural refuge that attracts its own loyal tribe of summer people.

For the most part, these summer people have spent their winter work lives in offices that must be reached by elevators. Many have moved two or three or 15 times until some cannot name their "hometown" anymore. They telecommunicate or travel or high-tech most of the year in a fast-paced world.

But in July, even those who consider themselves progressives in their fields resist the advances on their summer retreats. In August, they rail against each subdivided potato farm, each new onslaught of convenience, each inch of pavement that encroaches on their turf.

They want this hometown at least to stay the way it exists in their winter imagination: warm and full of clear light, with an ancient red flannel shirt on the hanger, a mackerel jig in the top drawer, beach glass in the bowl, a wonderful waiting quiet broken only by the sound of gulls. They want it to stay the same, even if "it" is a view.

It's to be expected, I suppose. Summer people are not like the other vacationers who pick up roots each year and pack them into Winnebagos. They don't want to go somewhere different, new, unusual. What is unusual to them is a sense of place. What they want in a transient world is a right to return.

So it happens in a hundred summer places. The very people who come from the world of instant-money machines and 24-hour convenience stores are warm-weather boosters of inconvenience. Having found a place of their own, summer folk become its fiercest conservators.

Let others call them regressive. But it is the inaccessibility, the unreliability, the wonderful, quirky, haphazard independence of rural life that insulates a community where children can still hitch rides, where adults can leave doors open, where a crime wave is a midnight rider knocking down mailboxes. They know what it does have.

I suppose that those who go to islands like this one are a hard-core subspecies of summer people. Water is the last line of defense against malls and modernism. The ocean may be a saline preservative against change. Those who choose islands choose also to believe that the fog can protect their refuge the way the mists and magic protected Brigadoon.

Yet there is an irony to all this that does not escape the people who measure and talk of change. Each year the world of their winter lives creates a greater demand for this small summer supply.

There are more gypsies who follow work from one city to another and try to put down roots in summer. The special attraction of country, space, quiet, and water, entices the crowds who inevitably transform them into subdivisions, neighborhood, and noise. The growing need for retreat impinges on each retreat. There is a fragile ecology that separates shore from suburb.

It hasn't happened here. Not yet. Not really. There are no condominiums. People still look up from their hammocks in greeting when someone walks by their cottage.

But lately there are tourists on the main road who do not know to return the island wave. And someone, or so I am told, has just installed an answering machine.

Ellen Goodman *is a columnist for the* Boston Globe.

Island Progress

SARAH GEOFFRION

BUILDING THE BRIDGE to the island started the problems. Now progress could come over. The bridge was built so the town could construct a power plant on the island.

Over the new bridge came cement trucks, construction crews, cranes, planners, and builders. They rumbled over the twisted dirt roads, felling trees and hammering houses together. On the west end the walls of the power plant climbed.

Another island's ferry began docking at the old ferry landing. The people parked their cars on the island and drove from there to the mainland. They could watch the construction as they drove by on their way to the new bridge.

A wide swath was cut in the coniferous forests to make room for the steel towers that were to hold the power company's lines. Another swath was cut to build one-story houses with yards, playsets, and septic tanks. Bathrooms, central heating, and electricity were added to the rambling white farmhouses that were already there. The rutted road was smoothed down and tar pressed onto its surface. This was topped by a yellow stripe that divided the way from the power plant down the island to the bridge.

New islanders, old islanders, and other island islanders glided down this road and over the shiny green bridge beside which the steel towers of the power company rose from the water like giant fenceposts. Dead gulls occasionally hung here and there from the lines which had killed them.

Despite noise, construction, many new faces, and a rise in taxes (island property was now worth something), the islanders were cautiously excited. After all this was progress. Now there was a chance to live on the island year-round and to work on the mainland, and the only time anyone really noticed the blinking blue lights of the power plant was when they came or went on the bridge.

One islander, who owned the eastern tip of the island (the exact opposite end from the power plant) watched the changes cautiously. His son owned the construction company that built the bridge, and his daughter's husband helped to build it. The whole family had a party the first time they "drove" to their house on the island. The old man watched the price of island land leap and quietly gave his to his son and daughter. The daughter built a house next door to the old brick farmhouse. The avaricious son sold his land for lots and built squat, square houses on them. They hemmed in the old man's farm, now called an estate by those surrounding it.

It was 20 years ago that the bridge was built. Today, cars whizz back and forth across the rusted bridge that's full of potholes. The drivers swear at them as they bounce. Clusters of houses and tarred roads jut off from the main road that needs to be repaved again. The morning traffic to the power plant and cars commuting to work on the mainland have worn out the bridge and road more quickly than the planners expected. New houses are still being built, squeezed in between the old ones. The latest cheap style is split-level.

The island next to the one with the bridge still docks its boat at the old ferry landing, but the dock is getting rickety and there are other problems. The new islanders don't want them landing there anymore. They say that there are already too many cars on the road and the bridge. The new islanders feel that since they pay the taxes, they have the right to decide island policies. The old islanders guardedly agree. They remember a time when they used that dock, but their voices are drowned out.

The old man on the eastern tip of the island has died, leaving what's left of his land to his daughter and her husband.

The progress-driven son has moved to another undeveloped island.

The daughter and her husband have put up fences and nailed "No Trespassing" signs all over their land. They own the only undeveloped point on the whole island. Their tip still has dirt roads and green forest, quiet mornings and a dilapidated farmhouse. The couple struggles to pay the enormous shorefront property taxes.

Another island meeting is held. Money is appropriated for the repair of the bridge and the over-used roads. Also discussed is the need for a park. There is no space left for recreation on the island. It is decided by the new islanders, with a few soft complaints from the old, that the eastern tip of the island will be taken by eminent domain.

The islanders next to the one with the bridge also hold a meeting. They have to decide where to land their ferry. A motion is made to build a bridge. It is unanimously voted down.

Sarah Geoffrion *of Chebeague Island first submitted this short story for* Killick Stones, *a collection of Maine island writing. Lacking room in* Killick Stones, *we publish it here for the first time.*

Any Island

False Move

MAILI BAILEY

WE SAW HER BRING boxes back from the store. She piled them behind the kitchen door, one a day for a week. Hating even to think of leaving, she let herself plan for it only a little each day. But still it *had* to be done, and she had stayed longer than most summer people did.

From time to time before she was to go we saw her gaze out at the harbor. You could see the play of light on the water fill her with longing, which visibly grew into actual pain as time passed and the day approached.

Later she told us that she had awakened to a grey sky and rain slanting in waves across the harbor. She'd heaved a sigh and turned and walked dejectedly into the kitchen, picked out the largest box from the pile and let it fall with a hollow thud on the table. She gritted her teeth. Turning on her heels she went upstairs and dressed against the rainy day.

"Let's go for a walk, Pearl." The dog danced as she put it on the leash. The screen door closed with a bang as the two stepped onto the porch and into the rain. We saw them walk off toward the lighthouse.

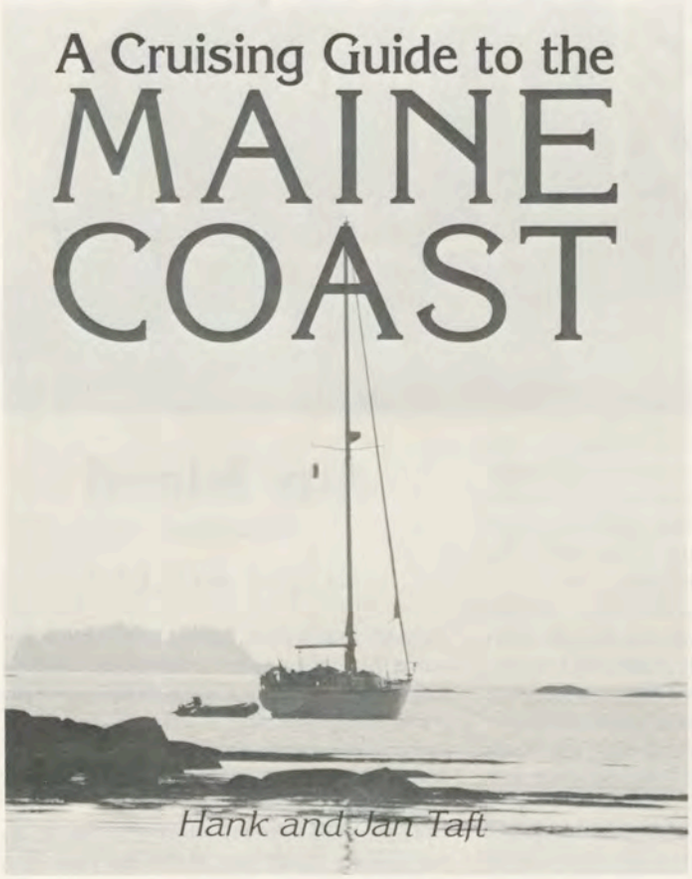
The cold bite of the November rain felt strangely warm, and her skin felt more alive than it had ever been in her life. She stopped a moment to watch a blue boat go smoothly out over the ocean. White gulls flickered way in the black distance towards Big Baker.

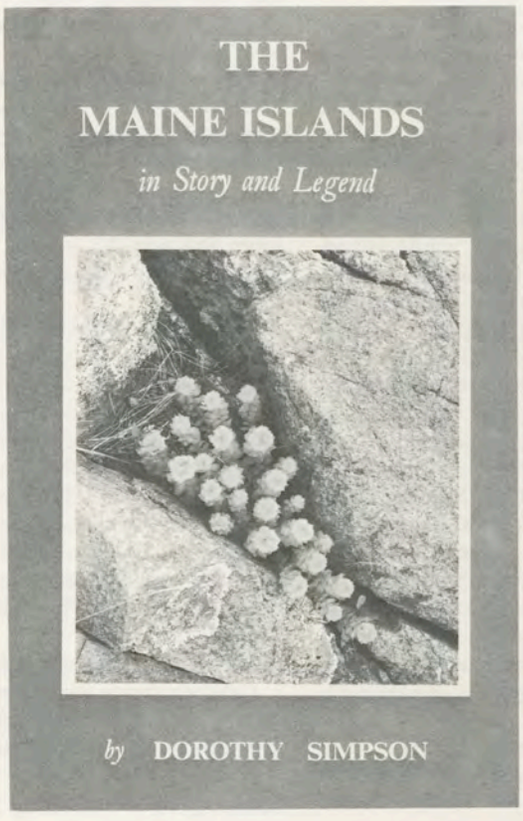
"To hell with it!" she yelled.

Later she threw the boxes out the kitchen door, and over the winter she watched with pleasure as they disintegrated.

Maili Bailey, *a resident of Swans Island, is deeply involved in the island's civic affairs, including the Planning Board, library, and the Swans Island Educational Society.*

Island Bookshelf





A Cruising Guide to the Maine Coast, by Hank and Jan Taft. International Marine Publishing Co., Camden, Maine, 1988.

Reviewed by Joel White

I SUSPECT THAT I suspect that most boat owners, after a few years of sailing and exploring, have had the urge to publish their findings so others could benefit from their experience. Hank and Jan Taft have done just that. Here is their *Cruising Guide to the Maine Coast*, four years and 500 harbors, coves, and anchorages later. For someone cruising this region for the first time, it will be invaluable. For those familiar with coastal Maine, it will shed new light and insight on the downeast scene.

This guide is a good one—well researched, comprehensive, and interesting reading to anyone who wants to explore the Maine coast. Starting at the Isles of Shoals and Portsmouth/Kittery in the west, it guides us eastward along the coast, harbor by harbor, island by island, all the way to the Canadian border and then a bit farther. Grand Manan and Passamaquoddy Bay are covered at the end to round out a voyage of 250 crow miles or 3,500 miles, more or less, around the shoreline. Within these boundaries are literally thousands of islands, hundreds of possible anchorages, and a wide variety of cruising facilities. Shore-based amenities can range from comprehensive at such places as Southwest Harbor, to non-existent at Roque Island. The Tafts take us on a tour of this varied coast and instruct us on the places to visit, what we will find there, and what charms, dangers, and/or puzzlements await us.

I like the way the book is organized. It is divided into regions, the first being the southern coast from the Isles of Shoals to Cape Elizabeth, through Number 7, West Quoddy Head to Calais. Within each region the individual places are covered by a general description, followed by a discus-sion of the following information categories: "Approaches," "Anchorages and Moorings," "Getting Ashore," "For the Boat," "For the Crew," and "Things to Do."

Not all of these categories are covered at each harbor—the smaller anchorages may have only one or two items listed, but for the larger places with more facilities, it is easy to find out what services are available without having to read through the whole entry. The "Things to Do" item is usually a description of amusements and activities that might be found ashore—a good idea. It is interesting to note how these listings peter out as one cruises eastward, which is one reason many of us cruise in that direction. By the time the Tafts have reached Wilsons Beach, Campobello, "Things to Do" has been reduced to watching fishermen unload their catch—not a bad way to spend an afternoon.

Scattered throughout this catalog of anchorages are occasional essays on a variety of subjects: historical dividends, coastal activities, native birds, even a discussion of the Kennebec River ice trade of the mid-1800's. (Did you know that back in 1870, ice was sold for $10 per ton delivered aboard ship?) I particularly liked the description of puffins included in one of the bird essays: "Part of a puffin's charm is the contrast between its sober black morning coat and earnest expression with its orange feet and brilliantly colored beak. It looks rather like a clergyman on a binge."

The text is supplemented with a number of photographs and some fine bird sketches by Doug Alvord. The appendix includes a listing of available charter services and ferries, both public and private.

The introductory section of the guide contains discussions of a number of subjects pertinent to the cruiser: preparations before a cruise, customs regulations, use of public and private property, environmental concerns, lobster fishermen, weather, tides, and fog. This section is thoughtfully done and factually sound, as is the entire book. After reading over most of the entries, I can find little

to fault as to the accuracy of the information or the advice offered. The writing is well done and frequently amusing. The text is augmented with sketch maps to help clarify tricky bits of navigation.

Best of all, the Tafts manage to convey rather nicely their own pleasure in cruising the Maine coast, and the book will no doubt encourage others to discover its infinite variety for themselves.

It is difficult to discuss this guide without comparing it to the faithful old standby, *A Cruising Guide to the New England Coast*, by Duncan and Ware. I guess I had hoped to find a different approach or format to the subject in the Tafts' book. But if you stop to think about it, there really isn't a different way to convey the necessary information.

Both books are excellent, the information factual and to the point, and I suspect that both will end up on board the serious cruiser.

***Joel White** is a naval architect living in Brooklin, Maine. He has sailed much of the Maine coast in boats of his own or others' design.*

Maine Islands in Story and Legend, by Dorothy Simpson, reprinted in 1987 by Blackberry Books, Chimney Farm, RR 1, Box 228, Nobleboro, ME 04555. 256 pp., $8.95.

Reviewed by David R. Getchell, Sr.

"AS ONE EXPLORES the Saco Bay islands, most of which are uninhabitated now (in strictly human terms), one is accompanied by a great sense of the past. It begins with the tremendous upheaval of nature which created them; then follows a period of incredibly rich wild life and vegetation of which we can have only the faintest idea, and inhabitation by a race that antedated Indians as we know them. The Indians considered the mainland and the islands as their own, and they were right. If ever innocents lived in a Garden of Eden, it was they; the pure and savage freedom they possessed has never been surpassed anywhere. The islands were necessary to them; they paddled out in their canoes to hold summer encampments and great councils, to hunt seabirds, to spear fish, to gather shellfish, berries, and nuts."

That's potent writing, at once evocative and comprehending, but very much the norm in this softcover book about Maine islands, one of the best we have read. Written by islander Dorothy Simpson in the 1950's from material compiled by the Maine Writers Research Club, *Maine Islands in Story and Legend* was first published in 1960. More than a quarter of a century later, the writing is as alive and refreshing as ever, and if there is a trace of innocence from time to time, it tends only to emphasize the great changes that have taken place along the coast and in our ways of seeing and thinking of the world about us.

"Though I was born on the mainland," writes Simpson, "I went home to Criehaven when I was two weeks old, and I've been an islander ever since, living on five islands in all. My stepfather, grandfather, uncles, cousins, husband, and four brothers were all lobstermen. Naturally, I wanted to be one too, but in those days? Never. So I thought the next best thing would be to write about the island, and eventually produced six novels about childhood and youth there, drawing on my own life and family."

Simpson's native "islandness" is always in the background. Some 50 island are featured here, from the Isles of Shoals to St. Croix on the Canadian border. No two are alike, nor does the author see even the smallest as anything less than animate, a place with its own life, its own history, and very much with its own future.

"Most of the islands that are empty today, or are just being discovered by people searching for an escape from the crowd, were a part of this thriving little world," Simpson tells us in her introduction, harking all the way back to the 1600's. "But then as the Indians' resentment grew, and the French fought against the loss of a good part of their Acadie, a whole way of life was wiped out in blood and smoke. How many people today know that way of life ever existed? For most of us the settling of the islands began after the Revolutionary War, and on many of the islands the continuity has been unbroken ever since. Yet it is possible to find those ancient cellar holes, as it is possible to find traces of the Indian occupancy..."

Asking what these 17th century Englishmen were seeking on their islands, she finds little need to speculate: "It was probably the same thing that dwellers on island have always found. That something has not changed. It simply takes different forms...

"The man who finds his island later in life, and goes to it whenever he can, escapes the rush and confusion of his mainland existence only to find himself on his island—or rather, the early, innocent, primal self that lived at ease with nature, and greeted each rising sun as a fresh miracle."

Simpson takes this feeling for islands and uses it skillfully to bring the excitement of reality to the thorough historical factfinding done by her friends in the Maine Writers Research Club. There is blood and gore galore in the long history of our islands, but there is also pride, accomplishment, and happiness, the latter rarely touched by historians intent on presenting only the facts.

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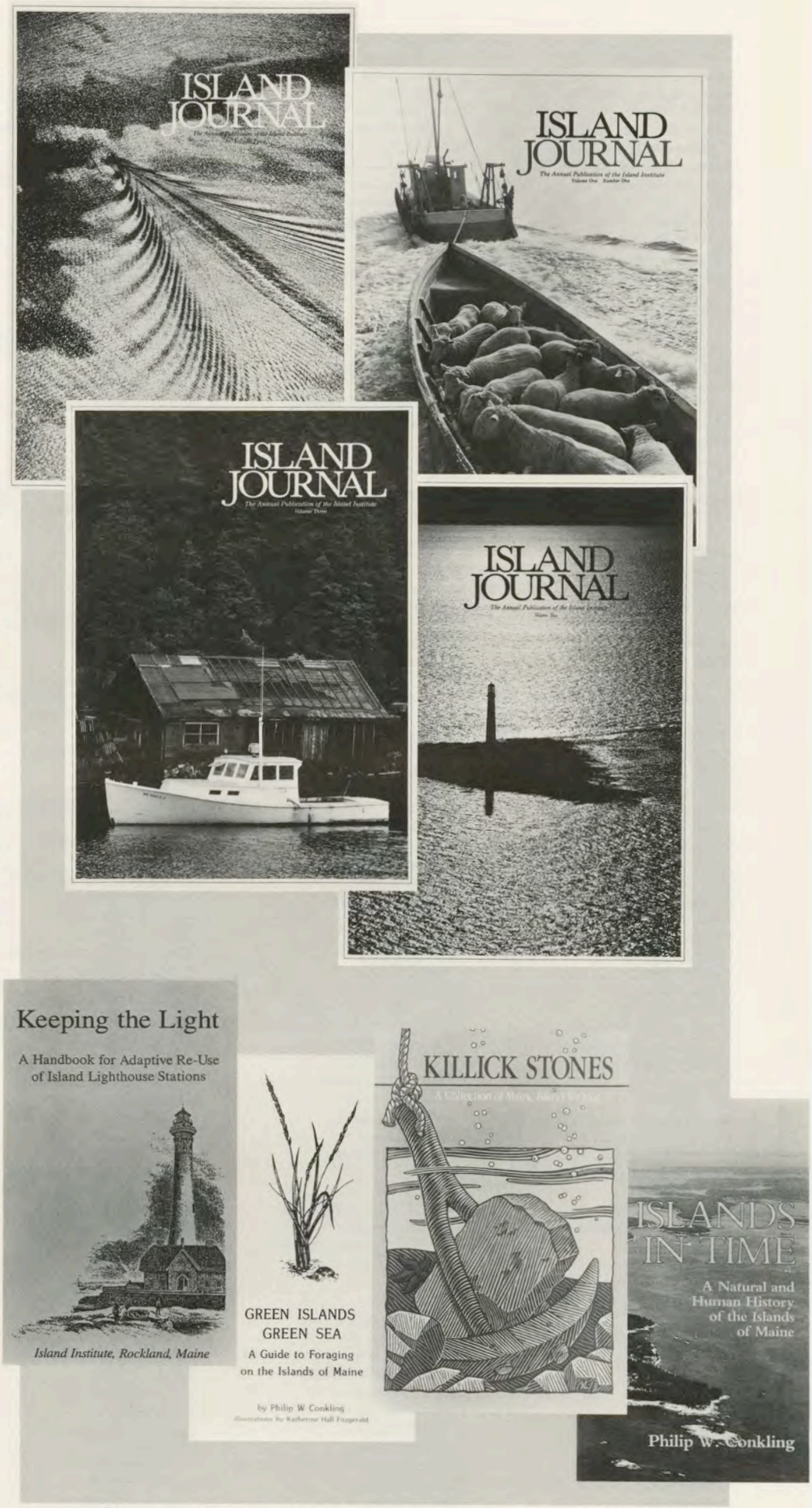

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Jeff Dworsky

To rebuild would mean hiring labor, and breaking in on the slim reserve of cash he had laid by for winter. It would mean buying some new nets, though he had a few old ones hanging up in the loft of his fishhouse. He'd have to patch them up and put on a new coat of tar. He'd have to get the heavy pile driver down from above high-water mark in the cove where it had been hauled up until it should be needed in the spring. And above all, to have the weir fishing again would mean starting all over on the old round of worry and exasperation every time the weather looked smurry.

—Ruth Moore, *The Weir,* 1943
Blackberry Books, 1986

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