The Annual Publication of the Island Institute
Volume Six

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Schooner Isaac H. Evans
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207-594-8007

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207-594-2923

LEWIS R. FRENCH
Schooner Lewis R. French
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Publishers of the Island Journal

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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Painting courtesy: Gallery-by-the-Sea, Box 262, Port Clyde

It went practically unnoticed, but last year's 113th Legislature took the first step toward making the islands an area of critical state concern.

The legislative document that was unhandily titled, "An Act to Promote Orderly Economic Growth and Natural Resource Conservation," and came to be known as the "Comprehensive Planning Act," became law at the end of the legislative session. The marine islands were designated along with rivers, lakes, alpine areas, coastal areas, and wetlands as "critical natural resources." The act requires all towns to consider how municipal decisions will affect islands within their jurisdictions.

Beyond this rather straightforward statement, the act proposes no standards and is equally silent on what kinds of activities might be considered to be positive or negative. But still, it's significant that lawmakers and policy makers have had their attention directed offshore and have begun to recognize that islands are something more than just extensions of the mainland coast.

It might not seem like a big deal for islands to be considered as an area of critical state concern, but it occurs to us that this honorific distinction could lead for the first time ever to the articulation of state policies (and funding) to assist islands with regard to conserving their natural systems and preserving their cultures. This means taking an interest in maintaining island schools, transportation systems, and maritime economies in the face of a rapidly expanding tourism. And moves toward conserving the natural systems will lead to a recognition that islands face unique and acute challenges with solid waste disposal, sewage treatment, and groundwater protection that are far more difficult and expensive to address than the same serious problems in mainland towns.

The Island Institute has served as a clearinghouse for information about the Maine islands and as catalyst to increase communication among the many different people who are concerned with their future. In this role our work has been enhanced by the rapidly emerging technology we have developed that allows for the first time the display and analysis of high-quality satellite images of islands on desktop computers. Suddenly we can look down from space and see the big picture of how vast and complex this archipelago really is, and simultaneously we can view the little picture — down to the size of a tennis court — that shows how pieces of the environment interrelate.

Although islanders are isolated and communication between islands off the Maine coast has decreased with the decline of maritime-based transportation, the small desktop computer linked to satellites is a new vehicle that can tie islanders into a larger information network — not just along the Maine coast, but everywhere that island cultures are facing increased pressure from tourist-related development. The value of such linkages was recently pointed out to us by an official delegation of islanders from Yugoslavia's Adriatic Sea interested in learning how Maine islanders, at the brink of substantially increased tourism, have responded to the opportunities without compromising their cultural and natural resources.

People everywhere are beginning to realize that the planet itself is a fragile island, and as we wrote in the inaugural issue of *Island Journal*, "in this sense mainlanders are the pre-Copernicans and islanders are the more sophisticated, modern and up-to-date."

Philip W. Conkling, Executive Editor

The islands need a stronger political will, one that if not always united, is nevertheless coherent, understandable, and tough. Islanders must act politically without regard to friends and neighbors who refuse to attend meetings, for we confront changes based on values that differ greatly between urbanites and islanders.

During the past few decades island rusticators were marine and nature enthusiasts, retirees, artists, educators, and whomever the God of Islands was disposed to drop on the archipelago. Now a new breed of people is looming in our future. They are middle-aged, professional, wealthy, mobile, self-assured, competent, selfish, narcissistic, patronizing, and usually island illiterate.

Even if these urban newcomers want to be part of the island tradition, the frenetic habits and expectations of their other lives frequently disallow the mental "calming of the waters" needed for a full melding into island life. The tools they need to inflict their lifeways on us are soon to arrive, and only the political will of islanders can ameliorate the force of these tools.

Political will means taking yourself and what you think seriously, and then coming together with neighbors in official circumstances to take part as a citizen in the kind of government, by the people, that effectively resists the social changes that metropolitan values impose on island life.

By illustration, let's regard two developments, one already here and the other on its way, that are especially worrisome:

Not long ago a friend showed us a map of his island that had been colored so that the property of permanent residents was in yellow and that of seasonal residents in red. The overall effect was that of an inside-out target, with a thickish yellow circle in the center and crimson all around the periphery. The story it told was that nearly all shore frontage had been sold by the very people who have a domestic stake in the future of the town.

What this means is that the islands are rapidly becoming a kind of society to which Americans generally, and Yankees specifically, are loath to admit — absentee landlords of the shorelines riding to hounds (or yachts) around invisible "affordable housing" villages of depressed wage-earners. It's as if the islands are beginning to re-enact the social catastrophes of the 17th Century Enclosure Acts wherein riparian lands and whole towns were depopulated in favor of sheep and a landed gentry. Proud peasants became disenfranchised serfs or were packed into cities to become industrial fodder.

Economic development of the islands, employing local residents and using local resources other than tourists, must be made a priority. In this age of increasing competition, I suggest that a major island resource is an intact work ethic that takes pride in quality and quantity of work performed. Combine this with profit sharing and indigenous management and you have a competitive combination.

Another urban-oriented tool, the effect of which may prove pervasive, is the corporate or chartered jet plane that soon may become a common visitor to mainland airports (as well as to at least two of the larger islands). Jets, together with helicopter services, will make easy use of island cottages as homes a reality. And when people fly home to their islands, they will not be leaving on Monday, or in September. Telecommunications technology and the newest generation of personal computers will allow anyone to run fairly large business operations from that little room just off the porch deck.

Modern transport and computer-integrated telecommunication systems will allow this new breed to live here, and it will be their brag that they can and do. Only historical moments from now private jet/helicopter services will be established at all of the contiguous mainland airports. Even corporate middle-management personnel will be able to operate out of cottages on remote islands.

We must look to our maps, to our citizens, and hope to change the minds of those who see no threat in these changes.

Political will, friends; Political Will!

George Putz, Senior Editor

In October Jeff Dworsky walked into our office to show us some of the photographs he had taken around Stonington and Isle au Haut. We had already planned to devote this year's Folio section to Working Waterfronts. Five minutes into Jeff's collection we knew we wanted to include his moody visions. As an island fisherman he sees the waterfront from the inside and is able to document this rapidly changing environment. We hope you will take the time to appreciate what is going on in these powerful images.

I would like to make a sincere point of saluting our photographers and the many people who have helped us with this issue of *Island Journal*. From Cape Elizabeth to Eastport aboard *Fish Hawk* we were often the grateful recipients of local knowledge, safe moorings, warm showers, good meals, and fine company...to all of you, we can't say enough for your thoughtfulness. Our special thanks are again due Sally Pingree for making the Working Waterfront Folio possible.

Peter Ralston, Art Director

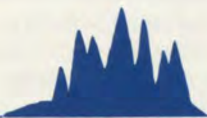
NOT FOR SALE

Western Head is more than just a place of dramatic beauty. Standing proudly at the entrance to Cutler Harbor, some 50 miles to the east of Mount Desert Island, this peninsula is a piece of Maine that time has left unchanged. Its clean, rich waters feed eagles and ospreys, and sustain one of Maine's last inshore herring beds.

In 1988, Maine Coast Heritage Trust purchased Western Head, adjacent Great Head, and nearby Boot Head. Six spectacular miles of Maine's easternmost coastline have now been spared from development for the enjoyment of future generations.

To make this possible, Maine Coast Heritage Trust initiated a campaign to raise $5,000,000. For those wishing to join us in the permanent protection of Western Head, Great Head and Boot Head, contributions are tax-deductible.

Maine Coast Heritage Trust, a publicly-supported, non-profit corporation, is dedicated to protecting land that is essential to the character of Maine, its coastline and islands in particular. Since 1970, the Trust has been instrumental in conserving 29,000 acres of Maine land, including 135 islands in their entirety.



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Peter Ralston

LOG OF THE FISH HAWK

PHILIP W. CONKLING

THE FIRST TIME in a new season that you crank over a winter-idled outboard, trying to coax her to new life, you wilfully re-enter the mystical realm of all things having to do with the sea. It's not just that you close your eyes and pray for luck, but also you can't help but feel the palpable personality of the boat and her powerplant.

Or so it seemed when the 26-foot *Fish Hawk*, with her twin Yamaha outboards, went back overboard in the St. George River in the spring of 1988. And when the steely gray motors fired quickly back to life, curling little tails of bluish smoke above the ebbing morning tide, the omens for the year were propitious.

In early June we headed out of the mouth of the St. George River at Port Clyde and swung east-northeast for outer Blue Hill Bay. We had in mind to visit a number of islands around the periphery of Swan's Island that were rumored to be for sale, partly because we are naturally interested in the quasi-secret island real estate market, but also because we have occasionally been able to act as a marriage counselor, introducing an island to a new owner.

It also occurred to us that the relatively large number (6) of islands for sale in Blue Hill Bay, plus the sale of two others in late 1987, was evidence that the heat of the island real estate market was moving east from Casco and Penobscot bays to the shores of Swan's Island, one of the few places along the archipelago where fishermen still outnumber summer people.

Our first visit was to a 12-acre island at the entrance of Casco Passage, north of Swan's Island. At dead low water *Fish Hawk* carefully nudged her way up into a little tidal gut with just a foot and a half of water in the channel between it and a neighboring island. When we stopped to throw the hook over and looked back, we could see the faintest trail where the Yamahas' skegs had knifed through the top layer of flats, leaving snaking parallel lines of roiled mud.

We rowed to a tiny white beach of sand and shell and began walking along the rocky outer shore. Halfway around the island beyond a pretty little pond, we noticed we were being checked out by a soaring tag team of adult bald eagles. Knowing that this company could only mean a nest in the vicinity (confirmed later in a conversation with Charlie Todd, Maine's "eagle man"), we were anxious to avoid disturbing the nest and cut a wide arc around the area to reach the protected back side of the island.

There, tucked in a spruce glade, we found a little log and tarpaper shack, no more than 12 feet square and nearly invisible from the shore. Although no one was around, it was clear that we had stumbled on to what islanders refer to as a "bandit camp." Temporarily inhabited, and often built on land owned by others, these structures represent a semi-permanent pattern of survival use of Maine islands by maritime people who live on the outer periphery of the law. And although bandit camp culture is at best rough and ramshackle, we took it as a good sign that eagles and outlaws appeared to be coexisting on this small island, which we concluded would be a difficult real estate proposition given the presence of a pair of nesting endangered species and at least a pair of camping bandits.

After spending the night in Burnt Coat Harbor off Swan's Island's active working waterfront, we woke early the next morning after two dozen or so lovely fishing boats

cleared Hockamock Head to chase lobsters crawling inshore looking for "shedder bottom."

We were heartened to hear that the spring lobster catch had been "fair" (read as unusually good), although we were more interested to find out what might be in store for nearby Marshall Island off Swan's' southwest quarter. Someone had told us that heavy equipment had been landed on the north point of Marshall, and a pilot had mentioned that an abandoned airstrip there appeared to have been refurbished.

We anchored in the lee, between Marshall's sloping sandy shores and the bold pink bluffs of Ringtown Island a hundred yards to the eastward. While we were rowing ashore, another bald eagle banked overhead and then soared back to perch in a nest within Ringtown's snarly spruce forest. You might wonder on what authority we visit, seemingly cavalierly, uninhabited privately owned islands. The answer is no other authority than the hope that a recognition of and appreciation for our efforts to encourage a balanced future for the Maine islands proceeds us. Of course, one person's "balance" may be another's upset, but there's nothing like the feeling of cautiously going on a wild island shore to provide some perspective.

Marshall is a 900-acre island that in the 1970's had been proposed as an addition to Acadia National Park by federal planners interested in expanding wilderness camping opportunities from the handful of sites available on Isle Au Haut. As is so often the case, the federal government proposed a reasonable idea without including many local residents in the discussion ahead of time, and the idea quickly went down to a howling and resounding defeat. Everyone from Swan's Island herring and lobster fishermen to regional planning commissioners and semi-professional bureaucrat busters thought it was a bad idea to expand National Park boundaries any further out on the islands for camping.

With this in mind, we made our way up through a young birch woods toward the center of the island and surprised a sleek doe and a pair of fawns whose white flags waved for an instant before disappearing into the forest. We followed a wide new trail, criss-crossed with bright orange surveyor's tape marking lot lines, up past a recently opened gravel pit, and out onto a newly resurfaced air strip with twin runways.

And then our hearts jumped a little when we saw at the junction of the runways a single engine plane that we surmised belonged to the island's owner and developer. It occurred to us to melt back into the forest like the deer we had just surprised, but *Fish Hawk* is prominently marked with our name (no camouflage there) and we were genuinely interested in meeting the owner to learn more about the plans for Marshall, so we pressed on. We headed past the airstrip to Marshall's wilder weather shore and tried to count the brightly marked lot lines on this large island. We never did run into the plane's pilot or passengers, but not for want of trying. An hour later when we rowed back to *Fish Hawk* it struck us as ironic that Marshall Island had been saved from Acadia's wilderness campers only to be prominently laid out a decade later as a private isle of estates for a fortunate few.

A MONTH OR SO later we were in Brooklin, back in the Casco Passage neighborhood, to attend the annual wooden boat regatta that coincided in 1988 with the opening of the 50th Anniversary celebration of Concordia Yacht Co. We had crept most of the way down from Rockland to Naskeag without seeing much beyond the greenish loom of the Raytheon radar in *Fish Hawk's* pilothouse, but in the light of an August evening the anchorage between Naskeag and Center Harbor was one of the most lovely sights we'd ever seen. Over a hundred classic wooden sloops, schooners, yawls, and ketches, each with its equally distinct and classic tenders, lay rocking in the faint evening breeze. Helen's face that had launched a thousand ships, surely smiled that night.

We delivered a message to one of the fleet's Concordias, the meticulously kept *Matinicus,* and then rafted up for a friendly supper with the Maine Maritime's Friendship sloop *Chance,* which was undergoing last-minute outfitting for the next day's race.

After spending the night in the Torrey Island bight (who, but us, thought *Fish Hawk* an elegant addition to the wooden yacht convocation?), we wandered down to watch the start of the race that would reach down the Eggemoggin from Little Babson Island. Wooden boats are, in a sense, like islands, anachronisms in an age where the marvels of technological innovation seduce us daily. Like islands, they are hopelessly expensive to own and maintain, and yet their owners come from all walks of life, many having forsaken other blandishments to pursue their passion.

Wooden boats, like islands, are cranky and imperious, extracting attention like affection-starved children. And yet on a summer's day like that of the race, when the fog scales up to reveal the long view and shimmering images of the sea lifting delicate craft of cedar and sail, not only do the sacrifices seem small, but you vow to pour more time and effort into these elegant creations forever — which may be as soon as the raw November winds that once again chill your ardor for punishment.

But on this day there is the glorious spectacle of white wooden classics reaching past shimmering island shores. From 15 knots the southwest breeze freshened to 20, and the broad reaching craft sang and groaned in surging seas with spray drying in salt lace on the faces of the hundred captains and crews. Oh my, when we die and go to heaven, may it be on a day such as this!

FISH HAWK'S NEXT major trip proceeded to the west'ard past Ram and Damariscove off Boothbay toward Casco Bay's busier shores. The daily logistical constraints imposed by island life would daunt an experienced army quartermaster — a truism which is under-

Peter Ralston

stated in the case of Casco Bay. Here, eight island communities are served by two transit districts and a private carrier, who move more freight and cars to a far flung constellation of island shores than anywhere else in the United States.

Amid this daunting mix of activity we planned a Friday night rendezvous with 150 Casco Bay islanders aboard one of the Casco Bay Lines boats, the *Island Romance,* to celebrate the diversity of the islands and hopefully to stimulate an informal exchange of conversation between "up-Bay" Peaks Islanders and their more isolated and fewer "down-Bay" neighbors. We had been planning this floating island party for close to three months with the friendly help of Pat Christian, the general manager of Casco Bay Lines, and had things right down to a minute-by-minute schedule of arrivals and departures for the chartered trip from Portland to Peaks to the Diamonds, Long, Chebeague, and Cliff, with island hosts at each stop. However, we hadn't factored the random event into our calculations. Two days before the September 16 party the regular evening commuter boat, the *Island Holiday,* exhausted from a summer's long duty, developed engine problems, so the *Island Romance* had to be pressed into service for the Friday evening commuters.

Although our hearts dropped at this news, it was clear that there was no feasible way that

we could get word to the 150 people signed up for the "Casco Bay Celebration" in time to cancel the event. The only alternative was to run the party on the commuter boat and hope that the island commuters would join in good spirits in the celebration.

To make the schedule work, *Fish Hawk*, after delivering a few of us to Portland, would go back down bay to meet Chebeague Islanders and bring them to the Long Island wharf and entertain them before the commuter boat arrived 20 minutes later than planned.

Meanwhile a few extra spirits and many pounds more hors d'ouevres were laid on as commuters and inter-island guests jammed Casco Bay Line's handsome new terminal building on the Portland waterfront. Through the skillful and efficient activity of the CBL crew, approximately 250 islanders, commuters and celebrants alike, were loaded aboard, and the party got under way with 100 additional unexpected guests.

When we finally tied up at the Cliff Island wharf an hour and a half later, Jean Dyer, the President of the Casco Bay Island Development Association, gave a fine speech that served to remind all of us what an effective local island voice the organization has become, both in Portland and Augusta.

Many up-Bay residents from Peaks and the Diamonds had never ridden the boat all the way down to Chebeague and Cliff — their island stops coming before these outer posts — so there was a lot of information to exchange. The trip ended on the sobering note that it is the sea that connects these eight island communities one to another, and the alarming and deteriorating quality of bay waters will, if not addressed, ultimately detract from the quality of life for all Casco Bay islanders.

So we returned our guests to their islands and said our good nights, and *Fish Hawk* and her crew headed out into the night to seek a quiet anchorage beyond the ghostly plume of bacterial and toxic pollution that circles the shores of Casco Bay's inner islands.

FISH HAWK'S FINAL TRIP of the season was her most ambitious. In early October, provisioned for autumn weather and with a fresh crew aboard, the little boat headed east to Lubec where two others planned to join the boat for a week-long ecological survey of the Maine coast's least known corner — the intricate network of Cobscook's bays and the outer shores of the bold Quoddy coast between Cutler and Lubec. Working east to west, we planned to start the survey on the inner tidal reaches of Cobscook's long finger bays and work our way back "up" the coast to Cutler in an effort to integrate and quantify the ecological, cultural, and scenic features of this last vast under-developed shoreline of Maine.

Cobscook Bay's outer edges are fringed by the scaly shores of Eastport and Lubec, two towns whose fortunes, over the past century, have risen and fallen along with the inshore herring catch and now are being reborn as centers of salmon aquaculture production.

We spent most of the first night at the end of the Lubec public landing finger piers until a raw and rising northeast wind rolling down Friar Roads convinced us at 3 a.m. that the lee of nearby Major Island was a safer place to be.

Shortly after the gray morning sky broke over *Fish Hawk* we headed in through the narrow passages that separate the Fundian outer bay from the secret little shoal-draft gunkholes of South, Straight, and Whiting bays. Cobscook Bay is the only place in Maine where the long, northwest bearing tendrils of mainland peninsulas run transverse to the northeast trend of the mainland coast. Cobscook's unusual geomorphology and its hundred-isled interior, combined with Fundy's legendary tidal engine, produce watery landscapes and ecological assemblages like nowhere else on earth. The tide, at full flood running 6 knots past places like Falls Island, changes the landscape visibly almost minute by minute.

This huge lunar wave drives deep into Washington county's forested interior and touches on a corner of Moosehorn Wildlife Refuge, which was purchased at the instigation of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who doubtlessly coasted these same shores from his Campobello redoubt.

Uncounted acres of fringing salt marsh leach their nutrient production over mudflats so vast that the hundreds of clam diggers who depend on their prodigious productivity actually travel by all-terrain vehicles from flat to flat and back to the main. Along the entrances of these huge flats are bolder promentories like Coggins and Horan heads where 28-foot tides wash against sheer cliffs on which cling a marine biologist's bonanza of normally sub-tidal invertebrates and seaweeds exposed nowhere else at the earth and air interface.

And if all this grandeur were not enough to still even the most restless soul to silence, the cautious stewards that presently preside over air, isle, and water are seals and eagles that also live off the bounty of this system.

The full autumn days sped by too fast for us along this remarkable, almost unknown coast. The last day before heading back out into the Fundy Channel, while cataloging the wild eastern shore of Straight Bay, we saw the fluttering orange of surveyor's tape crisscrossing Coffin Neck. This discovery left us feeling if we could have but one wish for this coast, it would be that some beneficient philosopher king would declare this place a biosphere sanctuary where wildness would not be tamed and where our civilized souls could be turned out for momentary glimpses into the divinity of an enclosed, tiny, infinite wilderness where we can recognize God's face.

This Island Earth

"The further away from something one gets the further into the future one sees..." WINSTON CHURCHILL

RICHARD H. PODOLSKY

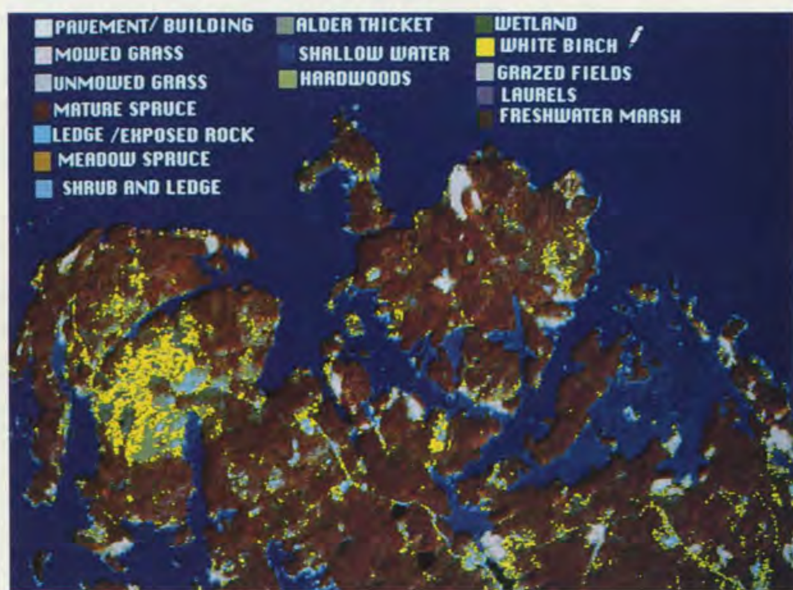
THE VISUAL diversity and richness of our universe is mysterious and seemingly endless. The point of reference or scale of observation of an observer greatly influences what kind of a world one sees. Take the difference between an animal pathologist and a veterinarian. A pathologist "sees" animals through a microscope while a veterinarian sees animals as a steady stream of dogs, cats, and parrots. Both are viewing animals, but because their tools are so radically different they see two very distinct worlds.

The kind of tool one uses to observe the world controls what kind of world he sees. What astronomers tell us about the structure of our universe is continuously revolutionized by the development of new and more powerful telescopes in much the same way that microbiology has been remade by the development of the electron microscope.

The same is true for ecologists. Some ecologists observe the natural world on their hands and knees with nothing more than a hand lens, while others use satellite images to make their observations. Both are "reading the landscape," but because of the different tools they use they see very distinct worlds.

For an ecologist nothing can take the place of having one's feet firmly planted in a particular habitat and having a good hard look around. But backing away and viewing a landscape at a distance is at times absolutely necessary. This long view is becoming even more crucial now because humans are having a global impact on the earth's surface. Examples of global impact include the effects of acid rain on forests throughout the temperate zone, the acceleration of tropical deforestation due to slash-and-burn agriculture, and the cumulative impact of urban sprawl on open space and wilderness areas. To monitor these global changes requires being able to observe large sections of the earth at a single glance.

How does an ecologist achieve this "birds-eye-view" of earth? The primary way is through remotely sensed data such as aerial photographs and satellite imagery. The earliest aerial photographs were black and white images taken from cameras sent aloft with balloons. Next, high elevation "spy" aircraft with cameras were developed to supply earth images. Currently, the highest resolution photographs of the earth's surface are being taken by multi-spectral scanners aboard orbiting satellites. The Island Institute has, for the first time, developed the capability to display and analyze satellite images of the Maine islands from our desk top computers.



SPOT satellite image of the Fox Islands archipelago, including North Haven and Vinalhaven islands, (at left) taken from 512 miles above Earth. This image was taken October 27, 1988 and displayed on an Apple Macintosh II computer using GAIA, the Islands Institute's remote sensing software.

Above is a color enhanced analysis of the SPOT image showing the distribution of white birch forests in the hardwood burn of Fox Rocks and Perry Creek drainage on Vinalhaven. Both images Copyright © [1988] CNES, provided by SPOT Image Corporation, Reston, VA.

THE EARTH IN DETAIL

Earth imaging satellites are basically orbiting cameras. Like most cameras, the scanners in satellites are sensitive to differences in the reflectivity of the earth. Even though the satellites are over 500 miles above the earth the sensors can distinguish minute differences in surface features, for example fresh water marshes versus salt water marshes. The photographs taken by satellites are not recorded on film, rather the images are digitized and relayed back to a receiving station on earth. In this digital form the images can be easily read into and displayed on a computer.

The author conducting a desktop inventory of several Penobscot Bay islands on a Macintosh II computer. The Island Institute currently has high resolution SPOT satellite images of over 500 of Maine's 3,000 islands.

Satellite photographs are ultimately composed of thousands of tiny visual sub-units called pixels. Individual pixels can only be seen at high magnification. When viewed directly on a computer screen pixels appear as different colored "tiles" in a mosaic, in much the same way that Seurat's impressionistic paintings are actually composed of tiny colored dots.

Different colors in the satellite image indicate different habitats or surface features. The satellite doesn't know the difference between a mudflat and a meadow. It is therefore necessary for an ecologist to "ground-truth" the image, which entails going into the field and ascertaining what surface feature each color represents. Once all the colors have been correctly identified the entire image is considered "classified." Being able to quantify all the pixels of a given color is the key to quantitatively analyzing the images for land use analysis.

THE MOST WINS

Each advancement in remote sensing technology reveals new information about the surface of the earth. For example, the interpretation of black and white aerial photographs allows one to distinguish approximately a dozen different surface features on the Maine coast. With satellite images however, it is possible to distinguish over 200 habitats. If knowledge is power, then ecologists and conservationists who have access to the best information will be in a position to make wise decisions about the destiny of the earth. An ecologist with access to the information contained in satellite images will be basing decisions upon more data of far greater precision than was previously available. This alone doesn't guarantee that *good* decisions will be made, but given the complexity and importance of environmental issues, ecologists and conservationists certainly deserve access to the best possible information currently available.

When does it make sense to use remotely gathered data? Remote sensing makes good sense for places on earth where it is especially risky or costly to conduct on-the-ground surveys such as remote roadless regions, tropical rain forests, or isolated islands. The latter in particular stand to benefit from advances in remote sensing.

The roughly one million islands on earth suffer from a serious lack of baseline data because they are difficult to visit and survey with any regularity. The irony is that in the midst of this information vacuum, islands host many of the most unusual and fragile ecosystems on earth.

Madagascar, for example, is populated with a unique biota, yet 90% of its native vegetation has been removed in the last dozen years. Land cover analysis based on satellite imagery of a place like Madagascar or the Amazon Basin could be the basis for a long-term monitoring program to track the rate of deforestation or, if we regain our sanity in those regions, to monitor the rate of forest regeneration. Madagascar is not alone; 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 them.

An ecologist with access to the information contained in satellite images will be basing decisions upon more data of far greater precision than was previously available.

ISLAND INSTITUTE PROJECT

Satellite images of the earth have been commercially available since the late 1960's, but except for their use in weather forecasting most of us never see, let alone use, them. Even though they contain some of the best information about the status of the earth they are not routinely used by ecologists, foresters, or land use managers, because the ability to display and analyze satellite images has, until recently, required prohibitively expensive mainframe computers and technically trained personnel. Consequently, only big research universities, government agencies, and large corporations have been able to use satellite images. The Island Institute was particularly frustrated by its inability to access this type of valuable information. Quite simply, no affordable and user-friendly computer system existed which would allow us to analyze satellite images.

A year ago, we initiated a project to develop our own custom mapping and satellite image analysis system with several design constraints. First was our desire to bring the most current and detailed information about the Maine islands to bear on environmental planning. Also, as many Maine islands are remote and therefore costly and risky for us

to visit, we wanted the capability to view and analyze the satellite image of any Maine island on a computer screen right from our desk tops in Rockland. This would allow us year-round access to every Maine island habitat. Lastly, field surveys are costly, approximately $25 per acre. Surveys conducted by way of satellite images, in addition to being more precise, cost us approximately $10 per acre.

With a Research and Development Grant from Apple Computer, Inc., we began to develop our own system based on the Macintosh II, selected because it is a powerful, "user friendly," and affordable personal computer. In addition, it has very sophisticated graphic and imaging capabilities which are absolutely necessary to display and manipulate satellite images. Apple Computer, through its Community Affairs Program, has been playing Johnny Appleseed with its equipment for ten years. By carefully "seeding" worthy organizations with free Apples, the company has stimulated an inestimable number of novel applications. It would be difficult to know how these grants and the solutions they produce have affected sales of Apple computers. Considering that Apple achieved Fortune 500 status faster than any other American corporation (five years), it appears it must be doing something right.

A GREEK GODDESS

We call the system we have developed GAIA, which is an acronym for *Geographic Access Information and Analysis.* The word Gaia also refers to the Greek goddess of the earth. Recently the British Ecologist James Lovelock has resurrected the term in what he refers to as the *Gaia Hypothesis.* The hypothesis posits that the earth functions not as a collection of independent systems but as a single living organism. According to Lovelock, for example, the climate of the earth is intimately tied to the health of our equatorial rain forests. In 1988 the earth was besieged by global environmental disasters such as the deterioration of the ozone layer, marine pollution, droughts, and floods. Many ecologists view these disasters as support for this super-organism concept put forth by Lovelock.

Our GAIA system has several capabilities, the most visually dramatic of which is the display and manipulation of satellite images. This means that we can "paint" the screen with a satellite image and then zoom in or out on any portion of the image. GAIA allows the display of both types of commercially available satellite imagery, called respectively LANDSAT and SPOT, which differ in their ability to resolve, or "see," surface features. LANDSAT images can record objects equal to or larger than 100 feet on a side (about two tennis courts per pixel) whereas SPOT can resolve objects equal to or larger than 65 feet on a side (about one and a half tennis courts per pixel). Simply put, SPOT images are higher resolution than LANDSAT. This higher resolution means that SPOT is superior for detailed landscape analysis. LANDSAT images on the other hand can "sense" temperature by way of an infrared sensor, which means the system is more useful in certain oceanographic applications. Although GAIA handles both types of satellite imagery, the Island Institute is working primarily with SPOT images.

The major feature of GAIA is the ability to analyze satellite images and derive precise acreage down to a tenth of an acre for all habitats. We accomplished this by programing the Macintosh II to tally pixels for each surface feature in the image, thus enabling very accurate "desk top" land surveys. The pixel tallying routine essentially breaks the image down numerically, and then we "capture" this data stream and analyze it. This analytical capability is the heart of GAIA because it allows us to "ask" the Macintosh II for the total acreage of any island or a breakdown of acreage for each habitat on an island. To achieve both the display and

Island Institute staff preparing to ground-check satellite imagery.

A Little Field Work Goes a Long Way

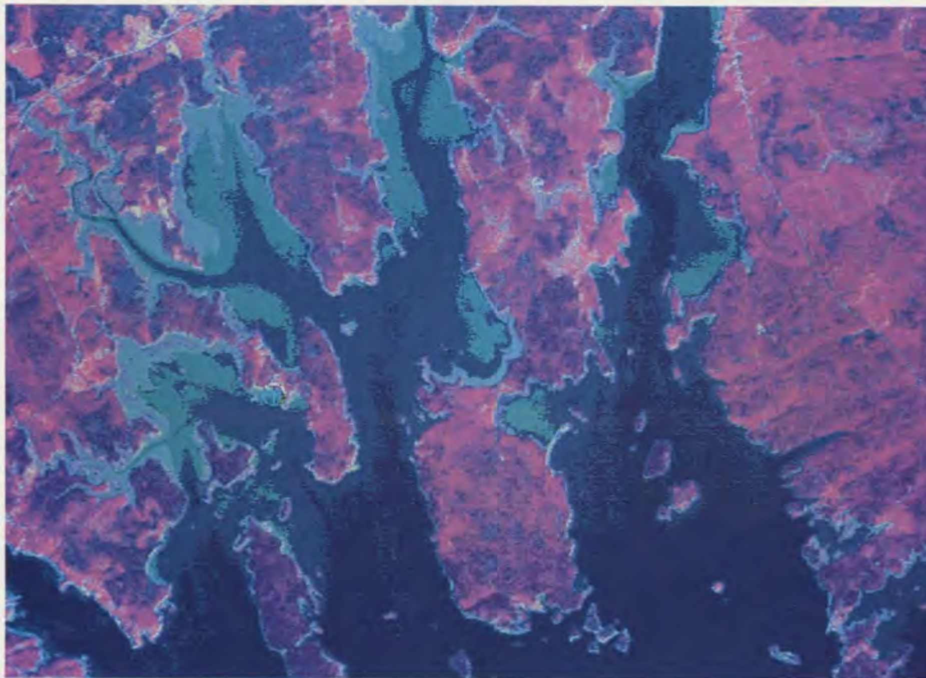
Like any remotely sensed data, satellite images have to be field checked or "ground truthed" to insure that all habitats are accurately and comprehensively described. Ground truthing requires visiting several locations in an image and carefully conducting a natural resource inventory . The purpose of the inventory is to identify all habitats and to compare them back to the satellite image. In the satellite image each habitat or surface feature is represented by clusters of different colored pixels. In the process of ground truthing, information is gathered on the ecology of each of the pixel clusters. The data gathered in the field is then entered into the computer and "tagged" to each pixel color.

The exciting part of the process is that once a cluster of pixels is categorized as a particular surface feature *all* the pixels of that color *throughout the entire image* are then identified. SPOT images contain approximately ten million pixels, which equal one million acres. Consequently, a modest amount of field checking at a few locations goes a long way in identifying the surface features of a very large area.

Field work is by no means made obsolete by GAIA but it is rendered more cost effective. This is because rather than having to visit each and every point in a given image it is only necessary to field check several clusters of pixels for each of the 30 or so colors in the image. In the past, a detailed survey of an offshore island might have cost the Island Institute approximately $ 25 per acre. Using GAIA and SPOT imagery will reduce that cost to approximately $10 per acre. GAIA means that the number of costly and at times risky excursions to remote islands can be reduced.

Currently, in order to initiate a detailed land use analysis requires waiting for late spring, summer or early fall. GAIA will allow us to conduct detailed analyses throughout the entire year. Also, because our SPOT images include the mainland adjacent to the Maine islands we are now in position to assist mainland coastal towns and land owners with their planning and land use management.

Apple Computer... has been playing Johnny Appleseed with its equipment for ten years. By carefully "seeding" worthy organizations with free Apples, the company has stimulated an inestimable number of novel applications.



Low tide SPOT image from upper Narraguagus and Pleasant Bay showing approximately 7 square miles. Diversity of intertidal communities is apparent with mudflats appearing in two shades of green. Pocket beaches appear in white and half-tide ledges in red. Deep water is dark blue, shallow water lighter blue, and mature spruce purple. Copyright © [1988] CNES, provided by SPOT Image Corporation, Reston, VA.

analysis of satellite images, the Institute contracted with Landmark Applied Technologies, a high technology firm located in Bucksport, Maine.

Another capability of GAIA is the ability to incorporate other graphic data such as road maps, tax maps, and topographic maps. These digitized maps can be registered and overlayed precisely onto the satellite images. The significance of this is that it allows us to build up several layers of data on-screen and, for example, key property ownership to a given habitat feature. This would allow us to know from analyzing pixels that a given island is one third wetland. But until we have overlayed the ownership map we wouldn't know, without more costly ground surveys, who owned the wetlands or the likelihood of their long-term preservation.

This approach of analyzing landscapes by way of "overlays" of different landscape systems was pioneered by University of Pennsylvania landscape architect Ian McHarg. In his book, *Design with Nature,* McHarg notes that the combined information is much more than the sum of the parts. GAIA is designed with this McHargian paradigm in mind except that overlaying is achieved by way of the Macintosh II. Finally, GAIA supports the ability to produce full color maps or plots simultaneously of any combination of data layers.

In addition to being used as a tool for land use management, GAIA is also being used to address several basic research questions. One area of particular interest to me is biogeography, a sub-discipline of ecology that explores the interaction between geography and biology. For instance what, if any, is the relationship between island size or isolation and biological diversity? How does the shape of an island or the distance to neighboring islands influence what plants and animals are found there? GAIA may very well be a tool that allows scientists for the first time to easily analyze landscapes in search of patterns in nature that operate on the regional or geographic level.

OTHERS STAND TO BENEFIT

GAIA has already helped the Island Institute in its environmental consulting and will continue to do so. Currently, we are using GAIA to conduct detailed wetland surveys of Vinalhaven and Islesboro based on the satellite image of Penobscot Bay featured with this article. But others stand to benefit from this technology as well.

In a very real sense, GAIA allows for the first time access to high quality data on an easy-to-use and affordable platform. This means that many professions which have been unable to use satellite images because of cost and lack of technical expertise can now do so. In addition to conservation, any profession that requires analyzing surface features of the earth will benefit from the capabilities of GAIA. This includes, but is not limited to, cartography, geology, forestry, and agriculture. Perhaps the day is not too far off when town managers or planning boards will be able to access satellite images from their desk tops.

The first full-frame photograph of the entire earth sent home by Apollo astronauts had an immediate and lasting impact on how we perceive our watery planet. For the first time we could hold the entire earth in our mind's eye and see it for what it is, an island traveling through space with a finite and fragile cargo. It is hard to predict what impact easy access to satellite imagery may have, but our hope is that GAIA will empower us all to more carefully and wisely manage this island earth.

Richard H. Podolsky, Ph.D, *is trained in ecology and serves as the Research Director of the Island Institute. In this capacity he directs the GAIA project.*

Peter Ralston

MAN & MEDRIC

Historical Biology of Gulls & Terns

WILLIAM H. DRURY

Seashore and sea birds go together in our psyche. When we see the one we expect the other, most particularly gulls and terns, the designated gatekeepers and resident entertainers of island experience. These are the people's birds; the others are in the care of birdwatchers. At that, it is chilling to think that herring gulls were nearly wiped out early in this century, and that terns are endangered in our own time. Ornithologist to the islands, Prof. William Drury writes of everybody's white birds on the coast of Maine.

THE POPULATIONS of all seabirds on the coasts of the North Atlantic have changed remarkably over the last 300 years. There is no evidence that this instability is new or that changes are inherently "bad," but nevertheless we humans have considered some changes to have been so.

During the late 18th and all of the 19th century, the New England-Maritimes region was as much a center of economic development as Salem, Boston, Nantucket, Philadelphia, or Charleston. Ships built and sailed by crews from Maine and the Maritimes plied the sea lanes of world commerce. Northeast centers of international trade were cosmopolitan, while much of the rest of Canada and the U.S. had only recently been settled by peasant immigrants. Evidence of this can be seen in the fact that it took until 1987 for the State of Maine to regain the population level it had in the 1880's.

In the 19th century, the coast and islands of the New England-Maritimes were occupied by people crowded into the centers of commerce, while fishermen and their families eked out a subsistance living on many of the more remote islands and outer coasts. They moved their families to the islands in the spring to be near the fishing grounds, because the sailing sloops from which they did their day-fishing were of conservative design and slow.

Families in the camps and small settlements used whatever food was available. They ate seabird eggs, and salted chicks for bait in the cod fishery. The small birds, like Leach's petrels and those that nested in rock crevices, like puffins and black guillemots, were killed by pet dogs and cats, or trapped in herring nets set over jumbled boulders at night. By the middle of the 19th century, eight species of seabirds, including great auks and Labrador ducks, had been killed off along the New England coast, and the numbers of the remainder were seriously reduced.

Then a new threat emerged — fashion demanded that ladies should wear feathers on their hats. This demand produced two great campaigns of shooting gulls, terns, and egrets for their feathers in 1876 and 1896. Arthur H. Norton, writing in the early 1930's from his own experience, told of the "feather campaigns" and listed 15 islands in Maine's Muscongus and Penobscot bays from which terns were exterminated in the late 1880's, and from Casco Bay islands in 1889 to 1890.

NO GULLS OR SHAGS

Edward Sturtevant, co-author of *Birds of Rhode Island* and a one-time market gunner, told me that there were three years during the late 1870's when he did not see a single sea gull. At the turn of the century, Norton and Dutcher reported that their survey of the coast of Maine showed no nesting great black-backed gulls or double-crested cormorants, and the presence of only five female eiders, and two pairs of Atlantic puffins (on Matinicus Rock).

At the same time, Wendell Townsend reported about 50 female eiders and 30 puffins around Grand Manan. Herring gulls nested on a few of the outer islands in eastern Maine, and the National Association of Audubon Societies hired wardens to protect them from the depredations of the plume hunters.

Terns were confined to nesting on Bluff Island south of Portland, two islands in inner Muscongus Bay, three remote islands in the approaches to Penobscot and Jericho bays, small islands in upper Penobscot Bay, and on the outer islands in easternmost Maine.

The exceptions were the islands on which lighthouses were maintained. For several critical decades, lighthouse operators and their families from Machias Seal, Libby Island, Petit Manan, Great Duck, Great Spoon, and Matinicus Rock kept off both the predatory feather-hunters and the predatory gulls. Unfortunately their family pets, dogs, and cats devastated the nesting populations of some small seabirds, like Leach's storm petrel and black guillemots.

All seabirds have increased since then, and five of the species that had been extir-

pated have recolonized: double-crested cormorants, great cormorants, great black-backed gulls, razorbills, and common murres. Most species have increased steadily, and so rapidly as to suggest colonization from refuges in the Maritime Provinces. So, it seems probable that redundancy of geographically remote sanctuaries played an important part in these species' escape from extinction. This movement of seabirds among several geographic areas has, presumably, allowed them to persist in habitats that have repeatedly changed in space and time in the past.

GULLS INCREASE AND EXPAND

Norton reported that by 1911 herring gulls had occupied small islands east of North Haven in inner Penobscot Bay and the Spoon Islands in Jericho Bay, forcing the terns to seek other places to nest. By 1921 herring gulls had colonized islands 60 miles to the west of their previous limit and Townsend reported about 20,000 gulls nesting in the Grand Manan archipelago.

Meanwhile, the numbers of gulls nesting on the outer islands in Maine decreased as scavanging birds moved closer to the mainland and to islands near fish plants. Many summer fish camps were abandoned to the gulls and flocks of marooned sheep.

RAPID RECOVERY OF TERNS

Norton reported that terns had reoccupied many islands by 1903, with 6,500 common and Arctic terns nesting on 18 islands. Terns increased rapidly and reached peak numbers in the late 1930's. This increase may have been a recovery of previous numbers, or it may have been a phenomenon of a special period with special advantages for terns by gaining sudden access to a large number of islands traditionally occupied by gulls.

By the early 1930's the terns in Maine were doing well, and fortunately their numbers were censused. The distributions of the three species differ. Most common terns were found on inner islands, some quite close to the main shore, and their numbers were evenly spread along the coast. Arctic terns were most numerous on outer islands in eastern Maine and their numbers drop off sharply west of Matinicus Rock, where the westward flow of cold water out of the Bay of Fundy turns offshore.

CAPE COD SHIFTS

The shifts of groups of terns away from traditional "populous " islands has been evident many times in the last decades as gulls have occupied, one after another, the major traditional nesting islands along the coast of New England. Most recently, the terns nesting at Petit Manan, east of Mount Desert Island, showed "malaise" about 1978, as gulls began to prospect the island and to increase predation pressure on the terns.

In 1968 approximately 1,400 pairs of terns had nested on Petit Manan, while about 150 pairs of gulls nested on neighboring Green Island, according to Jeremy Hatch. After the lighthouse on Petit Manan was automated in 1972, a local resident lived there for several years, and then the island became vacant. Gull numbers increased to about 350 pairs on Green Island and 10 pairs had settled on Petit Manan in 1977, according to Carl Korschgen. By 1978 terns and laughing gulls began to decrease, and by 1983 the terns had abandoned the island.

In 1984 some of my students looked into what was happening to the displaced terns, some of which settled on Flat Island and Nash Island about 10 miles to the east of Petit Manan and others on Egg Rock in Frenchman Bay, about 12 miles to the west. Those camped on Flat and Nash islands reported that gulls, after six days of fog which denied them access to their usual food acquired following lobster boats, began to hunt in the tern nesting area and to clean out all the young chicks. The students at Egg Rock reported gulls pouncing on incubating adult laughing gulls and terns from the air, and eating them alive.

At this same time, Steve Kress of the National Audubon Society began to use decoys and tape recordings of tern calls to attract terns to return to Eastern Egg Rock in Muscongus Bay, about 85 miles to the west. Herring gulls had displaced terns from that island by 1920, according to Arthur Norton. In early July in 1980, well after the usual time to settle to breed, some 80 pairs of common terns settled in. Steve reasoned that these first colonists were failed breeders from other terneries. In 1981 another 80 pairs arrived in late June and early July, and by late August 1982, 424 pairs were nesting: 400 pairs of common terns and 20 pairs of Arctic terns. As Steve said:

"Since Maine tern colonies have been declining for approximately 40 years, and there has been considerable inter-colony movement during this period, there is no way to be certain of the specific source(s) for the Egg Rock tern population. However, the 1980 breakup of the large tern colony at Petit Manan Island, located approximately 145 KM east of Egg Rock, is a likely source.

"The temporary increase in numbers of terns nesting on many islands made it difficult to convince the people on those islands that the tern population was in trouble. From their narrow view, the terns were in good shape. This point emphasizes the need to keep track of terns over a long stretch of coast, and to realize that subpopulations are strongly influenced by immigration and emigration."

HOW GULLS COLONIZE NEW ISLANDS

The increase in the East Coast herring gull population reflected rapid and continuing island colonizing. This meant that many young birds settled on an island at some distance "from home." Usually among seabirds, young birds are strongly attracted to established cities and are hesitant to nest alone. So young birds, newly recruited to the breeding population, are attracted to fully occupied islands, even though many other islands may be empty. This effect usually inhibits the growth of seabird numbers.

The growth of the herring gull population and southward extension of their breeding range continued during the 1950's, to Connecticut, New Jersey, and Maryland. The first herring gull colonists reached North Carolina about 1960, and the colonies south of New York continued to grow in the 1970's and 1980's.

Although the number of herring gulls nesting in Maine did not increase again after the control program of the 1940's, gulls continued to shift around among the islands.

Once an area is colonized only a relatively small number of gulleries is needed to

Gulf of Maine Tern Working Group

The poet Kathleen Raine refers to terns as "the signature of the sea." Few would disagree that the sight of a pair of terns locked in a courtship flight over an outer island is one of the rare treasures on the Maine coast. But what will it take to guarantee the long-term preservation of these fragile populations? This question is at the core of the three-year-old Gulf of Maine Tern Working Group.

The working group has approximately 20 members with representatives from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Canadian Wildlife Service, the National Audubon Society, The Maine Audubon Society, the Maine Department of Inland Fish and Wildlife, and the Island Institute. Members gather in late summer to share census data collected at all the terneries in the Gulf of Maine. The 1988 meeting was held in late August at the National Audubon Society Camp on Hog Island in Bremen, Maine. When the dust settled members reported terns nesting on only 19 of the 3,000-plus islands in the Gulf of Maine. Some 6,853 pairs of terns were found nesting on these islands. The breakdown by species was as follows, 2,955 pairs of common terns, 3,824 pairs of Arctic terns, and 74 pairs of the recently endangered roseate tern. On several islands the productivity of the terns was measured and averaged approximately one fledgling per nesting pair. The fate of the Gulf of Maine terns is intimately tied to the fate of the 19 islands that support them. In 1977, 25 islands supported 5,321 pairs of terns. So in the last decade we have actually gained 1,500 pairs but lost six nesting islands. At one time or another over the last 400 years 37 different Gulf of Maine Islands are known to have supported a maximum of 11,000 pairs of terns. The big picture is that it appears the region is loosing both terns and tern nesting islands. What actions should

produce the young birds that keep the population going. Reproduction on other islands is not important.

This means two things: first, that eliminating gulls from a number of outer islands where terns might nest will have no effect on "reducing the gull population." Second, that our concern for terns must be focused on those islands where parents produce enough young to export. These colonies will be able to maintain the population, but keeping terns nesting on islands where parents fail, provides a population sink. To manage a tern population we need to make sure when we attract birds to a nesting island that they breed successfully.

FLICKERING TERN WINGS ATTRACT GULLS

Several biologists in Scandinavia have pointed out the importance of groups of gulls already in residence as a "signal" to birds prospecting for nesting territories. The events of the 1960's suggest that nesting herring gulls serve this "ethological signal function, " not only for other herring gulls, but also for colonizing double-crested cormorants, eiders, and great black-backed gulls.

Unfortunately, nesting terns provide "signal value" for this ethological function and attract herring gulls. We saw gulls attracted to terns at Large Green Island, Wooden Ball, and Petit Manan, and at Tern Island and Monomoy Island on Cape Cod.

GULLS AS AN 'OFFICIAL' PROBLEM

During the Great Depression in "downeast" Maine, farmers used sea herring and alewives to fertilize their fields. The ready supply of fish, spread out as if for them, attracted gulls to the uplands and to the annoyance of farmers. The good times had suddenly come for the gulls. But beginning in 1934 the Biological Survey of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (now the Fish & Wildlife Service) and the Maine Department of Sea and Shore Fisheries began a program to reduce the growing gull population.

By 1940 the Maine nesting islands were under heavy pressure by egg-spraying crews bent on halting gull breeding. Close to 350,000 eggs were sprayed in 1940-1944. In 1945 it was clear that the numbers of birds nesting in Maine were decreasing, but the numbers nesting in Massachusetts were increasing rapidly.

The population of gulls nesting in Maine grew only slowly during the 1950's, and some can argue that the program was working. The population in Maine has stayed "conservative" since the program was ended, and it seems likely that the effect is the same as that of the gulls moving from outer islands to the inner islands in the 1930's and 1940's.

LETHAL CONTROL

Between 1967 and 1973, we worked with Biological Services agents John Peterson and Frank Gramlich of the Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct control experiments at islands where gulls were encroaching on terns.

We tried Alpha-Chloralose at Tern Island in Chatham on Cape Cod, where we were attempting to restore a formerly important tern nesting site that had been taken over by gulls in the early 1960's. The poison worked when used massively for a short period, as it had in Europe.

This exercise taught us that as we removed the nesting birds a number of gulls, especially immatures, replaced them. Killing gulls on Tern Island was not being successful because we had to "bleed down" the surplus of young gulls interested in, but excluded from, breeding.

SUCCESSFUL INTERVENTION IN MAINE

Our experience at Matinicus Rock in the late 1960's illustrated how it could come together, even though many doctrinaire protectionists were still opposed. Carl and Francis Buchheister (former President of the National Audubon Society) spent vacations in a camp on Matinicus Rock in the 1960's. With a long-term agenda in mind, I suggested to Carl that he watch for indications that the herring gulls newly settled on the Rock were disturbing tern nests.

I think they were already aware, because at the end of the first summer, Carl and Francis both commented that they had seen gulls taking tern chicks and had found several of the bands they had put on terns in gull nests on the north end of the Rock. Carl endorsed a program to remove the new gull colonists, and Frank Gramlich of the Division of Biological Services tolled them to bread, poisoned with 1339, thrown out behind a boat circling the island. The terns enjoyed another ten years of successful reproduction.

Steve Kress embarked on a similar program in 1974 at Eastern Egg Rock, and reported the events:

" . . .Well-established gull populations are not likely to decline unless there is repeated and complete breeding failure, increased mortality and emigration for at least three summers. Even after this period of control, continued destruction of clutches late in incubation will be necessary to keep gull populations from quickly rebounding."

PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

Some people have recommended that the entire gull population or a regional segment be reduced. The reality of the reproductive potential of gulls and the fluidity of the populations suggest that this is a much larger undertaking than its proponents realize. It is a project that would require the cooperation of operators all over most of the east coast herring gull range, and it is unlikely that such cooperation would be given. If the numbers of gulls were seriously reduced, they would probably first become scarce in remote places, because most gulls are attracted to food around towns and cities. It is more reasonable and effective to remove the attractions where gulls gather and become pests.

The problem of gulls is important in places where forces strongly attract a relatively small number of gulls. That is what we are dealing with at vulnerable tern colonies. But reducing the problems to a small number of areas and a minimum number of gulls is not good enough for some committed idealists.

Many people with whom I must debate killing gulls prefer to deny that any need exists. Some argue against killing on humanitarian grounds. I agree; killing is not a pretty or enjoyable activity. But gulls eating living tern chicks is not a pretty sight, nor is the sight of a herring gull pecking at the bleeding head of a living laughing gull that was just recently incubating its eggs.

I think that the philosophical question of killing one species to favor another was made and accepted by those early agriculturalists who pulled up plants that inhibited the growth of their crops — they weeded the garden. A biologist can argue that it is precious and self-serving to make a philosophical separation of plants from animals, or "lower animals" from vertebrates, or us. Why should fish be placed "beyond the pale?" When we find vulnerable species that we think are important, and want to encourage them, we may have to seed the garden.

As to the philosophical issue of nature's order and "playing God," we now know that laissez-faire ecology, like laissez-faire economics, doesn't lead to balanced systems, it leads to monopolies. Some species will take over and assert an order favorable to them, whether white spruce or starfish or herring gulls. Unless we believe that there is a natural order established at the creation, we should acknowledge that when we won't play God, someone else will.

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be taken to insure the long-term viability of terns? At the very least the islands that currently support the majority of terns should be guaranteed protection. And the best way to do this is to post tern wardens. Of the 19 currently active tern islands, 10 of them support 90% of the terns found in the region. From east to west these islands are; Machias Seal, Petit Manan, Indian Point, Eastern Cowpens, Matinicus Rock, Large Green, Eastern Egg Rock, Stratton Island, Pond Island, and West Goose Rocks. The ownership pattern of these islands is varied, ranging from Canadian owned, U.S. owned, state owned, and privately owned. Clearly we need to look long and hard to see if these islands afford long-term protection. One solution would be to incorporate these islands into a dispersed Tern Sanctuary System where protection and monitoring by resident tern wardens could be a continuing and coordinated effort.

Island Park Place

MIKE BROWN

Our habit of naturally ascribing an island to a particular private interest or ownership is understandable. Even in the case of state-owned islands we approach them with trepidation. Is it okay to go ashore? Will anyone see us, get angry at us? Some federal, state, and privately-owned islands have published guidelines for visitors, and many of these are included in the Maine Island Trail Association guidebook. Only one island on our coast is officially designated as a State Park: Warren Island, in the middle reaches of West Penobscot Bay. It belongs to us and is user-friendly. Associate Editor Mike Brown tells its history and how it came to us.

LIKE EVERGREEN amulets, the various shapely islands surrounding Islesboro in Penobscot Bay have all had their different magical times and influence.

The last four islands sitting on the western shoulder of Islesboro are Warren, Flat, Seal, and Ram. This mini-archipelago dissolves northward into treacherous subtidal ledges and wave-washed reef pinnacles, known locally as the "Black Rocks," wherein lurk the remains of mysterious wooden hulks interspersed with glacial crevice homes for pugnacious lobsters.

All four islands were once linked to the same name. And to this day the descendants of William H. Folwell inhabit one of the islands in summer, and the natives in defiance and deference still call them by names of their ancestral owners.

The most famous of the four islands is Warren because of its unique stature. It is Maine's sole island state park that can be reached only by boat of every conception, including kayaks and canoes. Its sheltered pie-slice harbor comforts the many, from clam digger skiff to Bristol-fashion yacht club raft-ups.

The island use has progressed from a fisherman/farmer residence in Revolutionary times to one of a public park with all the amenities, including Adirondack shelters, forest-scented outhouses, cast-iron barbecue grills, and some of the best tasting, deep-well island water on the Maine coast.

The Folwell influence came on the Penobscot Bay scene in the late 1800's. Folwell was then the owner of a very prosperous woolen mill in Philadelphia. Probably caught up in the popular rich and famous trend of the day, Folwell decided he needed a summer home in Maine. He consulted a friend, Warren Reed, Sr., who owned such a summer home in Saturday Cove on the Northport mainland. Reed also owned Seal Island 1 1/4 miles across the bay. He sold the ten-acre island to Folwell.

As befit his affluent social standing, Folwell proceeded to build a very impressive summer home on Seal Island. He named it "Isola Bella" after one of the Borromean Islands in Lago Maggoire off Baveno, Italy, which he had visited on a trip to Europe. Isola Bella was famous for its chateau and terraced gardens.

Two of Folwell's grandsons still beckon to the call of their grandfather to the headwaters of Penobscot Bay. Tom Hudson of Mullica Hill, N.J., and his brother, Ben Hudson of Columbus, Ga., spend part of their summers in Northport on property and in houses acquired by their grandfather in the late 1800's.

Tom recalls his mother telling of the building of the "cottage" on Seal Island: "A clear-

C.P. Buoy, Casco Passage, Swan's Island
Photo by Peter Ralston

William H. Folwell, 1892, patriarch of Seal, Ram, Flat and Warren islands.

ing was made across the center of the island and the cottage was commenced on a rocky promontory overlooking the bay toward the Camden Hills. The house was sort of a semi-colonial with a porch all the way across the front.

"The dining room and kitchen were separate buildings connected to the main house by a breezeway. There were six bedrooms in each building for family and guests."

Tom remembers one of the biggest rooms was the laundry and workshop. "I can remember as a young boy the fascination of the eight-man rowing shell hanging from the ceiling of the workshop. My grandfather named it *Fantasmagoria.* It was never taken down from the rafters because my grandfather said it was too rough on the bay for the fragile boat. I never knew where it came from or where it eventually went".

Folwell also built three little cottages along the path to the boat pier for his three daughters. Moored off the docks were three sailboats, a steam launch, two sailing dories, and five round-bottomed, copper-riveted rowboats. Ben Hudson recalls another boat. It was a 32' open launch with an Elco alcohol engine. Folwell acquired the boat from the U.S. Navy as surplus property from the Spanish-American War.

Supplying all the Folwell family and their Philadelphia guests was no easy task in the last century. Folwell bought a farm on the mainland where hired hands raised produce and livestock for the island. And although there were cisterns built into the island complex for catching rainwater, there was no potable drinking water. Folwell purchased what was then known as the "mineral spring" in Northport, a popular Indian meeting ground. Water from the spring was hauled by local oxen team to Saturday Cove and then transported to Seal Island by launch.

Ben Hudson remembers coming to Maine as a young boy. "We would drive by car to Savannah from Columbus and get aboard, car and all, on a Savannah Line boat to New York. We really liked that trip because we stayed overnight in the big city and saw all the sights. The boat then took us to Boston where everything was unloaded. The car was gassed again because it had to be drained of fuel before being stowed in the ship's hold. We then drove to Northport."

The family also made several trips on the "Boston boats," which stopped at nearby Camden, Bayside, and Belfast, but it was difficult to unload a car at these ports and the disembarking was usually in Boston.

Life on Isola Bella spilled over to Ram Island just a stone's skip to the north. Folwell owned it but Fred Hoisington had married into the Folwell family, and the Hoisington clan had built several rough cabins on Ram. Incidentally, the Hoisingtons did Grandfather Folwell one better by drilling a well into the island's granite mantle. But the well, alas, never did provide potable drinking water. But a hand pump on the property works to this day, giving false hopes to parched picnickers.

The sound of tom-toms and chants from circled members of the "Appawamis Tribe" could be heard on still nights far across the bay.

Ram soon took on the name "Sunset Island." A popular social game was invented called "Indian Councils," held around a great bonfire started by rubbing two "fire sticks" together under the awed-eyed stare of children dressed in beaded Indian costumes. The sound of tom-toms and chants from circled members of the "Appawamis Tribe" could be heard on still nights far across the bay.

As the Folwell clan grew older, so did their teenage mischievous ways. Ben recalls tales of "the boys" rowing to Belfast for one adventure or another and waiting for one of the side-wheeler bay steamers to head south. They would sneak under the overhang of the stern, loop a rope around the rudder post, and hitch a tow down the bay, casting off their painter adjacent to home island.

"Girling" or "sparking the locals" was (as today) a summer resident sport, and the Folwell descendants held an enviable reputation, in one case, in incredible fashion. One young Hoisington was courting a girl on the Northport mainland. Far too often for their youthful, spirited love, they were separated by 1 1/2 miles of deep, cold, tide-tossed Penobscot Bay water. On more than one occasion when parents were asleep, young Hoisington would rise in the night and swim the distance, meet his love, and then swim back before dawn. An indomitable voyageur.

The adult life on Isola Bella at the turn of the century also thrived. A cement swimming pool was built on the northeastern corner of the island because the bay water was far too cold for the southern guests. The compound had tennis courts, extensive boardwalks (with treated non-skid surfaces), and eventually an electric power plant. There was even a separate music room built for various musical artists who visited the island, including the "well known tenor, McNamara of the Metropolitan Opera who, after several cocktails and a grilled steak, was persuaded to sing."

Tom Hudson recalls: "I don't remember what he sang but when he unleashed his mighty voice it made everything in the house vibrate. I was completely overcome, and at my early age couldn't tell whether I was pleased or terrified."

Other more sedate hours were spent listening to readings from famous authors like Ann Seton, who visited the island many times.

The Hoisington and Hudson boys also sampled some of the bay's abundance of fish in a commercial way by setting tub trawls. The venture was, however, under the salty guidance of one Cap'n Ed Drinkwater of Saturday Cove. The boys caught, cleaned, split, brined, and flaked the codfish caught off the islands.

The good summer life of patriarch William H. Folwell and his family continued until he had several heart attacks. The last and fatal one was believed brought on by the death of his daughter, Bessie. He died at the

The 27-room "log cabin" on Warren Island which Folwell called "Mon Reve" (My Dream).

age of 60 years. His will left the four islands of Warren, Flat, Seal, and Ram to his children.

Ram Island continues to this day in Folwell legacy ownership. The heirs of the island maintain a logbook for visitors in the small cabin that is all that's left standing whole on the island that once heard the call of Indian spirits.

Seal was eventually purchased by the Horace Hildreth family in 1947. By that time, vandals had nearly demolished the once beautiful house. Ben Hudson remembers how he salvaged his grandfather's huge marble mantlepiece. He and Bill Carver, with some other men, went to the island and removed the mantle from the ruins and hid it in the bushes. Later they went back and loaded it aboard a boat. On the mainland, Ben and crew finally got the 500-pound mantle into the back seat of a roadster. Ben said on the drive to Columbus, Ga., "the front wheels barely touched the ground."

The Hildreth family sold Seal to Fred Mosely, who maintains a cottage there today. He also acquired Flat Island and has given that to the state for a "bird island" sanctuary.

However, before William Folwell died he made his indelible mark on another of his island possessions — Warren.

According to his grandsons, their grandfather purchased Warren and started to build a huge house for a "summer retreat" and guest lodgings for his woolen mill customers. Although it had been named Warren Island since about 1803 for a George Warren who lived there, Folwell, shortly after buying the island in 1899, renamed it "Mon Reve" (My Dream). In what was to be his last summer in Maine, he contracted to have a tremendous summer house built. Construction continued through 1900 and 1901, but Folwell never saw his dream house finished. He died in 1901.

The finished "log cabin" became a commanding structure sitting on the high ground of Warren Island. Mon Reve had 27 sleeping rooms and was said to cost $75,000 when it was finally completed. Although almost all historians refer to the structure as a "log cabin" it was not, says grandson Tom Hudson. It was of frame construction with unpeeled slabs for siding on the ground floor. The upper part of the house had clapboard siding. The enormous ballroom, which took up most of the ground floor, was kept brilliantly polished by children who wrapped their feet in wax-impregnated rags and danced about as happy as happy children can be.

The enormous stone fireplace had a marble mantle 12 feet long. On a chimney piece was engraved a quotation from Isaiah, "How beautiful upon the mountains."

Mon Reve was the gathering place for the Folwell clan for many years after grandfather Folwell passed away. The Masquerade Ball was the highlight of the summer for the family. The island and house had been left to Nathan Folwell upon his father's death. Apparently Nathan did not have his father's passion for island living, preferring the social life of Philadelphia. Grandson Ben said it was really Nathan's wife who refused to interrupt her city life for the "island backwaters of Maine."

The once magnificent and rough splendor of Mon Reve became neglected and an unfettered haven for every picnic and island party on Upper Penobscot Bay. There was also some confusion as to who was supposedly paying taxes on the island. The Hudson brothers said Nathan Folwell assumed the "mill" was paying taxes. But there was little of the mill money left at this point.

Almost completely vandalized by 1919, the structure mysteriously caught fire on the night of July 31 of that year in a blaze "that could be seen for miles and miles up and down the bay," according to an account of the fire in *The Republican Journal* of Aug. 7, 1919. The Mon Reve ashes were memorialized in the Belfast weekly newspaper: "The property loss, by sheer carelessness, is secondary to the sentiment that causes the regret of scenic beauty that will probably never be replaced."

Acquired by the town of Islesboro for delinquent taxes, Warren Island once again reverted to its native island habitat walked only by clam diggers along its shores and Sunday picknickers along the faded wooded paths woven warp and woof with spruce tree roots leading to the high ground rubble that was once My Dream.

In the 1960's Warren Island was donated by the Town of Islesboro to the State of Maine for a state park and now rests in public perpetuity for the enjoyment of its boating visitors.

Perhaps, just perhaps, the dream of a 19th century Philadelphia summer rusticator has come true after all.

The Trail of Captain Kidd's Treasure

FRANKLIN H. HEAD - 1889

Reappearing mysteriously, as if from the mists of Penobscot Bay, and here delightfully enough, about to be retold again, is one of the best Maine pirate fireside stories I know of.

It is so spellbinding in its "factual" references that each new rising generation, wide-eyed and gullible, re-swallows, hook, line and sinker, the false belief it so easily creates; that Captain Kidd's Treasure really was found and that it formed the basis of the Astor fortunes.

I have lived just long enough to watch at least three generations now allow themselves to be innocently trapped by this plausible misconception. During the 30's, I'm told, a WBZ radio storyteller by the name of Alton Blackington put the tale on the air, thus doubtless vastly multiplying the number of its believers. Even in today's matter-of-fact world, I see people around our Stave Island fireside, on chill September evenings, yet again becoming enthusiastically roped-in. The Astors themselves, a family member confides, have even spent a bit of time, now and again, putting people straight.

Since childhood, I had always heard that the story's author, Franklin H. Head, (a man who today would certainly qualify as a top-flight investigative reporter), was actually a member of a literary circle Mr. Olmstead himself convened each autumn at his homestead on Deer Isle. The "Notable Lawsuit," here retitled, supposedly, was written to please that group.

But Clayton Gross of Stonington is the one who probably knows more about the story than anyone else alive, and he believes the tale is actually a concoction of none other than Mrs. Frederic Law Olmstead herself, to entertain, not Mr. Olmstead's Fall visitors to Maine, but her own New York City literary circle.

And Franklin Head?

Well, Clayton thinks he's just a ghost too: probably Mrs. Olmstead's pseudonym.

The above introduction was kindly supplied by Henry Sharpe of Stave Island.

The Treasure Cave
N.C. Wyeth
(Collection: New York Public Library)

THROUGH THE COURTESY of Mr. Frederic Law Olmstead, I spent several days during the summer of 1885 as a guest at his summer home on Deer Isle, which lies in Penobscot Bay on the coast of Maine. Having heard in detail the history of the legal action, which seemed to me a most forcible illustration of the maxim that truth is stranger than fiction, I take pleasure in giving the story as it was told by Mr. Olmstead and the members of his family.

During my stay I learned of a suit commenced some three years previously by Mr. Olmstead against the various members of the Astor family in the New York Superior Court which attracted considerable attention at the time, both from the prominence of the parties to the litigation and the large amount claimed by Mr. Olmstead, something over $5,000,000.

An ancestor seven generations back of Mr. Olmstead, whose name was Cotten Mather Olmstead, was an Indian Trader and spent a part of each year from 1696 to 1705 in what is now the State of Maine. His treatment of the Indians was always fair and honorable, which enabled him to win their confidence and esteem. Winnepesaukee, the head Sachem of the Penobscot Tribe, was at one time severely wounded by a boar. Mr. Olmstead having dressed his wounds and aided greatly in his recovery, the chief presented him with "The Deer Isle," as a token of his gratitude, a portion of which has remained in possession of his descendants ever since. The original deed, written on a piece of birchbark and bearing the date January 24th, 1699, is still in the possession of Mr. Olmstead. After the Revolution the validity of the transfer was recognized and affirmed and a formal patent issued by the Secretary of the Treasury during the second term of President Washington's administration.

Upon a rocky shore near the residence of Mr. Olmstead and at the extreme south end of the island is a cave, the opening of which is upon the sea. The cave is about ten feet wide and high, of irregular shape and extends back into the rock formation some 25 feet. It has evidently been excavated by the ceaseless motion of the waves upon a portion of the rock somewhat softer than its surroundings. At high tide the entire cave is under water, but at low tide it can be entered dry shod, being entirely above sea level. The bottom of the cave is covered with coarse sand five or six inches deep, beneath which is a compact bed of hard blue clay. At low tide the cave is often visited by Mr. Olmstead and the other residents of the island.

In 1882 Mr. Olmstead observed upon the rock at the inner end of the cave some marks or indentations; something in the form of a rude cross which seemed to him of possibly artificial origin. If so, it was of ancient date, as its edges were not well defined but were rounded and worn as if by the action of the waves and tide and ice. Still it appeared more regular in form than other markings upon the walls of the cave. One day Mr. Olmstead suggested to his family, when in the cave, that since stories of Captain Kidd's buried treasure had sometimes located their burial upon the Maine coast, they should dig at the place below the crest.

Purely as a matter of sport the excavation was commenced; the sand cleared away, and to their surprise, a rectangular hole in the clay was discovered about 15 by 30 inches on the surface and about 15 inches deep filled with sand. Upon careful excavation, they plainly saw upon the bottom of the hole, the marks of a row of bolt heads some three or four inches apart about one inch from the edge of the hole. The appearance was precisely as if an iron box heavily bolted at its joints had been buried in the compact clay, and after its removal, the excavation was filled with sand, perfectly preserving the impression.

After an exact facsimile of the bottom of the hole had been taken in plaster of Paris, the excavation was again filled with sand. The clay was so hard that the taking of the

cast did not in the least mar its surface. The bottom of the hole and such portions of the sides as had not been marred by the removal of the box were heavily coated with iron rust so that everything indicated a former presence of an iron box which had remained buried in the clay long enough at least to become thoroughly rusted on its surface and firmly embedded on the clay matrix. As there were various legends relative to the presence of Captain Kidd upon the Maine coast, the discovery of the excavation was sufficient to awaken eager interest in the question of the iron box and the person who carried it away.

Mr. Olmstead learned that about the year 1801, a French-Canadian named Jaques Cartier, who was one of the employees of John Jacob Astor in his fur trade, had for several winters traded with the Indians and hunters along the upper waters of the Penobscot River. The trader expressed a desire to purchase from Oliver Cromwell Olmstead, then the owner by inheritance of Deer Isle, either the whole island or the south end where the cave described was located. Mr. Olmstead refused both requests, but finally sold him a few acres near the center of the island where he built a log cabin and lived for many years with an Indian wife, hunting and fishing occasionally as a diversion but giving up entirely his former livelihood.

Cartier had always seemed extremely poor, having but a meager salary from Mr. Astor, but when he purchased a portion of the island he seemed to have an abundance of money, sufficient in fact to meet his wants for several years. Occasionally, when under the influence of whiskey, he would speak vaguely of some good fortune which had befallen him, but when sober he always denied having made the statement and seemed much disturbed when asked about the source of his wealth. His behavior led to various suspicions among the few inhabitants of the island as to the honesty of his methods of aquiring it.

Their suspicions ultimately became so pointed that he suddenly disappeared from the island and never returned. On searching his cabin, some fragments of paper were found, torn and partially burned, so that no connected meaning could be ascertained from them. One fragment had the signature of John Jacob Astor. On another in the same handwriting, the words "absolute secrecy must be observed because..." These fragments were preserved and are now in the possession of Mr. Frederic Law Olmstead.

From the story of the trader and from the fragmentary papers Mr. Olmstead believed that there might be some connection between the mysterious box and the newly aquired wealth of the trader Cartier; and that the secret, if there was one, was shared by Mr. Astor. As the trader had for many years previous to his good fortune camped upon the end of the island immediately adjoining the cave, it might readily be conceived that a heavy storm had washed the sand away so as to make the top of the box visible, and that Cartier had found it and taken it to New York with him to Mr. Astor with his boat load of furs.

Various questions presented themselves regarding this theory. Had the box contained the long lost treasure of Captain Kidd? If so, to whom did the box and its contents belong? Mr. William M. Evarts, to whom Mr. Olmstead applied for a legal opinion, after a careful examination of the evidence gave his views in substance as follows:

—That Captain Kidd beginning in the year 1700 had aquired by pillage vast treasures of gold which he somewhere concealed prior to his execution in 1701.

—That if such treasure were concealed upon Deer Isle, the island at that time was the absolute property of Cotton Mather Olmstead. For while the record title to the island bore the date in President Washington's administration in 1794, this title simply validated the 1683 title when the island was given to Cotton Mather Olmstead by the Indian Chief Winnepesaukee.

—That Frederic Law Olmstead, by inheritance and purchase, had aquired all the rights originally held by his ancestor in that part of the island where the treasure was concealed.

—That as the owner of such real estate, the treasure would belong to him, as against the whole world, except possibly the lineal descendants of Captain Kidd, if there were any.

Mr. Olmstead next learned that in his early life Mr. Astor for many years kept his first and only bank account with the Manhattan Bank. As the books of the bank were preserved in an archives, he was able by a plausible pretext to secure an examination of Mr. Astor's financial transactions from the beginning. His idea in this search was to learn if Mr. Astor's fortune had increased at the time as that of the French-Canadian's. The business of both Mr. Astor and the bank was small in these early days, and the entries of the customers' accounts were much more detailed than in our time. The account commenced in 1798 and for several years the deposits for an entire year did not exceed $4,000.

Each year showed a modest increase in the volume of business of the thrifty furrier, but the aggregates were only moderate until the year 1801, being the same year the Canadian trader bought of Mr. Olmstead a portion of Deer Isle. Then the volume of bank transactions reached for the time enormous dimensions, springing from an aggregate for the year 1799 of $4,011 to over $500,000 for the year 1801. Among the entries in the latter years are two of the same date for cheques to Jaques Cartier, the French-Canadian; one of $133.40 drawn in settlement of fur account, and one for $5,000 in settlement to date. Inasmuch as in each previous year the aggregate of transactions with Mr. Cartier had never exceeded $500, the entry of $5,000 seemed inexplicable on ordinary grounds.

The enormous growth of Mr. Astor's own transaction also seemed equally mysterious. Mr. Astor evidentally had visited England in the year 1801 as the bank entries were filled with credits to him of drafts remitted by him from Roderick Streeter, varying from 10,000 to 40,000 pounds sterling and aggregating during the year nearly $495,000. Credits of the same Streeter drafts are made also during the two following years to the amount of over $800,000 more or a total of over $1,800,000 when the Streeter remittances abruptly ceased.

Edwin W. Streeter of London is at the present time one of the largest dealers of precious stones in the world, and as the same business in England is often continued in a family for generations, it occurred to Mr. Olmstead that the Streeter who made the vast remittance to Mr. Astor might be an ancestor of the present London merchant. An inquiry by mail developed the fact that

the present Mr. Streeter was a great-grandson of Roderick Streeter, and that the business had been continued in the family for five generations.

Mr. Olmstead thereupon sent a confidential agent to London who succeeded in getting access to the books of the Streeter firm for the years 1798 to 1802 inclusive. Here was found a detailed statement of the transactions with Mr. Astor. The first item was for 40,000 pounds sterling entered as "advances on ancient French and Spanish gold coins" deposited by Mr. Astor. All other entries were for the sale of precious stones, mostly diamonds, rubies and pearls, which in all, with the sums paid for the Spanish and French coins, reached the enormous aggregate heretofore given. Some of those stones were purchased outright by Mr. Streeter, and the others were sold by him as a broker for the account of Mr. Astor, and the proceeds remitted during the year 1801-1802. The whole accounts corresponded exactly, item for item, with the various entries of Streeter remittance shown on the books of the Manhattan Bank.

The facts gathered thus far enabled Mr. Olmstead to formulate a theory in substance as follows: That Jaques Cartier had found the box containing the buried treasure of Captain Kidd; that he had taken it to New York and delivered it to Mr. Astor; that Mr. Astor had bought the contents of the box for the sum of $5,000; that he had taken the contents to England, and had, from their sale, realized the vast sum paid to him by Mr. Streeter. Many links in the chain of evidence, however, were still missing, and a great point could be gained if the mysterious box could be traced to the custody of Mr. Astor. It seemed reasonable that this box, if it were ever in the possession of Mr. Astor, would be retained by him with scrupulous care; and that if he had imparted the secret to his children, it would still be in their possession. If not, it might have been sold and lost sight of as a piece of worthless scrap iron after the death of the first Mr. Astor.

Mr. Olmstead learned that the last house in which the original John Jacob Astor had lived had been torn down in the year 1893, to be replaced by the superb modern mansion, and that the old building had been sold to a well-known firm of house wreckers for an insignificant sum. In the hope that the rusty box had been sold with the other rubbish about the premises, Mr. Olmstead inserted to following advertisement in the *New York Tribune:*

"A rusty iron box, strongly made and belted, was by mistake sold in 1893 to a dealer in junk, supposedly in New York or Brooklyn. The dimensions were 15 x 17 inches. A person, for sentimental reasons, wishes to reclaim the box, and will pay to the present owner for the same several times its value in scrap-iron."

Address: Box 74, New York Tribune

Within a few days Mr. Olmstead received a letter from Mr. Bronson B. Tuttle of Naugatuck, Connecticut, an iron manufacturer, stating that in a car of scrap iron bought by him from Malchisdaic Jacobs of Brooklyn was an iron box answering the description given in the *Tribune*; that if it was of any value to the advertiser, it would be forwarded upon receipt of 80 cents which was its cost to him. Mr. Olmstead at once procured the box and shipped it to Deer Isle where the bolts upon the bottom and the box itself were found to fit perfectly the plaster cast of the clay bottom of the cave. Every peculiarity in the shape of the bolt heads and every hammer mark made in riveting the bolts was reproduced on the iron box. There was no possible question that the iron box was the identical one which had been long before buried in the cave. The top of the box was distinguishable despite the heavy coating of rust; and there in rude and irregularly formed characters, as if made by the strokes of a cold chisel or some similar tool, were the letters W.K. — the initials of that eminent pirate, Captain William Kidd.

The indications thickened that the mysterious box contained the long lost and widely sought treasures of Captain Kidd. One peculiarity of the box was that there had apparently been no way of opening it except by cutting it apart. The top had been firmly riveted in its place, and this fact possibly indicated the reason for its purchase by Mr. Astor for the moderate sum of $5,000 as the trader who found it had been unable to open it before his arrival in New York.

Mr. Olmstead also had his agent in London look up and report everything available relative to the career of Captain Kidd, the substance of which is as follows. Captain Kidd had won an enviable reputation in the English and American merchant marine as a brave and intelligent officer. For many years the English merchant marine had been preyed upon by pirates. Numerous vessels were captured and destroyed and others robbed of all their treasure. The depradations were largely along the coast of Madagascar and Mozambique, the route of the English vessels in the India Trade; and off the coast of South America where the Spanish galleons bore great treasures from the Peruvian gold fields. The depradations of the pirates became so great that the English merchants finally bought and equipped a staunch war vessel, which was placed under the command of Captain Kidd to chastise and destroy the pirates.

As these pirates were known to have secured vast amounts of gold gems, it was expected that Captin Kidd might not only clear the seas of the piratical craft, but capture from them enough treasure to make the operation a profitable one.

After reaching the coast of East Africa, news was received from him of the destruction of sundry vessels containing much treasure, but the capture of this treasure seeemed to excite his own cupidity, and he decided himself to engage in the occupation of being malefactor.

For some two years thereafter he was literally the scourge of the seas. He plundered other pirates and the merchant vessels of every nation alike. Finally, after an extended cruise along the eastern coast of America as far north as Halifax, Nova Scotia, he for some reason decided to boldly make an entry at the port of Boston as an English merchant vessel under the papers originally furnished him in England. Before entering Boston Harbor, he put ashore and concealed on Gardiner's Island in Long Island Sound, a considerable quantity of merchandise consisting largely of bales of valuable silks and velvets and a small amount of gold and precious stones. These articles were afterwards discovered and reclaimed by the owners of the vessel and sold for some $14,000, which was divided among them. From the great number of vessels which Kidd had plundered, it was known that the treasure thus discovered was but an insignificant part of the treasure captured. It was evident that gold and gems of vast value were concealed somewhere between Key West and Halifax.

A short time after his arrival in Boston, Captain Kidd was arrested and sent to England, and at once put on trial for piracy. In two days he was tried, convicted and hanged. His wife was not allowed to see him except for a half hour after the death sentence had been pronounced. They had a whispered conference, and at its close he was seen to hand her a card upon which he had written the figures 44106818. This card was taken from her by the guards and never restored, and every effort was made to induce her to tell the meaning of the figures, but she utterly refused, and even claimed herself not to know.

This card was preserved among the proceedings of the trial and a photographic copy obtained by Mr. Olmstead. From the records of the trial it appeared that Captain Kidd was the only child of his parents; that he had been married for several years; that two children had been born to him— a daughter who died while yet a child and a son who survived both his mother and father. It also appeared from English War Office records that this son, ten years after his father's execution, enlisted as a private soldier in the English Army and was killed in the battle near Sterling in 1715, leaving no children. These facts settled the question as to any claim upon the treasure by descendants of Captain Kidd.

The records of the trial also contained a report by experts upon the card given by Kidd to his wife, to the effect that they had applied to the figures upon it all the usual tests for the reading of cipher writings without avail; and that if the figures ever had a meaning, it was undiscoverable. The same conclusion was reached by several people to whom Mr. Olmstead showed the copy of the card.

In the summer of 1894 when Professor David F. Todd, the astronomer from Amherst College, was visiting the family of Mr. Olmstead at Deer Isle, he one day amused himself by calculating the latitude and longitude of the home near the cave and gave the results to Miss Marion Olmstead. As she was entering such results in her journal, she was struck by the fact that the figures for the latitude 44°10' were the same as the first four figures on Captain Kidd's card - 4410, and that the other four figures 6818 were almost the exact same longitude west from Greenwich (which was 68°13'), a difference easily accounted for by a moderate variation on Captain Kidd's chronometer. The latitude taken by observation of the pole star was absolutely accurate. The very simplicity of the supposed cipher writing had been its safeguard, since all the experts had looked for some abstruse and occult meaning in the combination of figures.

By the happy thought of Miss Marion Olmstead another link was thus added to the chain of evidence. With the facts given, the only point seemingly needed to show that the Kidd treasure had come into the possession of Mr. Astor was to show that some of the money or gems sold by him had actually been seized by Captain Kidd. Even this by coincidence became possible through the correspondence secured from Mr. Streeter of London.

It appeared that in the year 1700, Lord and Lady Dunmore were returning to England from India when the vessel upon which they had taken passage was fired upon and captured by Captain Kidd. The ladies were compelled upon peril of their lives to surrender all of their jewelry. Among the articles taken from Lady Dunmore was a superb pair of pearl bracelets, the pearls being set in a somewhat peculiar fashion. Another pair, an exact duplicate of those possessed by Lady Dunmore, had been purchased as a wedding gift for her sister. The story of the two pairs of bracelets and the loss of Lady Dunmore's pearls is a matter of history, as well as one of cherished family traditions.

In 1801 Roderick Streeter wrote to Mr. Astor that the Lady Dunmore, in looking over some of the gems which he was offering to her, had seen a pair of exquisite pearl bracelets which were a part of the Astor consignment, and had at once recognized them as the identical pair taken from the family by Kidd nearly 100 years before. She returned the next day with the family solicitor, bringing with her the duplicate bracelets; compared the two pairs, showing their almost perfect identity, showing certain private marks on each, and demonstrated beyond question that the pearls offered by Mr. Streeter were the identical ones seized by Captain Kidd. The solicitor demanded their surrender upon the ground that having been stolen they could not be sold even by an innocent third party.

Mr. Streeter then stated that he had asked for delay until he could communicate with the owner of the gems and asked for instructions from Mr. Astor. Mr. Astor replied authorizing delivery of the bracelets to Lady Dunmore and asked Mr. Streeter to assure her that the supposed owner was guiltless of wrong in the matter and was an entirely

innocent holder. He repeated the caution, given also in sundry other letters, that to no one was the ownership of the gems sold by Mr. Streeter to be revealed.

The discovery of the hole in the cave in Maine after a lapse of nearly 200 years thus brought to light the apparent origin of the Astor fortune. Prior to the acquisition of the Kidd treasures by the first American Astor, he was simply a modest trader, earning each year by frugal effort $200-$300 above his living expenses, with a fair prospect of accumulating by an industrious life, a fortune of $20,000-$30,000. When he came into possession of the Kidd plunder, he handled it with the skill of a general. He expanded his fur trade until it embarasssed the continent.

Some twenty different tracts of land in what is now the very heart of the business and residence portion of New York were purchased, each one of which is now probably of more value than the price originally paid for the whole.

Having this evidence thus formulated, Mr. Olmstead called upon the descendants of Mr. Astor, accompanied by his attorney, Mr. William M. Everts, and demanded of them:

1. Payment by them to him for the sum of $1,300,000, the amount received from Mr. Streeter, with interest from the date of its receipt. The total amount, computed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, in force since 1796, was $5,122,234.80. Mr. Olmstead offered, on condition of immediate payment, to deduct an item of $34.80. This demand was refused.

2. Mr. Olmstead then demanded that the Astor family should convey to him all the real estate in New York City purchased by their ancestor with the money received from Mr. Streeter, with the accrued rents and profits from the date of its purchase, and this demand was likewise refused.

Peter Ralston

WORKING WATERFRONTS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JEFF DWORSKY AND PETER RALSTON

The following special Folio addition is again made possible by a generous grant from the Charles Engelhard Foundation.

Jeff Dworsky *is a lobster fisherman out of York Island, off the east side of Isle au Haut. In addition to first-rate photography, his avocations include boat building (he built his own boat, the* Wooden Shoe*), and with his wife Brinna, raising a flock of 120 sheep, from which they sell prepared yarn. Their younger of two children was born on the island in July, 1988.*

Island Journal *Art Director* ***Peter Ralston*** *has been a professional photographer for over 10 years, during which time he has done many assignments for national magazines and has produced 18 books.*

WORKING WATERFRONTS

GEORGE PUTZ

At the outset, a working waterfront is all plain and clear. There is a harbor with at least some protection from the weather and sea, around which is based a small township.

The infrastructure — wharves, piers, docks, ramps, floats, and breakwaters — conjoin to serve marine traffic, boats, and maritime trades. The latter may include fish and cargo handling, fuel and bait facilities, seafood processing, chandleries, and marine construction and repair facilities. They are dynamic places, busy and interesting. Differences stand out in both boats and men because of their specialized roles. In all respects it is a singular community, thought of and acting quite independently of other aspects of the town.

Along the waterfront participants in the culture have separate expectations, rules, and language. Maritime usefulness, marine competence, and nautical canniness override other considerations for citizenship. It is an environment based on laws of the sea, not terrestrial governance or bourgeois piety or goodness. Dependability, stamina, and skill are more useful on and about the water. So long as they pull their load, reprobates are as fully enfranchised as any other sort of character.

Working waterfronts are physically stressed places. Weather, salt water, marine organisms, and ice continuously chew away at structures that are expensive to build and difficult to maintain. Some level of seediness comes over them, compounding a suspicious notoriety. This in turn is enhanced by the labor- and materials-intensive nature of marine work that often assumes an unkempt quality — tubs, barrels, crates, and traps piled about, gear and engine parts here and there, repairable and discarded equipment lurking over a ground patina of scrapped small parts, rope and wood, with or without a binding sauce of spilt petroleum, seaweed and creature shells, paint chips, and a million odd fastenings, screws, nails, and broken effluvia. What is not seen by the visitor is that everything is in its place, and that mariners in fact are usually as fastidious as an Edwardian dame. Waterfront people are not there for the view (though they like it), piers are repaired before they fail, and the apparent mess has its own logic and order.

Most marine enterprises are built on information — where the fish are or likely will be, where the best bait is available at the best price, what is the market, who is being most successful and how, where can a rare part be found or made, how can something be fixed before the next tide? Waterfronts are built for work, but sociability is inherent. Kibitzers are expected and usually encouraged, so long as they take as well as they give and are sympathetic. Wharf talk is equal parts technology transfer, secret sharing, bravado, commiseration, and guy-talk.

Jeff Dworsky

In this highly utilitarian culture, reward is expected for honest effort. People who accept welfare or earn a living by manipulating others ("a slick talker") are scorned. Those who can solve practical problems are admired. Formal education for its own sake is not greatly valued, though education is more than acceptable if it helps a person to earn more money. Educated people who flaunt their education to demostrate their superiority and who cannot cope with the practical problems of life are "educated fools".

Lobster Gangs of Maine, by James M. Acheson 1988 Courtesy of University Press of New England, Hanover, N.H.

Since everything around the water is in a process of constant disintegration, the waterfront is a place for mandatory creation, generation, renewal, and repair. For every boat being built, a hundred are fixed, maintained, and tuned. Fishing gear takes enormous punishment, so nets are regularly unflaked over parking areas, towing wires are unkinked, spliced, and deburred, traps rehabilitated, warps lengthened, electronics fixed. Boat bottom defouling and painting has no end, and the immortal gadget, widget, or gilhicky is unknown. Mariners live in the midst of their own industrial archaeology, their middens building like snow drifts.

To the initiated, waterfront odors are the welcome smell of life. The natural airs of salt water, kelp, weed, and low-tide mud are enhanced by diesel exhaust, bait, and hot metal. Around boat yards the redolence of a half dozen kinds of wood dust, polymer esters, welding fumes, and paint join the olefactory orchestra. Of course, there is the smell of fish, a sweet, snappy odor dear to fishermen. What nonmariners think to be the "smell of fish" is in fact organic decay, something undesirable anywhere outside of a bait barrel. When loss of discipline yields the smell, it is not approved, and when visitors occasionally complain of the bait, mariners raise their nose to the occasion and allow how all they smell is money.

Along the waterfront people think differently. It begins, of course, with the verities of time and tide and the other stuff of maritime homily, but these differences run deep and are not mere sentimental trifles. The very notions of what time is, and tides are, separate the mariner from the lubber and the waterfront community from inland communities, even though the latter may begin but a hundred yards back from the shoreline.

Maritime people are most at home along the waterfront. Non-marine parents warn their children not to go there. This disreputable cast over working waterfronts is ancient. Assyrian mothers gnashed their teeth over the influence on their youngsters by Phonecian sailors down at the docks 4,000 years ago. 'Twas always so...

Though island waterfronts are pleasantly domestic places, the cast of mind among their people is in a long tradition of differences, even as some of them are being challenged by a new economic order along the Maine coast. It is a complicated thing that resists accurate generalization, but it's generally true that a mariner's sense of time is not like that encouraged by other vocations. It goes way beyond not having a time clock overseen by social institutions, for *time* itself differs. Hours and minutes have nothing to do with it, and even day and night do not impress as time periods. Rather, they are photometric conditions, when the presence or absence of light affect how fish behave.

Purse seining, for example, is conducted in the dark, not at night. Even the idea of "a moment" is metamorphosed by nautical regimen, as sleep is replaced by "kinks," and hourly intervals by tricks at the wheel, deck watches, sets, tows, haulbacks, and lumping sessions — long stints of picking fish, cleaning, and icing down the catch. Deep-water fishermen often come to ignore time altogether.

This sense of time leads to a different view of the world and a disparate attitude about a person's place in history. Terrestrial folk tend to view the universe in terms of circles — down to life cycles, seasonal rounds, and periodic paychecks of an expected amount. They are employed during work weeks separated by weekends, when one's time is one's own. On the other hand, while mariners have their cycles of tide and seasons of differ-

Jeff Dworsky

ent target species, gear rigs, and periods ashore, days, weeks, and months are irrelevant to them. Their cosmology is more lineal, so they emphasize Fate rather than the Destiny celebrated by their lubberly neighbors.

There are no contracts, no regular paychecks, and no employers. Crew and sternmen are share-holding partners. No catch, no money. It is no wonder that such a philosophy, when confronted by constant battle amidst the elements and a product that either sells or smells, has a general disdain for paperwork and distrust of people who presume to work by creating and shuffling paper. Quite literally they are in a different universe.

Taking these values from sea to shore is bound to be difficult. Up over the edge of the wharf from the boat the paperwork begins and ever thickens as one goes inland. So the waterfront is not only an environmental edge, what ecologists call a natural ecotone, it is also a cultural ecotone. Ecotones are where two systems meet; say, where a desert meets a mountain, or a prairie meets a forest. These narrow bands are stressful places for the organisms that live there, for the plants and animals of the zone are programmed for their particular ecosystem, and in the ecotone must adapt to some aspects of the adjacent ecosystem.

While ecotones have a greater diversity of life, from both worlds, as it were, individuals that are not of both soon perish. Not surprisingly, ecotones are places where species are most likely to evolve new varieties and learn to extend their "natural" ranges. Along with the dangerous comes the creative.

So it is with cultural ecotones, such as an island's working waterfront. There the mariner's world meets the marketplace, and if a fisherman must become part businessman, the businessman best get off his high horse and "eat the ship," as they say. There is diversity on the docks, but it is stressful to fixed notions that cannot or will not adapt to the horrific changes that constantly sweep over maritime industries. Ideas are born and die like flies. Extinction is common on the waterfront, not because of the adversities of the sea, but rather those of mankind on an edge.

How could it be otherwise, then, that self-regard is tempered by altruism annealed into the ancient Law of the Sea? Mariners who may despise one another, and perhaps never speak, still keep a mutual lookout for the other's wellbeing, and, perhaps still not speaking, give aid without question when it's needed. Another's market will be usurped without remorse, but no one will sink or go adrift if it can be prevented. The very notion of personal injury on a small boat at sea has universal empathy and is a basis for brotherhood, even if at arm's length ashore.

All this sums into common sense, not only in its usual meaning of practical pragmatism based on experience, but also in it's better aspect — meaning what is shared, what is common to everyone on the waterfront. In the boatshop fairing a plank, in the bilges dealing with a recalcitrant ignition, on the dock weighing up a trip of fish, at the washboard shocking-out scallops, everywhere about this lineal neighborhood there is a pervading impatience with ideas about ideas (like this essay), and any scientific thought based on presumed reality or on remote authority. To paraphrase President Truman, the general feeling is, "I'm from the waterfront; show me!"

Modern materials and engineering used in boats, powerplants, fishing gear, navigation, and communication have taken some of the neighborly comforts out of marine professions. Boats are tougher, bigger, faster, and must go out to sea farther and longer to meet the capital requirements of the work. OSHA has penetrated the boat shops and fish plants. And some of the fraternal habits of the fish house on the dock have become nostalgic memories. The I.R.S. is frothing to designate crew members and sternmen as employees, and capital steadily replaces labor in the affections of the waterfront.

Yet, no matter how covered in paper or harrassed by terrestrial institutions, mariners are hunters and gatherers, and so heroes. Everyone stars in his own drama, is protagonist to his own story, and all heroes strive to meet the expectations of the role, no matter how simple the plot or how humble his place in it. Just to be in the midst, tolerated if not included, surpasses ordinary ambition.

While others are trapped by insane visions of Destiny, on the waterfront men regard their Fate, and share it.

Maine Marine Alliance Formed to Protect Working Waterfronts

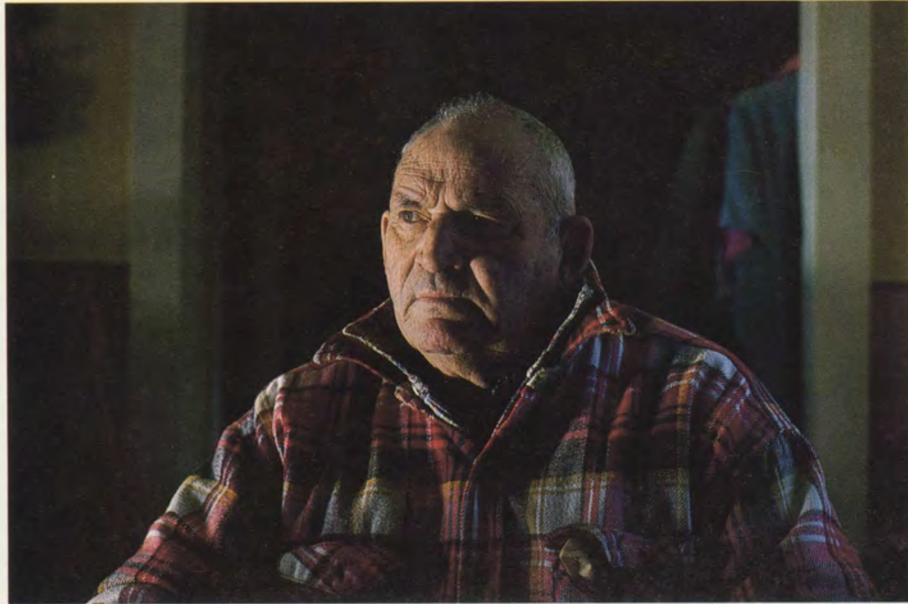
The idea of creating the Maine Marine Alliance started over a cup of coffee at the Island Institute's Working Waterfronts Conference in December 1987. At that meeting everyone agreed that working waterfronts face tremendous development pressures and will surely disappeaar unless marine interests unite and speak out on the need to protect access and water quality. Arthur Brendze, President of the Maine Marine Trades Association (boatyard owners) and Ed Blackmore of the Maine Lobstermen's Association decided the time was ripe to forge an alliance of marine interests and businesses.

The idea, in brief, was to create a forum in which members could discuss their common interests and then advocate those interests at both state and local levels of government. Having agreed that no position would be taken that does not enjoy the unanimous support (or opposition) of the board, the Alliance will have a presence before the 114th Legislature on such issues as regulation of boating, water quality, and balanced waterfront access. Additionally, the Alliance is now represented on two task forces looking into needs for state marine facilities and dredging priorities.

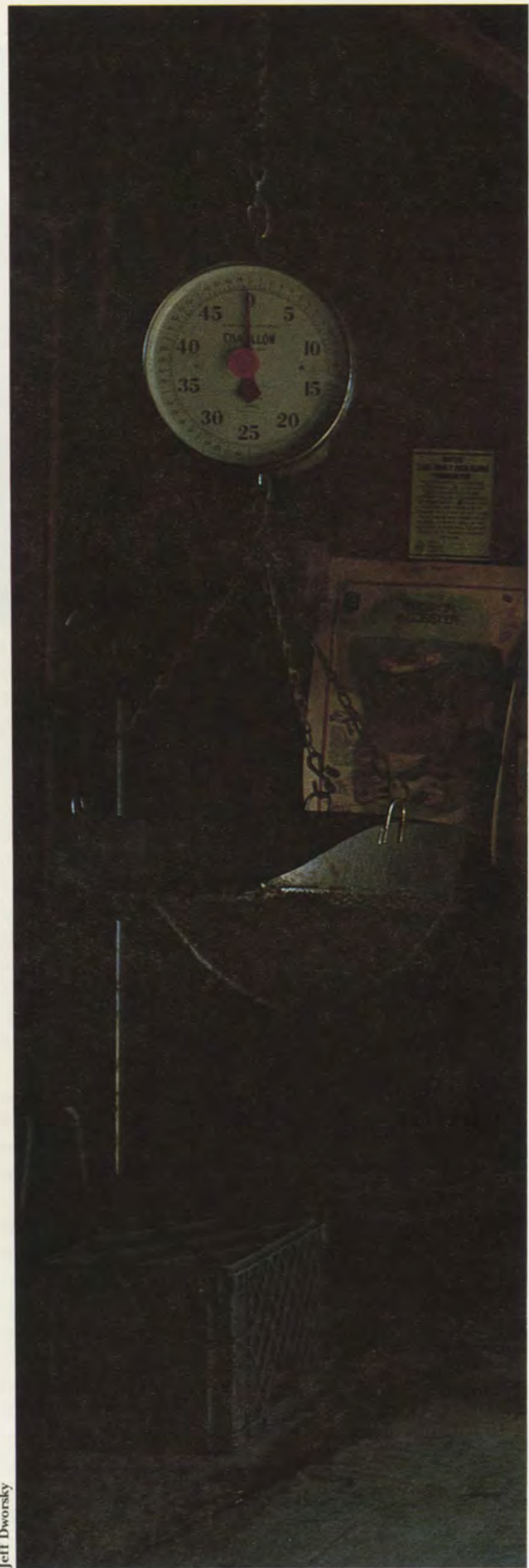
Since its formation in Rockport over a year ago, the Maine Marine Alliance has grown. Members include such key groups as the Maine Lobstermen's Association, the Maine Aquaculture Association, and Associated Fisheries of Maine. Appropriately, the Island Institute is also a founding member, along with the Maine Sardine Council, Maine Harbormasters Association and Penobscot Bay Pilots.

Maine Marine Alliance president and father of the organization, Art Brendze, sums it up when he says, "Although our concerns may not always coincide, we have many in common. Through the Maine Marine Alliance we are working together on common issues in order to survive the unprecedented pressures that threaten all of us who use and appreciate Maine working waterfronts."

For membership and other information contact: Maine Marine Alliance, P.O. Box 5376, Augusta, Maine 04330. Or call (207) 622-2559.



Jeff Dworsky



Jeff Dworsky

But the old breed of deep-water fishermen was slowly dying out, and lobstering was coming in; a man could live at home, go out every day in a small boat, and still make a good living. Still there were a few survivals from the old days and there are some today — men who go like gulls or seals searching for the schools of herring and mackerel and whiting; who travel in the dark as easily as in the daylight, and who, in spite of modern equipment that makes their work easier (and more expensive) are still spiritually kin to their prototypes of seventy-five or a hundred or two hundred years ago.

The Maine Islands In Story and Legend,
by Dorothy Simpson, 1960

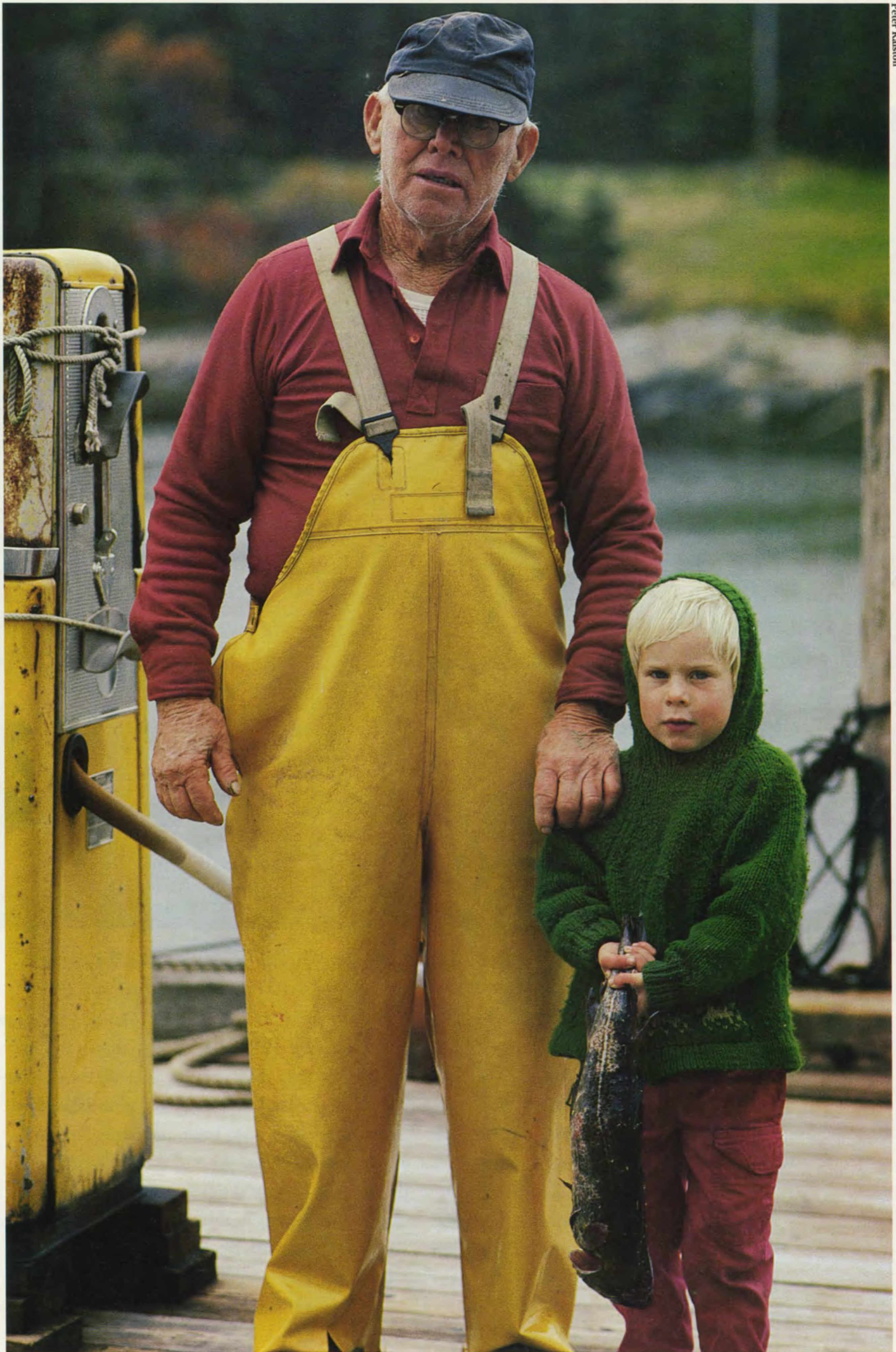
Yet amongst all these ruins and shards, so depressing to the sightseer who has been conditioned to posters of neat, white-spired Maine fishing villages rife with flower gardens and picket fences, are other enterprises humming with unprecedented prosperity. Lobster buyers' wharves with their floats and scales and gasoline pumps and stores for selling paint, hardware, and gear, and the fishermen's sheds festooned with rainbows of lobster buoys give evidence of an enduring vitality.

Biography of an Island, The Story of a Maine Island, Its People and Their Unique Way of Life,
by Perry D. Westbrook, 1958

Peter Ralston

Fishing as well as hunting was an exciting experience for a boy in a seacoast town. My father had six tubs of trawl with six hundred hooks on each one. In summer I would go with him and cut bait. After all the trawls were set, we anchored for an hour. That was the hour I looked forward to. We baited our handlines and tried our luck. Within a few minutes we hauled in haddock and cod. One day I hooked a fish so hard to pull in I thought I had at least a thirty-pounder. I finally landed him, but was disappointed to see a fish of about seven pounds hooked by the tail. He had been swimming down with all his might as I was hauling up with all mine.

Codline's Child,
The Autobiography of Wilbert Snow, 1968


Peter Ralston

Peter Ralston

"Thirty-five or forty years ago, when I went into the fishery as a young man, if you went into a bank and told 'em you were a lobsterman and you'd like to have $25,000 for a new boat and gear and all the stuff that you needed to work with, hell, they'd call up the funny farm and have'em come get you. You'd be crazy! . . . Well, times have changed. You can get all the money you want . . . My generation, we earned our way. We started out with an old boat, probably leakin' aplenty; a small boat, small gang of traps. And in a couple of years, when things would get a little better, you'd get a little bit bigger boat and more traps and so forth. I was forty years old before I had a brand new boat. But when I stepped aboard there, and cranked up the engine, and hauled the first trap, she *belonged* to me."

Ed Blackmore as quoted in *Lobstering and the Maine Coast*, by Kenneth Martin and Nathan Lipfert, 1985

Jeff Dworsky

Those communities on the islands at the edge of the coast, which depended most heavily on fishing and shipping, fell into a decline more rapid and more serious than occurred in similar communities on the mainland, where shifts to other means of earning a living were possible. Along with this decline, an independent, thrifty, hardworking, self-reliant, and vigilant way of life was eclipsed. If it were not for the modest development of the luxury lobster fishery, it is doubtful whether much of a seafaring tradition would have persisted in the state where the sea has historically been the most vital economic and social asset.

Islands in Time, A Natural and Human History of the Islands of Maine
by Philip W. Conkling, 1981

Peter Ralston

DRAGGING
Durward: Setting His Trawl

A whole week. Out of
the north all day.

A dry cold. The wind
clean as split oak.

Dark islands, dark as
the march of whitecaps.

Under hills hard on
the shoreline: churches,

settlements, planted
like bones. Out here,

the boat on good marks,
we let the wire out:

the drag plunges and
tugs. First light to

first dark, we tow, dump,
set, tow. Numb to what

cuts our hands, we set,
tow, dump, mend; tow until

dark closes down. We clean
the catch heading in

through dark to the thin
walls of our lives, grown

numb to the wind, numb
to the dark, to all we've

dragged for and taken,
shells returned to

that other dark that
weighs the whole bottom.

Peter Ralston

Durward: setting his trawl
for haddock, and handlining cod
a halfmile east of Seal Island,

twelve miles offshore in fog.
Then his new engine went out.
A Rockland dragger spotted him,

two days later, drifting drunk
off Mount Desert Rock. He was
down to his last sixpack.

After they towed him back in,
Ordway kept asking him what
—those two days—he'd been thinking.

Nothin. I thought about nothin.
That was all there was to it.
Ord said, Y'must've thought something.

Nope, I thought about nothin.
You know what I thought,
I thought fuckit.

Philip Booth, 1980

From: RELATIONS - Selected Poems 1950-1985 by Philip Booth
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Jeff Dworsky

Jeff Dworsky

Boy fishermen turn into father and grandfather fishermen as surely as the tides turn. In the early years of establishing lobstering as an occupation distinct from handlining and seining and trawling, it was expected of a son that he would become a lobsterman, too, that he would continue the tradition, the profession of his father. With that mandate, small boys started very young to learn their trade. The transfusion of knowledge was subtle yet exceedingly effective. The psychological weaning of the son from his mother was not a deliberate and conscious power play by the lobsterman father, but one of subsistence and survival that had uncanny resemblance to the natural world of animals. Just as a mother seal trained her pup to select the right fish to eat by diving with the infant and ignoring the bad fish, so did the father fisherman take his son to sea and teach him the difference between survival and death.

The Great Lobster Chase,
by Mike Brown, 1985

Peter Ralston

It was generally agreed in lobster-catcher circles that the lighter you salted (*your bait,*) the better (*it*)would fish. As a result of this light salting, the stench from the barrels assailed the air for many yards around. The smell of rotting fish would often saturate the boat and the man's clothing. It would bury itself in the wood of the oars, the handle of the gaff, and everything connected with the business, if one were not immaculately clean in his habits. It so clung to a man's hair, fingernails, clothing, and boots that his wife would almost hate to see her spouse come home. Some were so careless that people had to keep to windward of them when engaged in a neighborly chat.

Codline's Child,
The Autobiography of Wilbert Snow, 1968

Peter Ralston

Harold now becomes the professional man - Maine lobsterman. He is on his range and none in the whole world knows it better. Instinctively, he has timed his hauling against the tide so that he runs down his buoys spindle first. His father showed him that ... my God, it was 40 years ago. The traps come assembly-line fashion and the routine begins to revive Harold. The gaff, the line through the hauler, the whine of the hydraulic motor retrieving 100 feet a minute, the idling engine in gear, and the wheel easy to starboard to swing the stern from the route of the ascending trap. And then it is there on the old girl's rail, a dripping, slatted prison covered with kelp and bottom slime. Harold squeezes the locking lath of his no-cleat door and looks inside. It is this moment, this one second in a lobsterman's life, that chains him to the sea forever, Harold once told Effiejean. It is the hunt, the uncertainty of prey, the skill of pursuit, the knowledge of lairs. . . . He really couldn't explain it. Effiejean understood.

The Lobsterman
by Mike Brown, 1985

BLAZING A WATERWAY

Annals of the Maine Island Trail Association

DAVID R. GETCHELL, SR.

THE MAINE ISLAND TRAIL, presented as a concept in the 1987 issue of this annual, became a reality in 1988. It enters its second season on solid footing, but its arrival at this point has not been without controversy and confusion, both of which are common to new organizations.

This article will attempt to clear up some of that confusion and give the reader a fair picture of where we are and how we arrived here. In order to reduce the tediousness of a first-person account and to lend a measure of authenticity to this report, we will use the medium of written letters received by the writer and the Island Institute over the past two years. Because of space limitations, most of them have been trimmed in length, but neither the words nor the context have been edited.

As a starting point, here is what has occured to date:

— The concept was stated in the 1987 *Island Journal.*

— This was discussed and digested (in some cases, indigested) through much of that summer.

— A workshop on the idea was held at the 1987 Island Institute Annual Meeting on Hurricane Island. Much of the time was taken up by critics, many of them private island owners, who mainly saw the trail as adding to the problem of increased use of both public and private islands.

— I restated the concept in briefer form in a column I write for the *Small Boat Journal,* a bi-monthly boating magazine. I asked readers for written comments on the idea.

— The early winter months were spent in further discussion within the Island Institute with the critics' concerns being accommodated in the planning as much as possible.

— In late winter the decision was made to go ahead with the Island Trail project, and funding was obtained from public and private sources for start-up costs.

Poverty Nub, Muscle Ridge

— A Steering Committee of 15 persons from all sections of the coast who had expressed an interest in the Maine Island Trail was set up.

In three meetings in early spring of 1988 the committee finalized the route between Yarmouth and Jonesport, established ground rules for the membership, and organized the Maine Island Trail Association to develop and maintain the trail.

— With relatively little publicity, recruitment for a small working membership began. But many persons were excited by the project and by the end of the boating season, membership had burgeoned to 400, and by the year's end to nearly 500.

— An 80-page guidebook was produced containing guidelines on low-impact camping, information about wildlife, hazardous areas, and charts showing the location of state and private islands in the trail system.

— The first Annual Conference of MITA was held at Warren Island State Park in late September.

Peter Ralston (2)

To flesh out the bare facts stated above, we'll share with you the comments of letter writers for the rest of the way and attempt to answer, correct, or explain in many cases; in others, we'll quote from letters in reponse, or will let our correspondent's letter speak for itself.

While a few people were openly critical, if not scornful, of the idea, others were neutral or mildly supportive, but nearly all had concerns the writer and others in the Institute had already wrestled with. First, let's look at some of the reservations. (The "TC" in the letters stands for Trail Coordinator, a broad enough term to cover all bases.)

Dear TC:

Giving the public access to their own islands seems fair, although in truth Acadia has become a magnet for the useless, stupid, irrational behavior of unconcerned businessmen unattached to nature or its surroundings...A similar fate fell upon Cape Cod, the Vineyard, and Nantucket.

You've told a vital secret...maybe nothing will happen to Maine's treasured coastline, but don't you think someone will be greedy, or are you just naive?

Oh, hey, it would be nice to toodle along the coast with a topographical map, island guide, whatever in hand. What's the point? That's just another excuse to regulate our lives and minds as if we had none to begin with. The idea of wildness is to leave nature alone. Raising sheep on islands is respected useage...

Designating a "trail" to follow is regulatory idealogy. Don't misunderstand me, the Appalachian Trail is fun and enjoyable and to many a worthwhile endeavor. The land is not the sea, however, and your promotion may injure the very persons you are trying to help.

Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire* should be required reading for all public do-gooders in a position such as yours.

J.J.Y.
Reading, Mass.

Dear TC:

In working with the Friends of the Androscoggin, I have become aware, as you must surely be aware, of some of the problems of stirring up interest in places we love. At the same time that interest will help us preserve them from development and inappropriate use, too much interest can begin to destroy the very thing we set about to help preserve, can change the very nature of experiences we seek to enjoy and share. I would be interested in hearing your thoughts on this apparent dilemma.

W.R.P.
Bethel, Me.

Dear TC:

With regard to your "Island Trail" idea: I approve, with reservations...I think you are right that most of the islands will not be overrun as a result. But I am not as sanguine as you are about keeping them clean; however, the project is still worth trying. Around here, I used to attribute the garbage in the bush to hunters and fishermen, and I still think they are most to blame, and those whose families have been here for generations seem to be the worst. However, in the past few years there has been more and more garbage on ski trails and by whitewater routes; it seems people are naturally sloppy, and getting sloppier...

B.W.
Deep River, Ont.
Canada

Peter Ralston

Small aluminum outboard moterboats are a good choice for the undeveloped landings on islands in the trail

Dear TC:

First of all, I'm cautiously in favor: I discovered the joys of island hopping several years ago after we bought a little house on an island in Muscongus Bay. Most uninhabited islands near us seem privately owned, though I'm not sure...

Would an island trail be successful? I don't know. Surely, the sailing cruisers that we see more of every summer might like some guide to the islands. But, as you suggest, there may also be enough interest among small boaters who would want to follow islands as hikers do the Appalachian Trail.

A potential problem that you doubtless have considered is the possibility that too many visitors would despoil the islands. As you know, some of these places are already littered with washed-up flotsam like beer and oil cans. Now and then, you stumble across camp sites that were left in a mess. Granted, those who are interested in an island trail in the first place would probably be sensitive to the need to preserve them. Nonetheless, officialdom in Augusta or wherever may be reluctant to back activities that encourage greater use of the islands. But maybe not...

M.J.P.
Worcester, Mass.

Officialdom has taken quite a razing from many of the people we've talked with, but in most instances cooperation and interest in what we are doing has been broad and supportive. A good example is the Bureau of Public Lands (BPL), the agency charged with managing many of the small state-owned islands. It was the BPL that asked the Island Institute to survey the recreational potential of the wild islands. The brochure, "Your Islands on the Coast," which locates about 40 islands open to public use, was issued by the Bureau, and again, it asked our help in preparing the text on how to use the islands so as not to damage them. Aware of its limited ability to patrol the islands, the BPL took particular pains in the brochure to get across the idea that most of the care would be up to the users. The Bureau's island coordinator, Steve Spencer, has worked as hard as anyone to make the trail project work. An important note: the BPL was the very first organization to put up money for start-up costs of the Maine Island Trail.

The state Bureau of Parks and Recreation and the Dept. of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife have also been supportive of our work. Both Acadia National Park and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have made special efforts to pave the way for the trail through lands under their jurisdiction.

Dear TC:

I have been considering your recent letter concerning the development of an ocean trail and must conclude that this may not be in the islands' best interest. I have been sea kayaking here in the mid-coastal area for several years now and have noticed a significant change in other paddlers as the sport becomes more commercialized. Not too long ago it was uncommon to come across someone else paddling offshore but when you did you could generally know that they would be ecologically oriented folks using the sea islands in low impact ways. Not only have the numbers increased but many of the newer paddlers seem quite self-serving. To map a trail, I feel, would funnel these folks onto the same series of islands with the probability of significant impact.

M.H.
Surry, Me.

We quote here part of our response since it touches on some important reasons behind the Maine Island Trail.

Dear M.H.:

Let's consider just one point you make — the increase in the number of self-serving kayakers. Their number will grow whether the trail exists or not and the eventual result may be the same as we are now seeing on the mainland; namely, increased regulation, vandalism, uncaring use of public facilities, etc. Ignoring them won't send them away, the problems simply will increase. The state has neither the money nor the manpower to police our vast coast, so these people get away with whatever pleases them.

The conservation movement in this country and elsewhere so often has had to fight a rearguard action, trying to pick up the pieces after the damage has been done. The idea of the Maine Island Trail is to make the islands mean something to a large segment of the general public and to instill in users of the islands a desire to treat them properly. We believe most people want to do the right thing but often don't know what the right thing is. Through the work and publications and actions of the Maine Island Trail Association we can carry out a long-term education program that is accepted voluntarily by its members as opposed to increasing regimentation which nobody really wants. We feel "user management" has a lot more going for it than "official enforcement," and it appears the enforcers feel the same way since we are getting strong support from state agencies and federal organizations...
TC

Dear TC,

I am perplexed by your call for an Island Trail. Aren't these islands already owned by the state? Presumably they are not threatened by development. If one can land a small boat on these islands, then the Maine Island Trail already exists and needs no further encouragement. If, however, you envision some sort of "campground"-style development then the Island Trail will be the biggest threat to these islands. They should be considered as "wilderness" and left as they are. As long as they remain accessible there will be an Island Trail.
R.A.C.
New York, N.Y.

Dear R.A.C.:

As you know, people don't act without a reason. The existence of a recognized trail, waterway, or what-have-you, would give them a reason to act: to help develop and maintain the trail. In this instance, the aim would be to maintain the status quo by setting high standards of use within the organization, by cleaning up after others, and by helping the state monitor use. Members would *not* be involved in policing the islands since that is the very thing we are trying to avoid.
TC

For every letter of concern and criticism, we received ten urging us forward. Some were from skilled boatmen who cruise in kayaks, canoes, rowboats, sailboats, and small motorboats. An equal number of others were from persons far distant from the Maine coast who are happy just dreaming of some day cruising among wild islands in their own small boats.

The last-named group, the dreamers distant or nearby, is not to be taken lightly. In our crowded world, we often need things to dream about just to keep our heads on straight. Boats and islands are tremendously powerful sources of such fantasies just as are wilderness preserves and wildlife sanctuaries, and sizable sub-economies exist to service them. In turn, these people provide moral and financial support to organizations they believe are working in their interest: The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon, the Island Institute, and an occasional new kid on the block like the Maine Island Trail Association. Our membership was still under 50 persons when we received the following letter:

The conservation movement in this country and elsewhere so often has had to fight a rearguard action, trying to pick up the pieces after the damage has been done.

Dear TC:

I had not forgotten the Maine Island Trail, and your (membership) letter and proposal made my day.

Please accept the enclosed check for $100 as my contribution to your efforts, including one family membership...It represents about half of my annual total of contributions, so you can see how excited I am about your project...
A.C. and B.T.
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Dear TC,

Your articles have refreshed wonderful memories of the quiet, the excitement of bluefishing, and in general just the pleasure of living in Maine. This has really been a help during our months here in the Persian Gulf...

The idea of an organization in support of a Maine Island Trail is both an outstanding concept and one I would most definitely be willing to support both financially, and after I transfer to fleet reserve in five years, in person. Sounds like another very good "excuse" to get out in a small boat to a small island and support what sounds like a worthwhile cause.
W.L.S. (EMCS [SW])
USS Guadalcanal
FPO, New York, N.Y.

We regularly receive letters asking questions about how to determine which islands are public and which are private. Since there are many kinds of ownership — by various state and federal agencies, non-profit groups, private associations, etc. — it can be confusing, to say the least. For instance:

Dear TC:

I received a folder from Augusta listing 42 islands owned by the state. I note they still do not list Jewell or Little Chebeague Islands in Casco Bay...
E.J.H.
Gorham, Me.

The folder he speaks of is "Your Islands on the Coast," mentioned earlier in this piece. It describes only islands managed by the Bureau of Public Lands. Jewell and Little Chebeague are managed by the Bureau of Parks and Recreation. Some public islands are closed to public use; some islands owned by land trusts or other non-profit groups may be open to day use but not to camping; some privately-owned islands are open to members of the Maine Island Trail Association but not to the general public; many private owners do not want the public to use their islands — some post their land, but others do not.

Baffling? You bet. A main purpose of the MITA Guidebook is to sort out this confusion and attempt to direct people only to those islands where they are welcome.

Dear TC:

I think an "Islandkeeper" is needed to patrol and protect the trail, not so much as an enforcer but more as a friendly, helpful, informative person, with clout! He or she needs a well equipped, seaworthy boat designed for this special use...There is a "Riverkeeper" on the Hudson River in New York State.
L.J.H.
Mt. Vernon, N.Y.

There is no need for a person to patrol the Island Trail at this time, and there should be no need for one any time soon, if ever. The closest thing we have to an "Islandkeeper" is the Trail Coordinator and he neither has nor wants any authority. His job is to arrange for use of private islands, to organize work parties for clean-up sessions (we have begun the never-ending job of cleaning plastic from islands in the trail system), to remove fire rings and other signs of mis-use from trail islands, and to coordinate the work of the five sections on the trail.

MITA members do monitor use of both state and private islands so that owners and the BPL can get some idea on how often their lands are visited. However, the section on monitoring in the guidebook begins with this statement: "The only authority we have is our own good example."

Dear TC:

I feel the trail headings up the rivers should be side trips and that the main route should follow the shoreline. In other words, the Morse, the Kennebec and other rivers, and Islesboro and the Fox Islands would be side or alternate trails. What are your thoughts on this?
N.I.
Tenants Harbor, Me.

Dear N.I.:

A main purpose of the trail is to expose users to the variety of the coast and to show them what a different world Maine is from the water. As drawn, it does that; if we follow the coast only, some of the safest and prettiest water and land will be bypassed.

Steve Spencer and I covered the new section in northern Penobscot Bay on Wednesday and were impressed with the easy hops between islands and the spectacular nature of the mid-bay islands. They shouldn't be missed.

We then went up the bay and river to Bucksport. Although it was not a particularly windy day, the broad water at the river mouth was rough and the currents strong, not at all as pleasant as further down. My belief: we should establish the best route we can find and then let people accommodate their skills to the requirements. The "Trail Corridor" idea allows for selection by the user.

TC

The "corridor" idea is a necessity on salt water. The trail does not go from place to place as does a land trail, but rather encompasses about a mile-wide band where there are many alternatives of travel, depending on weather and tide conditions and the boating skills of the travelers. A point we emphasize every chance we get is that the Maine Island Trail is not a tourist attraction, but rather is a serious small-boat waterway with hazards and challenges just like any first-class land trail or waterway.

Also, the trail is designed with the small-boat user, not yachtsman, in mind. Many of the overnighting islands can be approached safely only by small boats that can drawn up on the beach or be grounded out. Parts of the trail go under bridges only high enough for boats under 20 feet in length without cabins or masts. A few of the islands are even difficult to reach at low tide or when a sea is running. In brief, certain sections of the trail require a high degree of boating skill and the ability to adapt to changing conditions.

Dear TC:

I won't be available for any trail development this year, since my time in Maine is well used up by maintenance work on the Appalachian Trail. But, as a Maine coast native, I am interested in the progress of your idea.

I must mention that I expect that the future of such a "trail" will be quite unlike the AT in that it will be most likely dominated by power-boaters rather than human-powered travelers. If so, then, as with car-camps, the biggest maintenance chore will be trash clean-up instead of blowdowns and annual growth...

R.B.I.
Ann Arbor, Mich.

As with government agencies, motorboaters (and we are speaking primarily of outboarders) have a bad name that to date has not been warranted as far as the Island Trail is concerned. First off, they constitute only about 25% of the MITA membership, the rest being mainly sea kayakers, canoeists, and sailors. Unfairly burdened with the reputation gained by the so-called "six-pack crowd," they share the same love of the sea and islands as owners of other types of small boats and have been a great help in carrying off great loads of plastic picked up on the islands.

One soon discovers that like larger yachts, heavy outboard boats with big motors don't fare well on many of the small islands along the trail. In order to be kept from being damaged, they must be anchored offshore, which means a second boat must be carried as a tender. In contrast, people with small wood or aluminum outboard boats can draw their craft up the beach or over the rocks out of harm's way.

A point we emphasize every chance we get is that the Maine Island Trail is not a tourist attraction, but rather is a serious small-boat waterway with hazards and challenges just like any first-class land trail or waterway.

Dear TC:

Why stop at Jonesport? There are many beautiful islands in Machias Bay, before the barren Grand Manan Channel.

We hope you will be able to make MITA tax exempt.

R.D.
Brunswick, Me.

We stopped at Jonesport because it was a protected harbor with an excellent launching ramp. In addition, despite the fact that there were many islands beyond, nearly all were private and unavailable for use during our first year of operation.

This year, the trail will be continued on to Machias, thanks to the offer of use of a superb private island about halfway between Jonesport and Machias. We hope to add other private islands in the region, and two or three state-owned islands may also be available.

As for tax-exempt status, as a division of the non-profit Island Institute, the Maine Island Trail Association has exemption.

Dear TC,

Since the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway extends all the way from Florida Bay to Boston, would you entertain the idea of extending your concept to the "New England Coastal-Island Waterway" from the Elizabeth Islands through the Cape Cod Canal and up the coastal area of the Gulf of Maine right up to Campobello Island, N.B.? Actually, it could run from Long Island, via Block Island, and north.

J. McN. S.
West Kingston, R.I.

The concept is there for anyone to use, and we're happy to share with others information on how we went about organizing and setting up the Maine Island Trail. In fact, the idea apparently sprang up in a number of different areas for similar waterways are under consideration in the Pacific Northwest, the Great Lakes, South Carolina, Georgia, and New Brunswick. Beyond sharing our experience, though, we have our hands full with the Maine Island Trail and will concentrate on solidifying its base, for the time being.

A frequent question asked us is why any private owner would want his or her island to be included in the Island Trail system. There are many reasons, ranging from the philosophical to the pragmatic. For instance, some who own wild islands use them only occasionally and are willing to share them with a responsible constituency of users. In return, MITA will provide work teams to help the island owner with outdoor projects such as brush or trail clearing, clean up the land if unauthorized users leave it messy, and in general keep a friendly eye on the place when the owner is absent. The association is not a watchdog agency, but some island owners like to know others are looking after their interests, even if on a casual basis. As many as ten or a dozen private islands will be available to MITA members this season.

In late September under perfect weather conditions, MITA held its first Annual Meeting at Warren Island State Park. Some 130 members camped out, enjoying the company of new friends, attending informal workshops on such things as basic kayaking, foraging, and small-boat anchoring methods. It was a nice cap for a successful first season and gave us strong hopes that the use/preservation concept will work. The following letter serves to wrap things up:

Dear TC,

Back in my autumnal environment, far from the sea, I find myself coming back to the pleasant memory of my recent stay on Warren Island in Maine. What a pleasant experience this has been for me. Meeting all these people who care for and appreciate the magnificent nature along the coast was as satisfying as the sailing was, and you were there to see what great sailing this was!

As I live some distance from the coast, your work in making the islands accessible is of great value to me. I remember first going out to an island off Isle au Haut (see, I couldn't identify it today) with very little knowledge of the area, and a sense of not being supposed to be there. What a difference: now I can plan ahead, know where to launch and how to find an island where I can spend some time ashore, and all the time feeling I sort of belong there, as a charter member of MITA.

I look forward to the next season, and will definitely try to involve my wife and children, who will be one and four by then...

Thanks for your warm welcome into MITA.

A.B.
Trois-Rivières-Ouest Quebec, Canada

Peter Ralston

WAVE MUSIC

by Wilbert Snow

Behind this bowlder on the shore,
After a night of wind and rain,
I lie and let the waves restore
The jaded tissues of my brain.
Why can no inland mountain strain
So flood with ecstasy my flesh?
No inland waters float a seine
To snare my fancy in its mesh?

There is an undertow in me
That only moves when some great gale
Kicks up an undertow at sea,
Starting an orchestra going full scale:
Woodwinds full toned, and strings assail
High cliffs in bristling undismay:
Beneath, loud drums and brasses flail
Dark ledges hidden in the bay.

There may be in an island birth
A need unknown to inland men —
Need for an armistice with earth
To let salt tides flow in again.
"Dust to dust" was spoken when
The race had not yet found the sea;
A deeper call has come since then —
"Salt brine to blood," for men like me.

Nicholas Snow

Snow on Snow

Recollections of Wilbert Snow

NICHOLAS SNOW

Father often told us how much he had appreciated Forrest Snow's help and about the very large Snow family. I would encounter one of the sons three decades later in a very unexpected place. I was serving as an editor for American Education Publications, owned by Wesleyan University of Middletown, Conn. I heard that there was a Professor Snow from Maine on the faculty. At one of our social functions I introduced myself to him and we soon were launched into animated conversation. We could hardly believe it when we discovered we both had been born on Whitehead Island.

Not long after, I asked my mother if she remembered Wilbert Snow.

"Oh yes," she said. "Young Wilbert. We never thought he would amount to much. Couldn't seem to do anything very well."

And in coastal Maine terms, Wilbert probably was not very good at lobster fishing and cutting granite, the only two occupations open to a young man in that area. All he ever amounted to was being an outstanding professor of English, an acclaimed poet, author of several books, and lieutenant governor of Connecticut. One of his books was his autobiography, Codline's Child, *which paints a colorful picture of his life in the Sprucehead area in the early 1900's.*

—*Phil Wass, from* Lighthouse in My Life
Downeast Books, Camden, Maine, 1987

THE ISLANDS at the southern entrance of Penobscot Bay vary widely in character. Yellow meadow grasses smother and soften the bony skeletons of a sheltered few whose sandy beaches invite boaters to a soft and easy landing. The granite ramparts of others are perpetually battered by surging seas, their crowns of dark, druidic spruces (peopled exclusively by sea crows and ospreys) towering above the fisherman, pressing on him a sense of deep, unreasoning dread.

"Steer for the deep water only!" — an oft repeated warning of my father to his five sons.

My father, Wilbert Snow, claimed that Whitehead Island, his birthplace and ancestral home, contained a perfect convention of contrasting qualities and moods. On the side facing the channel and the open sea, steep granite cliffs topped by dense bayberry, puckerbrush, and scraggy spruce bear the brunt of the hoarse iteration of breaking seas. On the opposite and Seal Harbor side, fragrant clusters of alder interspersed with raspberry vines rim the sloping meadows and sandy beaches. Here, on the leeside of the island, my grandfather Forrest Snow and his Norton relatives built their houses and barns.

And here on April 6, 1884, Wilbert Snow was born. The child in Wilbert would know throughout his long life the pull and tug of two opposing forces: on one hand, the sweetness of a quiet and contemplative nature; on the other, the crashing imperatives of a larger cosmos whose waves of conscience and conflict never ceased pounding in his ears.

> The sea is forever quivering,
> The shore forever still;
> And the boy who is born in a seacoast town
> Is born with a dual will:
> The sunburned rocks and beaches
> Inveigle him to stay;
> While every wave that breaches
> Is a nudge to be up and away.

Midsummer 1977, and a flock of picnic-bound Snows were off in small boats headed out from Sprucehead to a rendezvous on Whitehead, the "sacred island." Wilbert, aged 93, was as usual leading the way, at least in spirit.

It was to be the last summer of his life and his last visit to his island home. We didn't know that. But then his children never experienced intimations of mortality in connection with Wilbert. He would go on forever, of course. Only his sons were growing older.

He still chopped wood for the fireplace each morning at his summer camp on Sprucehead. Sunrise would find him chipping away at the knot-ridden spruce chunks his slug-a-bed sons had slung aside. But this summer of 1977 he did voice one serious and uncharacteristic complaint:

"I'm not getting my strength back."

Chopping wood, smelting in season, meandering and musing on mossy paths under cathedral woods, or merely lying on his back on our granitic shore, in all these Wilbert

found power to "recharge his batteries," to restore his energy for another plunge into the political, literary, and academic worlds he loved with a passion.

Lie on these rocks—perhaps to your surprise
Will spread the glowing comfort of their arms;
Lean on these rocks that lavishly devise
A resting place where odors from the barms
Of ocean, floating in on either side
Quicken your vision up and down the bay.

The sons in charge of the boat carrying Mother and Wilbert on this summer excursion had chosen to attempt a landing at the site of our family's traditional picnic spot at Mast Cove on the ocean side of the island, generally a good site for watching the breaking of great waves on the cliffs. A dead sea calm on a remarkably soft day in August made this otherwise reckless feat possible. By landing here, we meant to spare the old folks the long, cross-island trek from the Government Wharf.

Wilbert had said many times, "The Nortons were dreamers and late bloomers . . . played with marbles into their fifties." Wilbert owed much to the Nortons.

Having barely touched his lunch, Wilbert started up and began walking toward the center of the island. He had gotten noticeably wobbly over the summer, and I feared he might overreach his strength. I decided to follow him. His path led him past the old and new Coast Guard station houses, on to the meadow-like pastureland of the harbor side and finally to the ruinous cellar foundations of his childhood home.

"Father ferried all the granite over from the mainland to build this cellar."

The house was gone. Burned down years ago.

"Here's where Uncle Horace Norton had his barn. No foundation, just perched it on a stone here and there. Horace was a dreamer."

Wilbert had said many times, "The Nortons were dreamers and late bloomers . . . played with marbles into their fifties." Wilbert owed much to the Nortons. His mother Elizabeth and his Uncle Horace were but two in a horde of a dozen children begotten by Joseph Norton, who from his citadel overlooking Penobscot Bay sailed the seven seas in search of trade in molasses, spices, and rum. Uncle Horace Norton was a free thinker in the midst of a strongly Calvinist society. In the course of his lifetime he proclaimed himself variously as an evolutionist, a Fabian Socialist, and a Unitarian!

Horace's wife, Aunt Cynthia Elwell Norton, was determined that her children got to "use the brains they were born with." She managed to pry Horace, her children, and her household goods off the island, onto a barge, and injected the whole into the urban environment of Greater Portland. She had notable success in advancing the careers of her children . . .but that is another story.

But the "dreamer" label stuck, and I, Wilbert's third son, was not above claiming Norton ancestry when feeling unduly stressed by such suggestions as "maybe the time has come for you to look for an honest job."

So here on these grassy paths, Forrest Snow's third son (one of seven children), Wilbert, had learned to crawl, had tottered down to the nearby boathouse to listen to survivor talk among rescued sailors. Forrest Snow served on Station 5, First District, of the U.S. Life-Saving Service quartered on the island. Wilbert would recall the stormy nights when his father, making his rounds of the island, would stop in at home to warm his hands at the stove before venturing out again into the storm.

But this day of our visit in 1977 was a sunny, summer day, and the voices from the past swarming in his ear were most likely summer voices. Perhaps he heard once again his Irish mother Kate professing her love for moss-roses above all the other annuals in her garden. In the background, the murmuring rote on the Browns Island ledges could be heard, even on this flat calm day.

"Listen."

I heard far off the motion of the sea.
Dead the whole belt of calms; my spirit craved
In those volcanic crises vastly more;
The rote on distant shoals, resounding, saved,
When harbors muffled by an inland shore
Were mockeries; deep registered to deep,
Filling a need beyond all need to sleep.

That was the heartbeat forever sounding in his ear, this perpetual rote that in autumn and on wild winter days would crest in

. . . . echoes tumbling out of ocean caves
Whose overtones arouse me like the leap
Of Sursum corda high in Gothic naves.

An island in Maine could not, at the turn of this century, offer an island youth much in the way opportunity beyond that for which his father (fisherman, boat builder and Life-Saving Station crewman) was the model. Provoked by an inner need and prodded by an Irish mother who was no stranger to departures (having herself left the Emerald Isle at the age of ten for a New World), Wilbert escaped what he wryly refered to as "the Land of the Lotus Eaters."

On this, his last visit, he stood alone. And I felt all at once both his weariness and his reluctance to take his leave of this memory-charged spot. He had returned. In some ways that the wind whispering in the meadow grass knew, he had never left.

He died in September. But when I return to Whitehead, the island that gave shape and energy to his spirit, I am convinced he is there still.

Let there be sea gulls crying when I go,
Let there be great waves crumbling on the shore,
Crumbling in layers like walls of Jericho,
The orchestration of whose ram's horn score
Kindled my boyhood fancy. Let there be
Gray clouds low hanging over ocean foam—
Soft curtains veiling white sails out at sea,
Under the sails far mariners hurrying home
On tides that flood for them and ebb for me.
And let there be fulfillment of the dream
Of Lost Atlantis, once so Easter-bright
I all but reached it on the warm Gulf Stream
That flowed through me. Come,Stream,and warm my flight
When I go out to meet the enfolding night.

The excerpts from poems "Conflict," "Granite," "Groundswell," "Coast Cathedral," and "Valediction" are from *The Collected Poems of Wilbert Snow,* Wesleyan University Press, 1963. (Out of Print)

***Nick Snow**, the third son of Wilbert Snow, is a painter living on the family land on Sprucehead Island.*

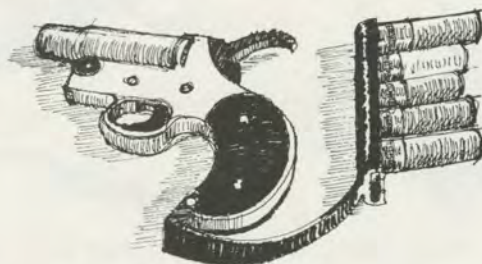
Snow family collection

Wilbert Snow, with Nick on his arm and sons Bill, Stephen, and Jack at Sprucehead, 1932.

ME 3664

Where you going now, Skip?

JAN ADKINS



People and boats have their ups and downs, multitudinous careers incarnate. Artist/author Jan Adkins and the ketch Foxfire *shared the 1987 season. Some 41 feet overall, and 41 years old, the lovely British-built vessel under charter yielded the most hilarious writing we have ever received about ranging the coast of Maine. Here is a brief passage from an extensive letter Jan sent his friends about his adventure-filled cruise. Sharing in this notable event were his son and daughter and a lady friend, the Contender.*

ALL WRONG. My diaphragm frosted over and an old penny appeared in my mouth. Wrong. Not just the disorientation of perspective with wind shifts, not day and night range confusion, just wrong.

Lane's Island still lay ahead, the wind still rushed over it, the boat still swung to it, but now the train of lobster cars was interposed between *Foxfire* and the island, too close, and the anchor rode disappeared into the darkness at an impossible angle, almost horizontal. I pushed the hatch farther and peered into the inhospitable night, cold and half water, until I shivered uncontrollably, wishing childishly and devoutly that this bad thing would stop, now, and I would be back in my good bed until morning birdsounds.

Much has been made of the Tahitian navigators. Overrated by half, I say. It was warm, over there, and they wore the same thing at night as they wore in the day, a yard of cloth to keep their parts out of the rigging. They didn't get up at night and put on four layers of clothes to save their bacon.

Your really intrepid explorer is a disorganized urbanite who has forgotten everything he ever learned about sailing, plagued with ghosts, desperately trying to find a working flashlight, stumbling against someone else's bulkheads without his contacts pasted over his eyeballs as he tries to find his glasses. In Shackleton's stern words, "Adventure is a sign of incompetence."

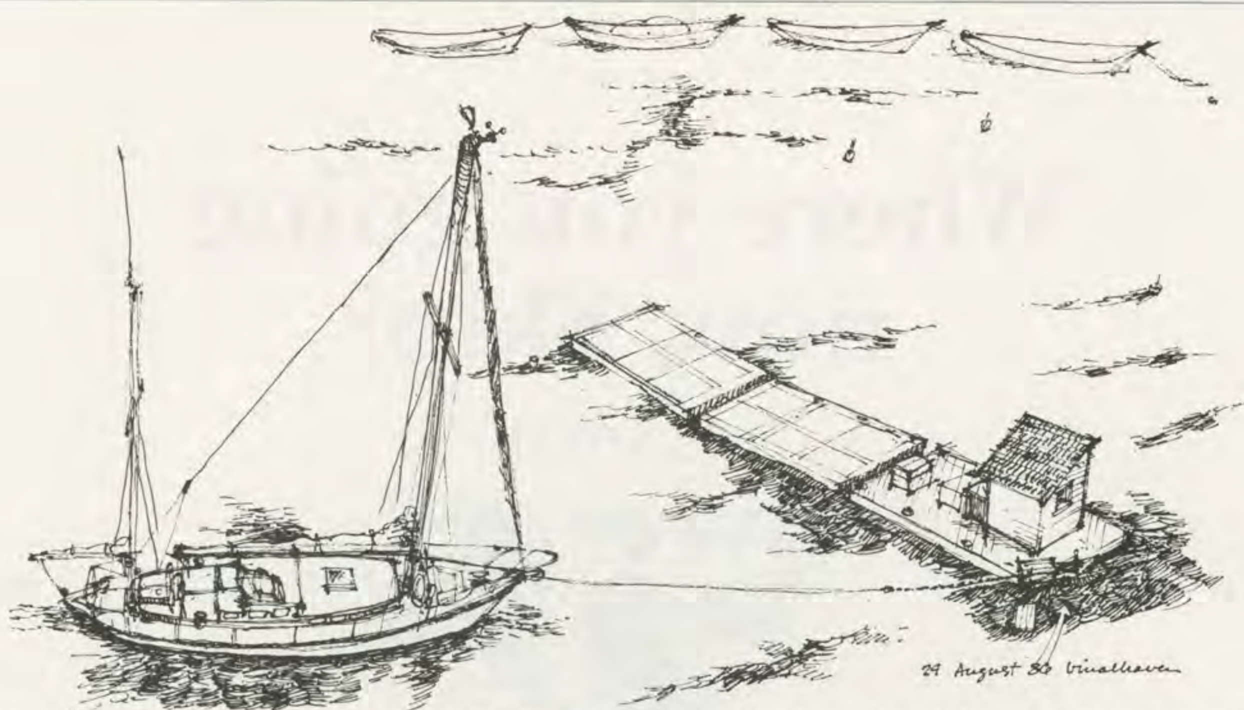
I flicked on the spreader lights. On most nights it is best not to turn the spreaders on at all. The harsh cone of light maximizes and dramatizes, an effect you do not need at 3 a.m. It opacifies the water and picks out the white beards of whitecaps from the far black; in a running sea you can feel surrounded by a nightmare. In a stormy harbor the circle of light floating against the uneasy surface emphasizes the current, the spindrift, bits of flotsam that seem insidious, caught in the night; the rain blown in salvoes through the cone forces a giddy feeling of forward rush. Crouching on the foredeck, steadied by the pulpit railing, I could follow the anchor rode from bow chock out along its shallow dip to the swivel, where a length of heavy chain stretched taut against, oh shit, a Danforth Standard #135 anchor with one fluke caught in the timber corner of the right-hand lobster car.

The night, the storm, the lobster car did not dismay me, but I crouched in the bow terribly affected by the length of the rode. I had secured a 14-ton boat (on a bottom later described with a wince as "kelpy") with a length of anchor line that wouldn't have made a good dog-run. I'd anchored at dead low and run out "enough"— enough to look safe. But as the bay added 15 feet the angle became untenable, and the anchor skittered along the bottom grabbing and sliding, its jerks unfelt in the buffet of the storm.

Some perverse water spirit had, with wit and no small kindness, allowed the bow chock to nod across the very corner of the car, the spoon of the bow within inches, enough to catch the rode on the corner timber but not enough to touch. Even a city boy would have felt that. *Foxfire* backed away from the wind, the rode pullied across the corner and lifted the anchor clear of the bottom; it was (shudder) lifted out of the water, over the side, and miraculously one of its flukes sank into the spruce.

I bobbed with the dinghy, keeping station beside the miraculous anchor, looking at it again with a weak flashlight. I pulled out into the dark beyond the cars and looked back at the *Foxfire* truckstop — good spreader lights

Jeff Dworsky



on that boat. Rowing farther out the light died quickly, grey bouys and black rocks cluttered the little cove, the water became inhospitable.

A Maine-built lobster car is good holding ground, if you can get it. Anchoring technique is a little tricky, the subject of my next article, but once you're on, you're set. I'm not saying it makes for a comfortable night: all night long I popped out of the forehatch like an overanxious Punxatawny Phil, feeling about as much at home on the water as a mountain groundhog, beginning to believe that West Virginia boys born to the hollows and ridges should maybe ought to leave the Big Water to them as was born to it, like the Captain, out of a line of Narragansett merchant captains, born to the water, in the blood, not worth a goddamn in the mines but great on the ocean sea.

Morning disregarded my several difficulties of situation and confidence and broke sunny and brisk, as if nothing was wrong. Before the air had taken up all the color from the sun I was on deck with my crew, planning the maneuver. I could have used a set of deck apes; I had two children and a small Californian woman, but they were fierce, every one of them. The wind was still up but shifting quickly now into the north. Everyone had their positions.

I was memorizing the lobster buoys around us, only one close, on my starboard quarter about five yards. We were being streamed south, almost parallel with the face of the cars, the Contender was in the dinghy, rounding the far side of the cars to dislodge the anchor, Sally and Sam had been told off to the bow where they would haul in like lightning and snub, the engine was on and in neutral, we would drift below and swing under the beneficent cars with our anchor ready to drop in the same cove (with more sensible length). She struggled with the anchor, I eased into gear and offered slack, creeping forward.

Anchor free. Hauling clear of the water. The wind is shifting in gusts, a quick look around for the inboard pot, new maneuver for new wind . . . pivot to starboard away from the cars and then swing under them. Starboard rudder, half ahead for a clean turn, reverse, half ahead, not answering, no response. No inboard pot. No control. Bow swings off to starboard with a new gust, off toward a ledge of rocks that looks like an old Roman wall.

Terrified and helpless as in all boat disasters, because they unfold so certainly and so slowly from a small seed of inattention, a seed germinated in the absence of that water sense that must be renewed constantly, like vows and offerings to Poseidon. Hard reverse, nothing. Sally and Sam beginning to feel a break in planning, looking uncertainly from the bow. The Contender shouting from the cars, "What are you doing?" No answer, no control.

Foxfire continued her swing but not her downwind progress. The wall remained a threat, 200 yards away, while we settled stern-to, moored by the propeller (the subject of another technical article) to unseen lines. Unseen and untrustworthy: I had the anchor dropped at the bow and several fathoms of rode paid out against the possibility of the lines or the propeller letting go. Once again, the water spirit had surprised then saved me with a sense of humor I was not in a mood to appreciate; and the spirit's supply of joy buzzers and wax lips was not yet exhausted.

Sunday morning. It is illegal to pull pots on Sunday in Maine. Vinalhaven fisherman, addicted to hard labor early in the morning, use this time to sort and weigh their catch from the community lobster cars moored in the harbor. The cars on which I had moored for the night and near which (my transom swung ten feet off the southerly car) I was experimenting with propeller-mooring technique. Within the next 15 minutes every lobsterman in Vinalhaven was bustling about on the cars, shifting hatches and stacking baskets and avoiding looking too obviously at the yacht snagged off to leeward.

A small song of praise for the lobstermen of Vinalhaven. They work a demanding, dangerous trade; they work alone on perilous water, in conditions that compound the peril at a fearsome rate; they are watermen of consummate skill, keeping a level of knowledge and technique unattainable to anyone from Away, or anyone who does not spend life on, with, the water; they are the marks against which serious work on the water is compared. Two dozen professional watermen, a blinding blur of bright yellow bibfront. Helly Hansen's and not a guffaw among them. Not a sneer, not a slur, all opportunity for easy jibes supplanted by genuine concern.

Moreover, they went out of their way to convince me that they did the same thing all the time: "Oh, hell, skip, you've got y'self a real mess there, you do. I've done that a time or two, I have, yessuh."

Another spoke up, "Sure have. You want to get Jimmy Knowlton out here to clean that off for you, dive down there and do it in no time. I'll get him on the radio, f'you want."

"Well," I said, looking at the water, "I got myself into this, I figured on diving down there and clearing it up, myself."

"Oh hell, Skip," one of the lobstermen squatted down and squinted with professional skepticism under my transom. "Hell, I don't think so." he said sadly, shaking his head with professorial finality.

"At's Wilbur's mooring you got wrapped 'round your wheel," a younger man said, not looking up from his own inquiry into the perverse nature of line near water.

Wilbur stood up and said, apologetically, "Yuh. Three-point mooring. At'll be a fierce tangle 'round your wheel. You let George call Jimmy. He'll fix you right up." He shook his head again, as if this treachery of line against his fellow men (me) was too much to bear, then said, "Why, you know I done this three or four times, I did. Yuh. Done it once when I was going hunting, come out here to get something and wrapped my wheel right up, never did go. Nope." New resolve, a penance, "You know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna sink that son of a buck, yuh. At's what I'm gonna to do. Sink her." That would teach it, his nod said. Yuh.

Jimmy Knowlton arrived, crisply efficient, wearing Levi's and an oxford shirt which disappeared as he stepped inside the folds of a black rubber dry suit, adjusted his mask and regulator, and duckwalked his fins backward

over the edge of the car. Bubbles came up around *Foxfire's* waterline.

I went below to find something sharp to cut my wrists. Sam was heading for the companionway ladder with a box of Triscuits in his mitt. The thought of the freckled kid sitting on yacht cushions eating TV food while the lobstermen hoisted and the hired diver extricated, blew several circuits. I said harsh things to the boy and bid him stay below in his cabin.

In 45 minutes Jimmy had the propeller cleared and the mooring restored. We were made fast to the lobster cars, stern to, and it was time to let go. I gave the helm to the Contender and told her to bring *Foxfire* around to port as soon as I brought up the anchor and let go the last line. She did. Too fast and too reliant on the rack-and-pinion steering of her BMW. In full sight of the assembled lobstermen of Vinalhaven, and as I was leaping back into the cockpit like a roebuck leaping through brush, we ran into the nearest lobsterboat. The bobstay rode up onto his transom and we came to a nodding stop.

Lobstermen's mothers spend years teaching them to be polite: although I think I saw one waterman look away with his eyes tightly closed, there was only professional concern in 24 pairs of eyes for a moment and then they were all studiously examining objects on the other side of the harbor.

"Back down, back down!" I hissed.

But the anchor, which was hanging just below the water's surface, made a grab at the small lobster crate streaming aft of the violated boat (out of habit, probably). As we started backwards the chain came taut and the crate came up out of the water and we were anchored to the lobsterboat.

"Neutral, neutral!" I hissed.

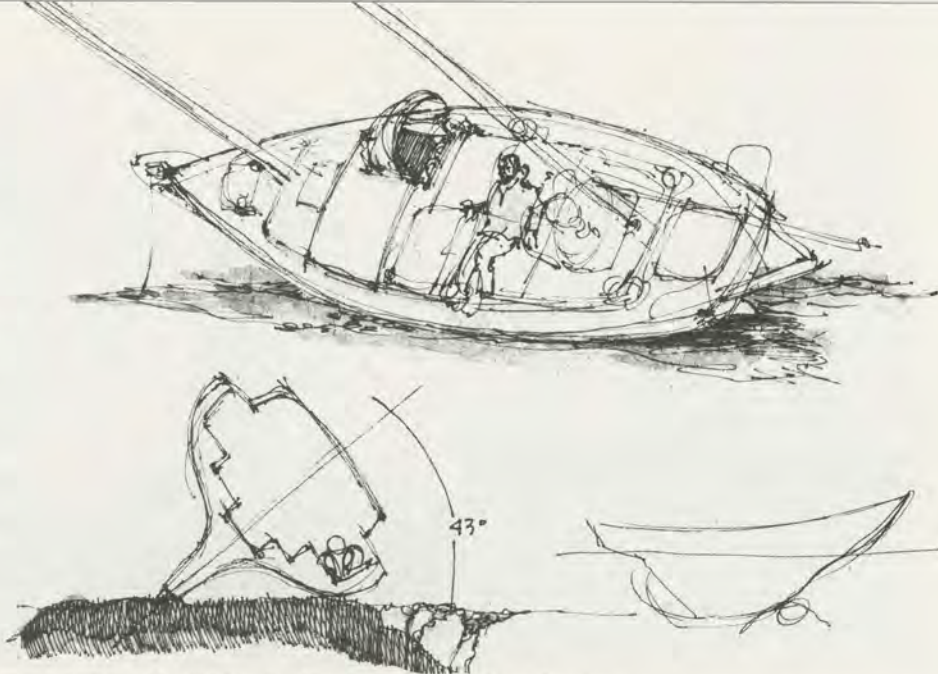
It was a moment's work with Foxfire's beautiful boathook to free us, and we moved off slowly, past the lobster cars. As we passed the lobstermen Wilbur called out, "Where you gonna anchor?"

I pointed to the cove. Two or three pairs of lobstermen looked at each other as if I'd announced that I was converting to Islam. Wilbur said, hesitantly, "Kinda kelpy, ain't it?" I nodded, I'll bet it is. I took the helm and motored into the outer harbor to make careful circles, not even confident of those.

Calls on channel 16 yielded some static but no marina. It was the dapper Jimmy Knowlton, perhaps alerted by the kind lobstermen, who returned — "You need a mooring, Skip?" — and led us up the harbor to a friend's big commercial ball. I lashed down the mooring pendant with several more turns than were necessary. We were on.

Sam let go the dinghy, then.

It floated sweetly across the harbor into the shallows with its oars cocked up in the most despicably lubberly fashion, and I watched it all the way, standing, on the lazarette hatch. I could hear Sam behind me, breathing, occasionally making little sounds in his constricting throat. He was thinking, I'm too young to smoke a cigarette, so I'll only get a blindfold. The dinghy fetched up against a little dock, safe enough but mightily inconvenient. I walked forward to Sam and reached down for the centerboard winch handle.



The author's troubles didn't end at Vinalhaven - but that's another story.

Boy Beaten To Death With Winch Handle By Crazed Dad. Page 1.

I handed the handle to Sam.

Crazed Dad Demands Dutiful Son To Beat Him With Winch Handle. Page 12.

I pointed to the centerboard winch. "All the way down. All the way up." I said. "Then I'll put you ashore at the dock and you can walk around and get the dinghy." One hundred and twenty turns would make him remember. I went below wishing there were a bigger, tougher winch to absolve my own guilt.

But Fraser Walker, who runs the fish plant, was on the harbor with his son in their jaunty Drascombe Lugger, and folks in little boats are always looking for something purposeful, smugglers at heart. Walker & son smuggled me ashore and the dinghy was returned. Sam was forgiven (after the turns), and someone else was forgiven.

It was a necessary removal of an obstacle but a painfully difficult effort of will: I had to forgive myself. I could not absolve myself of the responsibility or persuade myself that I had not anchored stupidly. I could, though, allow that being occasionally stupid was not inconsistent with honor or any of the workable virtues (chastity and temperance elude my aspirations). Could I embrace the idea that a person who anchored stupidly might still be good at heart?

Easy to forgive someone else, much harder to offer comfort to yourself. Why? Guilt is so useful, it is the coin in which we pay debts, buy into ideas, buy out of discomfort. Dispensing with guilt is no easy matter for it has a function, propping up shaky walls in the mind, and tossing it out lightly can be dangerous. To forgive myself for anchoring on short scope in a blow I had to tiptoe around my Fake Beard guilt: gulling simple folks ashore into believing I was a sailor, pretty low considering I was raised in West Virginia. Was Joseph Conrad from West Virginia, I ask you?

They'll find out and strip my epaulettes and beard off, but until then I'm ignobly playing a shallow role with a False Beard. I also skirted the guilt of losing, or of never having, the Captain, a great bolus of angry confusion that intruded on the simplest parts of each day. Father Guilt: I am a poor example to my children; they are growing away from me, growing without guidance or wise counsel: why am I so self-conscious with them; why is Sam so dirty; why don't I feel like Bill Cosby?

So there I am, wrestling like Laocoon with the Blue Guilts on a 41-foot yawl in Vinalhaven harbor, on a good mooring, with food and booze and a pretty lady. Grisly, right? Still, it took an hour or so to admit that the guilt was payment for something, a complex deal in emotional finance, and that giving up the guilt was giving up something else. What? Probably some agreement of ascendance with the Captain, a baring of my clumsy throat in tribute, the shreds of an old, long argument that part of me would miss, once it was gone forever. Forgiving myself for dropping the hook like a roofer would not excise it totally but I felt it going.

"I've forgiven myself." I announced to the Contender.

She smiled with relief. "We wondered how long we'd have to pussyfoot around. I forgave you hours ago."

"Ah, you see, but you don't count when it comes to forgiveness."

Artist, author, and illustrator, ***Jan Adkins*** *has published 23 books, his most recent being* Solstice, Christmas on the Islands of Maine, *Walker & Co. of New York. Formerly Associate Art Director of* National Geographic, *he is again a free-lancer. He has cruised among the islands of Maine since 1970.*

Mariner's Museum, Newport News VA

DAMN GOOD BOAT

A Boat for the Islands

GEORGE PUTZ

In looking for a good general-use boat to recommend for the Maine Archipelago, many craft were considered. First of all, to whom would we speak? Not to fishermen, surely, nor to ensconced rusticators and yachtsmen. We do not go in the way of such danger, and preaching to the choir is useless.

So, we here address the newfledged islander, with this further caveat: Pay no attention to this article. Buy a screwed-up lobsterboat, maintain it yourself until it is compromised beyond your tolerance or skill, and then take what you have learned to a dealer in whatever boat you think may please you. Meanwhile, take some quiet pride in reading the last publication in America that editorially regards a "boater" to be a hat.

Among mariners there is always a politic surrounding boats. There is no such thing as a neutral boat, devoid of expression, meaning, or significance. Minimally, a boat is good or bad, but then also of a type, size, variation in style, place of origin, builder, material and method of construction. A boat is built for a range of purposes, use in certain areas in particular ways, for better or worse under various conditions of weather and sea. Each boat owner takes care of his craft differently, and every boat responds to use and care in unique ways.

Boats, like islands are iconoclastic entities, and firm agreement among seamen as to the virtue and weakness in any one is rare and brief. Traditional boat types are especially subject to passion and sentiment: an endless, natural, hopelessly satisfying conversation that will continue so long as people and water conjoin.

In proposing the New England Boat typified today in the handsome 22-foot inboard launch built by Dick Pulsifer of Brunswick, Maine, as an ideal craft for general use around the islands, we exhume a dozen bones of nautical contention. So, I am going to conduct this discussion based on relic arguments that have haunted every fish house since the first curious sachem dispatched his braves to discover the magic of influenza and smallpox. Looking down on them from the bulwarks of their galleons, Europeans no doubt muttered that it was amazing the damn things (Indian dugouts and bark canoes) floated at all (!), the Indians meanwhile wondering what could ever be the practical use of so unwieldy a vessel as a Renaissance European ship!

So that mariners new to this fray may enter it in good fighting trim, understand that everyone else's idea of what constitutes a Good Boat is a bunch of asinine foolishness. Stand in front of a mirror and say this aloud several times. Then, go down to the (island) village wharf and say in a disgruntled voice something like, "There's no such thing as a 'Friendship Sloop,' and they sail for crap, anyway." If you do not get a response it means that the assembled present are fishermen and could not care less about anything you said.

So then try this one: "Anyone who thinks that the Maine lobster boat came from the Novi boat comes from a peculiar family." If that doesn't work, then point randomly to any boat in the harbor and say that it stinks. There. That will do it. You will then be a veteran, but with some real explaining to do....

You need some background. Mercantile energy of the 19th Century combined with the inherent independence of American immigrants to unleash a wonderful creativity and competence among the marine peoples of the Northeast. Maine was a center of these efforts, not least on the islands, for here were vigorous fishermen, farmers, and foresters whose goods and wherewithal were plasma in the lifeblood of Eastern urban and international trades. They wanted not just boats but always better boats, which requirements condensed into several types of sailing craft whose legacies exist to this day in the form and construction of modern working vessels and many contemporary pleasure craft types, both sail and power.

At the upper size limit of practical local capability, the pinky evolved into the Ameri-

A New England Boat (an early example under sail pictured at left) is the archetypal regular boat, and for that reason a perfect point of departure for anyone who thinks about a general boat for general use in these waters.

can fishing schooner. This conformation was built in a range of forms that in any case included what nautical cognoscenti call relatively high bows, a fine entrance, built-down garboards, moderate sections (bilges neither slack nor angular), moderate beam and depth, a long easy run (the flattening of the after sections of the bottom), a graceful sheer, and the whole ending in a pleasing stern counter, where the after end of the ship overhangs the water.

At the lower size end of boat types two basic forms developed side-by-side, to their own noble service records: the flat-bottomed skiff and the round-bottomed rowboat. The skiff has its own history dating back to the Dark Ages. The rowboat's lineage is more ancient and complex, but in any case found itself on our shores as lighters, ship's yawl boats, captain's gigs, cobles, royal barges, whaleboats, and various other boat types that harken to small craft used by European peoples for inshore work of all kinds. Most important of these are the whaleboat and gig, for whalers ranged the seas in a dangerous occupation, placing high stress on the evolution of boat efficiency and handling.

It was a natural thing that American small craft became evermore efficient and seaworthy, and that a growing middle class, whose wealth often came from maritime business, began to take its pleasures on the sea as well. Meantime, individuals in the marine trades demanded medium-sized craft from which to fish, transport goods, and otherwise work, these combining what was useful from the lines and construction of larger vessels with what was known and desirable in small boats. Among various classic American small craft, the Maine sloop boat and the New England boat were derived.

To dismiss it in a hurry, the Friendship Sloop is unfortunately misnamed, for the type was built all up and down the Maine coast in large numbers. Sixty years ago yachting editors became enamored of specific craft built by the Morses and Carters of Muscongus Bay, and so bestowed the Friendship designation on the type. Later, a lamentable laudit of the sloops for their seakeeping ability by Chapman, the universal boat handling textbook author, fixed forever the name and inappropriate use of the boat (running inlets).

The Friendship Sloop Society is a first-class organization, doing great works for a fine boat type, the Maine sloop boat, that was commonly built for a hundred years by and for Maine coast fishermen who wanted schooner construction scaled to the needs of some types of inshore fishing. Maine islanders (besides the Carters) built hundreds of them before, during, and after the Muscongus boatwrighting springtime.

Other Maine fishermen and boatmen preferred a lighter, shallower, open craft — one that was more flexible in use than the relatively deep and heavily ballasted sloop boat. Toward this end the New England Boat evolved, and again in the residual lights of inappropriate nomenclature, for yet again boat magazine editors popularized the type as the "Hampton Boat," misusing the Smithsonian's (and Maine's!) famous scholar, Howard Chapelle, as their source. Chapelle made a specific point in his seminal *American Small Sailing Craft* to evade the designation. Some very good ones were built on the New Hampshire coast, but far and away most of the boats were Maine, indeed Maine island natives.

Most people who simply look at a New England Boat will immediately recognize it to be just about everything they ever meant by "a boat." It is the archetypal regular boat, and for that reason a perfect point of departure for anyone who thinks about a general boat for general use in these waters.

While the type from time to time and place to place has been radicalized for specific reasons, as in the Crotch (now Cliff) Island Pinky, for open roadstead mooring or for racing, the general type evolved rationally and steadily through the sail era, adapting naturally and easily to powered models after the development of the internal combustion engine.

The boat is moderate in all regards of dimension and scantling (specifications), and begs adaptation to individual quirks and history alike, more so than any other craft one can name, except, perhaps, the barge.

Richard (Dick) Pulsifer of Brunswick is the premier builder of New England boats. By commercial necessity using the "Hampton Boat" name, Pulsifer has built more than 30 of these splendid 22-foot craft, his version in strip pine planking over oak backbone and frames, decked forward and along the washboards, and carrying inboard Yanmar diesel power in either 18 or 27 h.p. Finish and delivered equipment are to owner's specifications, but the basic turnkey boat is about $20,000 at press time, an unheard-of figure in this nautically unreasonable age. It is the finest inboard powered boating value currently offered on the coast of Maine.

Besides its value, why do we single out this craft for island use? As said in the afterward, other kinds of boats are more practical for some kinds of work and play. But no other powered craft available speaks to the mystique of islands, with the mystique of boating, the way this one does. Fishermen will immediately spot it to be in the hull tradition of their occupation, seaworthy and sea-kindly characteristics a matter of fact.

That its wooden construction makes it materially obsolete in some contemporary

Crie family collection

A powered Hampton lobstering early in the century. The stern overhang was not common to the type.

It is honestly and well made of natural materials, and will, after giving service and pleasure, go where we go — back to the earth for recycling.

fleets does not detract from its essential nautical soundness, and certainly not from the fact that Pulsifer delivers them for half the cost of the same sort of boats available in GRP (glass-reinforced plastic). The saving enjoyed would cover much of the price of a half-decade of hard fishing use.

Young fishermen or elderly lobstermen looking for a new boat, up from the outboard of adolescence, or down from the crusher craft of one's prime, would be remiss not to consider a strip-built New England boat.

But it is the pleasure boatman and cottager who is best served by this boat. While in old age strip-built construction presents its own difficulties, in youth and middle age (0-15 years) strip-built craft that receive ordinary good maintenance have none of the nagging problems of carvel and lapstrake boats that are only occasionally used and have to endure long periods of layup. Kept clean, protected, and well ventilated during storage, and given no more than commonsense fit-outs, a pine-stripped, diesel-powered Hampton will serve well for at least a quarter century.

The particular conformation and size of the boat are what are compelling. It will ferry passengers and goods from wharf to island and back forever. At 2500 pounds, it trailers well behind a large sedan and is simplicity to handle on the water.

Yet, it is a real boat, with the feel and capability of a much larger craft. Not a boat to beach-out at picnics, it is nevertheless large enough to stow, carry, or tow ancillary craft with ease, its 28-inch draft allowing safe near-shore anchorage and easy disembarkation to exotic landings. The deck area is frankly huge for this size boat, and a glance at it begs your imagination to churn out ideas about launch settees, camping arrangements, sport fishing layouts, photography/bird or whale watching platforms within the 22' x 6'8" confines of the sheer and rail.

Finally, its potential weakness is also its strength. It is honestly and well made of natural materials, and will, after giving service and pleasure, go where we go — back to the earth for recycling — meanwhile teaching its children to take care of something besides themselves. Some of this is bound to rub off on the island(s), too.

Here is the New England boat, direct ancestor of the Maine lobster boat, and itself the child of its people, conspiring with place to create a beautiful, functional form.

Dennis Griggs

One of Pulsifer's modern Hamptons with a crowd aboard.

AFTERWARD

If you do not affirm the boat-made-of-wood mystique, and many should not, then we suggest options. First, there is a terrifying glut on the used boat market. Grasp hold of a copy of *Soundings* magazine and see what we mean. Asking prices for used boats are pure fish slime, not culpable only because prices of new ones are criminally exorbitant.

Then, give some thought to your real needs and what gives actual pleasure during the time you spend on the water. Do fewer than 100 hours a year justify thousands of dollars spent on what can only be called a flimsy investment? Consider a large family cruising canoe, perhaps a fleet of individual sea kayaks, an aluminum outboard boat with a medium-sized motor, or one of the modern inflatables with a small motor.

Canoes have their own noble tradition in these waters. Properly conformed large cruising canoes, like the Grand Laker, with or without an outboard transom, have given generations of pleasure to island families, who have made training and the acquisition of skill in their youngsters a priority.

The same may be said for sea kayaks, their advantage being that contemporary design technology is now developed to a very high state, and a large network of training and meeting opportunities serve the sport. Membership in the Island Institute's daughter organization, the Maine Island Trail Association, will supply you with all kinds of information on how to enjoy this kind of boating in Maine.

For plain practicality, and corresponding Deep Domestic Happiness, a stoutly built aluminum outboard boat with a medium-power motor has few competitors. Their somewhat hoky aesthetic notwithstanding, they are tough, forgiving, convenient, accommodating, and relatively inexpensive to purchase and maintain. That's a home run with two men left on, somehow...

Finally, inflatable boats have a permanent future along Maine island shores. Wet and not entirely handy, they nevertheless serve with residual safety, go along as asked, and are the best to use in the poor landing conditions presented by many island environments. Rush ashore, leap out, grasp ahold, and stick it in the bushes until time to depart. Too, there are some larger models with GRP bottoms offering more efficient travel between destinations.

Still and all, a proper boat is a proper boat, and even if an indulgence, a boat cared for and well found is a joy. The New England boat sets atop most reasonable options.

Jack of all Trades

The Crowells of Kimball Island

Mrs. Robert W. Tilney, Jr.

Arctic survival specialist, sailor, Maine island fisherman, Antarctic consultant, homesteader — are some of the terms to describe the long and full life of Jack Crowell of Kimball Island.

Crowell's adventurous years in the Arctic are worth a book in themselves for his work there spanned many decades, from close association with famous explorers to advisory work with the military that continued until he was in his 70's. But always he and his wife Alice returned to the islands around Isle au Haut and, from the 1930's on, to their home on Kimball Island, just across the narrow thorofare from Isle au Haut. Some of the aspects of that island life are told here.

NATHANIEL BARROWS

Q. You first really started living on Kimball Island about 1937, so you would have lived there almost 50 years now.

A. Yes. What I want to point out though is that when you speak of us as island people, Alice was the island person. She knew more about the islands than I ever did. But we've also been away from that island for a total of 17 years.

Q. It was your home base the whole time?

A. Yes. So we went through a lot of island living. No doubt about that. But I am not by any means an authority on Isle au Haut and the area.

Q. When you first built the house in 1937, how did you get it all together?

A. We bought the lumber from Arthur Barter in Deer Isle. It was loaded on a scow in Stonington, which belonged to his brother Ralph. Alice and I went after it. We had the Burnt Island boat that belonged to Mrs. Holmes.

They had already loaded up and we hooked onto her and started for the island. The weather, coming easterly, was getting worse all the time. The barge began to get a list; she was leaking. So by the time we were going across Merchants Row she was really dancing around and I was wondering whether we'd lose the lumber. Ralph sent a boy with a motor boat to help me out if he could, I suppose, and he came alongside on the starboard side of the barge. His boat got away from him somehow or other and she struck her nose up against the barge and hurt her. She began to leak so badly that he had to hightail it back home.

We finally got down across the bar at Isle au Haut. We ran the barge ashore on Kimball's at high water. During a heavy rain storm I worked that night alone to unload all the rough lumber for that house. Alice stayed overnight on Isle au Haut with Lizzie Rich at the old post office. Of course we had very inadequate gear to get the lumber up the hill to the building site.

Q. At that time there was no one else living on Kimball?

A. That's right. We were still working on Burnt Island. That was our source of income.

Q. You and Alice were alone pretty much the whole time on Kimball?

A. Well, no, Frank Barton, the man who owned it, lived in another house on the island. He was getting old and had no source of income at all. So he continued to live there. When we were away, he sometimes

When you are on the islands you can't have a garden at all unless you've got a high fence. It has to be high and it has to be strong for the deer...the bucks can tear the wire right out of the garden fence.

Revere Memorial Library, Isle au Haut (2)

Jack and Alice Crowell on Kimball Island with Isle au Haut in the background.

went to his people here on the mainland. I don't know where it was. He died on Kimball Island.

We had a few sheep and we worked very hard. We had a garden and, of course, like most people do when they go new to a place like that, we were young and bit off more than we could chew. We had a garden, a great garden we'd started on land that hadn't been worked for a long time. There had been a farm on the place many years earlier.

Frank had an old horse. There was a plow laying on the island, a real old-time half-broken thing, and an old busted harrow. So we thought, well, Frank has a horse and a plow so we can get plowed up. But this was comedy.

The harness he had was held together with baling wire and pot warps. We finally got old Joe hooked up to the plow and Joe was a wise old boy. We got the plow straight to make the first furrow and Frank says, "Come on, Joe," and the horse would just look around at him. It would take two or three minutes to get him going and when he did, he wouldn't go more than two, three, four yards and he'd stop again. We never did get it really plowed up. But this was the sort of gear we had to work with, and the type of work that we did.

We bought some sheep; and that's another thing that I hear a lot of talk about now. People might raise sheep down there but I don't think it's a good idea. They could have a few sheep if they wanted meat for themselves. But since then the islands are now even less suited for sheep because of a great surge of this skunk spruce that has taken all the fields. But we had sheep up until, and even after, we left. Dennis Eaton looked after some of our sheep and he put some of his own over there. It's good to have meat for yourself, but you don't appreciate the work that goes into them. They're wild, almost like deer.

Q. Did you have to fence your garden in so the sheep wouldn't browse the garden?

A. Oh yes. When you are on the islands you can't have a garden at all unless you've got a high fence. It has to be high and it has to be strong for the deer. But we found out, on Kimball at least, when the deer begin to get hungry in the fall, the bucks can tear the wire right out of the garden fence.

Q. Did you ever have electricity out there at all?

A. We do now. In the beginning we had just a bucket for the well. After the war we finally got a generator and a pump. You talk about hard work! My well is 400 feet from the house. By hand, I dug a trench to below the frost line through everything but the ledges and boulders. I got the boulders out, but for the ledges we had to have people come down from the power company in Stonington with a compressor to blow them out.

Something like that takes up a lot of time. And all the while we were trying to make a living fishing. So this is one of the reasons that we were driven out the first time. Our first source of electricity was a Windcharger.

Q. When did you get the cable over from Isle au Haut?

A. Just two years ago.

Q. Did you have any trouble with fire on the island at all?

A. There had been a fire shortly before we went on the island and that didn't burn the whole island but it come down pretty close to the area where the house is. But the only thing that we saw were the blackened stumps. We have never had any serious fire since then.

Q. Have you had any trouble with people bothering your place? Boaters, campers?

A. We've had a few altercations with people who just come ashore and don't understand. They would want to picnic and they'd just start a fire without asking if it was OK. I've seen them come at high tide, so they would start a fire close to the woods with a southwest wind blowing. Then they would really get upset because I would go down and make them quit. But in late years I haven't had that.

Q. How big is Kimball Island?

A. There's around 400 acres. But it's owned now by three different people.

Q. When you lived there were you pretty much dependent on Isle au Haut or Stonington?

A. Yes, that's something I think most of the younger people now haven't had any experience with. When we were there in the '30's it was common for everybody to lay in their staples for the winter. Of course, we lived much more on salted stuff and bulk. They were things that you could keep without refrigeration. If you get a firm freeze up of the bay it cuts you off two or three weeks. Nowadays it would just be an inconvenience because nobody would let anybody starve, and you've got all the helicopters and communications we didn't have before. Although we did have aircraft, they were World War I planes on skis.

We got caught by ice in the early '30's, I don't know whether it was 1932 or 1933, when we were working on Burnt Island. We left and went to Gloucester for the Christmas holidays and stayed quite awhile. We came back sometime in early February. We got as far as Rockland. None of the steamers were running because the bay had already frozen up.

So we stayed in the old Thorndike Hotel. Esther Robinson was there. Esther was Billy Robinson's grandmother and she had been taken off of the island just as the freeze up began by the old Kickapoo because her mother had died over in Rockland. We stayed on, I don't know how many days, in the Thorndike.

Then along came a young man, I think his name was Boynton. He'd made a name for himself flying across the continent, which was a big deal then. He went to Boston and got an old World War I crate. She was on skis. He said he would fly us and Esther over to Isle au Haut. He was making a little business out of it then. So we got ready and we went up early one morning. It was bitter cold but

a bright clear day. We went up to the air field and got in the plane.

The pilot got in and pressed the buttons and the engine whirred around and nothing happened. The engine wouldn't start — no gasoline. He went and got a barrel of gasoline and put that into her, and we rolled out onto the runway in order to take off. The plane ran the distance of the short runway but she wouldn't take off.

He said to me, "Jack, we'll go back and try again. Now, if you will get out and run alongside the aircraft until she begins to lift, and then jump in, why I think we are going to make it." Which we did.

So we got up in the air and could look out to see over the bay. Just as far as you could see was ice. We flew over to Vinalhaven and he said, "Oh, yes, I have an errand to do here.

"So we dropped down over the cemetery and dropped a wreath. I began to wonder by this time maybe we better hang onto the wreath. We might need it. Over Isle au Haut Bay the engine began to spit and miss. The pilot was pushing this little gadget in the dashboard, I don't know what it was, but it was leaking and the gasoline was coming back into the aircraft. Alice began to get sick since she was sitting alongside of the pilot.

Anyway, we got to Isle au Haut and came in over Head Harbor, over Les Grant's house, and landed on the frozen lake. It was really cold. We put our gear off to one side. Alice and I had plenty of warm clothes but Esther wasn't really dressed for that type of weather.

The pilot tried to turn the aircraft around but she wouldn't go. He couldn't get power enough so again he turned to me and he said, "Jack, if you'll get on one wing and the two girls get ahold of the tail and push then I'll gun her and maybe she'll go around." We did that and she got around all right, but Esther got a frozen face out of it. Right in that prop wash. It was 35 below. That's the coldest it had ever been recorded down there.

Jack and Alice Crowell at Thule, Greenland.

Bert Nevells, Nora Grant's son, came up in a little Ford, and we all went down to Les Grant's. The pilot got off but we heard later that he didn't get any farther than North Haven, so I guess maybe the plane is still there. We went down to Nora and Les Grant's, and good Lord, she had a big clam chowder on the stove, with these big white dumplings on top of it. We stayed there that night, and the next morning Bert took me up in his little automobile up to Burnt Island thorofare. We walked across to Burnt Island.

I got the stove going. I'd left a part of a bag of potatoes underneath the stove when we left and, my gracious, when I yanked them out, it sounded like beach rocks inside there. This was an old house. When we first went there it had been unoccupied so long that the small panes of glass in the windows had shaken back and forth so the mullions were thinner on the bottom and you could put your fingers through the window in the space on top. We lived there several years.

This was an old house.... it had been unoccupied so long that the small panes of glass in the windows had shaken back and forth so the mullions were thinner on the bottom and you could put your fingers through the window in the space on top.

Q. Did you walk across the ice from Burnt Island to Isle au Haut over the years when you lived there?

A. Yes. Irville Barter drove a small, very light Ford truck over the ice. You speak of walking across the ice; my birthday is Feb. 17 and on that night in the early '30's after supper I happened to be looking out the window across the thorofare and there were some lights coming down the hill on Isle au Haut, and a whole crowd of people came across the ice to the island. They stayed until midnight.

Q. You were used to ice from your polar experience?

A. Yes. But since then I've become leery of salt water ice because of what I've seen in the north where we worked a lot putting in runways on different kinds of ice. People don't realize that if you get a cover of ice in the bay, say a foot thick, which it seldom does here, the water underneath is not freezing. It's warm enough to melt the ice underneath in moving water. If you get current running, this can wear out in just a matter of hours.

You asked if we walked across to Burnt Island. We walked from in front of the house around Birch Point on Isle au Haut and over to see Clyde Turner and his wife. We stayed there one afternoon talking and towards evening we started home. This was when the ice was at its thickest, perhaps 12 inches. We reversed the course and when we got out about where Point Lookout Club wharf is now, the ice began to undulate. There was a swell working in from offshore, and before we got to Birch Point the ice had broken. By the time we got home we were jumping across the cracks.

I think it was that first year, before the days of radio, the mainlanders were getting nervous about people on Isle au Haut. There were several weeks when nobody got up to the mainland although they had been walking up occasionally dragging a sled with the mail. So two National Guard planes appeared overhead and dropped a note to us wanting to know if everybody was OK. With the note was a coil of line and two sticks on the end of it. The instructions were to "tell us what you need."

The people wrote a note answering back saying we were OK and we didn't need anything. We attached the note to the rope and stretched it out on the frozen thorofare. They came down with a hook and picked it up. We were better off really than they were on the mainland. "No colds, no accidents - well fed!" was the message.

Q. There aren't too many people in the world who live on an island by themselves. What were the things that you really liked about that experience about living on an island by yourself with your wife?

A. In the first place I was fortunate to have a girl that liked it; not only liked it but had both the ability and the character to live alone with somebody.

Q. Is there a special mystique living on an island?

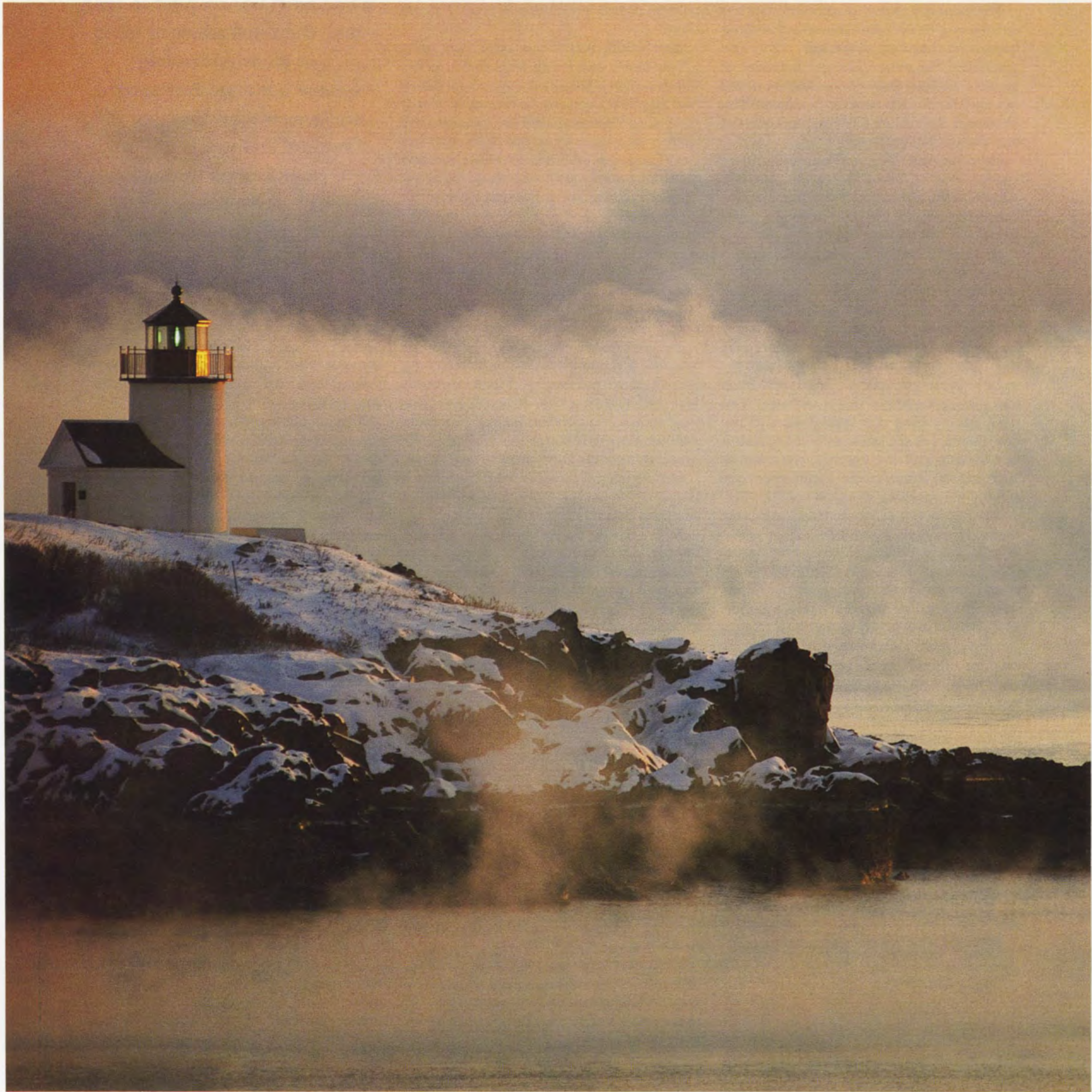
A. I don't see why there should be except the fact that you begin to realize after awhile that the people around you are potential saviors. You and I can be fighting like hell, but if I get my hand caught in the crank of the engine out in the bay somewhere and need help, you'll come.

Alice was particularly suited for island living. She loved it. Anything to do with it. She did a man's work. Strong at the time. She'd do anything that she had to do and not feel that she was being imposed on. We'd go fishing together a lot. We had a lot of fun at times. But like any family sometimes you work too hard, both of you get all steamed up. But if you are willing to pass that right off, everything works out.

Q. What are the things you liked least about living on Kimball Island?

A. Nat, sitting here, there is nothing on Kimball Island that's wrong except for not having Alice.

***Nathaniel Barrows**, Editor and Publisher of* Island Ad-Vantages *and other publications in the Stonington are, interviewed Crowell in December 1986 a few months before his death.*



Peter Ralston

Splicing the Lights

Interview with Joe Johansen

Joe Johansen is one of the few individuals whose 20-year Coast Guard career with lighthouses spans the old "wicky" days of incandescent vapor through electronic automation. This interview pops the lid on this transitional chapter in maritime history and gives us a view into the day-to-day lives of those individuals who were totally wrapped up in lighthouses. In Johansen's view, the automation of lighthouses is both an economic necessity as well as a sad end to an era when many islands and mainland heads had a "pair of eyeballs" fixed on the horizon. What comes through in this interview is that Joe Johansen came full circle in the Coast Guard. His first two years were spent on Ram Island Ledge maintaining its incandescent vapor light, and at the end of his career he and his crew laid the cable that automated Ram. What doesn't come through in this interview is that following his retirement from the Coast Guard, he has lived yet another life on the Maine coast. Since 1974 Joe has been the manager and head boatman at the National Audubon Society Ecology Camp on Hog Island in Bremen. In this capacity Joe leads natural history trips to the islands in Muscongus Bay, visiting many of the same islands he worked on while in the Coast Guard. Talk about coming full circle!

JJ: I was an assistant keeper on Ram Island Ledge Light in 1949-50. At the time, I even liked it out there. Like I always say about Ram Island Ledge, you could have been living in the 1800's because, other than the link with the radio, there were no conveniences at all. Nothing.

You went up a ladder onto a pier where there was a 15-foot peapod hanging on davits. That was your access for going shopping over to Cushing or Peaks Island around two miles away. When I first was on Ram, we rowed there and back.

It was lonesome in a way, but you never really were lonely, because there were always two of you aboard. In the winter, the nights were kind of long because you split the watch. As opposed to nowadays, when you just throw a switch, you really had to maintain a watch. You usually stood watch in the galley, because that's where your only source of heat was: a kerosene stove, which we used for cooking and heat.

The tower light was a little chimney affair with a vaporizer and a cheesecloth mantle. The mantle was really the light bulb. To run the light, you had to pump up a tank which fed air pressure to the kerosene, and then you'd go up and heat up your vaporizer to get it hot enough to vaporize the oil. Then you would touch it off.

IJ: So it was constant maintenance of the system?

JJ: Sure, because you really had to work at it. The light mechanism turned a tremendous second-order lens. Before doing anything with the light, you'd wind up the gear mechanism, which was controlled by a weight that went down the center of the tower. This created tension on the gears, and they turned the whole turntable, which was in a bath of mercury — all enclosed. You couldn't see the mercury. That was the lubrication to allow this tremendous turntable with the lens on it to revolve. Every hour and a half the weight would about reach the bottom. So you had to go up there and crank it up all night along, every hour and a half.

Joe Johansen at the helm of **Osprey** *at Hog Island.*

But if you missed that hour and a half and kind of conked out down there in the galley, the revolutions would stop, you'd lose your characteristics, and somebody would report you. That was really a ding on your record. Once in a while, I did, but certainly not for any length of time.

IJ: How long was a typical stint out there before liberty?

JJ: The normal stint was 24 days on and six off. It was pretty primitive because you didn't have a heck of a lot of bathing facilities. For instance, we bathed in an old steel tub.

IJ: There was no house attached to Ram Island?

JJ: No, we lived right in the hundred-foot tower.

IJ: So it was really like life aboard a ship in many ways.

JJ: Yes, but certainly it couldn't be compared to a lightship. That was really tough duty, in my estimation. I was never aboard one. But there you had to ride it out. At least on a lighthouse, even though it was kind of lonesome, we were pretty well anchored.

IJ: Did your anchor ever drag there?

JJ: No. She vibrated once in a while. The tower was built of 3 ft. by 3.5 ft. granite blocks, as were all of these so-called water-washed lighthouses like this. Of course, the most famous is Minots off Boston.

IJ: And Boone, probably, Half-Way Rock...

JJ: This is as closely related to Minots as you could be because Ram Island Ledge rises right out of the sea, as does Minots. Of course there the ledge very seldom ever bares, where on Ram Island Ledge you do have ledge at very low water. But at a place like Half-Way Rock or Boone Island you always have rock, even at high water. So a person has some square footage to roam around, no matter how high the tide is on those two.

After a person arrived on the pier, there was another ladder to climb, this one to the system room, below which was the fresh water supply. Going up from there, the next level was the galley, then the sleeping quarters, gear room, and then the storm pane and the second-order lens.

To show you how primitive it was, there was not even a drain through the tower. Underneath the sink, we had a slop bucket. Whenever "high tide" reached the edge of the bucket, we'd have to take that pretty carefully down and flip it over the side. Toilet facilities were on the dock. That was just a two-holer.

IJ: The wind must have whistled there in winter.

JJ: It was kind of exciting when the tide was up and the seas were crashing. You'd sit your stern on there and, boy, sometimes you'd get chased off pretty good!

One time I got stuck on the light for 45 days in the winter. It got to be pretty sparse, in the old locker. We wound up eating oatmeal three times a day for about five or six days. We did have powdered milk, but then we never did get fresh milk out there.

During these days, most of the lights were stag stations — the island lights anyway. Some of the mainland lights still had Lighthouse Service old-timers and they'd have families. But there were very few Lighthouse Service people still involved on the islands. The last three I can recall were Curtis Island in Camden, Burnt Island in Boothbay, and Squirrel Point up on the Kennebec River. These oldtimers were so wrapped up in their lighthouses, they were unbelieveably fastidious. I remember one day on Burnt Island in Boothbay. We went to walk in the house to have a cup of coffee and we had to take our shoes off. You could see your face in the deck.

So when I say I've worked on all these light stations, I mean *all* of them.

It's easy to understand, because they spent so much time on these lights it was their whole life. That was true even back in the old days when they'd be lucky to get ashore two or three days a month. And sometimes they wouldn't go then because it was too much trouble to get back and forth, especially in wintertime.

As for me, after two years on the light, I left. I think they figured you'd go a little whacko if you stayed longer than that. They cranked me into the base in South Portland. I was only there about a week before getting assigned to the schooner *John Hathaway*. She was built in Friendship, Maine, I don't know the year, but I do know that her owners figured it was more profitable to run rum than it was to go dragging for fish. She had an engine in her. As you know, during the period from 1920 to 1933, Prohibition was in effect. So they ran rum. On June 1, 1929, the Coast Guard cutter *Wilkes* caught the *Hathaway* southeast of Georges Shoal with a load of alcohol aboard. They confiscated the whole thing.

She was turned over to the Coast Guard on October 2, 1929. So she had been around a while when I got here; in fact, I was the last skipper of her and I put her out of commission in 1956.

She was used primarily as a cable-layer at first. That didn't work out. Having been wrapped up in this cable business, I can certainly see why. So finally she was used to work on all the fixed aids to navigation on the New England coast within the confines of the First Coast Guard District, which encompasses the area from the Canadian border on down to the Connecticut border. The job was to go to and from all these lights, carrying building materials, repairing or building new boat slips, making repairs to the dwellings, shingling roofs, whatever had to be done.

IJ: Including the island light stations?

JJ: All the island light stations. So when I say I've worked on all these light stations, I mean all of them.

IJ: So you became kind of the supply vessel for the island lights?

JJ: Supply and repair. Mostly repair. I consider the *Hathaway* was the last of the real true lighthouse tenders. I put the *Hathaway* out of commission in 1956. The Coast Guard wanted to replace her but they didn't know what the heck they wanted. Then they found an old Army T-boat. It was a very fine hull, but it needed a lot of work down below to bring it up to speed. We put her in commission in April 1957 and went back to doing the same thing as before — supply and repair.

IJ: Were you working with some of the same guys from the rum-runner?

JJ: Yes. The head of personnel in Boston asked me, "Who do you want aboard her?" I said, "Well, I'd like to have a couple of Maine guys because those outside of Maine don't like all that remoteness up there." He filled the billet nicely and a couple of Maine men came aboard. They enjoyed it. I was aboard this one for four years and then was given command of the Coast Guard cable layer.

She, too, was a former landing craft revamped in Curtis Bay, Md. I commanded her for the last eight years I was in the Coast Guard, and continued hitting all the lighthouses. You can see how almost all my 21 years in the Coast Guard were completely wrapped around this lighthouse business. What we did with this boat was lay and repair all the telephone, power, and control cables that linked the lighthouses with the mainland.

IJ: Can you give us a sense of what some of the projects involved?

JJ: Our home port was Portsmouth, N. H. You'd think in the wintertime, you'd kind of lay low, but that certainly wasn't the fact with this vessel, because what causes problems with underwater cable is primarily sea conditions. As you know, you have your bad weather in the wintertime in places like Mt. Desert Rock, Matinicus, Half-Way Rock, and so forth. We'd almost invariably have cable troubles at these places in the wintertime. For instance, we laid a replacement telephone cable to Monhegan, I think it was in 1961. That's ten miles of cable.

In this instance, it would be delivered to the base in Rockland. We only had the capability of loading one mile of cable on each of our two reels. In weight, this two miles of cable might come to 18-20 tons. When we had filled our two reels, we'd proceed to Marshall Point. That was the termination for Monhegan.

We'd always worked the tide up and coming to get that shore end in. Our vessel

Johansson family collection

Johansen and his crew aboard the Coast Guard cablelayer.

had very shallow draft. We'd go right into the rocks, tie the end of the cable to the pole or existing termination. We'd take the bolts out of the reels to let them free wheel and then back off. There was a braking system on the reels. One guy would be on the brake, another in the bow. There was only four of us. I'd always be on the controls. We'd go ahead with the cable going over a roller in the bow and ultimately to the bottom.

At the end of the first mile we'd simply slow down, stop, get the end coming off the forward reel, and put it in a big splicing rack with chain binders on it. Then we'd take the end off the second reel and splice the two cables together. This was a process that would take about a couple of hours, to unwind all the neoprene, canvas, and jute wrappings spun on the wire, and finally we'd get down to the conductors.

The only thing that made the splice impervious to water was anhydrex tape. If water ever got to those conductors, the cable would ground. We never, in eight years, threw over a wet splice. It's amazing that the stuff could work so well.

So with the splice in, we'd lay the other mile and buoy it. After that, it was back to Rockland to start the same process all over again. This would keep up until we got there. So it might take six or seven days to lay ten miles of cable — simply because we had to spend so much time going to and fro.

IJ: What about repairing cable?

JJ: To shoot trouble on a cable was where the fun came in, where the challenge was. It always happened in the winter. In the summertime, you'd never have any problems — maybe we'd do some laying of new cable or some repairs that we knew had to be repaired. But in the wintertime, we were right out straight. That's when we'd end up in a place like Matinicus, trying to pick decent weather and always getting caught in something.

IJ: What was a typical repair?

JJ: With a telephone cable, you could virtually see the problem, because the seas would chew up the armor wire right down to the conductors. But if you had power cable, you could have a tiny pinhole and never see where the trouble was.

With a down power cable, we'd take it up on the reels. When there was one section of cable aboard, we would hook it up to a big transformer that would develop 12,000 volts. If there was a pinhole in that cable on that first layer, you'd see fire shoot right out of it. That's the only way you could determine where your ground was.

This was dangerous work, so we always had the same guys doing the same thing. Everybody was a pro. We didn't have to say anything unless we came into something we couldn't fathom. Then we'd all gather in the pilot house and have a summit meeting and say, "How the heck do we get out of this?"

I remember we laid a Minots power cable and then went back there almost a month to the day. It was unbelievable when we found the problem. Here is this power cable 2.5 inches in diameter; it weighs 4.5 pounds/foot. That cable had only been there a month, but it was like someone took a hacksaw and cut that thing right clean. Must have been lying just on the right kind of ledge. Tremendous seas, if you know Minots.

IJ: Are there any repairs that stick out in your mind?

JJ: Matinicus Rock and Mt. Desert Rock certainly are two of the stars. Every winter. You could plan on it.

For instance, here comes a storm. Southeast. Monhegan goes out. You know darn well — common sense is going to tell you — that if the storm is southeast, the problem isn't going to be out at Monhegan itself because that's protected. The cable went right in close to where the town landing is. It's certainly not going to be in deep water. It could have been at Burnt Island or the shore end at Marshall Point, because that's where everything would funnel in. So we started at Marshall Point and, sure enough, I think within 3,000 feet we found the problem. Very simple. I think it only took a couple of days and that was fixed. That was right in the middle of the winter.

IJ: Did you get into any tough situations with your boat?

JJ: If we were going into a classic Northeaster or Northwester, a lot of spray might come aboard and freeze and the boat take on a list. There was no radar, no Fathometer. Nothing except a magnetic compass. I steamed from Canada to Connecticut, up and down all the time, in and around all the islands, and never went aground. I've been screwed up a lot. I've seen kelp where there shouldn't be kelp — ahead of me, on the starboard, on the port. But I always managed to get out. But the wintertime, the big thing, especially on this cable-layer, was ice.

IJ: Did you ever think you were about to buy it?

JJ: Our worst time was a very short run. We were trying to make it home one year right before Christmas. We left Gloucester and got into Ipswich Bay when we were hit by a classic Northeaster. Snow just like that! Horizontal. In those days, there were still wooden lobster buoys around and we didn't have any cage on this thing. Our twin propellers would suck those buoys in from a few feet off. So we had to be very alert.

We cranked the hatches down. It's no exaggeration, the whole inside of the pilot house was iced up. Virtually every minute or minute and a half, my face was all frozen and I would have to take a rag and thaw my face out so I could see. We started listing and I wasn't sure if we were going to make Portsmouth or not. The only alternative was to turn our stern to it and go back, but we didn't really know where we were. You can try to relate it to your watch, but visually you don't know where you are. Of course, we made it all right, but we had one heck of a list on that vessel when we got in to Portsmouth.

IJ: When you were out there laying cables, you were helping to automate these lights. Was it just a job then or did you have any strong feelings about helping to unman the lighthouses?

JJ: At the time, I didn't think that strongly of it. But to emphasize how I've come full circle on this, consider Ram Island Ledge, which was the newest lighthouse on the Maine Coast — 1905 — and yet the oldest as far as modernization was concerned, with the most primitive living conditions of any light. Talk about coming full circle, living there in the 1940's and then laying the power cable to it in the late 1960's.

IJ: One of the things you were doing was plugging in these isolated stations with an electric umbilical cord back to the mainland. It was mostly stag lights that were being automated, and you really can see why for Matinicus Rock and places like that.

JJ: You can see it in one sense. Probably in all of this you can blame technology, which has forged ahead and left the lighthouses behind. Their remoteness works against them, and now there is the technical capability so that you don't have to have personnel there. But still, I've always said that on places like Mt. Desert Rock and Matinicus Rock, despite all the technology, there's still nothing like having people there in case of bad weather. In the event of an accident at sea or a breakdown of the light, there would at least be someone there to call for help if they can't provide the help themselves.

So in all of this technology and automation, I still think it's a step backwards myself. I think you could always find people to go out to these remote places for a period of time. And in these days, it's even more important, I think, because people want to get away more, they want some isolation, some time to be alone. This is so even in the minds of young people. I think you could still always find people who would go out there.

Little River Naturalist

Memoirs of Myron Corbett

A few years ago, our good friend Delia Mae Farris of Cutler sent us a book-length manuscript written by her uncle, Myron L. Corbett, who had spent his youth as a lighthouse keeper. The Corbett family stations were at Little River, Manana, and Southern islands, and his writing is redolent of the special human events and poignant sentiments that always infused life at the family lights. Fully half of his stories have to do with his observations of the wild and semi-domestic animal life that always attended the stations, and some few of these are offered here. It is a lovely kind of folk science, beginning with...

Corbett family collection (2)

THE BLACK DUCK MINK

A LONE BLACK DUCK was alternately gaining the pinnacle of a big ledge in front of the house, losing that perch in a gust of wind, and returning to it, only to be blown away again. For reasons of his own he had forsaken the calm and quiet of a lee to try to maintain this treacherous roost.

A certain amount of stalking and skulking were necessary to arrive at shooting range, so the gunning delegate, taking advantage of any cover available, set out on his mission. The stand of spruce on the north side of the house was good initial cover.

Before this hunter had gone very far, it became evident that something else had a taste for black duck, and eaten raw would be good enough. The intentions of a mink sneaking around at the base of the ledge were obvious to Dad, who hastily donned some foul weather gear, grabbed his gun, and left the house, taking the southerly route to the scene.

Thus the drama deepened, with one innocent duck the target of two stalkers, and one of the latter the target of a third: the first hunter, with only duck on his mind, was the mink, feeling he had all the right in the world, zeroing in on the bird; and Dad, seeing dollar signs in the black pelt, working to get within range of the mink.

Never had so little triggered so much action and pursuit, all of which was right out in the open so far as the rest of the family was concerned. We were in just the right position to see every move made by both humans and the black duck hunter from the wild.

In the case of the mink in pursuit of the bird, it is just as well to confess that, left to its own devices, that wily creature would not have failed to succeed. The bird was back-to his stalker, facing into the easterly wind, and would have never suspected anything was creeping up on him until he had been taken.

From the kitchen window we could see the mink in his stalk, skirting this or that knobby promontory, until at last he had arrived at the point where a quick spring would close the gap. An unplanned bit of near-perfect timing also saw both gunners arrive at what seemed to them proper range, the first hunter to have left the house totally unaware of the presence of the mink or of Dad closing in with his shotgun.

The time for everything and everyone to reveal their intentions was at hand, and there was a fast moving sequence of events.

First, another gust of wind lifted the duck into the air, causing the mink to spring a bit early. There was the sharp crack of a .22 rifle from the left side of the arena, and the crashing boom of a shotgun from the right.

It is in the nature of poetic justice that the prime target in this drama flew off unharmed. The mink quickly scooted out of sight into the cover of a crevice, and the synchronization of the gunshots was such that the bearer of the .22 was startled to hear such an earth-shaking blast when he pulled the trigger of his little gun.

One of the most fecund yet insecure of island animal populations is that of the cottontail rabbit.

BOUNTIFUL BUNNIES

My boyhood days on various lighthouse stations were complete and interesting enough so that I never wished for a different background. The things of nature were present in numbers that outweighed everything else, for knowing what conditions gave rise to situations is a prime start in the appreciation of nature and everything else in life.

So it was with the short-lived rabbit population of Little River Light Station. This island seemed like a perfect spot for a colony, and various signs pointed to the fact that such at one time had existed. The swamp in back of the light tower seemed lacking without them, and the abundance of grass and browse lent a feeling of plenty.

One day a walk through the woods on the mainland resulted in the capture of a tiny baby rabbit about the size of a man's fist. Too young to be afraid, he or she went into a large coat pocket and was later released on the island. There it was, an infant loosed in a world far too big to comprehend, and, no doubt, unable to look after itself.

A month or so later a half grown rabbit attempted to cross the mainland baseball diamond during practice. There were legs enough around to run it down and once more, he or she was placed in a bag and later turned loose on the island.

Wonder of wonders, we had a Jack and Jill! Had it been otherwise there would have been much in the way of frustration and lack of fullfillment on the part of each. But here on this six-acre island, sculpted away from the mainland countless centuries ago, these two snowshoe rabbits met in wonder, knew fulfillment, and brought forth young.

Strange as it may seem, there was never a sign that they had survived until Dad spotted an adult and eight or ten small ones in a field one night as he was lighting the tower lamp. To us, the news bordered on the miraculous, and, as they grew to adulthood, it was a challenge to try to find them in the woods and spy on their habits. They were wild in every way, and it was a good education watching them browse or nap on the sunnyside of a tree trunk ready to dart quickly out of sight.

Fall came, and a thinning-out process took place. Sixteen plump and full grown animals found their way to the table in stews, roasts, and mincemeat. An interesting side issue to dressing them off was the saving of hearts, liver, and kidneys. This was a loser, as they all tasted just like spruce buds and went entirely lacking of appreciation.

The removal of 16 of their number still left a fair representation, and things looked good for another year but for an unforseen calamity. Spring came and the hot days of summer followed. Other interests kept us from being too concerned about the rabbits. After all, they were supposed to be prolific, so why worry?

During that summer we had noticed a curiously foul odor from somewhere in the vicinity of the steps to the barn. The sweltering days of August forced an investigation that revealed 13 dead rabbits piled together under the steps.

The finger of suspicion pointed in one direction only. Our cat, operating entirely at night, had done away with every single bunny on the island. So stealthily had he gone about it that we never suspected a thing. There was never a trace of blood as this tiger of the hearth, deigning to partake of furry flesh, simply murdered for the sake of killing.

Thus ended the rabbit game, and they took their places as ex-residents of the island, along with the red squirrels of an

The Corbetts (and ghost cow) at Little River Lighthouse, 1934.

earlier period, likely exterminated by yet another cat.

Lest one feel sorry for the rabbits and squirrels and cast the cat in the role of eternal conqueror, let it be known that a buck rabbit on occasion can give a pretty good account of himself.

Out of the distant past comes the picture of an outraged domestic buck kicking the daylights out of my pet tomcat, who had made the mistake of invading the bunny's harem.

This unpardonable breach resulted in such a sound thrashing of the conceited feline that we ended up burying it roughly a week after the encounter.

Finally, words about summer visitors seem to have been as unavoidable in the old days as they are now.

FROM OUT OF THE BLUE

It was too late to be a World War I scare, and too early to have been a part of the frightening World War II goings-on, yet, for the want of a better description, it was most surely a submarine that was approaching Cutler Harbor in the wide gap between Machias Seal Island and the Southern tip of Grand Manan.

September and school were only hours away that rather hot day when distant objects loomed mirage-like and magnified above the horizon.Thus the spectacle of an invisible hull with only a stubby mast or periscope showing, pointed in one direction only. If it were a sub, it would have to be reported to the Cross Island Coast Guard immediately.

However, before the worst was assumed, it deserved a closer look through the binoculars. Like the UFOs of the future, that UM(motoring)O revealed itself to be about as far fetched and out of its element as the flying objects. At least we were unaccustomed to being visited by people so frivolous and foolhardy as to cross the Bay of Fundy from Yarmouth, N.S., in a 13-foot skiff!

In addition, it was not an ordinary, leaky, patched-up and ticklish vessel of wood, but instead an aluminum, unsinkable, and very stable craft, captained by a lanky, erudite, and adventurous person of some stature as a faculty member of an eastern college. The skiff's other member was his young son, about 12 years old.

It was the skipper's need to stand erect while navigating that had caused the illusion. Adding to our surprise, this skiffload of the most sophisticated camping and marine gear we had ever seen chose to land on the island, ignoring the promise of the minor metropolis of Cutler, just inboard of Little River Island.

"Would it be possible to pitch a tent and have a fire on the beach?" the small-boat pilot asked. That was agreeable to keeper Willie Corbett.

The next surprise came when the senior member of the visiting party decided that a dip before supper would be in order. Now swimming off Little River Island was never a thing of joy to those with a daily opportunity to do so as the water was never anything but shockingly cold. There was another reason why salt water pleasures were frowned upon. This was the unannounced visits of the villainous catfish — the salt water kind with a mouthful of razor-sharp teeth. The ocean catfish has never been a popular item on downeast tables, although those who will dare break down the barrier will get a pleasant surprise.

The trident spear was as much a fixture as any other tool of the fish house, and it was often used on flounder, small halibut, or even a catfish, impaling them upon those no-return tines.The scene for such back stabbing was generally the half-tide flood, pushing ahead of it both prey and predator.

Catfish are mean to handle when caught in lobster traps, and big ones have been credited with biting off pieces of wood as big as an oar. Anything as mean as that wasn't considered fit to eat, and besides, they made a lot of slimey ooze in the fish pens.

We had already been impressed by our visitor's courage in navigating so small a craft over some of the most rugged riptide areas of the Bay of Fundy, and in putting his faith in an outboard motor.

Thus, when he splashed into the ice cold waters of the northern side of the island by the boathouse, he had already distinguished himself as one brave man. There had been some catfish sighted inshore, and local fishermen were reporting them in numbers. It was pretty exciting then to see this bather innocently head for shore, hit shallow water and start to wade, while a big blue cat, all of four feet long, stayed no more than six feet behind him until that fish's dorsal fin broke water.

A speechless gesture caused our hero to turn in time to assess his miraculous escape from perhaps a slashed heel cord, leg calf, or an injured foot.

Early the next morning, there were the muted poppings and snappings of his outboard as he hastened to his college campus. The outgoing tide had washed away his fire, no debris marked his camp, and only memories of the drama of his coming remained.

Back to the Lighthouse

Island Journal has covered the varying fortunes of Maine island and coastal lighthouses during the era of Coast Guard automation in each of the past five volumes. It has been our intention to help focus attention and concern about these irreplaceable symbols of our maritime culture.

The Island Institute has sponsored conferences on lighthouse preservation strategies and urged the State Historic Preservation Office to consider a thematic nomination of Maine lighthouses to the National Register of Historic Places. We have also written and published a 50-page booklet for community groups entitled *Keeping the Light* , which details adaptive re-use strategies for facilities associated with automated lighthouses.

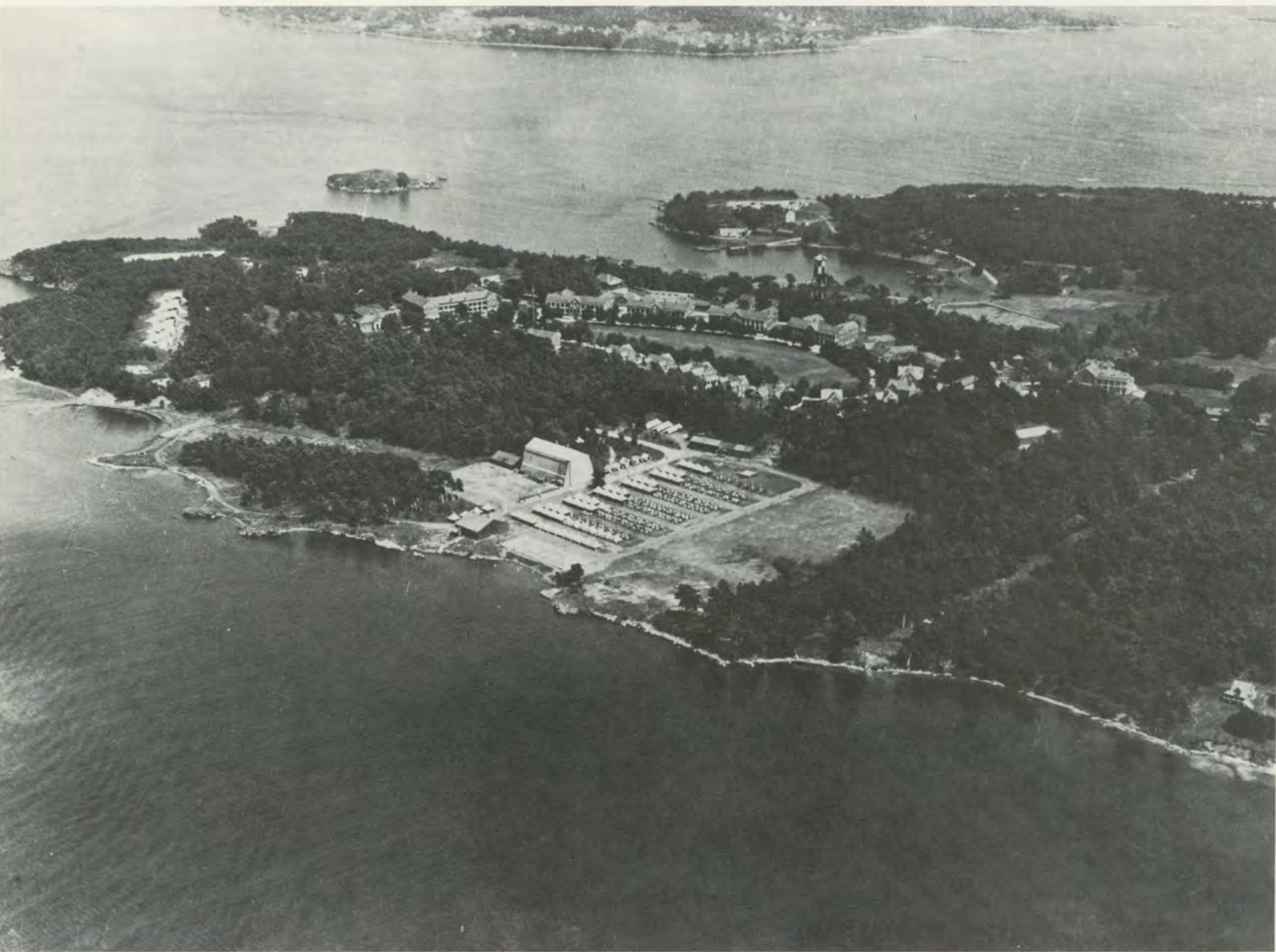
We thought readers would be interested in the following summary of successful efforts over the past five years of many small groups as well as large agencies in "adopting" lighthouses.

LIGHTHOUSE	LICENSEE
Cape Neddick (Nubble)	Town of York**
Portland Head	Town of Cape Elizabeth**
Wood Island	Biddeford Pool Improvement Association
Perkins Island	Maine Bureau of Public Lands
Squirrel Point	Maine Maritime Museum
Seguin Island	Friends of Seguin
Ram Island	Grand Banks Schooner Museum**
Marshall Point	St. George Historical Society
Whitehead Island	Pine Island Trust**
Matinicus Rock	National Audubon Society
Browns Head	Town of Vinalhaven
Rockland Breakwater	Samoset Resort*
Fort Point	Maine Bureau of Parks and Recreation
Burnt Coat Harbor	U.S.Coast Guard
Great Duck Island	The Nature Conservancy
Egg Rock	College of the Atlantic**
Bear Island	National Park Service
Mount Desert Rock	College of The Atlantic, Allied Whale
Petit Manan Island	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Little River Island	Cutler Improvement Association
West Quoddy Head	Maine Bureau of Parks and Recreation

*Temporary
**Pending

These lights are "orphans:"
Heron Neck
Burnt Coat Harbor

The Island Institute's lighthouse project has been made possible through the support of the Mildred H. McEvoy Foundation.



Guy Gannett Publishing

A 1930's aerial photo of Fort McKinley. The north fork gun batteries (Batteries Farry, Thompson, Acker, and Barry) are visible to the left of the barracks buildings. Across Diamond Cove, Battery Honeycutt can be seen.

Fields of Fire

Fort McKinley and the Defense of Great Diamond

NELSON H. LAWRY

For the past five years, the Island Institute has participated in the discussions over the proposed rehabilitation and subdivision of Fort McKinley on Great Diamond Island into 134 condominium units and 70 single-family house lots around the island's periphery.

Among the issues that have been hotly debated is the developer's proposal to build 14 private homes on top of Fort McKinley's historic gun batteries. Although the state historic preservation authorities initially approved the developer's plan, further federal review has recommended that locating private homes on these batteries should be discouraged.

Nelson Lawry's description of how Fort McKinley's armament was designed to protect both the seaward approaches and "back door" passages into Portland Harbor adds detail to the article published in Volume Four of Island Journal, *"The Guns of Casco," which provided an overview of the military history of Casco Bay.*

NINETY-SOME YEARS after its beginnings and having survived three wars unscathed, Fort McKinley has at last been engaged in battle. The harbor defense fortification, its guns long removed and its soldiers long departed, has nonetheless fought off—thus far— the devastation of its batteries.

In this instance the engine of destruction is not hostile warships, but commercial development. The fort remains among the most significant and instructive of America's coastal defenses, and throughout 1988 the Island Institute and others waged a rigorous campaign to ensure its preservation.

The embryonic stages in building the modern work on Great Diamond Island began in the early 1890's, under supervision of Lt. Col. Peter Hains, Corps of Engineers. Among Hains's first projects were constructing two buried, concrete mining casemates to control the electrical mine fields intended to defend the secondary or backdoor channel into Portland Harbor through Hussey Sound.

Great Diamond Island resembles the back of a catcher's mitt, with the North Fork (the "fingers") separated from the South Fork (the "thumb") by Diamond Cove. To the east and southeast of the island is Hussey Sound, connecting with Casco Bay proper. The main casemate on the South Fork controlled the mine field to be planted in Hussey Sound in time of war, and that on the North Fork controlled the field to be placed in the expanse of water between the mainland and the inner island chain, consisting of Long Island and the Chebeagues, accessible by Broad Sound.

Under Hains and a succession of other Engineer officers, including Lieutenant Colonels David Heap and Andrew Damrell, and Majors Richard Hoxie and Solomon Roessler, the construction of gun batteries of reinforced concrete proceeded apace. The work on Great Diamond Island, eventually named in 1901 for the recently assassinated President William McKinley, would be, on the basis of numbers of batteries emplaced, the largest such fortification in New England, and the tenth largest on the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts. The steel, breechloading ordnance mounted in these batteries varied from 3-inch to 12-inch in caliber, depending upon the mission projected.

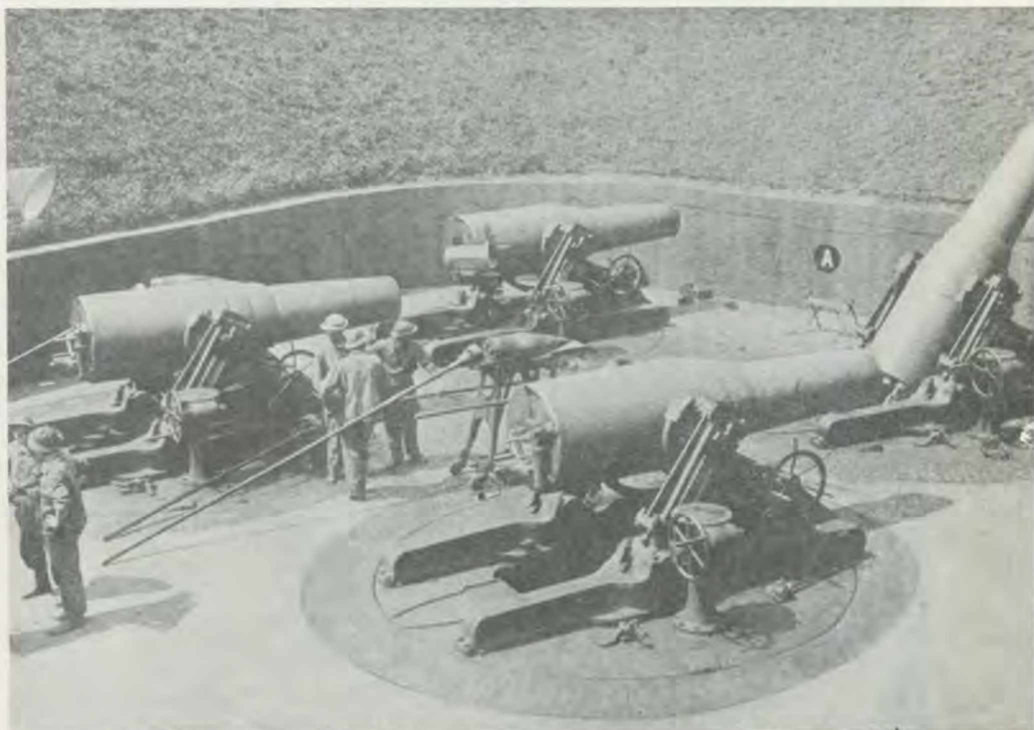
Fort McKinley's raison d'etre — and that of its subpost, Fort Lyon on adjacent Cow Island — was both seaward defense by the major batteries, and prevention, by smaller but still sizable batteries, of a run-by of an enemy squadron down the back channels, Hussey Sound and Diamond Passage, to take Portland under fire from the flank.

The largest batteries are on the North Fork, close to Diamond Cove. Battery Berry mounted a pair of 12-inch rifles on early model disappearing carriages. These ingenious carriages, the invention of Col. Adelbert Buffington and Capt. William Crozier, Ordnance Department, permitted the guns to fire over the concrete parapet, then to recoil behind its protection so the crews could reload in relative safety. With the destruction several years ago of Battery Winthrop, on the Winthrop Highlands northeast of Boston, no other 12-inch disappearing gun battery of this early type survives in New England.

Nearer the cove is Battery Ingalls, once mounting eight 12-inch, breechloading mortars (subsequently reduced to four, to obviate the crowding in the pits from the large crews necessary to serve these pieces). A coastal mortar used a unique zone system of firing, accomplished by progressive increments of propellant from zone to zone, then fine tuning within each zone by alteration of the gun's elevation. For the inner zones the mortars fired half-ton shells to achieve maximum devastation; for the outer zones they fired 800-pound (later 700-pound) shells to achieve maximum range. The high-angled trajectory of fire permitted these large mortars to hit targets otherwise masked by the numerous islands of Casco Bay. Lightly or non-armored decks and turret tops offered particularly attractive targets for high-angled fire.

A single serviceable mortar of this type, among other armament, inflicted heavy casualties among the Japanese landing barges during their assault on Corregidor in May 1942. Such unanticipated losses of experienced troops prompted the later removal from command of Lt. Gen. Masaharu Homma, already in difficulty back home because of the lengthy delay in capturing the Philippines.

Batteries Thompson (North Fork) and Honeycutt and Weymouth (both South Fork), each mounting two or three 8-inch disappearing guns, were the primary batteries defending Hussey Sound and the back channels. Battery Thompson is one of a kind, its rear wall constructed not of concrete, but rather of an attractive field stone.



A battery of 12-inch coast defense mortars similar to those at Fort Mckinley. They fired a projectile capable of piercing the deck armor of a battleship.

In Portland and elsewhere, the vicissitudes of wind and weather and the dangers inherent in flammable gas bags defeated the scheme, and the balloon units were soon disbanded.

The fort's historic value remains as an intact complex. Such a rich panoply of buildings, batteries, fire control stations, and mining casemates is a state and national treasure.

Six-inch ordnance augmented the primary armament: Battery Acker, mounting its two guns on disappearing carriages adjacent to Battery Thompson on the North Fork, and Battery Carpenter, with its pair on shielded pedestals at the end of the battery line on the South Fork. A 60-inch searchlight on a 60-foot counterbalanced tower, added in the early 1920's beyond Battery Carpenter, was elevated for night illumination, but was otherwise kept lowered out of sight.

Completing the scheme were two batteries mounting 3-inch masking parapet rifles, Battery Farry on the end of the North Fork battery sequence, and Battery Ramsay on a rocky spur on the South Fork. In these batteries, located to defend their respective mine fields against mine sweepers and fast torpedo boats, the guns remained hidden from direct view when not in use, but were ratchetted into place for firing.

The Ordnance Department accepted the masking parapet rifles in the absence of thorough testing during the hectic days of the Spanish-American War, but the Coast Artillery found them forever trouble-prone. After successive fixes, including welding the movable parts of the pedestals in place, Ordnance and Artillery threw in the towel and dismounted very nearly all guns of this model in 1920-21. In Portland, ironically, builders completed the batteries' adjacent range finder stations after the removal of the armament. The gun tubes thereafter underwent major conversion at Watervliet Arsenal in New York and re-emerged as trailer-mounted, 3-inch antiaircraft guns. Later models of 3-inch seacoast rifles, at Forts Williams, Preble, and Lyon, were designed as straightforward pedestals and were far more satisfactory.

The long ranges of the larger guns, up to 16,000 yards, necessitated precise fire control by optical instruments. Unhappily, the Coast Artillery found its initial grid system, termed relocation, to be unwieldy and inaccurate. A new system, resulting from tests performed at Fort Barrancas, in Pensacola, Fla., by one of that arm's most innovative luminaries, Maj. Garland N. Whistler, was based upon triangulation from an established horizontal base line.

Fire control stations were sited at the ends of these fixed base lines, and became known as base-end stations. The early brick ones, built 1903-05, had glass bulls-eye roofs to admit sky light for plotting, until the artillerymen realized that in a night battle, electric light would be emitted in the opposite direction, and quickly covered them with asphalt tar.

Precise positional fixes on the target vessel were taken simultaneously from each station and relayed to the plotting room. There, triangulation was calculated on a plotting board, most frequently the Whistler-Hearn type, of which Major Whistler was the principal designer.

Unfortunately, many solidly constructed masonry stations had been built for the old system and now required modification or abandonment. Congress, annoyed at the expense necessary to construct these structures for an ill-conceived system, balked at making a like appropriation for the new system. In consequence, future stations and plotting-room additions to older stations were built of a cement plaster over a metal lath, called Sewell construction after its developer, Capt. John Sewell, but stucco by any other name. These stations, first designed and tested in Portland, were resistant to fire, but little else, and the ravages of time and weather have resulted in few surviving today. Two in fact still stand at Fort McKinley, as compared to several of the splendid brick stations. The latter are of three different designs, including a one-of-a-kind early model, abandoned before 1907.

The Coast Artillery attempted one additional experiment in fire control in the years following World War I. In order to achieve more distant line of sight, the corps modified observation balloons, useful for artillery spotting on the Western Front, as instrument platforms. It had balloon hangars and hydrogen generating plants erected at either end of the aerial base line, at Forts Williams and McKinley, and organized and assigned balloon companies. In Portland and elsewhere, the vicissitudes of wind and weather and the dangers inherent in flam-

mable gas bags defeated the scheme, and the balloon units were soon disbanded.

Neither hangar survives in Portland, but the now famous karate fight in *An Officer and a Gentleman,* between the naval aviation cadet (Richard Gere) and his marine drill instructor (Louis Gossett, Jr.), was filmed in the balloon hangar at Fort Worden, Wash., one of only two extant, both on the West Coast.

Prior to the Spanish-American War, crews found the design of the mining casemates to be wanting. The buried structures were ill-ventilated, hot, and humid, and it was a question whether the men would succumb first to foul air or from sweat dropping onto their primitive and unsafe galvanometers. The war erupted in April 1898, too soon for changes to be made, and soldiers did in fact die in mining service.

Immediately after the war, the Engineers constructed new airy and well lighted casemates as a box within a box: the mining casemate was surrounded on three sides and the top by a concrete shell, but an air space existed between the outer and inner walls, and the casemate itself was pierced by windows on the unencased side, facing away from the probable direction of hostile fire. During World War I, Army mine-planter boats once again put mine fields into place from Fort McKinley, and contractors built a major addition onto or near each of the fort's previously existing casemates. In the 1920's, war planning permitted the abandonment of the inner mine field and the North Fork casemate, and established new mine fields farther seaward.

Also in the post war period, the Fifth Infantry Regiment returned from France and garrisoned Fort McKinley until the late 1930's. The primary duties of the officers and NCOs during the Depression included instruction of the Citizens Military Training Camp bivouacked in tents near the balloon hangar. As threat of war again loomed large, the mules of the regiment's machine gun companies were moved from stables at Fort McKinley to those at Forts Preble and Williams, so that in the event of sudden attack, there would not be the logistical difficulty of transporting frightened pack animals over water to the mainland.

When the Fifth Infantry returned to its old duty station in the Canal Zone, Fort McKinley became once again a full-fledged harbor defense work. Elements of the 8th and 240th Coast Artillery Regiments moved into the fort's barracks in 1940 and began rigorous training. As World War II progressed, all the older ordnance was removed, except that of Battery Carpenter on the South Fork, and a taller battery commander's station was erected a short distance away to afford better visibility of Hussey Sound and the bay beyond.

After 1943, more precise shooting resulted from the addition of SCR-296 fire control radar sets to the harbor defenses. The Signal Corps installed that for Battery Carpenter atop a new concrete tower on nearby Long Island. Moreover, much of Fort McKinley became a U.S. Navy reservation, comprising barracks and specialty schools to sharpen and update the skills of the sailors of the Atlantic Fleet. Soon after war's end the fort was abandoned, and in 1961 it was sold. The current owner, Diamond Cove Associates, obtained the reservation in 1984.

Today, Fort McKinley offers a rare and delightful opportunity to grasp harbor defense thinking of the 1890-1910 period, not afforded by Portland's other forts. Rather than a long gun line or batteries concentrated in a small area, Fort McKinley's batteries are scattered and concealed about the Army half of the island's shorefront. Such batteries are of earlier designs, less standardized than the survivors at Forts Williams, Preble, and Lyon, which, with two or three exceptions, are later, highly standardized, and relatively common examples.

The fort's historic value remains as an intact complex. Such a rich panoply of buildings, batteries, fire control stations, and mining casemates is a state and national treasure. In January 1989, the chief of registration, National Park Service, adjudged the entirety eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Preservation of the Fort McKinley complex ought to be fiercely sought by all concerned, for beyond a doubt, there's no place like it.

A student of American coastal defense for 30 years, ***Nelson H. Lawry*** *obtained his Ph.D. in microbiology and electron microscopy, and was thereafter a National Science Foundation postdoctoral fellow. Currently he lives in Rollinsford, N.H., and writes on harbor defense history and environmental matters, such as the acid rain problem.*

Fort McKinley

A National Treasure

Of the 78 Endicott era forts in the nation, Fort McKinley with nine batteries emplacing 26 guns and mortars is the country's tenth largest. And since no other fort in New England had more than seven batteries, Fort McKinley is the largest in the region. Fort McKinley also includes a unique collection of early generation base-end (fire control) stations, as well as a relatively intact collection of structures involved in the preparation, deployment, and firing of electrically controlled mines.

While most Endicott forts had a single role of seaward defense, Fort McKinley was one of a handful of forts nationwide that had a dual role of seaward as well as back passage defense. In addition to its pre-World War I importance as a Coast Artillery installation, Fort McKinley became an important infantry post between world wars, as well as the site of a Citizens Military Training Camp. Along with its resurgence as a Coast Artillery post during World War II, a major portion of the installation evolved into a Navy training and recreation center. Therefore, Fort McKinley had an important and varied military purpose for over four decades.

Although none of the 78 Endicott-era forts ever fired a shot in anger, they provided a formidable deterrent to enemy naval attack on American coastal cities from the Spanish American War through the early days of World War II. Yet, as a class, few of these forts have survived massive destruction and extensive intrusion of later construction. Twenty-five percent of the batteries nationwide have been buried or destroyed, while a majority of their supporting administrative buildings have been demolished.

Fort McKinley, because of its backwater siting, became relatively obsolete in World War II and after the war passed through a succession of absentee owners who did nothing with the property. As a result of this unplanned but beneficial neglect, this fort is now the largest intact example of an Endicott-era fortification in the United States, both in terms of surviving buildings and defensive elements. It is the premier time capsule of early 20th century defensive concepts.

One other Coast Artillery fort may be compared to Fort McKinley in terms of survival. Fort Worden, a state park and a National Historic Landmark in Washington State, is slightly larger than Fort McKinley. But in further comparison, Fort Worden has suffered the destruction of several key elements, it still has major surviving intrusion from World War II, and it has no mining function. Only one early generation base-end station survives at Fort Worden, while nine remain at Fort McKinley.

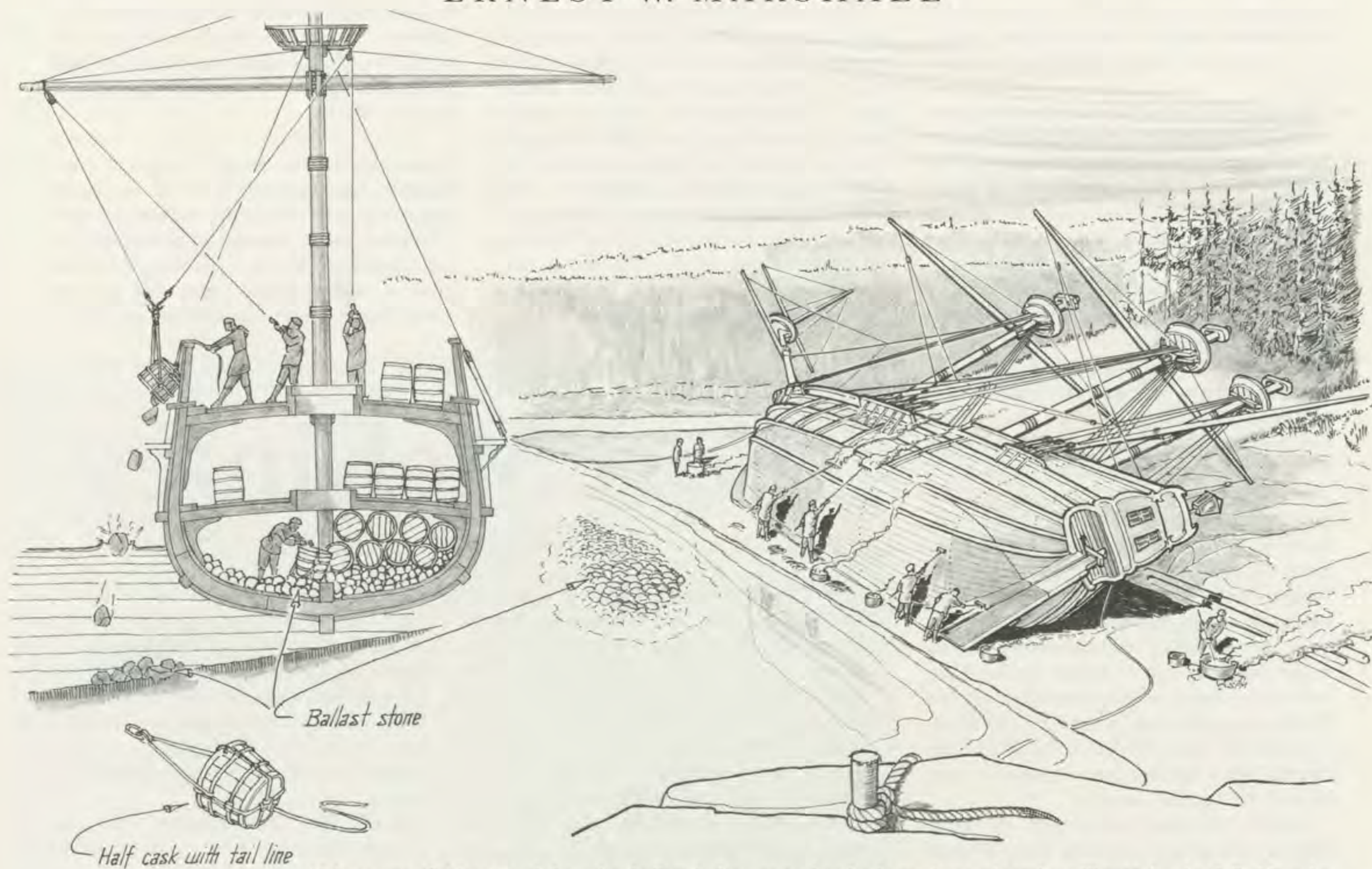
The parade ground buildings of Fort McKinley were nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, which excluded the defensive elements of the fort from the nomination. On the appeal of Island Institute and its historical consultants the National Park Service ruled in January of 1989 that the whole fort complex is National-Register eligible, citing the significance of McKinley's gun batteries and other defensive elements. The more impressive status of designating Fort McKinley a National Landmark appears to be obtainable.

The current development proposal that calls for building 14 homes on top of the batteries will be decided by Maine authorities while federal agencies consider making Fort McKinley a national treasure.

- Kenneth Thompson

BALLAST

ERNEST W. MARSHALL



17th century fishing vessel dumping ballast before careening for breaming and tarring. Illustration by S.F. Manning

THERE IS A BIT of beachcomber in all of us. Sometimes we enjoy beaches simply as collecting sites for shells, driftwood, stones, and feathers; at other times the beach is a canvas with unique colors, textures, patterns, shapes, and sizes — a Magee painting. As a geologist interested in history, when I walk beaches I view them as unique historical documents, pages of a geological detective story in which I look for clues of Maine's maritime commerce from the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries.

The clues are ballast rocks, which were picked up elsewhere in the world to stabilize ships during their voyages and were finally discarded in harbors and on beaches along the coast of Maine. In one sense ballast rocks can be viewed as geological calling cards from the ports of the world. In another sense, they are like scattered pages of a history book waiting to be collected together.

Stone ballast has a long history in being used to stabilize sailing vessels against the tremendous leverage of the masts and their spread of canvas. It has been found in sunken Bronze Age vessels excavated in the eastern Mediterranean that date back somewhere between the 1st and 2nd millenium B.C.; in Spanish ships of the 1400-1700's; and in sailing vessels of the 1800's. Only recently I collected ballast from a large sailing schooner that had completed a circumnavigation with a few tons of rocks tucked in the turn of her bilges.

In Spanish carracks and galleons, sands and gravels were spread in the spaces between the frames at the bottom of the ship. This was planked over and layers of large rocks were laid down to provide over 200 tons of permanent ballast to correct the top heaviness inherent in this design of multi-level foredecks and towering poop decks — well described when referred to as "castles."

Large sailing vessels, tea clippers in particular, needed careful ballasting. Tea being light and bulky required that in addition to stone or iron ballast placed in the very bottom of the vessel, large stones would next be placed low in the ship and smaller stones would finally be poured in between the stacks of tea chests and the sides. Tea clippers of the mid-1800's required as much as 350 tons of ballast.

Reports are common along the Maine coast of cargoes of English bricks that served as ballast and cargo in sailing vessels being used in the construction of stately homes of the 19th century.

Even today stone ballast finds its way to Maine. In a monument works near the coast, I found blocks of an unusual red granite that had recently arrived in this country in an Indian freighter. The granite had served both as ballast and as a commercial cargo.

The ideal ballast was clean, dry, hard, non-porous stone and beach shingle. Beaches which contained rocks with these characteristics became known as ballast beaches. The chert and flint gravels of European origin that I often find along the coast meet this criteria. However, field evidence indicates that, in practice, ships used whatever was readily available. Lightweight, porous heads of coral, coralline limestone, and volcanic rocks not native to this region are commonly found on Maine shorelines.

These rocks arrived on Maine beaches in several ways. Before marine railways came into common use, ships were careened on the shore in order to scrape off marine growth, repair the hull, wash out bilges, and freshen the ballast. In many cases this required removing and often replacing the ballast with local stones. At times vessels sailed without the stabilizing weight of a full cargo, thus requiring extra ballast to trim and steady-up the ship. At the completion of the voyage this additional weight was discarded in harbors and long the shoreline.

Ballast also found its way onto our beaches from shipwrecks.

During my years of searching along the Maine coast I have not found the great mounds of ballast stones that commonly mark the wreck sites of Spanish galleons in the Caribbean, but rather scatterings of exotic rocks that range in size from approximately 1 1/2 feet in diameter down to gravel sizes.

Maine's beaches are not the easiest place to locate non-native ballast stones. Every beachcomber knows that our beaches consist predominantly of a crop of local rocks together with a real mix of stones carried by the various continental ice sheets that have passed over the state. This glacial detritus may have come from as far as a hundred miles or more to the north. Thus, it is difficult to identify ballast in this mix of shapes, colors, and sizes.

There have been cases when scattered ballast rocks stood out by their color, size, and shape from the surrounding beach background. At other times the original shape had been modified by years of grinding in a high energy beach environment so that it matched the local beach rocks. Such a case occurred while searching an island beach downeast. When I first stepped out on the beach a white, fist-sized, rounded rock caught my eye. My first thought was white quartz, but closer inspection with a hand lens showed that it had the intricate structure of a tropical coral. No other samples were found even after an intensive search.

How did this tropical coral arrive on this remote Maine beach? Most likely a shipwreck lies off the coast and the sample was winnowed out by wave action and cast ashore.

At an island beach site composed of granitic rocks in the Midcoast area I found scattered, small rounded nodules of black flint of European origin — if you will, a beach with a scattering of "black, oversized jelly beans." On another island site known to have had early English occupation it required many hours of beach crawling to locate a few bean-sized samples of European chert and flint.

Normally I search the mudflats and beaches equipped with rubber boots, pack basket, rock hammer, and hand lens while at other times the island and estuary searches are carried out under oars or sail.

This past summer while I was sailing a spritsail-rigged North Haven peapod on a ballast search among Maine Islands, a fast moving front brought high winds and rapidly building seas that found this small boat, with limited freeboard because of her "scientific ballast," driving hard before the wind and taking in more than an occasional sea.

There came a brief and agonizing moment of having to decide in the interest of safety whether or not to jettison this historic ballast. Here were samples that had, in their first life, endured far angrier seas. It seemed unjust that they should come to such an ignoble end! But since I was sailing among rocky islands, options were fast becoming limited. Fortunately, a flying reach brought us boiling through the rock-infested waters leading into the shelter of a pocket beach.

To those who contemplate beachcombing, here is a little known fact to whet your appetite or make your blood run hot. There is the possibility that you may find Roman coins in Maine. No, Caesar and his Legions didn't march here. But it seems that beaches in southern England long used as sources of ship's ballast contain the cultural relics of thousands of years of coastal occupation. A documented ballast find in the coastal waters of Virginia reported not only authentic Roman coins, but also counterfeit Roman coins minted during the Victorian period to meet numismatic demands, together with shards of pottery and kiln fragments. The latter made it possible to identify the source as coming from a site above London Bridge. Because masted vessels could not proceed upriver beyond the bridge, the material must have been barged down the Thames and sold as ballast. Deposits of English ballast are not uncommon along the Maine coast, so it may be only a matter of time before a Roman coin is found at the end of a long and circuitous journey!

When I first stepped out on the (downeast) beach a white, fist-sized, rounded rock caught my eye... inspection with a hand lens showed that it had the intricate structure of a tropical coral.

Where do Maine's islands fit into this historical puzzle? After a long and stormy voyage across the Atlantic, European sailors must have found that Maine's islands offered welcome shelter, fresh water, a hedge against Indian attack, and a place to repair and refit their ships.

Between the years 1497 - 1614 many famous early explorers were attracted to the Maine coast, among them Cabot, Gomez, Verrazzano, Champlain, and John Smith. But it is doubtful that they littered the beaches with ballast. More likely, the reports of the rich fisheries that they carried back to Europe may well have lured many undocumented fishermen to our shores. It was these seasonal fishermen who were probably the first to regularly use the Maine island beaches to careen their vessels and leave off rocks alien to our shores. The establishment of year-round fishing stations and the gradual settlement of the Maine islands brought increased trade both with Europe and the Caribbean — each route bringing its own unique legacy of exotic rocks.

In my field work I'm finding that Maine's beaches yield cherts and flints of European origin, tropical corals, limestones of various types — among them a pink Cuban limestone now being developed with the help of the USSR for export as a decorative building stone — Bahamian limestone formed on the shallow, lime-rich Bahama Banks and which resembles fish eggs cemented together, volcanic rocks of many types, along with many other rocks not indigenous to Maine, clear evidence that we were visited by ships traveling from foreign shores. Ballast on Maine beaches is sparse, but it's there for the trained eye to discover.

I frequently receive boxes of ballast stones in the mail from all over the world. This is from investigators seeking clues as to where a vessel may have been built, where it received its permanent ballast, and for clues as to the trade ports it visited.

My interest in the use of rocks as historical, geological evidence first began in 1953 when I drifted six months on Ice Island T-3, a vast cake of ice 9 x 4 miles in size and 150 feet thick. For those of us on the island it seemed more like a great rudderless ship, carried by deep currents on a slow six-to-eight-year elliptical drift around the North Pole. My job was to determine how the "ship of ice" was constructed and where it had come from. At this time it was critical to determine whether it had broken away from the Siberian or North American Arctic shoreline and to evaluate its scientific and engineering uses.

The ice samples obtained by coring together with samples of normal rocks, made it possible to pinpoint T-3's origin as northern Ellesmere Island, northernmost of the Canadian Arctic Islands.

Later in Maine when I first found cherts and flints of European origin on the beaches of Penobscot Bay, it made me wonder where they had come from and when they had arrived on the coast. This inspired my interest in beach geology.

In the course of scientific beachcombing I have found a wide variety of exotic rock types that have helped to document Maine's early maritime history. In the process, I have enjoyed the privilege of voyaging to the islands by small boat, exploring their beaches, and feeling a forgotten part of their past come alive before my eyes.

But my investigations along the Maine coast have made me only too aware that we are fast losing this geological record of our early maritime history. Rising sea level, siltation, and erosion are slowly taking their toll of many historic coastal sites. Perhaps more importantly, looking down at the rocks, debris, and chunks of plastic scattered around my feet on a Maine island beach, I can't help but wonder and ask what our historical legacy will be.

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Just So Stories

JANE DAY

BONNY QUINN, the late bard of Eagle Island, knew a thing or two about getting the island news. It was a source, he wrote, that would never fail: "sitting 'round in Hopkins store waiting for the mail."

The mail these days still brings a goodly measure of the kind of news once traded in long-gone island stores, but now it appears in the pages of island newspapers. Nowhere is the island character more openly revealed than in these mimeographed weeklies with fuzzy photographs, or fat computer-tech monthlies. They all deliver to island people the fact and opinion, both sober and outrageous, that very likely makes them the best-read newspapers published. And their news is never "old." Especially if the reader is a summer resident wintering in Philadelphia.

The content of island papers and their freestyle presentation, unrestrained by journalistic jargonese, establishes a following quite distinct from that of the mass circulation press. Islanders read the mainland papers, major dailies, and weeklies in their area for what they print about the rest of the world. Island news generally fails to arouse the mainland press, unless it involves major catastrophe or bureaucratic scandal.

So, islanders turn instead to their own papers for local news of the sort most of them, as Dave Thompson of Cliff Island found, "pick up at the post office every day. They don't need to wait for the *Seagull.*" That knowledge, however, failed to prevent him from publishing the *Cliff Island Seagull* for 10 years. Island editors universally subscribe to the theory that their news is new until it's read. And island papers from Casco Bay to Passamaquoddy are thriving on it.

But what qualifies as an island paper? When is an island not an island? Or as some have argued, is that a state of mind? Land surrounded by water, in Webster's tidy definition, would mean a place accessible by boat or plane. Nothing about bridges or causeways. But he muddles the island moat considerably by tossing in . . ."anything regarded as resembling an island in position, isolation, etc. . ." That tends to legitimize claims of island status by some publications moored to the coast by steel or rock. It also resolved my initial dilemma in going about this story. Attitudes condition an island mindset about the rest of the world — that is, the mainland. If the hardy souls at the seaward end of a paved reef think of themselves as islanders, they indeed are.

Few will argue that natives of Stonington, where Nat Barrows presides over the *Island Ad-Vantages* — a good 30 minutes from the Deer Isle bridge — are more insular than residents of Peaks Island, 20 minutes by ferry from downtown Portland.

At the other end of the archipelago, Winnie French, editor of Eastport's *Quoddy Tides*, and her son Edward, managing editor, like to point out that the town's rightful name is Moose Island. Before the causeway was built, it was known as the Island City, a major trading center for the Canadian islands in Passamaquoddy Bay that lie in full view of her office window.

And in case readers in Wiscasset have forgotten, Virginia Anderson, Westport Island columnist, reminds them that until 1950 island residents depended on a two-car ferry pushed along on a cable by motorboat to get across a 500-yard stretch of water to the mainland. These latter-day bridges and causeways, it appears, merely invigorate an islander's claim to islandness.

"The *Island Ad-Vantages* and the *Bar Harbor Times* are the only island newspapers. " But Nat Barrows, seated in his office on the Stonington waterfront, laughed as he added, "I mean real papers." Or simply put, newspapers big enough to pay the help.

The *Island Ad-Vantages* was barely fledged in the late 1960's when I discovered Stonington, and on a busman's holiday impulse, looked in on the local news office. Nat, then in his twenties, stood swearing softly over an ancient and cantankerous press. It was no time to make small talk with the lone operator of the weekly paper in a Maine coast fishing town. The small tabloid looks much the same today, retaining its familiar "Salt Air Society" roundup of Deer Isle community news, and the "Day Before Yesterday" as seen by local historian and columnist Clayton Gross. Barrows has increased his staff over the years, acquired the *Weekly Packet* in Blue Hill, and recently ventured into book publishing.

Emily Saltonstall's *Bar Harbor Times*, on Mt. Desert Island, serves a greater, more diverse territory, dominated by the presence and pressure of Acadia National Park. But park visitors, blinded by the tourist signs that flank the approach to Mt. Desert Island, very likely fail to notice its connecting causeway. No other weekly paper covers the island's towns — Bar Harbor, Mt. Desert, Southwest Harbor, Tremont, and communities in between — as thoroughly as the *Times*. But the paper relies for social reports of nearby Islesford and Great Cranberry Island on Irene Bartlett, its correspondent there for many years.

Small island papers must generate their news within the narrow confines of a single community, some occupied by no more than 50 year-round residents. These newspapers seldom spring from a need for literary expression, although that quality is far from lacking. On North Haven, the *North Haven News* grew out of concerns for the island's future voiced by a group of residents. Jon Emerson has edited the monthly paper since it began in 1982. But the flavor of store and boat shop talk salts its pages along with the activities of community organizations, school, selectmen, and planning board. Emerson steers shy of investigative news. "We don't try to turn people out of office."

Mindful of the island's long-established summer colony and their general concern about the effect of winter wind and tide on their property, Jon opens his front page "Around Town" column with comments on the weather.

"Autumn did fall - with a thud," announced his recap of last year's nippy October, after one of the hottest summers in a century. His report that "Another savage southwesterly brought down several of the antique cedar power poles on the Middle Road . . ." possibly triggered out-of-state calls to island caretakers inquiring about that old maple on the south lawn.

The *Isleboro Island News*, technically the most sophisticated island paper, made its appearance along about mid-winter in 1985. "I was bored," Agatha Cabaniss explains. She whipped out 12 pages of light-hearted news and comment, and 176 island residents snatched it up — four times her most exaggerated estimate. Three-and-a-half years later, the paper was running 40 pages with an 18-page color advertising section, and Agatha was racing full speed to keep pace.

Although she loudly protests, "I tell you, I don't know what I'm doing," upwards of 1,200 monthly subscribers do. They alternately chortle and fume through every page of her outspoken, no-axe-to-grind "opinionated writing." Agatha holds no cows sacred. Except, she insists that her reports be substantiated, and that they serve the interest of the community.

She puts the entire paper together singlehandedly in a room roughly the size of a two-horse trailer at one end of her house on the island's east side. A prodigious worker with a prolific ability to translate thought to

computer disk, Agatha had never run a computer or sold an ad when she started the paper. Now, from almost any point in her office, she can put her hand on half a dozen pieces of computerized equipment — word processors, laser printer, copiers — along with an enviable supply of software. It all represents the hefty investment she undertook when she realized "the paper was going to fly."

"All I know is, I want to control everything I do. The only thing I can't get my hands on is the United States Post Office." She laughs uproariously at the very notion.

State ferry service merits standing mention in island papers along the entire coast. Agatha devotes a column to "Ferry Notes." On North Haven, Jon Emerson laments in one issue: "We had the dubious honor of sharing our ferry with Vinalhaven again this month . . ." And in another: "North Haven has once again sent its boat to Swan's Island just in time to muddle plans of last minute Christmas shoppers."

Matinicus Island, two hours by boat or eight minutes by plane from Rockland, wages ongoing battle with the Department of Transportation (DOT), lobbying for better ferry service. The condition of the island's ramps and wharves determines whether the "truck" ferry can deliver the backhoe to start a foundation in spring, or salt for the roads in winter. The ability to adjust to inconveniences becomes a virtue common to islanders.

But the hew and cry that greeted Islesboro's new ferry, the *Sen. Margaret Chase Smith*, when it arrived the wrong size for its terminal pens, hit the papers across the state. "Terminally ill," concluded Islesboro's Cabaniss in one of her running reports on DOT efforts to rectify its multi-million-dollar miscalculation. She vents island frustration over official misinformation, and reminds the DOT editorially that it is "operating a miniscule Staten Island ferry on the Lincolnville-Islesboro route. We are becoming a commuter island and need to get to jobs . . ."

Island newspapers depend heavily on volunteers, many of whom have been regulars for years. Jon Emerson's volunteer North Haven staff, close to 20 some months, reads like an island who's who. Teachers, fishermen, boatbuilders, artists, all, at one time or another, donate their talent and energy to the paper. Their help together with voluntary donations from 1100 subscribers — who get the *News* free — keeps the paper going. It costs a minimum $500 for printing on the mainland, and close to $300 postage under first class permit. Emerson abandoned second class when he found deliveries were taking weeks.

Close to a dozen volunteers show up every Tuesday in the basement of the Union Church to type and paste up *The Wind*, Vinalhaven's long-time weekly. Several have put in anywhere from five to 10 years on the paper. And each contributes personal experience to the operation. Marcia Davis, retired after 25 years at the local school, is still in her element as she trims a piece of copy for the layout page. "I taught kindergarten, you know — cut and paste."

Jean Wetherbee, *The Wind* editor, had worked 20 years on Hartford, Conn., papers before retiring to her summer home on the island in 1984. But when she delivers the papers around town on Wednesday afternoons she admits, "It is quite satisfying to find people waiting for it."

All items except church, town and school notices are paid and provide the bulk of the paper's news. These, with subscriptions — $15 first class mail and $10 for third — account for most of the paper's income. With expenses, including $750 for use of the church, and an average $6,000 each for printing and postage to 600 subscribers scattered as far as Alaska and several foreign

Getting the News Ashore

Islands, in the general view of the mainland press, are not forgotten territory. The trouble is, their news is just not "hard" enough.

Islands are short on crime, big budgets, and bureaucratic politics. They abound, the thinking goes, in "soft" news generated by crusty lobstermen, one-room schools, and descendants of lighthouse keepers — subjects all but extinct on inhabited islands anyway. News of a building boom, new stonecutting venture, or racial integration program in an island school is apt to come up short, if at all, in mainland papers.

What do mainland editors have to say about it?

"The perpetual problem in this business," says Hugh Bowden, managing editor of the *Ellsworth American*, "is trying to cover all the news." His paper does one of the best jobs on the entire coast, however, in reporting island news, both hard and soft. A major deterrent to getting island news is getting there. Says Bowden: "You tie up somebody for a long time to get a story, so you end up by going to places that are more accessible."

Elizabeth Banwell, editor of the *Bar Harbor Times* on Mt. Desert Island, with a circulation of 7,000, finds that mounting pressure on island resources by Acadia National Park is straining the paper's coverage of island communities. Solid waste, tourism, and environmental stress have become acute issues, she says. The paper, together with its weekend *Sun-Day*, runs a number of features, art and entertainment news from neighboring Islesford and Great Cranberry Island. But Banwell says the *Times* is making a greater effort to beef up its general coverage because the *Ellsworth American* keeps a correspondent on Mt. Desert.

The *Bangor Daily News* relies for island coverage on its bureaus in Machias, Ellsworth, and Rockland. The paper occasionally sends a reporter to do an island feature, but seldom relies on a local island correspondent because they "don't tend to write hard news." Its Machias bureau scores pretty well with downeast readers for its coastal coverage.

Winifred French, editor of Eastport's biweekly *Quoddy Tides* — the largest paper in Washington County — provides the major coverage for islands in her area — Campobello, Deer Island, and Grand Manan — all of which are Canadian.

Last summer, Fred and Nancy Hastings staked out territory seaward of Route One from Steuben to Lubec to launch their *Downeast Coastal Press*. Hastings, who once reported the area's news for the *Quoddy Tides*, focuses on "mostly soft, rather than hard news." Like a prospector in virgin land, he has turned up unsung poets, a clam digger who writes about birds, and a bevy of correspondents eager to report news from Beals, Great Wass, and other coastal communities. Says Hastings: "We want people in that area to know they have something of value to offer," an approach that isolates his from other papers on the mainland.

On the midcoast, Jay Davis, editor of the *Waldo Independent*, admits the paper's coverage of Islesboro, the only island within range, is "embarassingly small." But it carried a number of hard news stories that developed when the island's new ferry, the *Sen. Margaret Chase Smith*, failed to fit the terminal pens, and a schism in the educational philosophies that erupted on the island school board. Davis says he'd like to give more space to island stories because "it is the most unique community in our area."

The *Camden Herald* gives less than token coverage to Islesboro, considering its proximity. But like other mainland papers, it carried news stories on the *Sen. Margaret Chase Smith* and also ran a lengthy background account of school board developments.

In Rockland, the *Courier Gazette* makes a conscientious effort to run regular reports from Vinalhaven, and for years has carried Dr. Alta Ashley's column from Monhegan Island. Editor Mike McGuire says the paper gives minimal coverage to North Haven, largely because the island has its own *North Haven News*. The *Courier* has established contacts on the islands, and McGuire says, "If the news is hard enough, we'll hear about it. The best job we do is covering island sports."

It takes "primarily hard news" from Casco Bay islands to make the *Portland Press Herald*. The paper "covers the islands as warranted," says a city desk editor, "as part of the city of Portland." It also sends a reporter to cover "issues that affect the islands, like water quality." Even so, the ferry "presents an obstacle" to covering these islands on a regular basis.

From Casco Bay to Passamaquoddy, getting island news is still a matter of getting to it.

-J.D.

outposts, the paper barely breaks even at $12,700 a year.

Matinicus Island is surely the only place in the country where the local paper is published by a Ladies Aid Society. But here, 20 miles seaward of the mainland, about 15 Society members meet at Betsy Burr's fish-house on the waterfront to divvy up editorial chores for the *Matinicus Plantation Newsletter*. "It's just a good little system," according to Harriet Williams, the newsletter chairman. It is also a very good little read.

The ladies' talent for expression catches the reader on every page. One report of the island's financial situation, unencumbered by figures, says everything everybody wants to know in a single sentence: "Real estate taxes have been paid, so there have been no foreclosures." Their account of a stormy Fourth of July picnic also tells a lot about the nature of Matinicus islanders. We assume that the live band did, indeed, perform as scheduled, despite the wind and rain, because "there was no reason for a fisherman to stay home and miss a good time."

The natural environment and change of seasons figure prominently in all island papers. The Matinicus women found it newsworthy at the end of summer that "children grew along with the gardens," and that the baby eiders "who followed their mothers in and out of coves like tiny soldiers, shed their down and struck out on their own." And when it comes to obituaries, who could hope for finer final mention: "We scattered his ashes in his beloved Old Cove. We toasted his health, remembering to fill his cup, and talked of some of the good times we shared...."

On Casco Bay islands, local papers supply a needed community service despite their proximity to a major metropolitan center. Island news is generated by island people. It scarcely behooves a Portland paper to ferry a reporter around the bay to report on activities of the historical society on Chebeague, the library on Long, or a concert at Peak's Fifth Marine. But that's the kind of news that has kept the *Cliff Island Seagull* going for 25 years or more. When she was a summer resident, Ruth Mistark waited eagerly in Worcester, Mass. for every issue. Since she retired to the island some years ago, she's edited the *Seagull* for the Cliff Island Association, pecking out the quarterly issues with one finger, "so it gets a little hectic."

On Peaks Island, where much of the adult population commutes to work in Portland, residents find little time to pick up local news at the post office. Back in 1982, Louise Capizzo and Marianne Rowe noticed that attendance at local events was spotty because people hadn't heard about them. "We're a small community. We need to know." Their efforts to do something about the situation resulted in the *Peaks Island Star*, a rough-hewn roundup of island news and events. It pays for itself with returns from public use of the copier that prints the paper.

Simply keeping abreast of Chebeague Island's social and community organizations fills the pages of its monthly newsletter, appropriately named, *The Calendar*. Fluctuations in the island's seasonal population affect the paper's size: "Pretty thick in summer, pretty thin in winter," is editor Gloria Brown's description. Francis Murphy takes an altogether different approach as editor of the Long Island Civic Association newsletter. The contents are almost entirely issue-oriented, with verbatim reports of municipal meetings to give residents a factual account of what goes on.

News of Monhegan Island reached the outside world for almost two decades through the columns of Dr. Alta Ashley in several Midcoast papers. Drawing upon a lifetime of summers and 16 full years on the island, Alta's columns read like letters from home. Who arrived on the boat, skating parties on the pond, Trap Day — the ceremonial start of the lobster season — all provided vivid insight into the workaday life on this unforgiving mound of rock at the edge of the Gulf of Maine.

It is not surprising that Monhegan, whose raw splendor has attracted generations of artists and writers, should have spawned a variety of island papers over the years. In the late1930's, James McAlpin Pyle edited the weekly *Monhegan Press* and sold it for five cents a copy. He not only reported island comings and goings, but took note of the political events leading up to World War II. "It was great reading," one year-rounder recalls.

Then came the *Monhegan Voice* in 1968, the year the combined ferment of the '60's, the Viet Nam War, and the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., tore a generation apart. None of this escaped editorial comment on Monhegan, where Bill Boynton and eight or 10 friends hawked their 12-page mimeographed *Voice* on the island wharf every Monday morning — "25 cents cheap."

They could draw upon an enviable pool of artistic talent for contributions of poetry, fiction, and cover art — provided variously by Jamie Wyeth, Zero Mostel, Charles E. Martin and others — work that added style and tone to the pages of the politically outspoken *Voice*.

No matter how small or distant, islands tend to provide fertile ground for creativity. And the muse on Monhegan runs strong. From their home here, Peter and Raquel Boehmer publish *Seafood Soundings*, a widely circulated newsletter that tells consumers in entertaining fashion how to use different species of fish.

The muse is at play in the island's one-room school where youngsters recently heralded the return of the *Messy Press*, a school paper that flourished periodically decades ago. They report happenings in the community as well as the classroom, and even twit their elders in "Blasts from the Past" — tidbits from their own school days that native parents may wince to see in print.

Whatever their scope, size, or source of origin, island publications reflect the quality that is unique to their island and its people. They report what they see and say what they think with a humaneness and humor woefully lacking in the general media.

Putting out an island paper is its own reward. An occasionaly blasphemous letter, a steady dribble of subscriptions, and the cluster of people waiting for their copy at the local store are often their only assurance that they're doing something right. But many would agree with the editor who told me, "I've never worked harder, earned less, or had more fun."

ISLAND NEWSPAPERS - ADDRESSES

Matinicus Plantation Newsletter
Harriet Williams
P.O. Box 212
Matinicus 04851
366-3868

North Haven News
Jon Emerson
North Haven 04853
867-4861

The Wind
Jean Wetherbee
Vinalhaven 04863
863-2158

Long Island Civic Association Newsletter
Francis Murphy
Long Island
Portland 04050

Peaks Island Star
Louise Capizzo
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Islesboro Island News
Agatha Cabaniss
Islesboro 04848

Island Ad-Vantages
Nat Barrows
Stonington 04681

Seafood Soundings
Peter & Raquel Boehmer
Monhegan

Quoddy Tides
Winifred French
Eastport 04631

Downeast Coastal Press
Fred Hastings
Cutler 04626
259-7751

Bar Harbor Times
Elizabeth Banwell
Bar Harbor 04609
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RADIO WAVES

Judy Glickman lives with her family on both Great Diamond Island and across Casco Bay on Cape Elizabeth. An artist of talent and energy, her photographic vision is widely collected and published in the United States and abroad. We are pleased to be able to share this selection of her work from Great Diamond Island in the pages of Radio Waves.

Casco Bay

Bay Bottom Politics

JEAN DYER

Aquaculture — the salvation of a protein-hungry world looking to lower its cholesterol? The white hope of Maine's fishing industry? The only way for our fishermen to compete with coastal development and the proliferation of yachtsmen?

Ernest Burgess, a Chebeague Island fisherman, in a letter to the trade paper, *Commercial Fisheries News,* comments, "Aquaculture is, in fact, development of the coast; we are just as much out of the fishing areas come lease or marina."

"I think that the concept of aquaculture is here to stay," concedes Andrew Todd of Chebeague Island, "and for the most part it is good so long as it doesn't interfere with or displace a lot of other people." Aquaculture, as Todd sees it, should be carried on in man-made ponds or tanks or even a piece of ocean bottom that nobody is using or is likely to use. A harvester of wild mussels in Casco Bay, Todd takes a very dim view of bottom leasing, a view shared by several other fishermen from Chebeague — the largest island in Casco Bay.

Casco Bay islands have been known as the Calendar Islands because tradition has it that there are 365 of them. Nobody has ever been expected to count the exact number of rocks sticking up visibly at low tide to get such a number, and the tradition is for the most part dying out. It is enough to say that there are many islands providing nesting places for gulls and ducks, a variety of beaches, sheltered coves, and homes for people — fishermen among them.

All sorts of fishing is done or has been done in Casco Bay ever since the Indians summered on the islands to catch and dry fish and clams for the harsh Maine winters. Fishermen have lobstered, crabbed, clammed, seined for smelt, herring, and pogies (menhaden), and dragged for scallops and mussels (years ago to get bait for hand trawling and now for market).

The waters have been open to everybody within the boundaries of traditional good manners. It is not mannerly, for example, to set a string of lobster traps over someone else's string so that the warp tangles and he has to pull up your traps with his. Under such circumstances somebody's rope will have to be cut. It is mannerly to cut your own but not a sin to cut the other person's so long as you tie it back together. Competitors though they may be for the available lobsters, if a lobsterman's engine breaks down, it is the norm for another lobster catcher to stop work long enough to tow his unfortunate neighbor back to his mooring.

The chief complaint about bottom leasing is that it is "done at someone else's expense," as Bob Putnam pointed out at an Island Institute workshop. "It is just leasing somebody else's living," agrees Bud Robinson.

What can be considered a traditional fishery here in Casco Bay? Stop seining is not what it was, but who is to say that the herring will not come back? In a small way they have recently, and the Ross family has caught them. The same is true of smelt. Once pogies were caught in Casco Bay with purse seines. More recently a fisherman caught them with a stop seine that stayed in place all summer, providing bait for local lobstermen. The unanswered question is whether or not these activities will be considered traditional or will be precluded by somebody's lease?

Before a lease is granted there is a public hearing, but the aquaculture law is vague, and, as Todd points out, "There are too many loopholes in the system as it is. The burden of proof is on the opponents." Logical as it would seem for the applicant to be required to prove that his operation will not displace anyone, it becomes the problem of the about-to-be-displaced to prove that he is going to be harmed. Unless he has been granted intervenor status, a traditional fisherman is not able to question the applicant. The very terms "intervenor status" and "cross examination" conjure up the vision of "attorney." The average fisherman has found that not only must he take time from his work to attend hearings, but if he is to have any hope of success, he must hire a lawyer to defend his right to do what he has paid the state for a license to do. Even then, the leases have sometimes been granted.

In one instance, Burgess points out in his letter to *Commercial Fisheries News*, "the lease was denied and later the decision was appealed by the applicant in court. The legal intervenors, myself included, were not notified that the court hearing was being held. Consequently the fishermen were denied the right to represent themselves in court. The worst part of the whole mess was that the DMR's (Dept. of Marine Resources) representatives were there and did nothing to protect our rights, knowing full well that we were intervenors and were not being represented!"

Such an instance reduces the fishermen's confidence in the DMR. The agency's attitude toward lease applicants seems to mirror the attitudes of Planning Boards, who frequently seem well disposed toward developers. This seeming coziness has caused outraged citizens of Maine communities to petition for moratoriums on development.

Another problem with lease hearings, according to Todd, is that the applicant does not have to say where he will get the seed to put on his lease. Casco Bay wild mussel fishermen complain that lease holders from down the coast dragged up seed mussel from Casco Bay beds and took them home to their leases. In *Coastal Choices*, Maine Aquaculture Association President Willard Mook states, "Mussel farmers gather seed from crowded intertidal beds and spread them out thinly on leased areas of the sea floor." Casco Bay draggers of wild mussels are not convinced that such is always the case and tell of a bed of mussels that were almost market size being taken off by a seed barge. They feel that those mussels should be left to grow right where they are and be available to everybody as is the custom. You don't start raising chickens by stealing your neighbor's eggs, they say.

Casco Bay, despite all its sheltered areas, could not provide leaseholds for all its fishermen if they wanted them. Jim Ross (known to all as "Brother" — and that includes his wife) points out that mussels will not grow everywhere and may even be taken out by ice.

At present Casco Bay fishermen do not seem to want leases, although they wonder uneasily if the time will come when they will be forced to lease in order to stay in the mussel business. Robinson also wonders "when leases will spread to other things."

The expense of a lease, with the attendant legal fees, adds up to a large capital investment. The fishermen envision large companies controlling larger amounts of bottom through individual fishermen who, as "part owners," will take out the maximum leases allowed and then, in effect, work for the parent company — a secure future for them, perhaps, but at the expense of their fellow fishermen who will have no place to fish.

The December 1988 *National Fisherman* has a rather sad story about the "guerrilla warfare" going on in Louisiana where poachers are taking oysters from leased beds because there are no other beds left.

In effect, many of the fishermen opposed to leasing in Casco Bay are asking: Shouldn't the Department of Marine Resources consider what is best for the people of the coast? Shouldn't DMR manage the resource properly and not allow it to be overfished, polluted, degraded, or moved? Why shouldn't DMR use aquaculture technology to rebuild depleted stocks and then allow the greatest

Caught in the Middle

Two years ago Casco Bay fishermen, who as a matter of principle vigorously opposed leasing of state-owned subtidal lands for aquaculture enterprises, won a victory. They were successful in convincing the Maine Legislature to rewrite the regulations which govern how, when, and where aquaculture leases can be granted by the Department of Marine Resources (see Volume 4, *Island Journal*, p. 24-25).

Although the new regulations will undoubtedly improve the quality of environmental data that must be supplied by aquaculture ventures before leases are approved, it appears they will also have the unhappy side effect of forcing those small fish farmers — who had previously operated with nothing more than the cooperation of the traditional fishermen in a local area — into the formal and usually adversarial proceeding of a lease application.

Take the case of Brian Tarbox and his partner, Chris Heinig, who in 1988 successfully raised 2,000 steelhead trout in an ocean net pen between Lookout Point and Birch Island in eastern Casco Bay. Knowing that local fishermen with whom they had spoken were not opposed to aquaculture, but rather to the idea of the state's leasing of subtidal areas for private benefit, Tarbox and Heinig decided to approach the fishermen in the area where they wanted to raise fish.

"We said we needed a place with 30 feet of water and good tide that wasn't going to interfere with their fishing, " explained Tarbox. "And they said as long as you don't apply for a lease, we'll help you out."

And help out they did. The fishermen in the area let Tarbox and his partner use their wharf for transporting their fish and feed to the pen, actually helped move the fish from the hatchery to the net pen, and even bought some of the product at the end of the season in December.

"They were interested because they are always looking for new ways of making a living on the water. It's no secret that we're losing fisheries all the time," said Tarbox. So his net pen operation in Middle Bay was one of the few aquaculture ventures in Casco Bay that didn't rile the waters.

However, in Augusta the Department of Marine Resources (DMR), in drafting its new aquaculture regulations, had run afoul of the Army Corps of Engineers bureaucracy that regulates all floating structures in navigable waters, including ocean net pens. DMR was trying to work out an agreement with the Army Corps so that aquaculture businesses would not need to go through the lengthy and redundant process of securing both state and federal permits for each project. Instead DMR proposed that state review of aquaculture projects would be considered sufficient for meeting all federal standards so that the Army Corps could issue a permit essentially as a rubber stamp of the state permit. So far so good.

But then things started getting complicated. It seems that the applications of some of the big salmon aquaculture companies for permits to maintain net pens in Cobscook Bay had gotten stuck in the Army Corps regulatory eddy for about four years while the Corps pondered its regulatory authority with the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Marine Fisheries Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Meanwhile, the Cobscook applicants, hearing nothing from the Army Corps for years, decided to put their pens in the water without the federal permits.

To make a hellishly long story mercifully shorter, the only route for DMR out of the morass was to make all fish farmers, even those like Tarbox, go through a formal aquaculture lease proceeding even if they had no interest in aquiring a lease.

Tarbox and his partner, who have taken such pains to work cooperatively with local fishermen, feel that the new regulations requiring them to lease areas of Casco Bay bottom are unnecessary from a business point of view and a violation of their understanding with established fishermen.

The irony of the situation, of course, is that those who had so vigorously opposed leasing in the first place end up with a situation where it appears there can be no net pen aquaculture without leases. But perhaps such side effects are to be expected when the Legislature tries to set fisheries policy. Meanwhile Tarbox and Heinig are so disgusted they are pulling their pen out of the water and sitting out the next round of the great Maine aquaculture debate.

number possible to harvest the resource? Why does DMR seem to need to know what everyone is doing and where? Is our traditional way too unstructured — too different a drummer for anyone to march to? Must the DMR embrace bottom leasing as the City of Portland embraced waterfront condos?

"Big business will be reaping the cream," warns Putnam, "while providing only service jobs. The big bucks will be going back to New York or overseas." (While Casco Bay does not seem to have the large tides needed to keep the bottom flushed clean for pen culture, with its pollution, local fishermen remain uneasy about the Norwegian interests operating elsewhere along the coast.)

"We set up the 200-mile limit to keep out foreigners," says Burgess, "and now we are going to lease 'em the flats. It's crazy."

***Jean Dyer** is the wife of a lobsterman and resident of Chebeague Island in Casco Bay. She is president of the Casco Bay Island Development Association.*

Midcoast

"No Place to Put it"

DAVID D. PLATT

When Monhegan residents trooped down to their town dock last summer to have their trash sorted and weighed for a solid waste study, they were doing something very important. They probably didn't think about it that way — like people everywhere, they were accustomed to "throwing things away," "disposing" of them as if they were ridding themselves of a burden once and for all.

But in fact the islanders were teaching themselves to think about their refuse in a whole new way, one with large implications for hundreds of other small communities faced with daunting solid waste problems.

Monhegan wasn't the first island to get serious about its trash. In 1981, Martha's Vineyard formed a Refuse Disposal and Resource Recovery District to investigate alternative means of handling its growing pile of solid waste. After six years of study and experimentation, the district decided that a combination of landfilling, recycling, and shipping trash to a waste-to-energy plant on the mainland would make the most sense. By July 1989 a substantial portion of the 15,300 tons of trash the island generates annually should be flowing to the waste-to-energy plant, while as much as a third of the total will be recycled. Success, says district manager Paul Hannigan, will mean increasing public awareness and getting consumers and businesses to change their habits.

Islanders are moving ahead on their trash problems because they have to: thin soils, expensive real estate, lack of space, tightening government restrictions, and special problems like summer-winter population fluctuations are forcing them to act. In some respects — waste reduction, recycling and composting come to mind — they have forged ahead of their counterparts on the mainland.

Monhegan commissioned last summer's waste study after its other options ran out. Ground water is a resource in short supply there, meaning no government agency would permit islanders to develop a landfill. For generations, ocean dumping had been the rule — Monhegan is 12 miles offshore — but growing concern about pollution ruled it out as a long-term option, and a 1974 federal law prohibits it anyway. Last June, at the start of the island's busy summer tourist season, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency told Monhegan to stop dumping at sea and come up with another trash disposal system. The rock, as the saying goes, had met the hard place.

Islanders asked for mercy and got some: the EPA agreed not to enforce the federal anti-dumping law if Monhegan went looking for an alternative. By early fall the community had signed up with the Camden-Rockport-Lincolnville-Hope transfer station, and had begun shipping the trash ashore. The catch, as always, was money: $45 for each ton shipped, plus transportation. The island produces 150 tons per year. Clearly, the transfer station would have to be only part of the solution.

Enter Will Brinton, a composting expert and a consultant based in Mt. Vernon, Maine. With grant funds from the Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development Agency in Waldoboro, Brinton undertook a detailed study of Monhegan's problem. Beginning with an analysis of the trash itself (the sorting and weighing effort on the town dock last summer), Brinton found that 80% of it is generated during July, August, and September.

More than half of the island's trash is "compostable," Brinton concluded, suggesting it could be transformed into something more useful than landfill material. Brinton has designed a "containerized" composter to help handle the compostable fraction, and planned to report on it at the March town meeting. As for the non-compostable portion, he says, the solution seems to be a combination of compacting, grinding up the plastics, and shipping to the mainland for landfilling. Glass can be ground and left on the island, but other recycling that might reduce the volume may be hampered by high transportation costs.

Lying 30 miles northeast of Monhegan in Penobscot Bay, Islesboro operates a conventional dump, manned three days a week in accordance with state regulations. "Eventually," says Town Manager Scott Seabury, "we're going to have to get the trash off the island." The island produces 300 tons per year, most of it in the summer when the population is six times larger than it is in winter. The short-term solution, Seabury says, is an expansion of the existing landfill to extend its life. The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is considering Islesboro's application for the expansion.

"It's scary what we're spending on solid waste," Seabury says. In 1988, the town budgeted $21,000 for the dump but had to spend $50,000 to satisfy the DEP, according to the town manager. The solid waste figure in this year's budget is $32,000.

"An island is like any rural town," comments Jim Haskell, a land-use consultant who once served as manager for several Maine island communities. And as in any community with a small population, the state's regulations don't always fit. Maine has encouraged the development of regional landfills, for example — but for an island, that means major transportation costs. Regulations have made it virtually impossible to site new landfills on islands because of thin soils and threats to ground water. And as Cliff Eliason of the DEP's solid waste bureau points out, the summer-winter population difference that's common on Maine islands "throws a monkey wrench" into regulations or plans that might work in a large city or even a small town on the mainland where the seasonal variation isn't as great.

Still, the rules have to be there, and they have to be enforced to protect people. "With all island landfill," says Eliason, "what you have is a closed environment — where there's risk, it's hard to avoid it because ground water is limited. Any island dump or landfill may not test badly, but it should be looked at closely anyway."

Eliason's agency maintains a priority list of dumps in the state, a sort of 10-best (and 10-worst) compendium of Maine's solid waste situation. According to the January 1988 list, the dump on Chebeague Island in Casco Bay is among the worst third of the municipal sites statewide, presumably because it threatens ground water. Chebeague is part of the mainland town of Cumberland. Two other Casco Bay islands, Long and Peaks, also appear high on the list, but they're part of Portland and the city expects to close their dumps shortly.

Other island dumps — Vinalhaven, Frenchboro, Islesboro, Swan's Island, North Haven — are low on the priority list, says Eliason, because they're small and because the pressure on them isn't as great. "They've lived with them," he says of those communities, adding however, that the sites aren't particularly well run.

Are there fewer island dumps than formerly? "That's the trend in Casco Bay," says Eliason, "and it's certainly to be expected — there are enough on-shore facilities that provide something other than an open dump." Solid waste problems have changed since the 1970s when the focus was on stopping open burning, Eliason points out: "The safe, cost-effective alternative usually means transporting it, and more towns are willing to open their doors to islands than used to be the case. Still, an island is really held hostage."

Maine islands are hostage to more than mainland towns. Besides the DEP, which enforces solid waste laws on islands in organized towns — Vinalhaven and Swan's Island, for example — there's the Land Use Regulation Commission (LURC), which has jurisdiction over unorganized places such as Monhegan and Matinicus. The commission has trash-related enforcement actions underway on both, according to Jym St. Pierre

of the staff, and would become involved more deeply were someone to propose a subdivision on either island. If a subdivision proposal came up, "we'd look more critically at solid waste — a developer must be able to demonstrate he'll send solid waste to an appropriate facility."

The subdivision wouldn't have to be coastal to have island-related problems, either. On the Lily Bay islands in Moosehead Lake several years ago, LURC required a developer to produce a signed agreement from Sawyer Environmental Services in Hampden to take short-term solid waste, plus a long-term plan to ship trash to the Penobscot Energy Recovery (PERC) plant in Orrington.

These days, as islands wrestle with their trash problems, there is no shortage of ideas. Composting would work particularly well for Monhegan, Brinton told a 1988 Island Conference session on solid waste, because of the large amount of food waste produced by the island's seven inns. "Any community with lots of restaurants ought to benefit from composting," Brinton said. Islesboro's Seabury would ban plastics if he had his way; Hannigan of Martha's Vineyard points to the success of his district's $20-per-appliance charge designed to cover the costs of recycling "white goods" like refrigerators and washing machines, as well as a $1 per tire disposal charge. Martha's Vineyard has also negotiated attractive transportation rates with truckers who would otherwise return empty on the ferry.

Dawn Genes of the Time and Tide Resource Conservation and Development Agency favors inter-island cooperation: "We hope that what we're trying to do on Monhegan will become a demonstration, a pilot project for other communities," she says. "We want to share the information with other islands." One difficulty, points out Islesboro's Seabury, is that many Maine islands lie in different counties, making cooperation difficult.

But if islands and other small towns really want to solve their problems, says Jim Haskell, they'll have to involve the private sector. "We've made solid waste a municipal responsibility," he says, "but most municipalities aren't accepting their responsibility." The alternative: make individuals responsible. "We make the waste, after all, and if we had to pay somebody to come to the houses and pick it up, the free market would get involved and recycling would come sooner," Haskell maintains. "If it were all my responsibility, I'd be more likely to be conservation minded, and a whole economy would develop."

For islands and their residents, the new economy couldn't come soon enough.

***David Platt** is Executive Editor of* Maine Times. *Thorough research and clear writing are his hallmark, attributes well known by readers of the* Bangor Daily News, *where he was reporter and columnist for many years.*

Island Bicentennial

The Eastern United States is in a welter of bicentennial celebrations. This is no surprise, for at the successful conclusion of the American Revolution a thousand communities stood by to reap the benefits of enfranchisement after hostilities with England were concluded and the First Congress could get to its domestic business.

This year finds two Maine island groups in bicentennial swing — the Fox Islands (Vinalhaven and North Haven townships) and Islesboro. Every town has its own style and depth of appreciation, but a 200th anniversary in the world's greatest democratic republic ain't too rusty, as they say . . .

Through the assiduous auspices of William Vinal, petitioner to the Massachusetts Legislature, the Fox Islands were recognized as an officially incorporated township of the Maine, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, June 25, 1789. The official papers were signed in a public building on North Fox Island, today's North Haven. This swirl of islands in the middle of Penbobscot Bay remained all of a political piece for nearly a century, long after Anglican Maine split off from the residually Puritan Massachusetts, in 1820. After various disagreements, religious and otherwise, North Haven reincorporated separately from Vinalhaven in 1846.

The Fox Islands, named by Martin Pring for common animal sitings along the shore in 1603, share this special year of recognition, and all kinds of bashes are planned by each island individually, and together. The Fox Islands schedule to date includes:

1. A reinactment of the incorporation signing on North Haven, June 25;
2. Lobster boat races in the Fox Island Thorofare, July 15 (these will replace the traditional races at Stonington on this date);
3. A parade with at least ten bands participating on August 18 (Walter Cronkite presiding as Parade Marshal!);
4. A monumental fireworks display the evening of August 18 put on by the world champion pyrotechnic Santori family.

These are only a few of the highlights of a very busy schedule throughout 1989. So many are the events and features that an official calendar officer has been assigned the task of keeping track of it all, the updated results to appear regularly in *The Wind* and *The North Haven News.*

Islesboro's bicentennial plans revolve around a three-day celebration, August 4-6. An 11-person steering committee under the chairmanship of Paul Boardman secured a logo, the design still secret at presstime, pending a grant of copyright.

Merchants will be charged a percentage of their sales for objects and clothing that use the logo, this income to cover costs of the celebration. The committee itself will offer logo vases and official post cards for direct sales. All proceeds will be added to the $8,000 out of surplus funds allocated by a special town meeting held in December.

The recreation subcommittee is so far planning a dance, a parade, a guided tour of the island cemeteries, and a barbecue.

Details of these and other events will apear in due course in the Rockland *Courier Gazette,* the *Bangor Daily News,* the *Island News,* and over WRKD radio of Rockland.

-G.P.

Beach Speech

Some political sentiment in the state has it that Gov. John McKernan's "Capitol for a Day" program is a waste of time, and in any case merely political. However, when the governor and his cabinet appeared on Vinalhaven last June 9th, Himself and his commissioners were accessible, responsive, and the results of the day effective.

Among other things, months of negotiations with the state coalesced at that time as the town finally completed its purchase from the state of the so-called "State Beach," an 85-acre parcel of land and shoreline, for $100,000. Located on the east side of the island, and including a wide range of beach, shore, marsh, and woodland ecosystems for so modest an acreage, the purchase was a spectacular bargain. In the middle of Town Manager Victoria Dyer's purchase acceptance speech to the Governor, an American bald eagle flew past the assembled gathering, flashed its epaulets, and perched on a prominent nearby tree branch to oversee the last half of the speech. It was stunning, as if Nature herself approved of the gubernatorially sponsored transaction in the interests of public access to island shores.

"Selectmen, Vinalhaven Town Parks Committee, and Chairperson Ames, Ladies and Gentlemen; welcome to a rare event and an ever-more-precious place.

"In our state's heated economy, and certainly in light of the rapidly increasing value of private properties, public parks generally, and public shorelines specifically, have become the gold and jewels of the public sector. By acquiring ambient and beautiful places where ordinary people may come to relax, renew, and be with nature, secure in their right to do so, we make ourselves more than merely rich. We make ourselves civilized. The true wealth of a civilization resides in soul and spirit, not the pocketbook. Places such as this serve the spirit of a community.

"Ancient Puritan New England laws notwithstanding, most Americans, and certainly most islanders, regard the intertidal zones of the nation's shorelines to be, in effect, public highways, with riparian rights of both use and responsibility. But, it has happened that history seems to be outpacing opinion.

"More and more shores belonging to the people must be made official; and here today, we are doing just that — insuring that humble hotdogs will continue to get sand in them, beachballs will be forgotten and left behind, that sandcastles will be melted by incoming tides, and that the studious and lonely may study and be alone, unharrassed, where land and sea beautifully meet.

"It is important to remind ourselves that this transfer of property need not have happened. The state need not have offered, and Vinalhaven's voters need not have approved. But, everyone did what was right, and already we may congratulate ourselves for the gratitude of generations to come.

"Thank you very much..."

-Victoria Dyer, Town Manager, Vinalhaven

Downeast

Settling In Frenchboro

JAMES HATCH

Because the past five years of effort by Frenchboro islanders to attract new residents to their isolated community have been so dauntless and inspiring, Island Journal *has covered the story in one form or another since Volume One. Below are two different views of Frenchboro. The first describes what has come to be known as the "homesteading" project. The second, now that the new residents have moved in, is a view of life in a one-room island school through the eyes of one of its graduates.*

Frenchboro, Long Island, Maine, December 28,1988 — A 25-knot breeze was blowing a cold rain off the water as the U-Haul vans lined up at the ferry terminal in Bass Harbor. The years of dedicated work by the people of Frenchboro to revitalize their community by attracting new settlers was about to pay off. Two new families would be moving on with this special ferry trip, and another on the regular boat tomorrow. There was both excitement and anxiety in the air as newcomers and long-time residents alike wondered how this bold undertaking would affect their futures.

After driving all night through freezing rain and snow, Steve and Elaine Beote were near the end of a journey which began three years ago when the couple first read an article about "homesteading" on Frenchboro in *Downeast* magazine. As one of the first families chosen for the program, the Beotes stuck with their dream of moving to the island through the long period it took to finance and construct the affordable housing development which made their move possible.

Steve , a lobster fisherman and electrician from Salem, Mass., was looking for a more relaxed rural lifestyle in a place where he could still get access to a working waterfront. Steve was on Frenchboro all last summer, using his skill as an electrician to wire the seven houses in the new development. It has been hard for Steve and Elaine to be separated all these months, but it has given Steve a jump on the residency requirement for his lobster fishing license.

Steve was so excited about the project that he told other Massachusetts North Shore fishermen about it. Eventually, two other fishing families signed up; Joe and Sue Sylvester, and Brendan and Jennifer O'Leary, all from Marblehead. Joe and Sue Sylvester had also braved the the near-blizzard conditions on I-95 to make the early morning ferry. With their two sons, Patrick and Sean, and all their worldly possessions packed into a U-Haul, the Sylvesters were ready to start a new life on Frenchboro.

Sue Sylvester spoke of her reasons for moving to a remote island as the ferry steamed past the the deserted settlement on Gott Island. "We could never have afforded our own house in Marblehead, and it was getting harder and harder for Joe to fish as the yachts took over the harbor. The people of Frenchboro have been very helpful and supportive, and we love our new house. This will be a great place for our boys to grow up with no traffic or crime to worry about."

A large portion of the island's 50 residents were at the ferry dock to greet the new arrivals. As the Sylvester's pulled into their new driveway the sun broke through. With the storm over and a group of neighbors on hand to help unload, the job of moving into their new home went smoothly. A good start for a new island beginning.

Jennifer O'Leary was due on the next day's boat, driving her furniture from Marblehead in a 24-foot van. Husband Brendan was already on the island to start fishing. He planned to spend the winter scallop season as stern man for long-time island fisherman Pard Higgins. Indeed, all the new fisherman had stern man berths for the scallop season.

The first family to move in, Jon and Debbie Crossman, were already Frenchboro residents when they took possession of their house a week earlier. It wasn't entirely finished, but it did have heat and running water. With night-time temperatures dropping below zero it was time to get out of the unwinterized summer camp where they had been staying. Jon was raised on Frenchboro

and has been earning his living at lobstering since graduating from high school three years ago. Jon and Debbie were married in August, and have recently announced that they are in a family way. They are getting a quick start on fulfilling their responsibility to repopulate the island school.

The new island teacher, Kerry Hartman, was due to move into her house after the Holiday break. The final two homesteading families were scheduled to move on island in mid-January from Connecticut. This completed the efforts of the people of Frenchboro to repopulate their remote outpost. The 17 new residents attracted to Frenchboro by the program amount to a 35% increase in the year-round population.

The key to the success of this project was the creation of affordable housing for the new residents. Although most Maine islands are not looking for more people, the Frenchboro experience provides a useful model for solving the affordable housing crisis which affects many of the island communities. With this project they will have added to the year-round housing stock by seven houses, an increase of 40%!

The first step in the process was the town's successful application for a Community Development Block Grant. The grant application was leveraged with the generous gift of approximately 50 acres of land on which to locate a new community building and for the new subdivision. The grant funds were used to build the community building as well as to build the necessary infrastructure for the subdivision, such as roads, power, wells, and septic system. A non-profit, community-based development corporation, the Frenchboro Future Development Corporation (FFDC), was set up to accept the land and other contributions, to recruit the new families, and to manage the development of the new housing.

National media attention about the project brought in thousands of inquiries, making it relatively easy to recruit potential settlers. The real problem was finding a combination of financing and construction which would produce homes affordable to island families earning under $20,000 a year. After raising almost $100,000 in private donations and low-interest loan commitments, the FFDC was able to make an effective case to the Maine State Housing Authority (MSHA) for a long-term, low-interest loan of $250,000. With the financing commitments in place, the FFDC hired the Island Institute to provide management services for the project.

Institute Housing Specialist Jim Hatch worked with Portland architect Jim Sterling to come up with a design for an efficient 1,000 + square foot house. The cape style house is solar oriented, heavily insulated, and designed to be expandable into a total of three bedrooms and two baths. Although island construction costs are notoriously high, substantial savings were realized by having one contractor build seven almost identical houses at once.

The result is a comfortable, easily heated house which the FFDC is able to rent to program participants for $375 a month. After three years the homesteaders will be able to exercise their purchase options and receive a financing package which creates a $312-a-month mortgage payment. This includes provisions to assure that the houses remain affordable should the owners ever wish to sell.

The Regulatory Agreement which assures future affordability sets the rate of increase in the cost of the house to the rate of increase in the local median income. The FFDC retains a right of first refusal on any future sale, and if the owners should attempt to get around the FFDC and sell for a windfall profit, the property will automatically revert back to the FFDC. The detailed and costly legal work necessary to preserve the long-term affordability was generously provided by the Maine Housing Enterprise, a housing advocacy organization based in Portland, Maine.

What will be the long-term results of this innovative undertaking? Will the previously ebbing demographic tide on Frenchboro be permanently turned to flood? No one expects that all of the families in this first group will desire to put down permanent roots. This is a mobile society and there will likely be some turnover in the years to come. However, the people of Frenchboro now have a resource in these perpetually affordable houses that can be the key to maintaining the viability of this adventuresome island community for many years to come.

Certainly the new families which have been attracted so far will enrich and change Frenchboro, as they will themselves be enriched and changed, in ways no one has yet envisioned.

James Hatch is a housing consultant to the Island Institute.

"School Days"

DEAN LAWRENCE LUNT

Well so much has happened to me
That I don't understand.
All I can think of is being five years old
following behind you at the beach,
Tracing your footprints in the sand,
Trying to walk like a man.

— *"Walk Like a Man,"*
Bruce Springsteen, 1987

The little boy rubs his eyes, grinding clenched fists into his face as he tries to muscle away the sleepy bugs. He struggles from his parents' bed and crawls slowly into his mother's arms.

"It's time for school, Zac," Mom whispers into his ear.

"Yup," Zac replies in a sleepy voice. He climbs from Mom's arms and walks down the steps by himself.

He makes the transition from sleep to Mom to independence in less than a minute, but in reality it will continue for at least the next two decades. From Mom's bed, to her arms, to self-reliance. This is only day one — kindergarten — his first step away.

Zac sits at the table and eats his eggs, juice, and pop tarts in nervous anticipation of school. He finishes and hurries from the table to slip into his new school clothes: the red pants, red sneakers, blue striped shirt, and black sweater. His blond hair, strung across his head in a semi-combed state, leaves him one feature not neatly manicured for the occasion. As he heads down the road with his schoolmate, Wayne, his big blue eyes hold no hint of hesitation or remorse. In his eyes exists only bright expectation and adventure.

"I'm going to school and everybody's big there," Zachary says, in direct reference to his newly acquired stature and in deference to no one in particular. He walks in silence the rest of the way with his backpack slung over his shoulders. He ascends the grassy hill where sits the one-room, K-8, seven-student Frenchboro School.

The Frenchboro School, a virtual anachronism, stands in sharp contrast to modern-day school systems with their consolidated buildings, crowded classrooms, and declining efficiency. The sorry state of education in this country is no secret and lies at the root of many evils. According to a recent *Time* article, it even poses a direct threat to the future security of the United States. But Zachary doesn't enter a modern nameless school, rather one with a one-to-seven teacher-to-student ratio, resembling a large family more than the walls of academe.

In the early formative years the pros of this atmosphere far exceed the cons. However, the benefits work on the law of diminishing returns. As the students progress into junior high, social acceptance and interaction assume the reins of growth, displacing protective development as the important factor. Often if the student remains in the protective bubble too long, he becomes a carnivore of temptations once he is finally released. When Zachary reaches junior high he will move one step further from his mother and her arms.

I remember when I first started school at Frenchboro. I entered towards the end of the foster child program which brought 21 new children into the school during the mid-'60's. By the time I started school five years later, however, enrollment had dwindled again to 12 students. Me and my kindergarten buddy, Tim, started school together with Mrs. Onyett as our teacher.

Mrs Onyett, an elderly lady even then, became the unfortunate recipient of the large influx of students. While she was a nice person with noble intentions, she wasn't commanding enough to control the school. Tim and I operated pretty much alone our first three years while Mrs. Onyett tried to control rambunctious students. Although possessing good intentions, she had no force behind her convictions or herself, and thus attempts at pushing education fell on deaf ears. As a result few of her students learned respect for education, while students of the following teacher did.

This highlights an important characteristic of the one-room school — the teacher has

an overwhelming impact on his/her students. Few checks exist in a small school when a teacher doesn't perform; more correctly, no early warning system exists. In effect the student links education with the teacher. Learning assumes the teacher's personality for good or bad, hence the dire need for a quality teacher.

Kerry Hartman, a 26-year-old woman from Morristown, N.J., has been hired as the new school teacher. She earned her degree from the University of Maine at Orono, and last year worked as a teacher's aide at Pemetic Grammar School in Southwest Harbor. She looks forward to teaching a small school and brings the energy and excitement associated with her youth.

Unlike a large school, Frenchboro has a school that a teacher can consider her own. Without the politics, without a principal, it's yours to form. This creates a very special and personal feeling between the teacher and the school. The majority of the pressure results from the extremely close eye cast on the school by the parents, usually based more on personality than on curriculum. One thing about a small school in a small community, there are few places to run and no place to hide.

The white-washed school sits sandwiched between a church, white and steepled, and a parsonage, white. The triad conjures images of the proverbial small New England town. Inside, the walls are white and blue, but not bright. The ancient oaken floor rolls across the school in wave-like fashion and emits an oily aroma. Bookshelves line the walls on two sides, as do blackboards. The air is not fresh; it contains the everpresent hint of chalk dust, leaving you on the edge of a sneeze. Few items indicate a modern schoolroom: not the oaken teacher's desk, nor the tin ceiling, nor the wooden shelves, nor the oak floor. The lone modern item, a plastic exit sign and symbol tacked above the door, looks strange and out of place, as a car would in Camelot.

Desks are not placed in neat rows for the students in this school, rather two round tables and a bench serve as the pupils' work area. Four desks sit sideways against the walls, used only for storage. The students sit around the tables to work, further promoting school unity. The older kids occupy the larger table, while the younger ones — Zac, Samantha, and Carrie — share the smaller one. Zac and Sam remain cautious friends, not as close since the dreary day Zac learned Sam was a girl. "But why Momma? Why?" he cried.

Kerry — no Miss Hartman here — stands before the class: Zac, Carrie, Samantha, Luke, Travis, Wayne, and Jacob. She takes them through a discussion of days, months, and weather conditions, and then leads them in the Pledge of Allegiance, (Vice President Bush and Governor Dukakis nowhere in sight), and finally into a discussion of school rules. She sets up a unique constitution for the school, that begins, "We the students of the Frenchboro School..." and leaves five spaces blank to add the rules. In a carefully orchestrated democracy enviable of a third world nation, she prods the students into declaring that No Running, No Yelling, Raise Your Hand, Be Helpful, Share With Others are proper guidelines.

Zac put the most important rule on the floor — No Worms in School — but Kerry quickly dismissed it. Five rules to live and have a happy year by, the simplicity of a young grammar school is something to behold. No Running and Raise Your Hand, with no mention or concern that the road gets tougher just around the corner. This demonstrates a large advantage of the tiny school: the potholes in the road are delayed until the shocks are better equipped to handle the bumps.

I remember my first new teacher, teachers actually, a husband-and-wife combination. I credit them with probably teaching me more than any other teachers I had in grammar school or high school. They taught four years and returned following a brief hiatus. Looking back, it is strange they were successful or accepted since they didn't mesh with the island personality.

The first time I saw them they were sitting on the stern of a lobster boat looking like castoffs of the '60's. Mike's hair even hung behind in a pony tail. Their beliefs were also different. They were feminists, vegetarians, activists, and listeners of the Grateful Dead. I even remember — and my strong Republican beliefs shudder — tye-dying shirts. Their success rate in education, four college students, further indicates the results obtained by quality teachers in one-room schools.

In the quick acceptance style common to children, the polite reservation and eagerness to please apparent as school began, disintegrates into the normal bustle and impatience of youth, until by recess, a mere hour and a half since school started, teacher Hartman is as much a newcomer as the oldest resident and could very easily be the only teacher they ever had.

Recess consists of the usual run and jump exercise of young children not skilled enough to partake in any actual games. The half-hour is spent swinging, throwing the Frisbee, and teeter-tottering. Kerry spends time with each child, taking turns pushing one on the swing, helping another teeter, and a third totter.

The students return to their tables following recess and begin reading their *Weekly Readers* and math books. The morning moves on towards lunch and the end of the students' attention span. They finish each assignment quickly and not to full completion. Kerry may realize her biggest challenge is entertaining and occupying seven students and four grades simultaneously, especially since all are third grade or below. She may already sense the importance of timing, because towards the end of the three-hour morning session, she starts story time. Following a tale from the Wump World, involving an invasion by the dreaded pollutions, the morning ends and with it, Zac's first day in school.

They say the world gets larger as you get older. I disagree with that assertion; while your range grows, your scope diminishes. The attentive looks during the Wump story show their absorption in the story. When you get older there is no Wump World, only words.

As I look around the school grounds, the old ball field with the outfield fence, once an unreachable distance for our young bats, is now only a small plot of soil, the formidable wall only a cluster of spruce trees about 150 feet away. The road where only the biggest of the big kids could "hit one into" lies just over the hill. Behind the school, badlands and beaches, battlefronts and bunkers, and endless hiding places were once within easy reach, but I now have to stare very hard to see them. I have to look until the hazy and cool fall air dissipates into the past.

Zac wiggles into his sweater, pulls on his backpack and heads out the door, down the steps, and across the yard. He starts down the grassy hill, with the day behind him and Mom, his brother, and lunch ahead. His vision reaches only to his house. He doesn't see nor comprehend the 17-year educational journey that walks hand-in-hand with life, that he has now begun. On the other side of lunch and past his house lie successes and failures, A's and D's, friends and enemies, acne, dances, girls and a broken heart, and countless other pressures and temptations that don't exist to him on this crisp autumn day. Zachary certainly doesn't see them yet, he just sees lunch, his mother, and maybe still an occasional night in his parent's bed.

***Dean Lunt**, who grew up on Frenchboro, is currently a free-lance writer in Cape Elizabeth. He is 23 years old and a 1988 graduate of Syracuse University with a dual major in journalism and marketing.*

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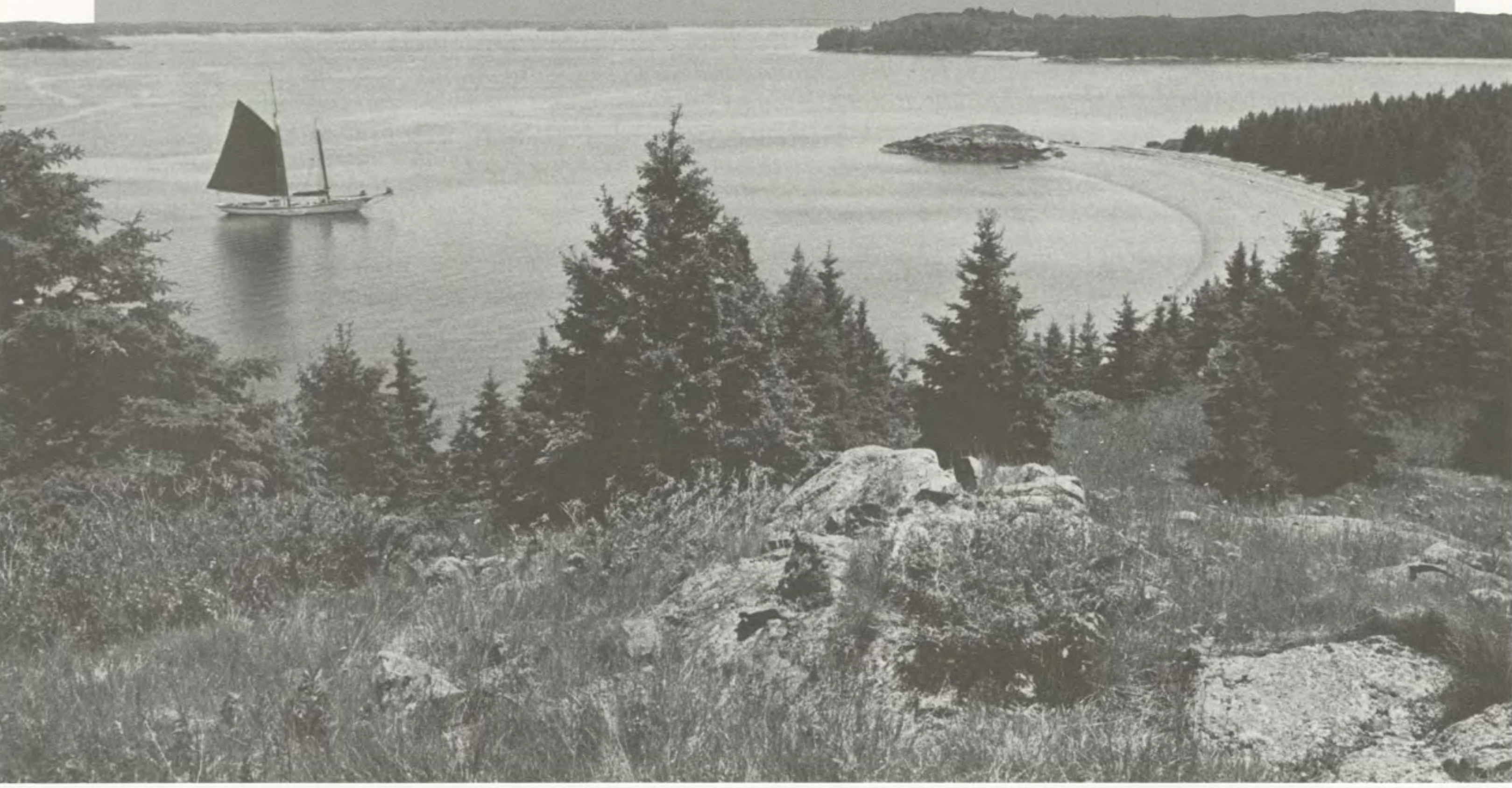

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A Note to Our Members

Last year in a poll of our members, of the more than 800 of you who replied, a large majority asked for more news and information on island community and conservation issues. So we scratched our heads (and looked at the budget sheets) and responded with an expanded publications program that includes a larger (92-page) *Island Journal* and four large issues of *Island News*, our new inter-island publication in newspaper format.

To make this expanded service available, we decided against raising the cover price of *Island Journal*, but instead have started a mail order bookstore to distribute quality island books. We have also begun accepting advertisements and expanded our corporate sponsor appeal.

But ultimately your support is the fuel driving our efforts. We thank you and ask you to help expand our membership base by giving to a friend one of the bind-in cards enclosed at the end of this issue. It's corny but true: if each one of you finds one more friend for the Maine islands, we can double our membership and increase our effectiveness.

REVIEWS

Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast, Vol. II: Mt. Desert to Machias Bay, by Charles B. McLane. Kennebec River Press, Falmouth, Maine, 1989.
Reviewed by Philip W. Conkling

Charles McLane, a Professor of Government at Dartmouth College and an expert on Soviet affairs, has become the most prolific and important historian of the Maine islands. With the publication of this second volume of histories covering islands between Little Cranberry (Islesford) and Little River (Cutler), McLane has added a considerable geographic range to his earlier historical accounts of islands in Penobscot and Blue Hill bays.

In this volume McLane, whether consciously or not, artfully shapes the historical narratives with more subtle shading and careful inferences than he allowed himself in the first book, and in the process adds greatly to our understanding of how and why the Eastern Maine region differs from communities to the westward.

In his thoughtful introduction to this book, McLane writes: "The most relevant observation I believe I can make about the residents of Eastern Maine in the nineteenth century — those east of Gouldsboro peninsula in particular — is that their isolation determined their patterns of behaviour and shaped their characters. Stage roads were excreble until well into the last century, according to all travelers. Sea channels (though of course used for many years by experienced mariners) were not adequately charted and buoyed until after the Civil War. The Washington County Railroad did not reach Eastport until 1899. Isolation meant that the communities were much thrown in on themselves. Some settlers left, to be sure, but most remained so that census schedules of 1900 reveal the same surnames as those of 1800, though there are of course many more of them. There were no great cultural centers or universities in the last century to stimulate the intellectual growth of downeasters. Few artists, writers, musicians, or poets emerged in Eastern Maine (though some were born there). The so-called 'downeast character' — whatever it is — derives, I believe, from the self-sufficiency induced by isolation. It is the autarchy of individuals." In this sense, then, all of eastern Maine was an island.

In addition to the insights into the history, geography, and character of eastern Maine, this volume has all sorts of unexpected bits of arresting and delightful information. Whaling appears to have been a substantial activity of a number of islands in both Frenchman and Narraguagus bays.

The important healing activities of the Maine Seacoast Mission are recounted here and there, and, in particular, the diary of one of its teachers, Mrs. Muir, who lived in Sealand, the town on Head Harbor Island, adds drama to the daily lives of this isolated community. A portrait of one of the founders of Beals Island, Manwarren Beal, emerges from two official petitions Beal wrote in the years 1775 and 1800. The latter, requesting the prohibition of torching for herring, is perhaps the first piece of conservation writing in Maine history.

This carefully researched and well written history is also beautifully illustrated with nearly 100 black and white photographs that, for many, will be worth the price of the book alone. Like the Maine Coast's most illustrious historian, Samuel Eliot Morison, McLane writes history from first-hand experience and exploration, and thus achieves in his work a feeling, both passionate and authentic, that eludes all but a few gifted historians.

This second volume in all ways will deepen the appreciation that readers of his first volume enjoyed. And because McLane is working on the third (and last) volume covering the islands of the Muscongus, Boothbay and Kennebec regions, the best may be yet to come.

The Lobster Gangs of Maine, by James M. Acheson. University Press of New England, Hanover, N.H., and London, 1988, softcover, 181 pages,bibliography and index, illustrated.
Reviewed by George Putz

There are many surprises here for everyone except Maine lobster fishermen, some of whom will be angered at having their profession illuminated by the cold light of objectively collected information. Written by Maine's only professional maritime social anthropologist, this book plumbs the breadth and depths of lobstering society: the role of kinship and family, hierarchical social organization among fishermen, the kinds of territoriality in the fishery, and the effects of traditionally imparted information versus skill.

On the one hand, the book is a mirror to be held up by all lobstermen, and those piqued or curious about this extraordinary trade. On the other hand, here is a contribution to maritime social science, to be compared with the best of too few good scholarly treatments of fishing societies, and even fewer examples in the general literature. Just to get your interest up, try on this quotation:

"Even when managers are perfectly competent, their decisions come under intense scrutiny, and co-op members or officers are constantly trying to influence their decisions. As one former manager expressed it, 'Life for a co-op manager is just sheer hell.' In many instances conflicts have reached explosive proportions. One manager from a religious community has a unique way of handling raucous co-op meetings: he prays until the members stop arguing. Another very competent manager periodically resorts to fisticuffs. On one occasion, he threw the president of the cooperative off the dock."

Some of it sounds dry until you consider the consequences on Maine islands of what is being said. A major conclusion of the book provides reconsideration of the now standard environmentalist idea about "the tragedy of the commons, " wherein resources that no one owns are inevitably depreciated by common holders. Maine lobsters, by the Constitution owned by everyone in common, are effectively protected and even nurtured by the communal, extralegal system that exploits them.

This is a solid, stimulating book, making a fine pair with Mike Brown's *The Great Lobster Chase,* providing a comprehensive view of this most critical island industry.

Maine Island Classics, Living and Knitting on a Maine Island by Chellie Pingree & Debby Anderson. Published by North Island Designs, Inc., North Haven, Maine. 1988. 80pp Spiral Bound. $14.95.
Reviewed by Jamien Morehouse

Maine Island Classics is a handsome handbook for knitters, but its appeal goes well beyond a typical how-to book; many non-knitters will buy it for the pure pleasure of having and reading it.

Chellie Pingree's narrative, her story about life in a town 12 miles out to sea, is as crisp and businesslike as her enterprise, North Island Designs. The red spruce- covered island has a general store and post office downstreet and a ferry that provides both transport and a forum for socializing. Men build boats and catch lobsters and scallops, and women tend homes and gardens and knitting. Sometimes they switch roles just to get the job done. Chellie herself says the island gives one the feeling of being a very safe place where little change can ever come.

Debby Anderson, the sweater designer for North Island, presents here to home knitters some 20 designs that gained nationwide popularity when they were formerly available in kit form. For traditional designs she offers cardigans, vests, and pullovers with variations on apple trees and summer porches, hens with clever chicken wire texturing, lobsters and gulls, and of course, the favorite "Sheep in the Meadow." Her instructions are easy to follow, and she remembers to tell you, in layman's terms, some of the mistakes commonly made by less experienced knitters.

Peter Ralston's photographs of persons wearing these special designs in different island locations make one feel healthy. His shots of island sheep being towed in a dory in milky early morning sunlight, or dappled by the light beneath a mast-straight birch, or being led by the author and her daughters, are evocative. They make one wonder, "Can I be as healthy, handsome, and happy as the island models in this book if *I* make a Maine Island Classic? Could I knit *myself* into this picture?"

Island Institute Publications

If you have enjoyed this issue of *Island Journal*, please take a look at some of the other publications the Island Institute has available. These volumes may be ordered directly from us by calling 207-594-9209, or by writing to us at 60 Ocean St., Rockland, Me. 04841.

Volume II - VI **Island Journal** (1985-1989) $9.95 each

Keeping the Light, *A Handbook for the Adaptive Re-use of Island Light Stations.* $5.00

Island News, A Quarterly Newspaper $.75each

Islands in Time, *A Natural and Human History of the Islands of Maine,* Philip Conkling. A fascinating blend of history, ecology, geology, botany, zoology and sociology in a personal tribute to the unique character of Maine's coastal islands. 223 pages, 120 photos and illustrations, paperback. $10.95 (*10.00).

Hurricane Island, The Town That Disappeared, *A History of Hurricane Island,* Eleanor Richardson. The boom and bust days of the granite industry are described through narrative, interviews and photographs in this fascinating history of Hurricane Island. 150 pages, 50 photos, paperback. $12.95 (*11.75)

Killick Stones, *A Collection of Maine Island Writing.* Nine new short stories and two essays on Maine Island life. 117 pages, 5 illustrations, paperback. $7.95. (*7.00)

Green Islands, Green Seas: *A Guide to Foraging on the Islands of Maine,* Philip Conkling. The shores and intertidal zones on the islands offer up a feast if you know where to look. Philip Conkling describes how to forage for wild food. 64 pages, 48 illustrations, paperback. $3.95 (*3.50).

SOLD OUT

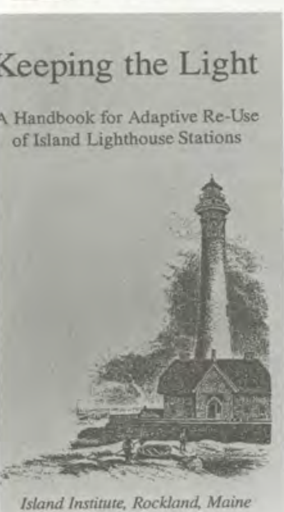
Hurricane Island, the Town That Disappeared, by Eleanor Richardson, has just been published by the Island Institute. This 144-page book, with 45 black and white photographs, tells the story of the rise and fall of one of the Maine coast's largest granite businesses in the period from 1870 to 1914 and its subsequent renovation as the site of the Hurricane Island Outward Bound School.

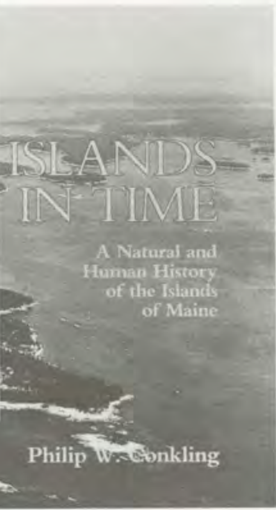
The photography richly illustrates the way the granite was cut and shipped from the island and the layout of the town and its massive granite works, cutting sheds, and loading operations at the turn of this century.

Hurricane Island is both a serious history and a fascinating story of the enterprise and subsequent disappearance of thousands of people who lived and worked on the island, a place that today hides much of its past beneath a cloak of gnarled spruce forest.

Anyone who has ever walked around an abandoned granite quarry and wondered how these men and their families literally carved a living out of stone cannot afford to miss this book.

Available through the Island Institute or your local bookstore.





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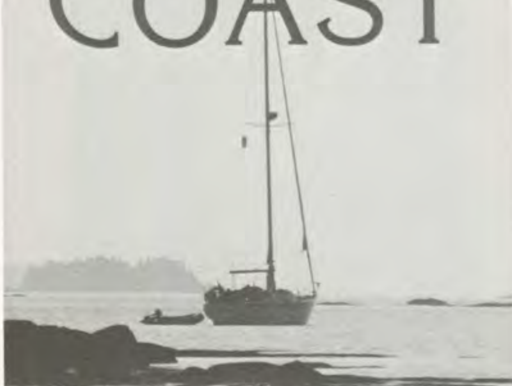


A Cruising Guide to the Maine Coast, Hank and Jan Taft. This guide is a good one - well researched, comprehensive and interesting reading to anyone who wants to explore the Maine coast. Starting at the Isles of Shoals eastward, harbor by harbor to the Canadian border including Grand Manan and Passamaquoddy Bay. 382 pages, generously illustrated with photos and charts, hardcover. $35.00(*32.50).

The Maine Islands in Story and Legend, Dorothy Simpson. Some 50 islands are featured from the Isles of Shoals to St. Croix on the Canadian border. Simpson takes a feeling for islands and uses it to bring the excitement of reality to thorough historical factfinding from the 17th century to modern times. 244 pages, 7 illustrations, paperback. $8.95 (*8.00)

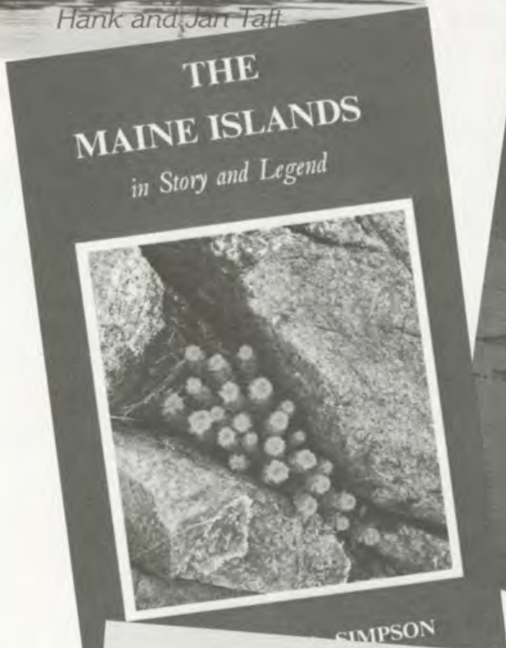
Relations, *Selected Poems 1950-1985,* Philip Booth. *Relations* charts decade by decade Philip Booth's spiritual journey across a hard physical landscape, Maine and the sea bringing him back again and again in all seasons of the mind. 259 pages, paperback. $12.95(*11.75).

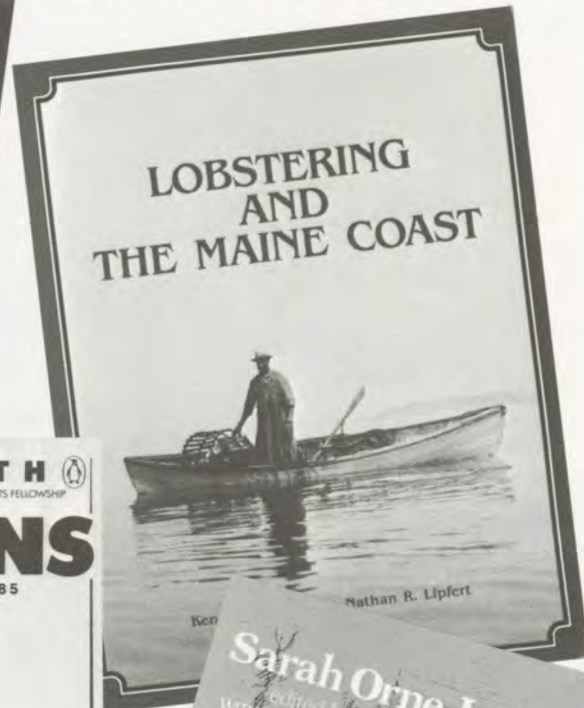
Amaretto, J. Upton. Joe Upton's story of the rejuvenated sardine carrier *Amaretto.* In narrating his first year, Upton describes a saga about the herring fishery - a fine and lasting addition to Maine's legacy of nautical writing. 164 pages, 32 photos, hardcover. $22.95 (*20.75).

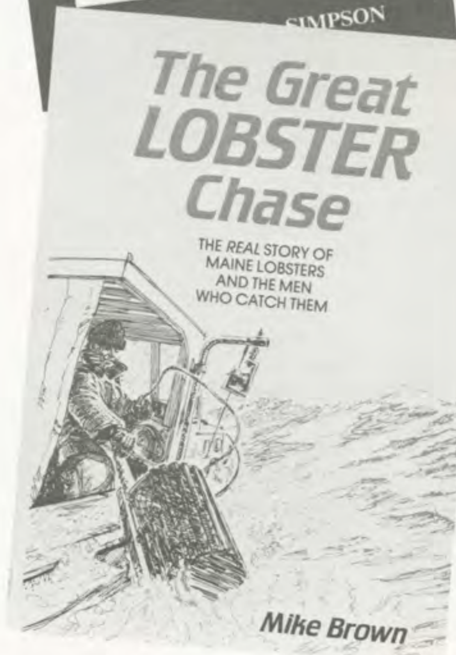
The Great Lobster Chase, *The Real Story of Maine Lobsters and the Men Who Catch Them,* M. Brown. This book is a story about the lobsterman, the sea, the boat, the lobster, the buyers, the scientists, the government, the community, the eating, and the future. It is THE BOOK on the lobster industry and its lifeways. 176 pages, 30 illustrations, hardcover. $22.95 (*20.75)

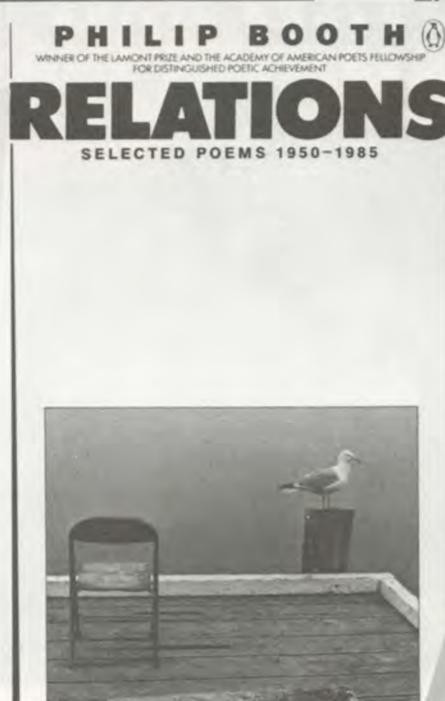
Lobstering and the Maine Coast, K. Martin & N. Lipfert. Beautifully illustrated, well researched and carefully written history of the Maine lobster fishery from the 1920's to the controversies of the 1980's. 143 pages, 105 photos and illustrations, hardcover. $17.50 (*15.25).

The Country of the Pointed Firs, Sarah Orne Jewett. Jewett's masterpiece of stories about the friends and family of Almira Todd, wonderful, independent and resilient men and women who live in small communities and isolated islands off the coast of Maine. 296 pages, paperback. $7.95 (*7.00).









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The Tide Trilogy: Vol I - High Tide at Noon; Vol II - Storm Tide; Vol III - Ebbing Tide , Elizabeth Ogilvie. These novels chronicle three different periods in the history of Criehaven Island experienced through the life of the central character, Johanna Bennett. Set in the 1940's, the novels celebrate Johanna's search for an identity independent from and supportive of her husband. Vol I-271 pp; Vol II-358 pp; Vol III-390pp. Paperback. $8.95 each (*8.00).

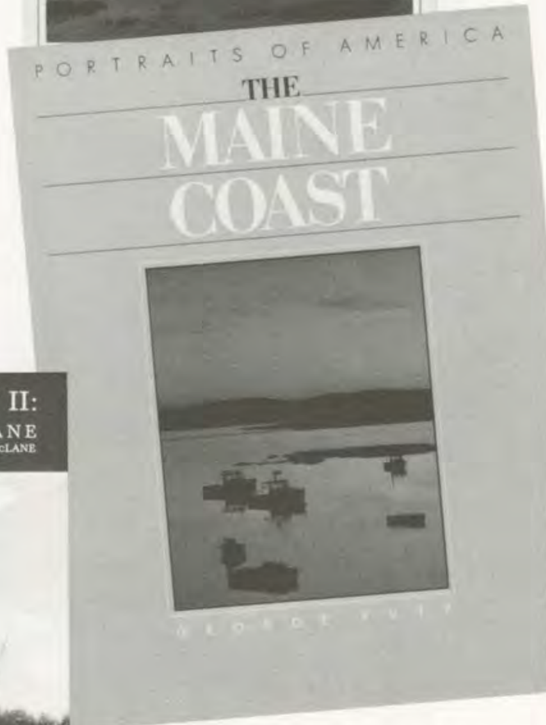
Islands Down East: *A Visitor's Guide*, Charlotte Fardelmann. From the Isles of Shoals to the Cranberrys here are descriptions of the places, means to get there, what to do there, where to stay , what to eat and what and how and what to be aware of to remain happy and tolerated, if not always accepted. 135 pages, paperback. $8.95(*8.00).

The Weir, Ruth Moore. A nostalgic story located in a small coastal community - a picture of a way of life fast disappearing, with strong independent characters engaged in real experiences. 342 pages, paperback. $8.50 (*7.50).

The Maine Coast, George Putz. This book takes the reader on a rambunctious tour of the coast from Kittery to Eastport. The color photographs are by some of the best photographers of the region, making it a great gift purchase bargain. George Putz is Senior Editor of the *Island Journal* and *Island News.* 175 pages, 151 photos, hardcover. $14.95 (*13.50).

Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast, Blue Hill Bay, Charles McLane. The Maine islands' most prolific and important historian's carefully researched and well-written history of the islands of Blue Hill Bay. 158 pages, well illustrated with photos, paperback. $14.95 ($13.50).

Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast, Mt. Desert to Machias Bay, Charles McLane. From books, maps, newspaper accounts, government archives and interviews with numerous individuals, McLane has reconstructed the history, geography and character of the islands of eastern Maine, from Mt. Desert to Machias Bay. Generously illustrated, hardcover. $45.00(*40.00)



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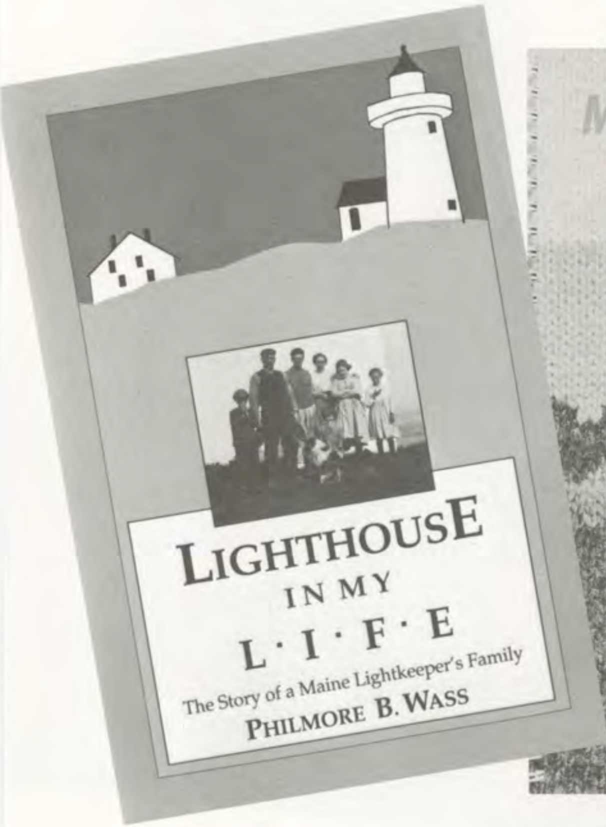
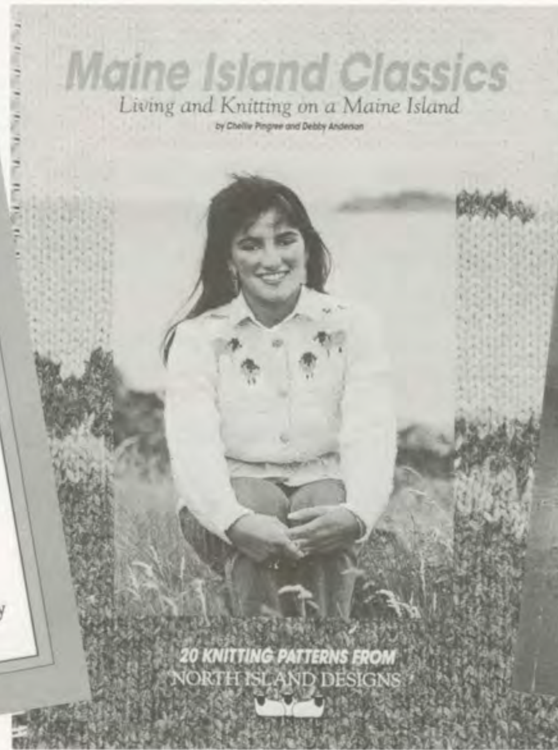
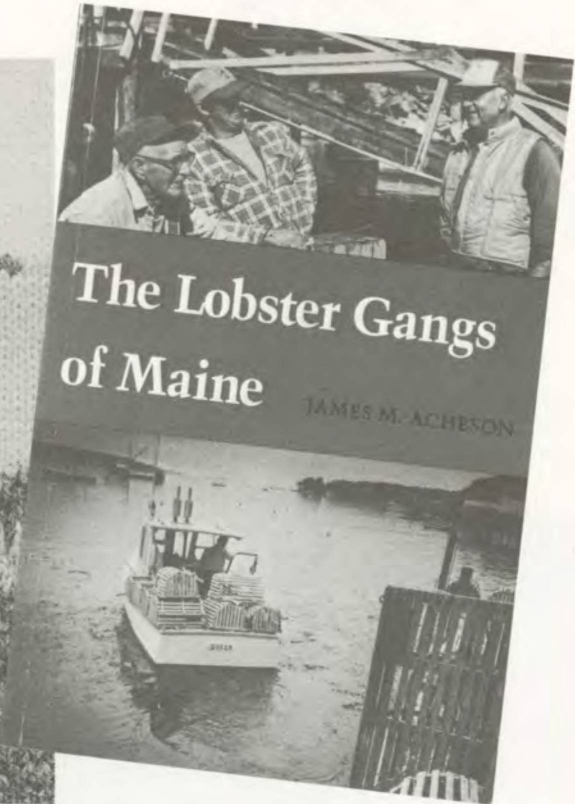
Lighthouse in my Life, *The Story of a Maine Lightkeeper's Family,* Philmore B. Wass. The first lightkeeper was assigned to Libby Island Light Station in 1822 and for the next 152 years Lighthouse Service employees faithfully tended the beacon. Some, like Hervey Wass, brought their families to this treeless island in Machias Bay. 258 pages, 19 photos, paperback. $9.95(*9.00).

Maine Island Classics, Living and Knitting on a Maine Island, Chellie Pingree. Not just another how-to book, Chellie Pingree's narrative is of life and history on a Maine Island, offering traditional sweater designs by Debby Anderson together with colors and patterns inspired by the island, and easy to follow directions. Lavishly illustrated with photographs by Peter Ralston. 80 pages, paperback. $14.95 (*13.50).

The Lobster Gangs of Maine, James Acheson. While published as a treatise on the social anthropology of Maine's most important fishery, this is a highly readable book of interest to all fishermen and those who want to understand the dynamics of Maine's working waterfronts. 181 pages, 30 illustrations, paperback. $9.95(*9.00).







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Jeff Dworsky

Before the railroads thrust their lines down the Maine coast in the 1850's, the only outlook for many of the towns east of Portland was toward the sea. The harbor mouth was a door leading out into life. To them, in reality, it opened up the world. Many a man built his home facing the sea with its back to the village street. And from the front door a shell-bordered walk led down to the family wharf or shipyard. The inhabitants of a seacoast town in Maine in their customs and habits, hopes and fears, ambitions and disappointments, language and institutions, and even their loves and hates, "followed the sea."

The Maritime History of Maine, by William Hutchinson Rowe, 1948

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