

**Gloucester, by land and sea; the story of a New England seacoast town, by Charles Boardman Hawes, with drawings by Lester G. Hornby.**

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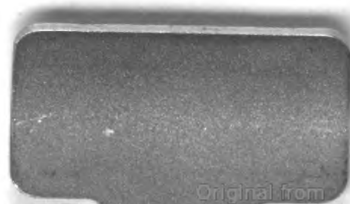
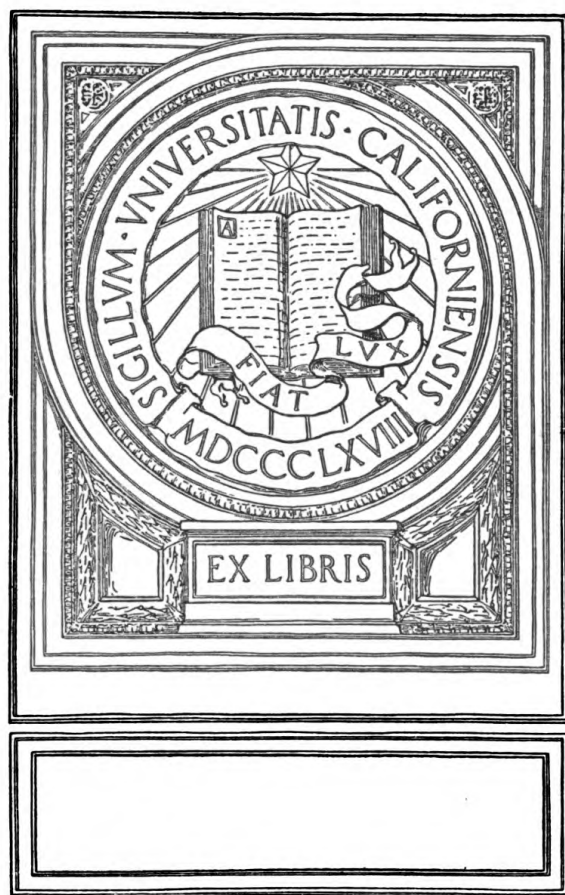
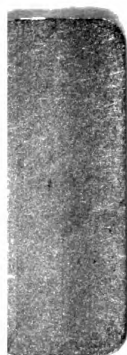
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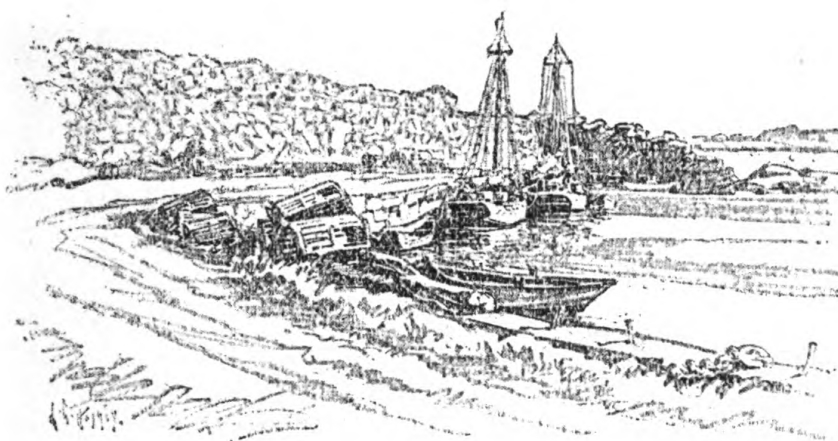












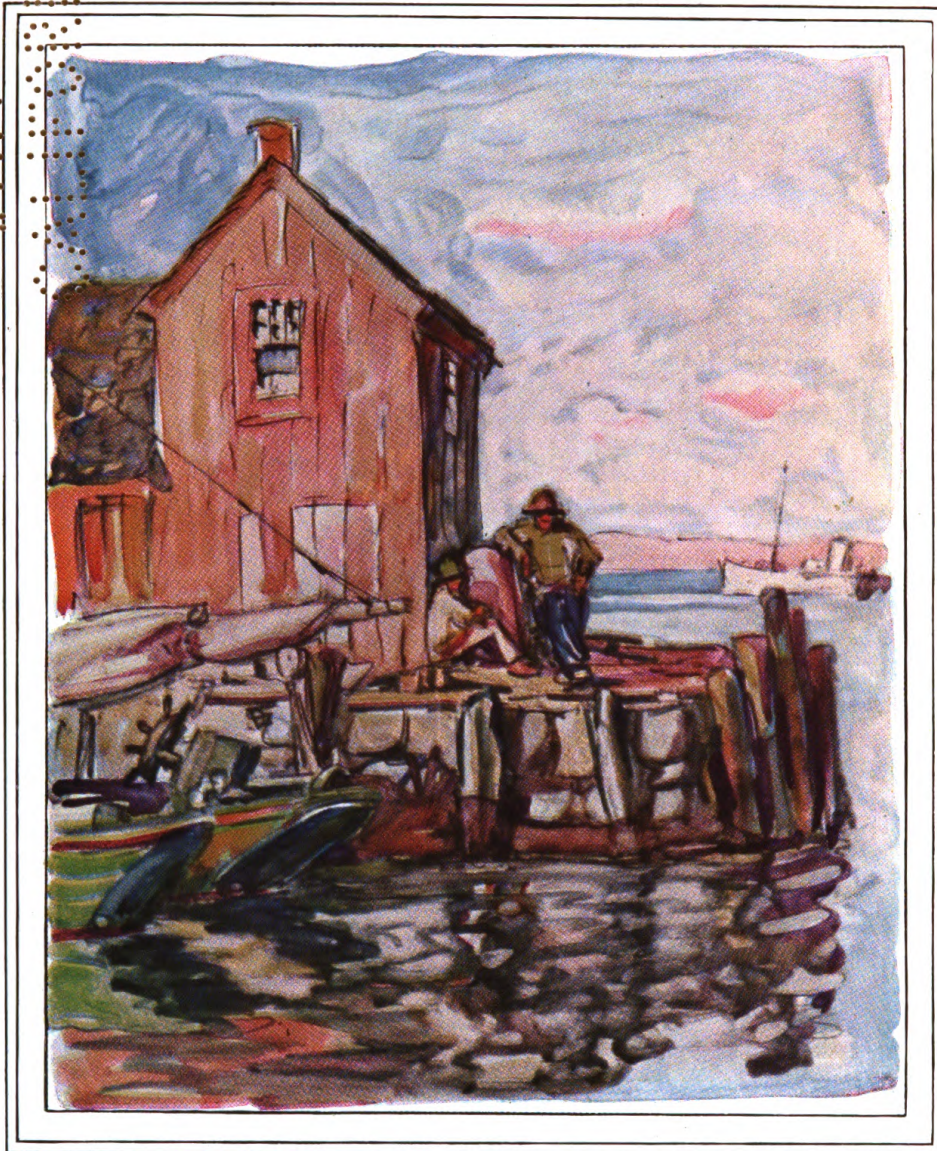
## GLOUCESTER BY LAND AND SEA







NO. 2



*AT ROCKPORT*

# GLOUCESTER BY LAND AND SEA

*The Story of a New England  
Seacoast Town*

BY

CHARLES BOARDMAN HAWES

WITH DRAWINGS BY  
LESTER G. HORNBY



LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY  
1923



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TO VIRGIL  
ALBANO

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**To**  
**GLOUCESTER**

**M103342**



## PREFACE

I HAVE sought to trace the growth of a town that is in many ways typical of most towns on our North Atlantic coast. The story of Gloucester is a chapter in the history of Massachusetts and of New England, and so far as I am aware, no one has tried to tell that story simply and consecutively, from the earliest times to the present day, for the general reader who cares little for genealogical tangles and nothing for a catalogue of the annual changes in the personnel of a town government.

There are admirable histories and guidebooks of Gloucester. In a large octavo volume published in 1860, John J. Babson, combining uncommon talent as an historian and diligence as a student, collected virtually all the available material about the early days of the town and about old Gloucester families. A later historian has carried on the chronicles of the Cape some thirty years farther. There are two volumes, long since out of print, made up of stories of the Gloucester fishing fleets; and to mention one other book, of many,

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## *Preface*

Mr. Charles E. Mann, in his little volume, "The Story of Dogtown", has written a detailed guide to the maze of old roads and paths and cellar holes that lies on the rocky plateau east of Mill River.

I have drawn at will upon these various sources. I have got further material from the files of old Gloucester papers in the Sawyer Free Public Library, and from collections of miscellaneous information in the Village Hall Library of Annisquam, and in the archives of the Cape Ann Scientific and Literary Society. Some of the tales I have retold come from journals and manuscripts lent me by various Gloucester people who have forbidden me to reveal their names, even to express thus publicly my gratitude; many others, from people who had them from old men and women long ago, or who drew them from their own memories. Of the quotations in this book, most of those for which I do not give credit elsewhere are from Babson's "History of Gloucester."

I wish to acknowledge particularly my indebtedness for information and assistance, and for patience in answering many questions, to Miss Alice Knowles, Miss Charlotte Lane, Miss Dorothy Burnham, the Reverend George E. Russell, Preston J. Marchant, William Howard Poland, Jr., Woodman C. Coombs, Raymond W. Sargent,

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## *Preface*

Jesse M. Main, Harry Blanchard, the Gloucester Net and Twine Company, the Frank E. Davis Company, the Davis Brothers Company, the Gorton-Pew Company, and the Historical Department of the Cape Ann Literary and Scientific Society.

I give you this tale of Gloucester, then, first as the story of typical early New England difficulties and trials, which the first settlers of all our towns met, endured, and overcame; and second, in time but not in importance, as the story of the great American fishing port.

The tale is still living, still growing, and whoever desires such a narrative can get it at first-hand if he will come down on the back of Cape Ann and cast his lot with the people of the Cape the year round until he has seen the life of the villages stir and wake with the passing of the summer season, and draw into itself again when the summer season returns.

C. B. H.

Written at the Head' the Cove,  
in the third parish of the old  
Town of Gloucester, March, 1923.



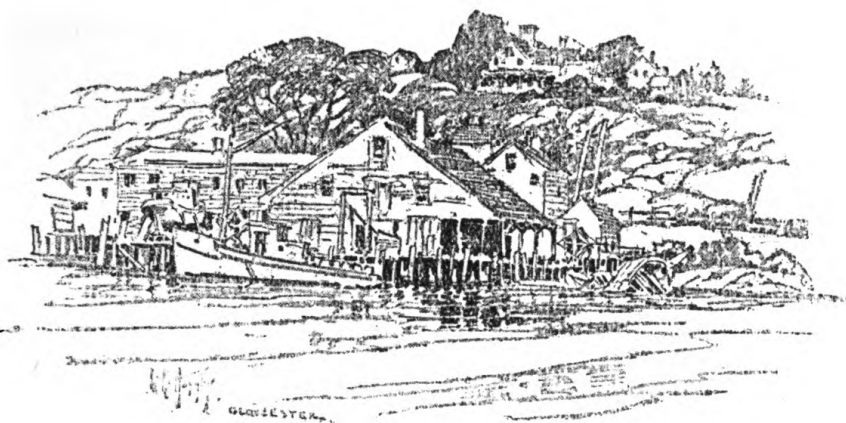


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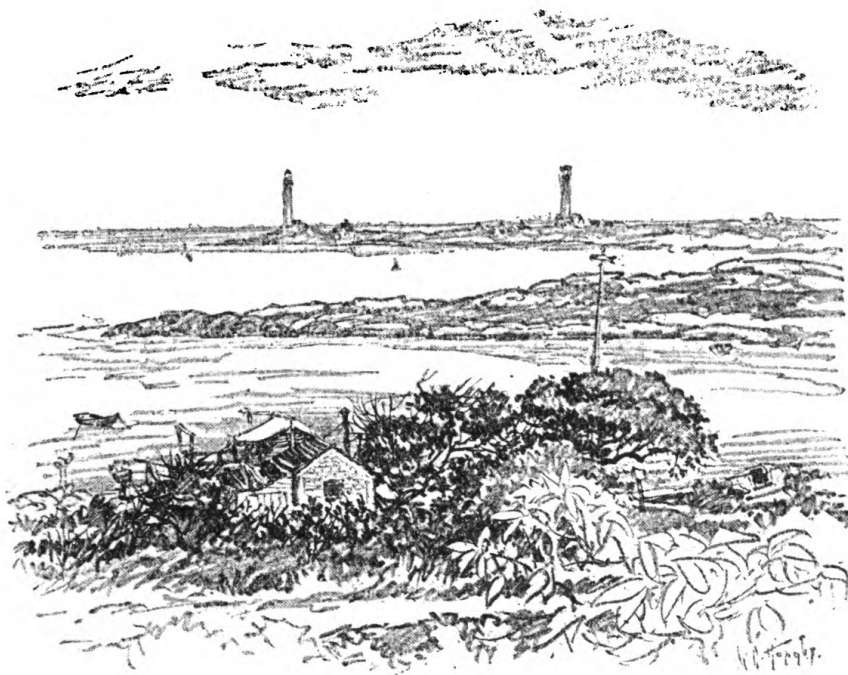
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## GLOUCESTER BY LAND AND SEA



# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

## I

### THE OLDEST HISTORY OF CAPE ANN HARBOR

THE highroad down the North Shore of Massachusetts to Cape Ann passes from the woods at Fresh Water Cove, into full view of the harbor and the city that for many generations have formed the greatest fishing port of America, and one of the great fishing ports of the world. The first schooner ever built was launched into that harbor in 1713; and since her launching, fleets of schooners have grown until a few years ago three hundred were sailing out of this one port. The first Universalist Church in America was formed a little way from the low shore at the head of the harbor, and others followed it throughout the country, until now more than six hundred Universalist churches hark back to that first little group of iconoclasts in the little town of Gloucester. In two wars hostile ships have entered Gloucester harbor and have landed troops on the Gloucester shore; Gloucester's vessels have carried on commerce with the uttermost parts of the earth,

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

and have taken a fling at privateering and at whaling; and to man her fishing fleet Gloucester has bred fishermen as good as any in the world. This is the record of three hundred years in the life of the town that is to be seen from Western Avenue.

Of incidents long, if remotely, associated with Cape Ann, a few names are reminiscent. An hotel borrows from the Norse voyages to America its imposing name of Thorwald. Champlain drew a map of the Cape and named the harbor Beau Port, but no one, I believe, has kept that name. Captain John Smith, who passed here in 1614, sowed names hereabouts with free hand, and in "The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith" there appears at length an account of his association with the charming Turkish lady, Charatza Tragabigzanda, for whom he named the Cape, and of his famous and sanguinary passage at arms, which he commemorated by giving the three islands off the Cape the suggestive name of "The Three Turks' Heads."

Captain John Smith's hairbreadth 'scapes in the imminent deadly breach, whence he was taken by the insolent foe and sold to slavery, together with his redemption thence, make as romantic a tale as one can find by a long hunt; but Prince

### *The Oldest History of Cape Ann Harbor*

Charles of England changed the name of Cape Tragabigzanda to Cape Anne, in honor of Queen Anne, his mother, the consort of James I, and "The Three Turks' Heads" have acquired other names also; and with the fishing port of Gloucester, Captain John Smith has no association at all.

To my mind, the notion that Gloucester acquires antiquity and prestige from the largely legendary exploits of wandering Northmen who skirted the shores of Greenland and North America perhaps a thousand years ago, or from other casual travelers of later years, has little merit. Gloucester needs no apocryphal tales to lend dignity to her past; nor, for that matter, does she need to borrow romance from the near-Eastern adventures of a chance visitor. As New England towns go, she is old; and among fishing ports she is famous. She has made for herself such history that her story is worth telling, and she is one of the communities that have kept the adventurous spirit of early New England.

On January 1, 1623, Edmond, Lord Sheffield, assigned to Robert Cushman and John Winslow of Plymouth, and their associates, a tract of land in that part of New England "commonly called Cape Anne", with various privileges, including those



### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

of hunting, trading and fishing. Had the Pilgrims of Plymouth availed themselves promptly of these privileges, they might have been the first to establish a fishing village on the site of Gloucester, but so poor were the colonists that they found it necessary to send Edward Winslow to England in the fall of 1623 to get help in undertaking the project, and by the time Winslow had reached England, the first settlers were already living on Cape Ann.

That same summer a group of men in Dorchester, England, having raised three thousand pounds as capital for the purpose, outfitted and manned a small ship and sent her to New England. Of the abundance of fish in American waters the first English voyagers had brought home numerous reports, and the Dorchester merchants intended to combine fishing with fur trading. Further, since many more men were necessary for fishing than for working the ship, the company evolved the thrifty idea that instead of double-manning the ship for each voyage, those fishermen who were not needed as sailors might spend the winter in America, where they could build houses, plant corn, and lay in a store of fowls, venison, and fish. Thus, these same men would be on hand for fishing the next year; their stores of corn and game would

### *The Oldest History of Cape Ann Harbor*

supply fresh provisions for each subsequent expedition; and when the colony had taken root in the new land, it would support a minister whose labors all would enjoy, whereas, otherwise, a vessel of the period that came to America for the fishing "being usually upon those voyages nine or ten months in the year, her men were left all the while without any means of instruction at all."

The colonists sent out by the enterprising gentlemen of Dorchester reached the coast of New England toward the end of the fishing season, with no particular place in mind as their destination, and having failed to take a full cargo in the waters west of Monhegan, they tried their luck in Massachusetts Bay, where they were more successful. The officers then landed fourteen men on Cape Ann, with supplies for a year, and sailed for Spain, where they sold their fish for a sum that allowed the company approximately £200. Having been late to the fishing grounds and late to the market, they got poor prices for their fish, and made altogether an inauspicious beginning of their enterprise.

Although the fishing in Massachusetts Bay had finally provided a full fare, the voyage cost the company a loss of more than £600, for it was the custom of the times that a third of the proceeds

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

should pay for outfitting the expedition; that a third should be divided among the men, according to their lays; and that a third should go to the owners of the ship. On that first expedition the owners had spent, all told, £800. In 1624, they sent to Cape Ann the ship that had made the voyage the year before, and in addition a Flemish flyboat, which added another item to the sum of their misfortunes. The flyboat, a big flat-bottomed coasting craft, was built for carrying cargoes and had no room for housing the larger crew of a fishing vessel, so the company added another deck, which made her too topheavy to carry sail. They tried to remedy this by shifting the ballast, but had eventually to haul her up and "fur" her by adding to her hull an extra layer of planking. When at last she reached Cape Ann, she had such bad luck with her fishing that she was only a third full at the end of the season; and by disobeying orders to sell her cargo at Bordeaux, she put the owners to the additional expense of hiring a small vessel to take her catch to market after she returned to England.

The two vessels did, though, in the summer of 1624, add eighteen colonists to the number already at the Cape Ann plantation, and left there, in all, thirty-two men, when they sailed for Europe.



*THE LOBSTERMAN'S PLACE  
ROCKPORT*

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ທິດສະດີລາວ

## *The Oldest History of Cape Ann Harbor*

In 1624, for the first time, the men of Plymouth Colony decided to exercise their rights under the patent held from Lord Sheffield, and having received various supplies in the ship *Charity*, they dispatched her to Cape Ann with a ship carpenter and a "saltman" on board to build permanent buildings for a fishing settlement and a plant for extracting salt from sea water. But Captain Baker of the *Charity* and most of his men kept themselves so drunk they could do no work, and William Pierce, whom the Plymouth fathers had sent to direct the expedition, could not control them, and the first Plymouth fishing voyage to Cape Ann, like the first two Dorchester voyages, ended with little profit to any one concerned. The carpenter died, it is recorded, and "the saltman was a foolish fellow who spoiled whatever he touched."

Meanwhile, with the carpenter and the "saltman" there had come from England to Plymouth one John Lyford, a clergyman of the Church of England, sent out by the churchmen who were members of the company of merchant adventurers that had helped the Pilgrim Fathers on their way to America. Mr. Cushman remarked in a letter that they had sent a preacher, "though not the most eminent", and Lyford's want of sympathy with the dour community in which he found

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

himself led him to join in intrigue the genial and roystering John Oldham. The upshot of it all was that in 1624 the Plymouth Colony expelled the pair — one at a time — whose Episcopalianism was little to the Pilgrim taste, and they departed to Nantasket, whither Roger Conant, having in disgust left the Plymouth colony, had preceded them.

The Dorchester Company presently appointed Conant as governor of its settlement at Cape Ann, to succeed Tylly and Gardiner, and the Colony then asked Lyford and Oldham to join them. Conant and Lyford moved thither; but Oldham did not, and ten or a dozen years later was killed in a brawl with Indians.

Up to this time the settlement of Dorchester squatters on land granted to the Plymouth Associates had caused no trouble and no one else had interfered in Cape Ann affairs. But in 1625, besides the vessels that the Dorchester Company sent to Cape Ann, and two sent from Plymouth, a fifth appeared in the harbor, with a lawless company on board, and started a lively fracas at the fishing stages, which stood on the shore, people say (although of this there is no certain record), at what is now Stage Fort Park, on the right-hand side of Western Avenue as the motorist enters Gloucester.

### *The Oldest History of Cape Ann Harbor*

In season for the spring fishing, two Dorchester Company vessels arrived at the Cape, with cattle and supplies on board; and the two Plymouth vessels came to use again the fishing stage that the men from the *Charity* had built the year before; but the strange vessel had preceded them, and her master, Captain Hewes by name, finding himself at Cape Ann Harbor before the ship and pinnace from Plymouth, maliciously seized the Pilgrims' fishing stage; and when the Plymouth men arrived to claim it, with the redoubtable Miles Standish at their head, Hewes built a barricade of hogsheads and defied them from behind it.

It is regrettable that no adequate report of this comical situation has survived. There appears to have been a good deal of talking, but nothing more. Gloucester historians give Roger Conant and Captain William Pierce, master of the Plymouth ship, credit for averting active hostilities, and at all events, the Plymouth fishermen gave up their stage to the invaders and built another, which seems, at a distance of three hundred years, to have been a pusillanimous ending of a brave affray.

For the Plymouth fishermen who made their headquarters in Gloucester, the season held both reverses and successes. They had lost their old



### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

stage, and the building in which they intended to dry out salt was burned; but they were successful in their fishing, and the ship and the pinnace went joyously home with full cargoes, the one towing the other "all ye way over-bound." Plymouth sent no more fishermen to Cape Ann, and so sorely discouraged were the "merchants and other gentlemen" of the Dorchester Company by the disasters that befell them during that unlucky season that they abandoned their infant settlement.

Of the vessels they had sent out in the spring, one — the luckless Flemish flyboat — had met with an accident and had turned back for repairs which took so long that she was obliged to stop at Newfoundland instead of completing her outward voyage; and of the two that reached Cape Ann, one has left no record. The third vessel brought back a fare of fish, but the company was forced to sell those fish, and the fish that the flyboat brought from Newfoundland, "for about half the sum they could have obtained for them at another market."

In three years the company had lost the capital that was to have supported its various undertakings for five years; and it was hugely dissatisfied with the conduct of its affairs at Cape Ann. It sold its ships and recalled its colonists, and all but four returned to England.

## *The Oldest History of Cape Ann Harbor*

The four, Roger Conant and his companions — John Woodbury, John Balch, and Peter Palfrey — moved to the township called Naumkeag, afterwards Salem, and to that particular section of the township which later became Beverly, but was irreverently known in the late seventeenth century, to the vast annoyance of good old Roger Conant, as “Beggarly.”

“I was the means,” he wrote in his petition asking the General Court to change the name of Beverly to the less easily ridiculed name of Budleigh, in honor of the town where he had lived as a child — “I was the means, through grace assisting me, to stop the flight of those few that then were heere with me, and that by my utter denial to goe away with them, who would have gon either for England, or mostly for Virginie, but thereupon stayed to the hassard of our lives.”

After the Dorchester colonists went away Cape Ann was deserted. There were casual visitors, among them Fells, the fugitive from Plymouth, and Thomas Morton from Mount Wollaston, whose jovial life in the colonies had culminated in that festival so peculiarly abhorrent to the grim souls that “missed God’s smile to watch His frown”, the Maypole of Merrymount. In June, 1629, the ship *Talbot* anchored in the harbor, and her

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

company saw the ruins of the old "plantation" and found on an island "ripe strawberries and gooseberries and sweet single roses." But for years there was no permanent settlement.

It is odd but true that by this same business of fishing, in which the first settlers on Cape Ann failed to make ends meet, those who eventually followed them and established on the site of their luckless plantation an enduring community were to achieve prosperity and renown.

## II

### OLD DAYS IN THE FIRST PARISH

JUST when the first citizens of the permanent settlement that became Gloucester established themselves on Cape Ann, and just who they were are debatable questions; but it is the general opinion that the year was 1631 and that their leader was a young man named Abraham Robinson, who is generally supposed to have been one of the sons of John Robinson, the Pilgrim minister who died at Leyden in 1625, although the name of Abraham is not included among the children listed in the Robinson household by the census of 1622.

Various traditions of this period in Gloucester history survive, but they are only traditions. It is said that the first permanent settlers lived on the little peninsula between Lobster Cove and Ipswich Bay, then called Planter's Neck, now called Annisquam. We know that there was a fishing stage there at a very early period in the history of the town and that the neck was divided

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

into numbered lots ; but so far as I am aware, no evidence has survived that proves, or disproves, this story of the first permanent settlement. Many of our early townsmen among whom, in all probability, was Abraham Robinson, held grants of land in widely separated parts of Cape Ann ; and it is definitely recorded that Abraham Robinson owned land, and built a house in which he lived, and in which he died on February 23, 1645. Since the keenest students have failed to discover documentary evidence to show that the house stood elsewhere, the tradition prevails that Annisquam was the site of the real beginning of Gloucester.

In the early history of Gloucester two dates are generally accepted as known points of departure. One is 1633, when it is said, on the authority of an old manuscript long since lost, that the settlers were meeting to worship God ; and the evidence of even this has become, by now, hearsay. The other is August 12, 1635, when a shipwreck gave Thacher's Island its name.

A pinnace from Ipswich, bound for Marblehead, was caught off the Cape in a gale of wind that split her sails. She anchored late in the evening, but dragged her anchor in the storm and crashed on a ledge, and a sea washed John Avery and his

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### *Old Days in the First Parish*

eldest son, and Anthony Thacher and his daughter out of the vessel. Climbing on the rock they called to the others to join them, but a second sea washed them off again and the shattered pinnace went down.

Anthony Thacher, struggling for life, eventually got his feet on bottom and crawled out on dry land, where almost immediately his wife, who had floated ashore on wreckage from the pinnace, joined him. Of twenty-three people on board the pinnace, all the rest were lost. Among them were the Thachers' own four children and John Avery, a minister on his way, with his wife and six children, to settle at Marblehead.

Food and clothing, and a bag containing flint and steel and gunpowder that by grace of God the water had not reached, came ashore in the wreckage. Thacher and his wife camped on the lee shore all that day and part of the next, then a boat touched at the island and took them to Marblehead. The rock they named "Avery his Fall"; the island, "Thacher's Woe."

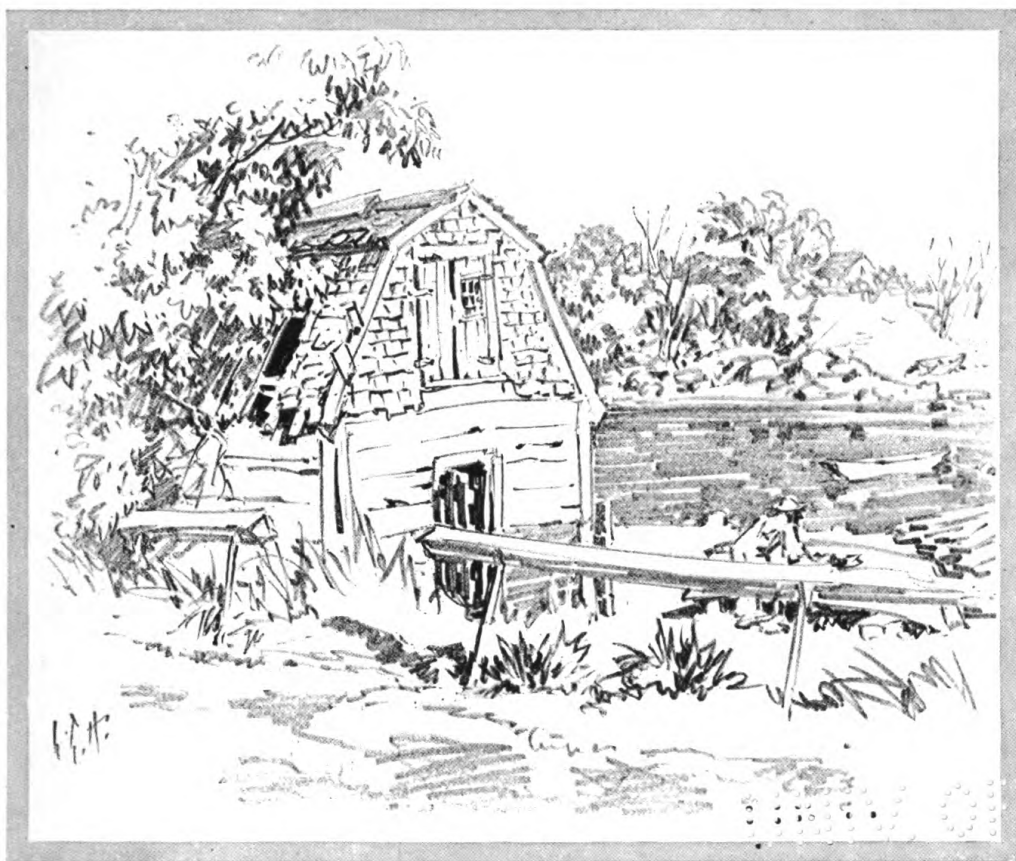
By their names Avery's Ledge and Thacher's Island to this very day commemorate the wreck, although their relative positions are such as to preclude the possibility that they are the identical rock and island between which Thacher passed

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

in the quarter of an hour that he spent struggling with the sea. Babson gives it as the opinion of William Hale, an old-time keeper of the Thacher Island lights, "that the fatal rock was a ledge on the south side of the island about a gunshot distant from it, now called Crackwood's Ledge."

So quickly does time obliterate exact knowledge, in lands where few books are written and few maps and charts are drawn, that the identity even of the island rests upon hearsay evidence. But we know that the pinnacle was wrecked and that twenty-one lives were lost, and to-day, nearly three hundred years later, the names of Avery, the minister who was lost at sea with all his family, and of the Thachers, a broken-hearted man and woman, are known to every seafaring man who rounds Cape Ann; and "Thacher's Woe" has become a landmark familiar to mariners from one end of our coast to the other.

That the rocky shores of the Cape were better suited to fishing than to agriculture was obvious from the day when the first settlers arrived, and in 1639 the General Court passed an act to encourage those who would build up the fishing industry, particularly one Maurice Thompson. Although Mr. Thompson appears never to have come to Cape Ann to avail himself of the lands and privi-



*ON 'SQUAM RIVER  
ANNISQUAM*



TO VIRU  
AIRPORT

### *Old Days in the First Parish*

leges placed at his disposal, the fisheries were already taking root there; and in the year 1642, when the plantation was incorporated as the town of Gloucester, taking its name from the English home of certain of the settlers, it emerges from the misty period of traditionary history to the clearer view given by written history.

The year 1642 was of peculiar importance to the small fishing settlement, for, besides being incorporated, it gained largely in population when the Reverend Richard Blynman moved thither from Green Harbor near Plymouth and brought several families with him; and with Blynman as its minister, it organized its first church.

Blynman came to Gloucester after a ministerial squall at Green Harbor, in which he seems to have got the worst of it and to have found it discreet to leave town. He held a piece of land and a dwelling near the meetinghouse of the first parish of Gloucester, which was built in the neighborhood of the Green of to-day, and eighty acres of land at Kettle Cove. But he had come from one riotous pastorate to another.

Disorderly citizens interrupted his church services and spoke ill of him, and when in a well-meant, if somewhat high-handed, effort to make peace between Anthony Day and William Vinson,

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

he tore up a legal writ that Day had taken out against Vinson, he was himself summoned to court. Because his intentions were good and he had meant no contempt, the court discharged him with merely a reprimand, and he continued at his pastorate. Three of his children were born in Gloucester between the years 1642 and 1646 — poor little wretches, they were doomed for life to bear the gloomy names of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Azarikam! — and at some time between September, 1649, and November, 1650, he departed from Gloucester to New London, Connecticut, followed by a number of his parishioners, which indicates that there was a good deal to be said for him. At all events he showed ability to learn by experience, for he was distinctly successful in the subsequent fields of his ministry, and able men of his day regarded him with affection and respect.

The story of the town exemplifies vividly the order in importance of the necessities of life. Upon the spots where food was reasonably easy to get and reasonably sure, whether from the land or from the sea, and where building materials in reasonable abundance were at hand, our forefathers settled; and even before their roofs were over their heads they applied themselves to pur-

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### *Old Days in the First Parish*

suings spiritual blessings. As soon as their numbers warranted it, a place of public worship rose, built of substantial timbers and hewn planks. Mills were an early community need and the first mill on Cape Ann, built beside the stream that runs out of Cape Pond, initiated a long series of grist mills and "corn mills" and sawmills.

The Cape was heavily wooded, but with shrewd foresight the early settlers preserved their timber from waste. In a town meeting held on January 20, 1667, it was agreed to cut cordwood "from the eastern side of Brace's Cove to Little Good Harbor, forty poles from the sea side up into the woods; and from Little Good Harbor, round the head of the Cape, to Plum Cove"; to cut no cordwood "to sell out of town, upon the south side of the path that goes to Salem, till they come to the Great Swamp", and to cut none "on the north-east side of the path that we used to go in before the new way was marked out from Goodman Parson's house, round the head of Little River, to Goodman Haskell's." Two years later the town agreed to sell no cordwood outside Gloucester for less than three shillings sixpence a cord; but for a number of years each family was permitted to cut on the town common, twenty cords a year for its own use.

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About the middle of the seventeenth century some thirty of the citizens of Gloucester were living at the Harbor ("nineteen of these lived on the north border of the Harbor Cove; five had lots at Vinson's Cove; three resided on Duncan's Point, between the two coves; and two lived on the southeast side of Governor's Hill"). Forty were living on the point of land that runs north from Governor's Hill to Wheeler's Point, and the rest were scattered no one knows where. A little later families were living at Freshwater Cove, at Annisquam, at Little River, at Walker's Creek, and at "the farms" near Little Good Harbor; and before the end of the century people had established themselves at the coves on the north, and in the parts of the town lying toward Manchester and Ipswich; but so little is definitely known of the outlying districts of the town before 1650 that the story of their early days goes back into a cloud of surmisals.

Among the picturesque figures of the period, Christopher Avery, three times a selectman of the town, is conspicuous. He held various public offices, which makes him appear to have been a citizen of good repute, but he was three times summoned to court as a culprit — "twice for living away from his wife; once for speaking scoffingly

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of Mr. Blynman" — and when he brought action against James Standish and William Vinson for saying that he got so drunk "that he took Inke instead of liquor; and took another man's wife upon his knee, and dandled her, ye foolish man, her husband looking on therewhile", the jury rendered its verdict against him. This hoary Lothario — he had a granddaughter eleven years old, when the slanderous statement of his behavior with another man's wife was argued in court — sold his house and lands on Cape Ann in 1658 and, shaking the dust of Gloucester from his cowhide boots, departed to New London.

John Rowe, the first settler in that out-of-the-way section of the Cape known as "the farms", just above the marshes behind Little Good Harbor beach, bought land there in 1651. About half a mile from the sea and two miles from his nearest neighbor, he and his family lived alone in the deep forest, and there he might have died, unwept, unhonored, and unsung, had he not achieved enduring fame by declaring, in 1656, that "if his wife were off his mind he would set his house on fire and run away by ye light, and ye devil should take ye farm; and speaking the same a second time, adding that he would live no longer among such a company of hell-hounds." Considering

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his remoteness from neighbors, and his solicitous regard for his wife, his impassioned words speak volumes about his two sons.

When you think of the thousands of learned and industrious men who have striven all their lives to shape one imperishable phrase, and have failed, the irony of Heaven, in permitting this enthusiastic misanthrope to utter in a black moment words that have already been quoted for more than two hundred and fifty years, surpasses understanding. The Quarterly Court fined him twenty shillings and ordered him to confess publicly at the next Gloucester town meeting, but time has made him liberal atonement for the sentence. Though men and women, great in their day, have written interminable and innumerable volumes of which not a word, not a thought, remains, the disconsolate soul of poor John Rowe, who lived on the right-hand side of the road, where you turn down Witham Street toward Brier Neck, still goes marching on.

For strong character and genuine ability William Stevens, the master shipwright who built the first vessel launched in Gloucester, is conspicuous in the history not merely of Cape Ann alone, but of all New England. In 1642, he came to Gloucester as a commissioner representing the General Court,

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but he had already been in New England more than ten years. Of the manner of man he was, a letter written by a member of the Massachusetts Company gives a comprehensive idea :

“Being last night at the exchange, I enquired what ship-carpenters Mr. Winthrop, the Governor, had with him in New England: when I was informed by Mr. Aldersey, the lord-keeper’s brother-in-law, and Mr. Cradock, that the Governor hath with him one William Stephens, a shipwright; so able a man, as they believe there is hardly such an other to be found in this kingdom. There be 2 or 3 others; but for want of their names, I could not be satisfied of them. This Stephens hath build here many ships of great burthen; he mode the ‘Royal Merchant’, a ship of 600 tonns. This man, as they enformed me, had more regard to his substantiall performance than the wages he was to receive, and soe grew to poverty: where-upon he was preparing to go for Spayne, where he knew he should have wages answerable to his paynes, had not some friends perswaded him to N. England, where he now lives with great content. Had the State of Spayne obteyned him, he should have be’n as a pretious Jewell to them.”

When he settled in Gloucester, he received eight acres of land at the “Cut” near the beach, where



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his house stood, six acres of land on Meetinghouse Neck, and five hundred acres of land between the Chebacco (Essex) and Annisquam rivers. It is plain that he was a man of mark.

Our earliest record of his activities in New England as a shipbuilder is his contract with John Brown "to build 1 new ship of 68 foot long by ye keele, and 23 foot broad from outside to outside, and  $9\frac{1}{2}$  foot in ye hold under ye beam; with two decks, forecastle, quarter deck; ye deck from ye mainmast to ye forecastle to be 5 foot high, with a fall at ye forecastle 15 inches, and a raise at ye mainmast to ye quarter deck of 6 inches. The great cabbिन to be 6 foot high. The sd Stevens to be paid the sum of £3.5s. for every tunn of said ship's burthen." The contract is notable, also, as preserving the measurements of the first ship known to have been built in Gloucester, where during the next century many vessels took shape on the stocks.

William Stevens held various town offices and was a member of the General Court, but like many another honest, outspoken man, he found himself time and again in difficulties. Having rashly declared that he would "bear no office within this jurisdiction, nor anywhere else, where Charles Stewart had anything to do; and that

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he cared no more for Charles Stewart than any other man, as king; and that he abhorred the name of Charles Stewart as king", he was sentenced, in 1667, to suffer a month's imprisonment, to lose his privileges as a freeman, and to pay the costs and a fine of £20. He mortgaged his five hundred acres between the Chebacco and Annisquam rivers and lost them, together with various buildings. His sons, James and Isaac, eventually held part of his property as trustees for their mother, who had some time since stated in a petition to the General Court that she believed her husband was deranged. When and where this first Gloucester shipbuilder died, who had risen to such prominence in his trade both in England and America, no one knows.

The description of Stevens' property at the "Cut" refers to the "gutt, or passage for boats running through as they pass between Cape-Ann Harbor and Annisquam." From the bridge on Western Avenue the eye to-day passes over the site of the home of that "soe able a man."

About this time there settled in Gloucester as minister of the town's church, the Reverend John Emerson, a young man who graduated from Harvard College in 1656 and came to Cape Ann in 1661 at a salary of sixty pounds a year to be paid

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"in Indian corn, pease, barley, fish, mackerel, beef, or pork." He was regularly ordained on October 6, 1663. The year before he came to the pastorate in which he spent his life, the people of the parish had undertaken to build a new meetinghouse, and at about the time he was ordained, or a little later, they completed it. During his ministry the church flourished, and so prudently and shrewdly did he handle the limited means at his own command that he accumulated what in his day was considerable property. He gave his daughter a hundred pounds when she married, and when he died on December 2, 1700, at the age of seventy-five years, he left the church three times as large as when he began his pastorate, which is in itself a tribute to his ability as an executive and a diplomat. His estate included, besides farms in Ipswich, which he probably inherited from his father, the three principal mills in Gloucester. There, to my mind, was an able minister.

In 1688, Peter Coffin of Newbury came to live on the five-hundred-acre tract between the Annisquam and Chebacco rivers that William Stevens had owned before him. He was the first of three Peter Coffins to live there, for although we do not know that he himself remained, the land was en-

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tailed on his grandson, Peter Coffin, who moved thither in 1747, or thereabouts; and a son of the second Peter Coffin, having graduated from Harvard in the class of 1769 and having read law for a time in the office of Judge Sargent of Haverhill, returned to Gloucester, went into trade, failed, and retired to the same great farm. There he lived until he had sold off the wood; then he returned to the Harbor, where in 1821 he died at the age of seventy-two years. The name of the Coffins lives in the name of Coffin's Beach, which marks one boundary of the old farm. May it continue so to live as long as the English language is spoken on Cape Ann! It has the homely flavor of old days and rough times.

The ancient reports of lions seen at Cape Ann indicate that some of the first visitors here were as imaginative as they were timid, but in the densely wooded lands of the Cape foxes were so numerous that they were regarded as public nuisances (although the thrifty citizens at an early day defeated in town meeting an order providing for a bounty of twopence a fox); and for years wolves ranged the Cape. In 1754 the town paid £6 in bounties for killing two wolves, an old one at £4 and a young one at £2, "within three and a half miles of the north line of the town."

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The wolves have long since gone, but the foxes are still here. Often, in the night, we who live down on the back of the Cape, can hear stray hounds in full cry; and our neighbors now and then report that some old fox has raided their poultry yards. Last year two of our neighbors, about daylight on different mornings, saw a big fox making off with a hen, and some boys found in an old quarry a den and a litter of cubs at play.

In 1688 the five selectmen of Gloucester, and the constable, were summoned to court for having neglected to assess the taxes levied by Governor Andros and his council, and all except the constable, Timothy Some, who appears to have had no responsibility in the matter, were fined forty shillings each. Some included, they paid £3.1s. each, as costs. It was peculiarly trying to the town fathers that the costs included paying "the Shott" at the tavern for the justices who came to Gloucester "to bind them over for their appearance at court." The discontent that culminated in the War of the Revolution was already brewing in the colony.

By the witchcraft delusion Cape Ann suffered little directly. The Abigail Some who was jailed in Boston from May 23, 1692, to January 3, 1693, was the daughter of Timothy Some, the Gloucester

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constable; and at different times Ann Dolliver and four other women of Gloucester were accused. But no Gloucester lives were lost, and the "old witch house" at Pigeon Cove is said to have been built by some brothers from Salem, who brought their mother thither to save her from those who charged her with witchcraft.

The strange story told by Ebenezer Babson, who heard the noise of running feet outside his house night after night, is all that survives of Gloucester's part in the fierce frenzy of superstition that burned for a time in the New England colonies. Coming home late one evening, Babson saw two men leave his house and go into the corn and heard them saying, "The man of the house is come now, else we might have taken the house."

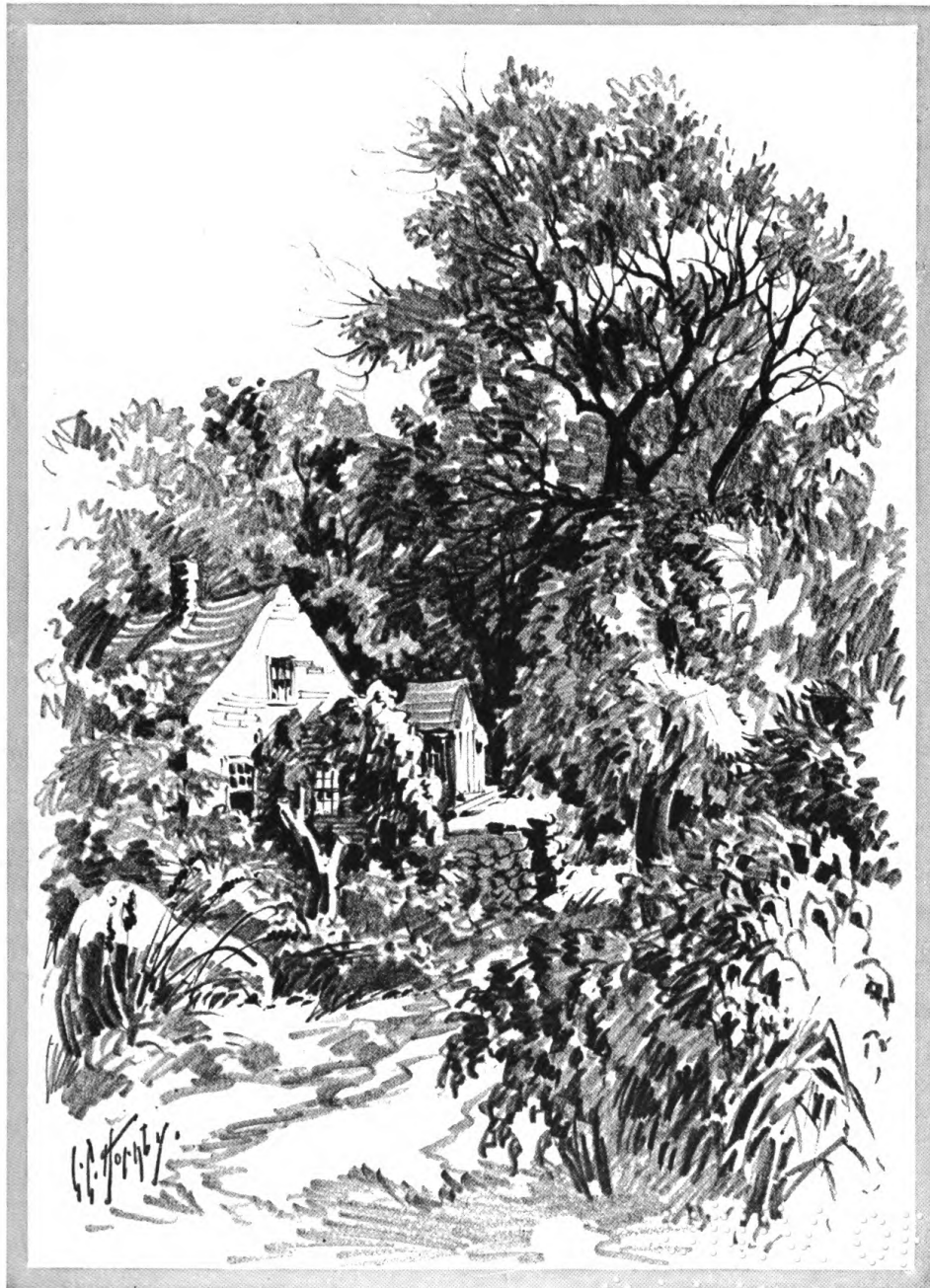
With praiseworthy discretion, good Ebenezer took his family and departed to the "garrison", and the two mysterious men, it is said, followed them thither and were seen hanging around for several nights afterward.

"One day Babson saw two men who looked like Frenchmen; and, at another time, six men were seen near the garrison; whereupon several went in pursuit. Babson overtook two, and tried to shoot at them; but his gun missed fire. Soon after, he saw three men together, one of whom had

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on a white waistcoat. He fired, and they all fell; but, as soon as he came close to them, they all rose up, and ran away; one of them discharging a gun as he went. One of these strange beings was at last surrounded by his pursuers, and all means of escape were cut off. He approached Babson, who shot at him as he was getting over the fence, and saw him fall from it to the ground; but when Babson came to the spot where he fell, the man could not be found. Afterwards several were seen lurking about the garrison, and great discoursing in an unknown tongue was heard in a swamp near. After this, men were seen, who were supposed to be French and Indians. Babson was fired upon on his way back to the Harbor to carry news; and finally, after enduring these disturbances of the peace of the town for a fortnight, the people sent abroad for help. July 18, sixty men arrived from Ipswich to assist in the protection of the town, and the deliverance of it from these mysterious invaders; but it does not appear that any of the latter were taken; which can scarcely be a matter of surprise, considering that they were too ethereal to leave a footprint upon the soft and miry places over which they were pursued."

Although the sea and the rocky soil of the Cape yielded the first citizens of Gloucester a bare live-



*AT THE HEAD OF THE COVE  
ANNISQUAM*



TO VMM  
ABROUO

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lihood and few comforts, they retained, unimpaired and unimpeached, the privilege of drowning sorrow. When Hugh Rowe died — he was the younger son of the melancholy John — his family spent the considerable sum of £1.16s.9d. for the liquor that was on tap at the funeral; and near the present center of the city there lived in the seventeenth century that good citizen, William Ellery, who died on December 9, 1696, leaving numerous sons and daughters to make of his funeral a notable event in its time. The family spent £2.5s. for “rum, wine, sider, and shugr and spis” to be used in celebrating the obsequies, and for eight pairs of gloves, which they presumably gave to the bearers.

### III

#### THE GROWING TOWN

WHAT is probably the oldest road on Cape Ann runs from the public landing at the head of Harbor Cove, past the statue of Joan of Arc on the left, the railroad station on the right, and again on the left the venerable Ellery house, to the Green, where now in winter the winds sweeping across the marshy bed of Mill River, which gives the region to the north of the present Cunningham Square its name of Riverdale, pile the snow in almost impassable drifts. The road marks a straight line from the harbor, which was necessarily the center of the maritime interests of the early settlers of Gloucester, to the site of the early First Parish meetinghouse, which stood near the Green of to-day; and in later years it has continued round the Cape.

The Green in earliest times was the center of such agriculture as flourished on the Cape, and now it looks out across broad meadows where the tidal river winds, to the gray uplands of Dogtown

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Common. There was probably a period when it was easiest to live by lumbering and farming, but there is little timber left on the once heavily wooded slopes, and the waste of boulders, that stretches as far as eye can see, presents graphic reason why the center of population moved back along the old road to the harbor. From the first days of her history, Gloucester has looked to salt water for a livelihood, and for many generations she has bred her sons to the sea.

In the early years of the eighteenth century the trade in lumber flourished and sloops laden with wood sailed up 'Squam River and through the "Cut." As the supply of timber diminished, the sloops turned to fishing; and schooners, in the days when they were still a novelty, joined the fishing fleets in growing numbers. During the decade from 1720 to 1730 the fleet from Annisquam appears to have held its own in numbers and activity with the fleet from Gloucester harbor, which indicates — when you consider the shoal water in 'Squam harbor, the limited anchorage, and the tides and currents — what little craft the early fishing vessels were, as compared with the vessels of to-day.

It is a sign of the increasing prosperity of the people of Cape Ann that Nathaniel Parsons, a

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prominent business man who died of smallpox in 1722, left his heirs a shop, a wharf, and several vessels. Elias Davis who died in 1734 left, besides six schooners and a considerable estate in Gloucester, a "fishing-room" and wharf at Canso. From Annisquam and from Gloucester the fishing vessels were pushing out to the Banks, and the men who owned them were building fortunes which were substantial according to the modest standards of their time.

The lot of the men who actually did the fishing was in many ways a hard one, for they lived a rough life and earned little money. The early fishermen went for the most part "on their own hooks" — we get that familiar phrase, like many others, straight from the common speech of pioneer days — and each man fished for himself. That is, he paid his share of expenses, and, the number of fish he caught having been recorded, he received a lay in proportion to his catch. But since the day when Adam began farming, it has paid to learn a business from the bottom up, and the men who learned the fishing business with hook and line in hand, advancing from dory or sloop to the counting room, were the men who became the successful merchants of Gloucester.

As early as 1710, and how much earlier no one

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knows, Abraham Robinson, son of the first of the name, owned land on the Gloucester side of the brook at Plum Cove and dabbled in whaling, which from time to time has appeared as a Gloucester industry. But Boston was the port of entry for whaling vessels from nearly all the Massachusetts coast, and there is no way of telling whether Robinson and his associates actually put to sea in search of whales, or contented themselves with thriftily trying out the blubber of those "cast by God's providence" on the beaches of the Cape.

That a "watch house" was built in 1705 on Elwell's Neck by Hogskin Cove — Elwell's Neck has become Davis Neck and Hogskin Cove has acquired during the passage of many years the less picturesque name of Hodgkin's Cove — and another on Watch House Point, now better known as the Fort, to commemorate the breastworks that the Government built there thirty years later, is significant of the state of the seas in the early eighteenth century, and of the well-founded apprehensions that made uneasy the men and women who lived in our thriving seaport towns. In 1704 the French and Indian alliance showed signs of unwelcome activity, and flesh-and-blood pirates, very different from the gallant ocean cavaliers of fiction, were ranging the seas from

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Labrador to Tierra del Fuegos, from the Horn to Canton Harbor, from the China Sea to the Cape of Good Hope, and from the Holy Land to Beachy Head.

Captain John Quelch's men had actually landed in Gloucester in 1704, where two of them were arrested and hustled off to Salem jail a few days before their master was hanged; and twenty years later, the Annisquam fishing sloop *Squirrel*, Captain Andrew Haraden, fell into the hands of the notorious pirate, Captain John Phillips.

Cruising along the coast as far north as Cape Sable in the autumn of 1723, Phillips boarded the sloop *Dolphin* of Gloucester, Captain Mark Haskell, in search of able-bodied men, and seized a youth of twenty-one years from Ipswich, John Fillmore by name, now known as the great-grandfather of Millard Fillmore, President of the United States.

"When I first went on board the pirate," Fillmore wrote, "their crew consisted of ten men, including the captain, and the whole of them, I think, as stout, hardy-looking fellows as ever I saw together." In reply to the young fellow's vigorous objections to serving in that outlawed company, Phillips promised to set him free when he had served faithfully for two months. But the two months passed with ill fortune and small

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profits; and when the time was up, Phillips put off the lad's importunity with the promise — "on his honor" — that he would send him away at the end of three months more, which was worth as much as you would expect of a pirate's word. At the end of the three months he was no more willing to let the lad go than he had been at the end of two months. "Set you at liberty?" he snarled. "Damn ye — you'll be set at liberty when I'm damned, and not before."

The old reprobate's assertion came true, more literally and sooner than he had foreseen.

On April 4, 1724, he took the schooner *Good Will*, of Marblehead, and the exploit came to the ears of Lieutenant-Governor Dummer, who sent the armed ship *Sea Horse* to cruise in search of him. On April 14, he took the new and able sloop *Squirrel*, whose master, Andrew Haraden, according to the not completely reliable editor of an old book in my possession, was then twenty-two years old.

To the *Squirrel* Phillips transferred his men, to whose number he had forcibly added various reluctant seamen from the crews of captured craft; and setting adrift the vessel he had been using, he ordered the work of completing the sloop to go on, for the *Squirrel* had put to sea unfinished, with tools and lumber on board.



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In young Haraden and his crew, young Fillmore found men after his own heart. On the third day after Phillips had taken the *Squirrel*, they formed a plot to recapture her.

The next noon, at a given signal, Andrew Haraden killed Phillips with an adze, Edward Cheeseman threw overboard the sailing master of the pirates, one John Nott, and Fillmore split the boatswain's head with a broadax. The quartermaster, hearing the noise, came rushing up from the cabin and went at Cheeseman with intent to kill, but an Indian, having been stationed at the companionway for exactly such an emergency, pinned down his arms and Fillmore cut his head nearly off at a blow. To cap their exploit, the conspirators then threw overboard the pirate gunner, James Sparks by name, and the rest surrendered.

Captain Haraden showed a singularly felicitous turn of mind in celebrating his victory over the pirate whose fame had gone from the Dan of the Maritime Provinces to the Beersheba of New York. He ran the head of Phillips to the masthead of the sloop, and then, "tradition affirms", triumphantly sailed into his home port of Annisquam.

Of the survivors of Phillips's crew, the Admiralty Court at Boston acquitted ten white sailors and

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three negroes as "forced men", and finding four men guilty of piracy, sentenced them to death, but reprieved two of the four for a year and a day and recommended them to the King's mercy. The other two, John Rose Archer and William White, they hanged "at Charlestown Ferry under their own black flag" exactly forty-five days after Haraden and Fillmore retook the *Squirrel*.

To the seven men who overthrew Phillips, the General Court voted a reward of £32 apiece. To Haraden, Fillmore and Cheeseman, the ringleaders in the plot, the court gave an additional reward of £10 apiece; and to Haraden it awarded £20 to pay for "bringing the sloop and pirates from Gloucester to Boston."

The tradition that a pirate or two was hanged on an islet in the Annisquam River, which acquired by this lugubrious occurrence the romantic name of "Hangman's Island", is taken to mean that the authorities hung there the bodies of Phillips and the boatswain, as after the execution the officers of the law hung White's body on Bird Island in Boston Harbor. A dead pirate hanging in chains in a harbor was considered to be as efficacious in keeping away his fellows as a dead crow in a corn-patch; and probably there are few ports of prominence and antiquity that have not at one time

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or another flaunted such a spectacle in the eyes of the seafaring world.

It is romantically interesting for a town to have in its annals old tales of pirates and outlaws, but it was by sleepless nights and by lives in peril that our forefathers earned for us such antiquarian thrills. *Forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit!* The time has come when it is pleasing to remember those old days. May the town never forget the name and tale of Hangman's Island over which now the railroad runs on its way into Gloucester.

The actual danger from the French and Indians was no mere trick of Ebenezer Babson's fancy, as Thomas Sanders learned, although curiously enough to his profit rather than to his sorrow. He was commanding a government vessel when he fell into the hands of a party of French and Indians, who treated him reasonably well and gave him so much liberty on their way through what is now Maine that he was able, one night, to get away while they were asleep. Not only did he escape, but to add substantially to the chagrin that they were going to feel when they should wake and find his place empty, he stole a bag of money before he left and hid it under a log.

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Years later, when he was master of the vessel that was bringing Lord Jeffrey Amherst up from Louisburg, he told Amherst the story as they lay becalmed off Owl's Head and persuaded him, notwithstanding the worthy soldier's incredulity, to go ashore and join in hunting for the money. There it still lay, under the log where Sanders had hidden it, two hundred dollars in coin, a monument that had stood those many years to the discomfiture of his captors. Nor was his shrewd presence of mind limited to small matters, for want of wider recognition. He was of such standing in the colony that at the Cape Breton siege he commanded all the transports in Chapeau Rouge Bay.

The petition of the town to the General Court, asking for an adequate defense against hostile attack, had brought no result from 1703 until 1741, but in 1741 the government of the province appropriated £400, and in 1742 an additional sum of £126. 13s. 4d., "for the erection of a suitable breastwork and platform, and for eight mounted twelve-pounders, with all necessary warlike stores." They built the fort on the rocky hill at the end of Watch House Point, that guards the mouth of Harbor Cove, and got it done in time to use it in the war with France. But there was never

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occasion to train the battery on a hostile fleet, and the Gloucester men who fought the French went all the way to Louisburg to do so.

The Gloucester of the eighteenth century, except as distinguished by its growing fishing fleet and foreign commerce, was like many another New England town of less note. As it grew in population, the outlying districts formed themselves into new parishes, built churches, and established for themselves distinct identities as communities. In 1710, the Second Parish, in the region toward Chebacco, petitioned the town for land for a meetinghouse, and it was full time they did so, for most of those who lived there had to travel from three to five miles over bad roads to attend church service. In 1728, fourteen months after "the inhabitants of Annisquam and those that live on the northerly side of the Cape" had petitioned for it, the town consented that they "should be set off as a precinct by themselves, to maintain a gospel minister among them."

It was in the early eighteenth century, too, that a physician settled in the town, which had hitherto depended upon the medical knowledge of its ministers, and upon midwives and women with a gift for tending the sick. The fortitude of the early settlers of New England, in enduring hardships that

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would appall their descendants, was extraordinary but the old records are worded with a quaintness that is divided between comedy and pathos. This record of the town's vote is peculiarly ambiguous :  
“ . . . the requist made by Capt. John Harraden and Nathaniel Parsons concerning Elizabeth Hoping, about Enys Herrick cureing of her sore brist, her husband being not able ; and these two men before mentioned engaged to see her paid five pounds, if she did cure the woman's brist ; and, if she could not cure it, she would have three pounds, or else the said Herrick would not meddle with it. And it is left to the selectmen to consider the cure or now ; that is, whether the woman's brist was cured by the said Mrs. Herrick.” In 1722, it is recorded, another woman skilled in the art of healing, Mrs. Mary Ellery, received £3. 18s. “for cureing Ebenezer Lurvey and his Diat.” Some Gloucester men went farther afield and fared worse, as witness Robert Elwell who journeyed all the way to Ipswich and there died “under the doctor's hands.”

The first physician definitely recorded as setting up in practice here was Nicholas Webster, who died before he had been a year in Gloucester. But Doctor Edward Thompson moved to Gloucester a short time afterward, and before he left,

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Doctor David Plummer had begun to practice here.

Samuel Plummer, the son of David, studied his father's profession and carried on his practice; and Samuel Plummer's son, Samuel, was in a fair way to follow in the steps of his father and grandfather, when he became involved in such a tale as Nathaniel Hawthorne might have told.

He had graduated from Harvard College and had returned to his old home to continue his studies with his father, when a slave girl belonging to Doctor Plummer was murdered in the pasture whither she had gone for the cows. They found her dead body, through which a sword had passed, and they found the sword hidden in a crack in a rock. There was no one to father legally the girl's unborn child and the sword had belonged to Doctor Plummer.

The authorities did not at once investigate the affair, but the suspicions of the townspeople fell on young Plummer and made such a stir that he crossed 'Squam ferry and went down the Ipswich road on foot, and for thirty years his native town saw him no more.

Thirty years later he appeared in Gloucester on a Sunday morning and put up at a tavern. He called upon a cousin, with whom for several hours

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he walked about the town. He visited his old home and lingered for a time in the neighborhood he had roamed as a child. The next day he went away.

Whence he came, whither he went, how he lived, and when and where he died, no one knows. It is one of the true, strange stories of old New England.

In the first half of the century a Gloucester schooner, returning from a trading voyage to Virginia, brought to Cape Ann one John Hews of curious and adventurous career. He was a Welshman by birth and in 1702, when he was seventeen years old, he had been impressed into service in a man-of-war. He had sailed in Sir George Rooke's expedition against Cadiz and had participated in the action off Vigo; he had been sentenced to transportation for a crime of which the exact nature is not recorded, and had served his time in Virginia. Thence embarking for Gloucester, he made Cape Ann his home for the rest of his uncommonly long life.

He accompanied the expeditions against Louisburg in 1745 and in 1758 — at the age of seventy-three years his martial ardor was still unquenched — and he was remembered long after his death as a man of extraordinary profanity. But the



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most singular thing about him was the conviction, which grew upon him when he was more than a hundred years old, that God had forgotten him. It is funny if you regard it thoughtlessly; but it is marked with a sadness that becomes downright tragedy when you think of him as an old man who had outlived his generation. He longed to die and cried like a child in his fear of endless life. When he was a hundred and five years old, he tried to commit suicide by cutting his throat with a razor, "but the dullness of the instrument and the toughness of his skin prevented him from succeeding." When he was a hundred and eight years old, he abandoned all hope of dying a natural death and determined to starve himself. For thirty days he ate nothing and drank only cold water, and then, worn out in body as in spirit, "ended the life of which he had become so weary."

In time the town began to move back along the old first road. Since the business of the community centered around the harbor, and since the settlement there was fast outstripping the settlement at the old plantation, it was inevitable that sooner or later they should build a meetinghouse at the Harbor to take the place of the meetinghouse on the Green. The new third parish had helped to change the balance of the old first parish by taking

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away from it a large part of those who lived to the north; and when the parishioners at the Harbor actually built a meetinghouse on the new street then called Cornhill, now Middle Street, and offered it to the Church on fair terms, the parish, on September 12, 1738, voted to accept it, and to occupy it on and after September 28.

It was for its day a large building, with a long seat for the elders and another for the deacons in front of the pulpit, which stood in the northern end of the church, and with a gallery that faced the pulpit from the other three walls.

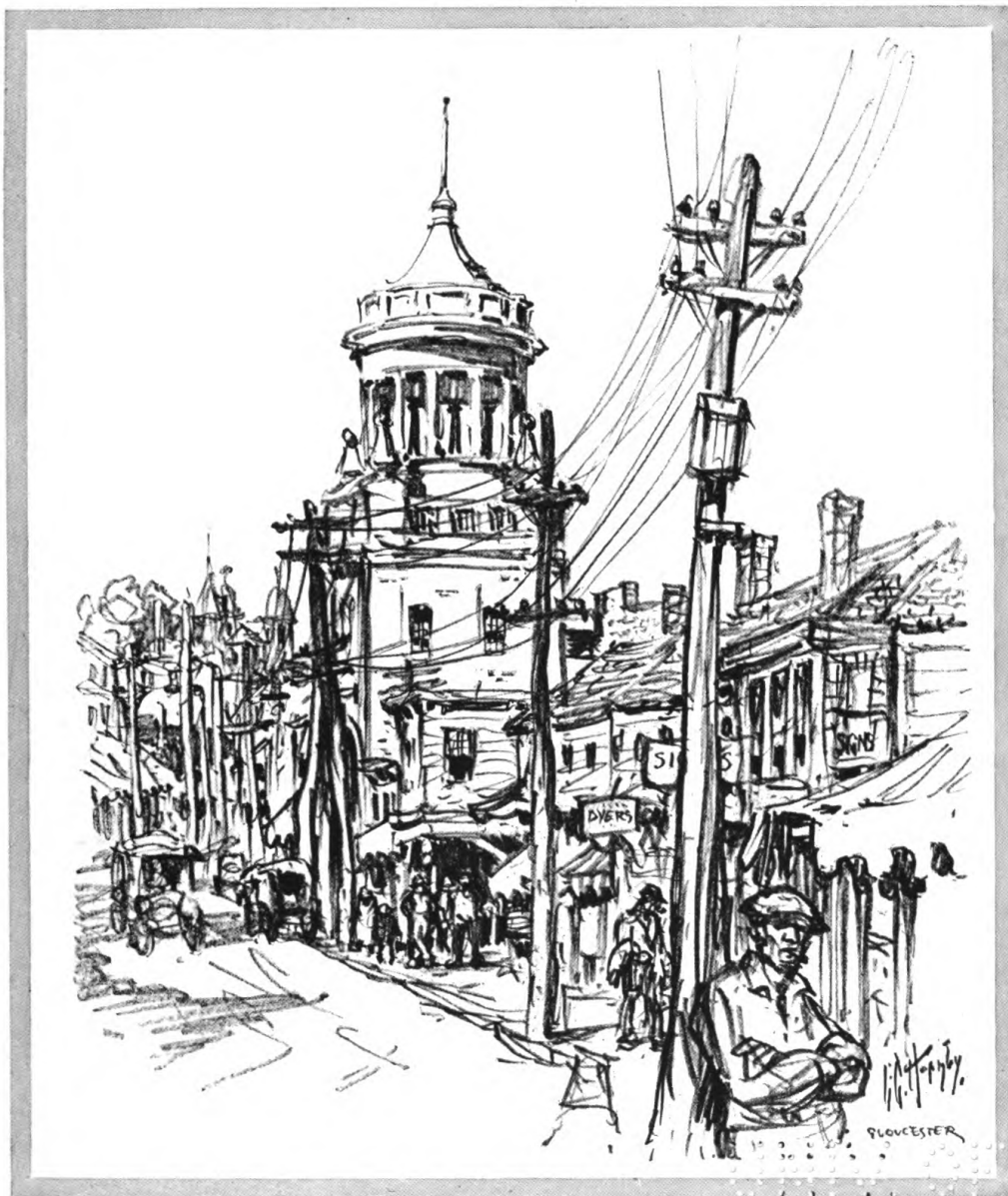
“For many years, a portion of the floor was occupied by seats, of which those at the eastern end were set apart for the negroes. In course of time, however, these seats gave place to pews; a row of pews was also built along the wall, the whole distance of the gallery; and the arrangement became such as is remembered by the elderly and middle-aged people of the present time [1860]. Those worshippers who were nervous will not soon forget the annoyances by which their devotions in the house of God were disturbed. The pews, which were square, were all built with an open-work top, formed by a rail that rested on round pieces of wood, about a foot long, inserted in the edge of a board beneath. These open

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spaces in the pews offered to restless urchins a constant temptation to play, and thus occasioned considerable noise in the house. But the greatest clatter came from the hinge-seats, when they were let down by the standing congregation at the close of prayer. This has been not inaptly compared to an irregular discharge of musketry. These noises, however, disturbed only a portion of the worshippers. It was on windy days, when the great building shook upon its foundation and the timbers creaked with startling sounds, that the whole assembly was awed by a feeling of insecurity, even in the temple of the Lord."

For years the echoes of the storm that followed the change from the old meetinghouse to the new can be heard rumbling in the history of Gloucester. Those members of the first parish who lived in the northern end of the precinct attempted in parish meeting to pass a motion that they be set apart as a precinct by themselves but lost the vote by thirty nays. The moderator adjourned the meeting, which had become tumultuous, and the dissatisfied members petitioned the General Court to set them apart, over the heads of the parishioners. The matter hung in balance until August 4, 1741, when the court rendered judgment thus :

"That if the non-petitioners in the parish do



*STREET IN GLOUCESTER*

TO VILLI  
MORILLAS

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not, within twelve months from the end of that session, remove the new meetinghouse to the place agreed on by the precinct, or the precinct erect there another house convenient for public worship; that, in such case, the petitioners be erected into a separate precinct, agreeably to their petition, unless the inhabitants of the first precinct shall, within the term aforesaid, agree to have the public worship of God carried on in both houses at the same time, and so settle another learned and orthodox minister there to assist the Rev. Mr. White in the ministry; the two ministers to preach in the old and new meetinghouses by turns, or otherwise as they shall agree."

In the autumn of 1742 the parish had neither obeyed the order of the General Court, nor come to terms with its recalcitrants, of whom, "by reason many of them live two or three miles from the new meetinghouse (many of them are seafaring men, and have no conveniences for going to meeting but on foot; which is very uncomfortable for elderly people, women, and children), — near about ninety families must go by the old meetinghouse to go to the new one." Most of them could not go home from the new meetinghouse for dinner and return for the afternoon service, although they had been able to do so from

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the old meetinghouse, and they could ill afford to buy the pews which occupied "the bigger part of the body of the new meetinghouse." They pressed the fight so hotly that the parish at last voted to set them apart as a separate precinct, and on December 15, the General Court confirmed the decision. But the majority of members of the church, having removed to the new meetinghouse, took with them the name and precedence of the first parish; and those who met in the meetinghouse by the Green were known henceforward as the fourth parish.

## IV

### PEACE AND WAR

FOR the spirituous refreshment that enlivened winter evenings and made endurable the laborious cogitations of town councils long ago, the worthy men of Gloucester, as of all New England, resorted to the taverns. And indeed, in these later and drier days does not the very name, tavern, suggest a warm-hearted jovial hospitality? (Which was perhaps as rare then as now, although a crabbed innkeeper contradicts all tradition.)

There were various hostelries during the first hundred years of the English settlement on Cape Ann, but small knowledge of them survives. It is likely that "Landlady Judkins" of felicitous memory, whose charges for refreshments appear on occasional old accounts between 1695 and 1705, carried on the business her husband had conducted, before he died and left her with her way in the world to make.

During the life of her husband she lived in the house in the neighborhood of the Green, that Thomas Judkins bought when he bravely married



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her and assumed the responsibilities involved in taking home as his bride a widow with three daughters; and there, for aught I can learn to the contrary, she conducted her inn. In 1704 and 1705 the town paid her more than a pound a year for entertaining the village fathers; and as a pound in those days was a very respectable sum, it is obvious there were certain satisfactions in conducting the town's business, for which our city governments of the present must sigh in vain.

“Backward, turn backward, O Time, in thy flight!”

After Mrs. Anna Judkins' day the selectmen met year by year at the houses of George Harvey, of John Day, of Thomas Millet, and of John Stacy. In 1727, Nathaniel Sargent, himself a selectman, was keeping a tavern, and it is suggested that his house stood at Done Fudging; that particular point in the Annisquam River where the opposing currents meet and where vessels used to anchor and wait for a change of tide. (The place got its curious name because “persons, poling or ‘fudging’ a boat or raft on the river against the current, here took a fair tide, and were therefore ‘done fudging’”, and it was peculiarly well situated to get such tavern traffic as in old days the river might afford.)

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The tavern of most lasting interest, though, is the one James Stevens and William Ellery kept in a house that John White, for fifty-eight years minister of the first parish, built in the first year of the century, under the Green on which the old first parish meetinghouse stood. Here Stevens kept tavern until 1740, when he sold the house to Captain Ellery who maintained the tavern as of old. The house, which is known as "the Old Ellery House", has kept Captain Ellery's name alive to this very day, for it is still standing under the Green on the left-hand side of Washington Street as you go toward Riverdale.

The old Ellery house is a monument to brave, genial days, for as years passed, the town fathers grew ambitious. When the officers of the town for 1740 were sworn in, the bill for "the Selectmen and Licker at the house of Mr. James Stevens" was £3. 18s. 2d., and in 1744, when the selectmen seem to have divided their patronage, the bills for entertaining them at two taverns "was nearly thirty pounds, old tenor." It is true that currency was depreciating and that the sum was nowhere near so much as it appears; but their ambition, like Cæsar's, led them into disaster, for at the town meeting in 1745, the town voted to pay them a salary of five pounds a year, old tenor, and let them "find themselves."

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I am unable to learn what led the town to relent. Perhaps the pathos of the selectmen's paying for their own "licker" touched the hardest hearts. But relent the town did, and resumed footing the bills, and in 1749, at Captain Ellery's tavern, the same old Ellery house that is standing to-day under the Green, the selectmen celebrated their return to grace by running up a bill of seventy-eight pounds, old tenor!

Of taverns at the Harbor there were many. On Front Street stood the inn where a Mrs. Prince is said to have made the first coffee drunk in Gloucester. Philemon Haskell kept a tavern in a house on the present Middle Street, which was notable for a curious projection built out from the house when it was converted from a private residence to a public inn, and he did a thriving business there about the time of the Revolution. The taverns of Mrs. Perkins, whose husband died at sea and left her with a family to support, of Benjamin Somes, whose house was famous for its riotous hospitality, and of Jonathan Lowe, who established, in 1788, "the first regular communication between Gloucester and Boston by land" and had his stage office in his tavern near the town landing, all stood on Front Street.

James Broom, who ran a barber shop in con-

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nection with the tavern he kept on the south side of Middle Street, just east of Hancock Street, taught his daughter Rebecca the trade of barbering, and she, when she had kept a barber shop for many years on Middle Street at the corner of Pleasant Street, taught the trade in turn to her own daughter, Rebecca Ingersol, who "inherited her mother's peculiar faculty, and succeeded to her business."

There were many other taverns in the old Gloucester days, some of them more or less vaguely remembered, some of them doubtless forgotten. A man had to have a house to live in; and given the house, the business required little capital and returned a fair profit. A stranger coming into town on the eve of the French and Indian War could take his choice of various hostelries, and having made sure of a room, sit down to a square meal with whatever he chose from the bar, sleep with the just, and rise at cockcrow to be about his business or on his way again.

To the French and Indian War Gloucester men went with more than mere martial enthusiasm, for Gloucester vessels were already fishing on the Banks where, as John White cried in an impassioned sermon, "they [the French] molest and break in upon our fisheries, and break them to

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pieces, they lie near the roadway of our European merchandise, and they can sally out and take our corn-vessels: and therefore our oppressions from thence, so long as it remains in the hands of the enemy, are like to be intolerable. We must remove these our enemies, or they will destroy us."

*Delenda est Carthago!* In the expedition against this Carthage of New France, Captain Charles Byles of Gloucester commanded a company and Captain Thomas Sanders commanded the transports. One Gloucester man was lost; two died immediately after returning home; David Stanwood was wounded and Job Stanwood lost an arm.

The story of Peg Wesson, who lived on Back Street "in or near" an ancient building known as the Garrison, is Gloucester's one real witch story. Some Gloucester soldiers who were about to leave for Cape Breton bedeviled the old woman until in her wrath she declared that she would be revenged on them at Louisburg. They took the old woman's words to heart, and when they had reached Louisburg they were further alarmed because a crow persisted in following them about. Having tried several times to shoot the crow, but without such success as they believe their marksmanship merited, they loaded a musket with a

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silver button. The button struck the bird in the leg. The bird fell and they wrung its neck. When they returned home, they inquired about the doings of Peg Wesson and learned that "at the exact moment when the crow was killed, Peg Wesson fell down near the Garrison House with a broken leg; and that, when the fractured limb was examined, the identical sleeve-button fired at the crow, under the walls of Louisburg, was found, and extracted from the wound!"

After the English had taken Nova Scotia, Gloucester fishermen went to the fishing grounds off Cape Sable in defiance of the "fearful depredations" of the French. To the old fleet of sloops, they were adding schooners within a few years after Captain Andrew Robinson launched the first schooner in the world, and they kept at their business in spite of a variety of adversities that might well have discouraged a less enterprising and persistent people. "Almost our whole dependence, under God," John White wrote to the Governor and his council, "is upon our Navigation and Fishery; and our other Navigation, on our Fishery: and that has so far failed by reason of the war with Spain, and ye fears of warr with France, as also by reason of ye smallness of ye price of fish, and ye dearness of Salt, bread and

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

craft, that, of above Seventy fishing vessels, there are few, if any, above ten in the business."

Gloucester was already sending fish abroad; and when the French wars ended, she came into a belated prosperity that was to last, with only such losses as every seafaring people must expect, until the eve of the Revolution.

With fish to export, and with fishermen and their vessels lying idle in winter, it had taken no great talent for mathematics to put two and two together. In the fishing vessels Gloucester sent to the southern ports of America fish and merchandise or provisions; and to the West Indies, to Lisbon and Bilbao, fish and little else. From the south, the vessels brought hogs and bacon and corn and beans; from the West Indies, rum and coffee and molasses and sugar; from Europe, fruit and salt and wine and money.

Meanwhile, for a long time, the colonies had been growing constantly more irritated at the mother country, and the British revenue laws taxing this flourishing young foreign trade led to smuggling so extensive that the authorities deemed it necessary to maintain a customs officer in Gloucester.

The poor devils who took the job had their hands full. The first of them, Samuel Fellows, is said to have fought the French in '55, and pre-

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sumably he was a brave man; but when a self-appointed delegation, seventy strong, "headed by several respectable citizens", called to interview him at Jesse Saville's house, where he was supposed to be hidden, he got discreetly away; and so far as there is any record in the annals of Gloucester he never came back. The deputation, led by the "respectable citizens", knocked Mr. Saville down, and taking a lesson from those medieval barons who —

"Day by day extracted grinders  
From the howling Israelite,"

presented a pair of forceps to the astonished gaze of the servant of Mr. Saville and offered to pull every tooth in his head unless he told where Fellows was. The affair, it seems, was enthusiastically and vigorously conducted, although they failed to catch Fellows. One or two of the deputation were fined and one, not having five pounds to pay his fine — or being blessed with a peculiarly strong streak of "cussedness" — spent several months in jail.

Mr. Saville, who seems to have been either an uncommonly stout-hearted man, or a fool — how often it is hard to determine which! — then himself accepted the post of customs officer, and a couple of years after Mr. Fellows' hasty departure for an unknown destination, Mr. Saville received



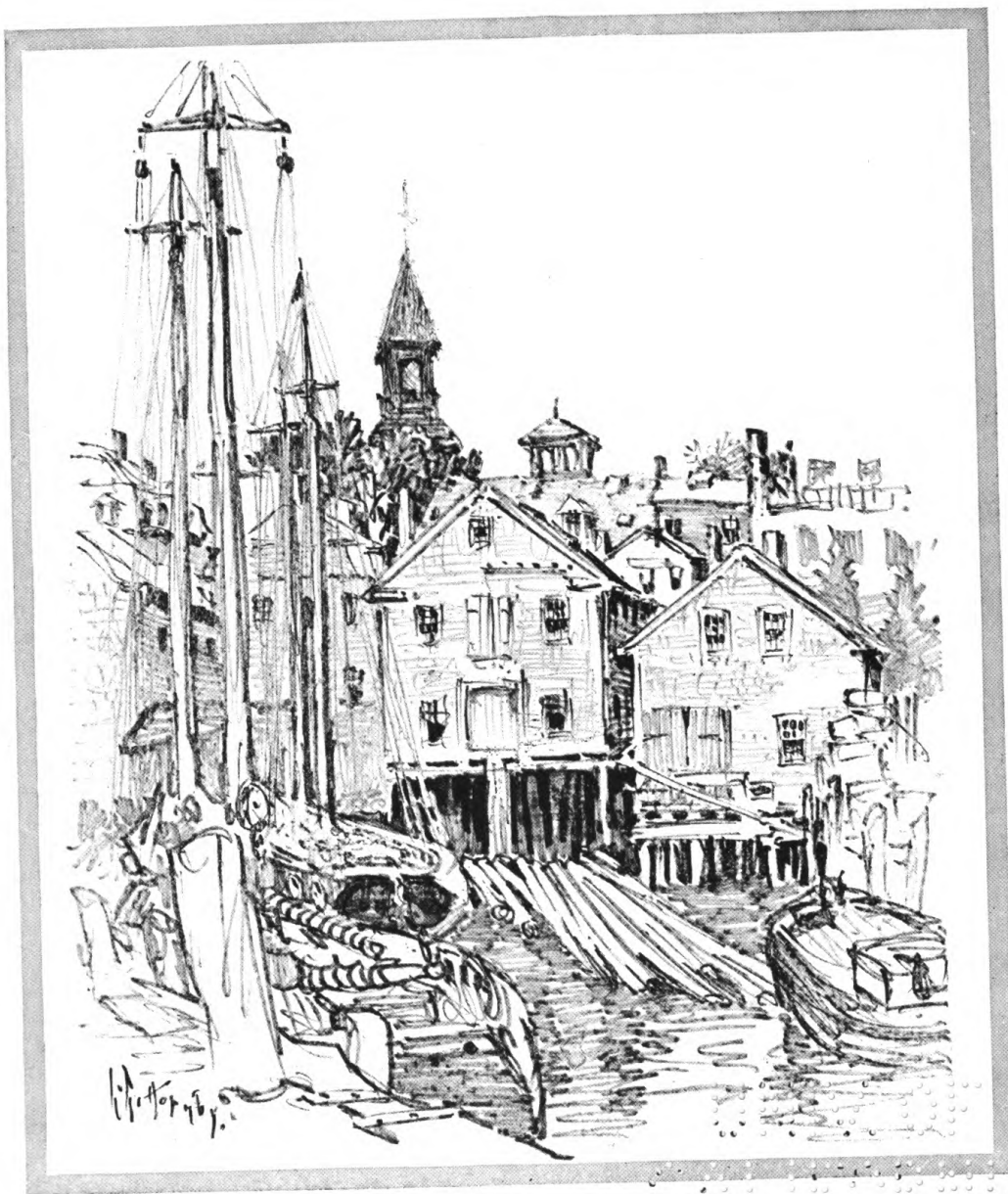
### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

in his own name a second deputation, which came disguised as Indians and negroes and dragged him "in an inhuman manner, a distance of four miles, to the Harbor, where he was subjected to various indignities till his tormentors chose to let him depart for home."

It kicked up the very devil of a row. The Governor personally called it to the attention of the General Court, and there was a tremendous hue and cry, but the only culprit they could find was Doctor Plummer's mulatto servant, George, whom they tried, and convicted of having had a hand in the affair. On a March day in 1772, two years after the night of Mr. Saville's humiliation, in an attempt to frighten George into telling all he knew, they hung a halter round his neck and stood him for an hour on the Salem gallows; but he staunchly held his peace, so they got what satisfaction they could by whipping him and let him go.

It is worth noting that in the autumn of that same year — 1772 — the selectmen of the town ordered another customs officer, Richard Silvester, then "land-waiter, weigher, and gauger", to leave Gloucester and take his family with him. But Silvester, having nerve and humor, published a notice in the *Boston News-Letter*, to the effect that he "prays leave to acquaint these worthies,

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*SPARS*

TO THE  
LIBRARY

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that he cannot, nor will not comply with their request." Luckier than some of his predecessors, very likely because poor George's sojourn on the gallows and his visit at the whipping post were still fresh in the public mind, Silvester suffered no further attentions.

One story of the customs officers at this period is still alive in Gloucester. I read it first in an old history, but I heard it told a few evenings ago as handed down by word of mouth. A schooner made port here in the night, and all hands, including Colonel Joseph Foster, the owner, fell to with a will to unload her, for an officer was to arrive from Salem in the morning. But work as they would, time was so short that when day broke, she still had more than half her cargo left on board.

Now there was a little house at the Cut where an able-bodied Irishman, John M'Kean by name, had stood guard during a smallpox scare to stop all strangers on their way into Gloucester and "fumigate them" for the good of the community. When the officer landed, John M'Kean was waiting for him and marched him away to be fumigated. Under John's watchful eye, the officer spent the day in smoke, nor did he stick his nose out of the house until darkness had fallen and all the merchandise was safe from inspection. Then,

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the hour of danger having passed, he emerged from his purgatory, "thoroughly smoaked and cleansed", as the old certificates used to say.

These are pleasing incidents, in spite of their lawlessness—or because of it. But they are more than merely pleasing incidents: they are a manifestation of the mettle from which the Boston Tea Party resulted; they show after their own fashion the spirit that led the farmers of Lexington and Concord to fire on a column of British infantry; they record definite acts in the long series of defensive blows struck at England, which culminated in war.

They lack the dignity that clothed many such acts, to be sure; they were rough-and-ready, and very likely ill-considered, and I am aware there is ground to argue that the town would have fared better had ten or a dozen men stood on Salem gallows with the mulatto George. But they were not mere rowdyism, for they reflect the temper of the period throughout the colonies, and equally with the many similar better-known incidents elsewhere, they express in their heavy-handed way the resentment of all the people against taxation from without their walls.

To a great part of Gloucester the Revolution brought stark poverty. The first hostilities at sea put an end to the fisheries and foreign com-

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merce, which left most men in town with nothing to do but fight or starve; and the depreciating currency and rising prices aggravated the hardships of the people to an appalling extent. The years from 1775 to 1783 present a picture grim almost beyond belief, but relieved by flashes of martial color, for Gloucester men went to the war and the war came to the very doors of Gloucester.

In May, 1775, John Murray, in America the first public preacher of the doctrine of universal salvation, went from Gloucester to the camp at Jamaica Plain, where he served as a chaplain in the Continental Army. A few months before, coming to Gloucester at the invitation of Winthrop Sargent, he had acceded to a request that he preach in the first parish meetinghouse while the minister was ill. Returning to Gloucester after a month in Boston, where his doctrines had aroused lively opposition, he found the meetinghouse closed to him; but he continued to preach in the Sargent house, and later, when he left the army because of sickness, he came back to Gloucester, and there assembled the people who formed definitely, on January 1, 1779, the first Universalist Church in America. The curious mental quirk that for thousands of years has led the world to try to settle religious affairs by civil laws — and

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

still does!—landed Murray and his church in court, and for three years the worthy justices of Massachusetts tried and reviewed the case. The final verdict, returned by a jury foreman who believed that Murray and his following “had as good a right to worship God according to the dictates of conscience as others had”, gave back to the Universalists their property that the tax collectors had sold at auction to pay the taxes assessed to maintain the orthodox minister; but when Murray learned that the Justices of the Supreme Court had decided he was not really an ordained minister, hence that he was liable to pay a fine of fifty pounds for each and every marriage ceremony he had performed, he prudently sailed for England and remained there until his friends persuaded the legislature to pass an act granting him exemption from all legal penalties, since he had acted in good faith. He then returned to America and they ordained him in a manner to suit the taste of the Supreme Court and the state legislature.

At Bunker Hill, the month after John Murray departed as chaplain to Jamaica Plain, two Gloucester companies took part in the fighting. In one of them were forty-four privates, of whom thirty-eight were fishermen and sailors. More than two hundred and twenty Gloucester men

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served by land in "the first campaign of the war", and an undetermined number by sea.

Many Gloucester soldiers left the army when their time was up and took to privateering, for which their training better fitted them, and toward the end of the war the town, finding it impossible to raise the full quotas for which the State called, petitioned the General Court for leave to fill only partially the number required by the last call. But there were Gloucester men in the fighting from Bunker Hill to Yorktown, and John Burnham, who fought as a lieutenant at Bunker Hill, and who became a captain in 1777 and a major six years later, served from the beginning of the war to the end "without a furlough, or leave of absence, for any purpose of his own."

Within two months of the battle of Bunker Hill, the British sloop-of-war *Falcon* brought the fighting into Gloucester waters and on to Gloucester's shore. On August 5, the *Falcon* hove to off 'Squam River and sent fifty men in a barge to get some sheep from the pasture back of Coffin's Beach, but Major Coffin mustered five or six men armed with muskets, and by firing from behind the dunes, succeeded in driving away the barge and the fifty. The barge then proceeded into the harbor to seize a schooner which lay low in the water, but finding



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that she had nothing on board except sand, the fifty men went back to their vessel with angry hearts and empty hands.

Three days later the *Falcon* chased into Gloucester harbor a schooner from the West Indies, bound for Salem. The *Falcon* followed her into the harbor, where she had grounded on the flats, and sent two barges to bring her out.

In the town all hands had mustered to defend the vessel, and from Pearce's Wharf and from the other side of the cove they fired on the boarding party and the barges, killing three men and wounding the lieutenant in command, who went back to the *Falcon* to report his ill luck. At that, Captain Lindsay of the *Falcon* sent a captured schooner and a cutter into the harbor, and opening on the town with the *Falcon's* guns, despatched a boat to set the fish flakes on fire.

The bombardment sent cannon balls into several houses and the Methodist Church and killed Deacon Kinsman's hog, but the good citizens of Gloucester worked so shrewdly and industriously that they captured both schooners, both barges, the cutter, the boat that was sent to fire the fish flakes, and thirty-five men. Two Gloucester men were killed, and one was slightly wounded. The next day the *Falcon* put to sea.

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The Reverend Daniel Fuller, minister of the second parish, recorded in his diary, with a simplicity and comprehensiveness that are Biblical, the attacks from the *Falcon* :

August 5, 1775

Alarmed in this Parish. Capt. Lindsey lay off Squam river. Sent a barge with fifty men who attempted to Land on Col. Coffins Beach; but were repulsed by a brisk firing of our People. Fast days are on Thursdays.

August 8, 1775

Lyndfey, Capt of a man of war, fired it is supposed near 300 Shot at ye Harbour Parish. Damaged ye meeting House somewhat, some other Buildings, not a Single Person killed or wounded with his Cannon Shott. We Retook two vessels belonging to Salem, his barque & another Boat, also we took together with ym about thirty of thier men, with the loss of only two of our Men. His Boatswain likewise in attempting to set the town on fire by Firing the Train of Powder to some combustible Matter prepared, providentially the fire was communicated to ye powder iron in his hand which occasioned an explosion and it is said he lost his Hand if not his Life.

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

A later entry, with its abrupt transition from affairs of state to the simple medicines of the period, affords a peculiarly intimate glimpse of life in Parson Fuller's time :

March 7, 1776

The Britiſh Troops precipitately Left ye Town of Boſton. The Virtue of Common Stinging Nettles, it is one of the moſt efficient medicines we have in the Vegetable Kingdom, in the form of a Strong decoction or Infuſion, taken in the quantity of a Pint in a Day it is a moſt valuable Strengtheners of a general or Particular Relaxation. In that of a weak Infuſion, it proves a valuable alternative or Decobſtruction of the Veſſels, and in that of Expreſſed Juices, taken by Spoonfulls as ye Exigency of ye caſe requires, it is the moſt powerful Stiptich in internal Bleedings known. Externally applied as a fermentation or poultice it amazingly dyſpenſes or ſcatters Inflammations & reſolves Swellings. In the common ſore throat, thus applied and internally in a gargle great dependence may ſafely be put in this common plant.

In a later engagement Gloucester was leſs fortunate, for when a ſhip of clumsy appearance hove in ſight off Sandy Bay, and twenty mechanics,

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farmers, and fishermen of the town organized an expedition to take her, their visions of liberal prize awards proved to be the most transitory of mirages. With the single purpose in their twenty minds, the enterprising company hurried out to a Continental privateer, the *Yankee Hero*, which had just come into sight round Halibut Point, and her skipper, his heart being set on just such sport, joined in the scheme with all good will. Unhappily, however, the very clumsy vessel proved to be a thirty-six gun frigate in disguise, and the twenty citizens of Sandy Bay and the entire personnel of the *Yankee Hero* sojourned at length, by a sort of vicarious royal invitation, in a prison ship in New York where smallpox prevailed and many of them took it. They fought their best, though, before they yielded, and it is a mark of their valor and resourcefulness that for their last volley, having used virtually all their ammunition, they shotted the guns with broken iron and spikes, and threw in a crowbar for good measure. The crowbar pierced the windlass bits of the frigate and stuck there, and His Majesty's sailors dubbed it "the Yankee belaying pin."

The affair of the ship *Harriet*, John Beach master, was disaster succeeded by triumph. When David Pearce, the owner, who had no notion of

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his vessel's departing thus prematurely, got up on the morning of April 1, 1782, and looked out of the window, he saw her in the offing, under full sail with a fair wind. A boat sent in from a fourteen-gun brig had cut her out; and to lend added weight to this April Fool joke, the *Harriet* had on board a full cargo billed for Curacao.

Pearce jumped into his clothes, and running to the meetinghouse, roused the town by ringing the bell. There was in port another vessel of some size, the *Betsey*, ship, which Pearce also owned, but she was stripped to girtlines, and had no ballast on board, and lay across the dock at the head of Pearce's wharf to be graved. They got her rigging back in place, her ballast on board and some of her sails bent, before the tide rose high enough to float her. They rushed stores and guns and ammunition on board — with small boats they kept up the work of equipping her while they were towing her out into the harbor, and the riggers continued to work aloft — and with a crew of a hundred men to work the ship and man her guns, she cast off the towboats at one o'clock and proceeded under her own sails in pursuit of the lost *Harriet*. It was an almost incredible feat.

Reasoning that the English would probably take their prize to their eastern station, Captain

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Joseph Foster, commanding the *Betsey*, stood east-north-east and sighted the *Harriet* at day-break next morning in company with the brig and the boat. When the *Betsey* began to overhaul the *Harriet*, the Englishmen abandoned her and showed their heels to the Yankee ship, whose guns outnumbered the brig's by six. At nightfall the brig was still leading her pursuers, so the *Harriet* and the *Betsey* returned to Gloucester and reached port the next afternoon. They learned that the British had manned a captured fishing vessel a fortnight before and had sent her into Gloucester harbor to reconnoiter. Her men, having returned with some blocks and a stolen hat to prove they had landed, had reported the *Harriet* as a valuable prize inadequately guarded.

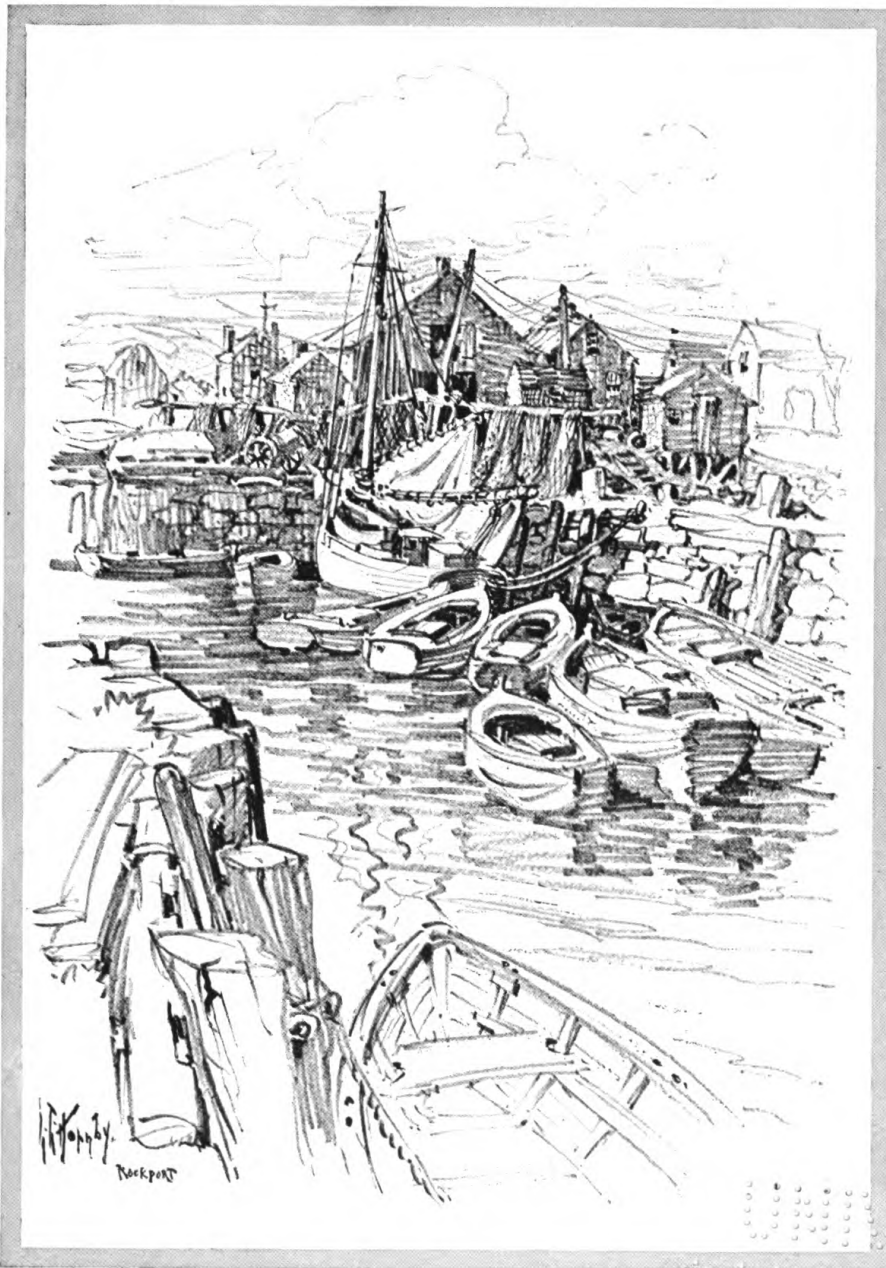
Daniel Somes, born and bred in Gloucester, was one of the men in that boat!

The War of 1812 had much the same effect as the Revolution upon the fortunes of Cape Ann, but to a lesser degree. It interrupted the fisheries and commerce of the town and inflicted severe hardships on the people, although not such extreme suffering as the earlier and longer war had caused. As was to be expected in a community that depended upon the sea for livelihood, there was strong opposition hereabouts to the war, and

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

an ardent Federalist in Annisquam expressed his opposition to the policies of the Administration by naming a vessel for his party, which served him better than he had probably foreseen: a British force, coming into Annisquam from an English frigate, which lay in Ipswich Bay, destroyed or carried away four vessels, but spared the *Federalist* because of her name.

The people of Sandy Bay, mustering on Bearskin Neck with small arms and a cannon, put to flight the sixty-ton cruiser, *Commodore Broke*, which had fired several shots into the town; and when the frigate *Nymph* sent two barges to take the fort on Bearskin Neck, impressing as pilot David Elwell, master of a captured fishing vessel, there was a lively skirmish in which both sides sustained losses. The force from the frigate spiked the guns and took fourteen prisoners; but the recoil of a gun fired at the meetinghouse belfry, in which the alarm bell was ringing, sank one of the barges, and although the officer and a few men seized a boat and got away, the people of Sandy Bay captured a dozen of the British. The American officer refused to exchange prisoners, but in the night a number of Yankee civilians took the British prisoners away from the soldiers and actually did exchange them for some twenty men



*IN THE LITTLE HARBOR AT ROCKPORT*



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## *Peace and War*

held by the British. So the little neck of land that incloses Rockport's diminutive harbor, with its tiny breakwater now quite overshadowed by the larger, still incomplete breakwater where the Government has wasted immense sums, has seen war by sea and land, and has shaken to the firing of cannon and the rattle of musketry.

In Gloucester harbor, in 1813, a Halifax schooner, masquerading as a Swedish vessel under the name of *Adolphe*, succeeded in selling a cargo of sugar, smuggling ashore various contraband British products, and clearing — ostensibly for St. Bartholomew — a cargo of flour. To return, as she did, in a fortnight was an act of arrant stupidity. Since she could not possibly have completed her pretended voyage in that time, the customs officer seized her and removed her sails; but during a stormy January night, some one on shore stole back her sails, and her master and crew, locking the customs officer in the cabin, bent the sails and put to sea. They set the luckless officer adrift in the harbor, in the revenue boat, and by the time he reached town and dispelled the prevailing notion that the schooner had sunk at her anchorage during the storm, she was beyond pursuit.

A curious reminder of the turbulent days of the Revolution and the War of 1812 came to light

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

in 1847, when a man who lived in the old Whittemore house on Washington Street, preparing to lathe and plaster the sink room, pulled the boards off the studding and disclosed an assortment of old-fashioned knapsacks, haversacks, cartridge boxes, and canteens. The cartridge boxes were made of clumsy blocks of pine, each with a double row of auger holes, one for each cartridge, and were covered with leather flaps; and both cartridge boxes and canteens were painted red.

Another odd treasure trove — a couple of bushels of sand, a dozen clay pipes, and two quarts of bullets — came down, with four square feet of plastering, upon the head of a man who was repairing a ceiling in the same house.

The sand had doubtless sifted down through the floor above, which the occupants of the house had for generations sanded as a matter of course. The pipes and bullets, — explain them as you please. Old houses are custodians of queer tales as well as queer treasures. I have found in dingy old Gloucester houses, whose drab and battered outer walls are commonplace beyond description, panels designed and wrought by forgotten artists of an earlier day, cavernous fireplaces that time has given the inimitable associations of age, and true stories that beggar fiction.

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## V

### LIFE IN NEW GLOUCESTER AND OLD GLOUCESTER

WHEN the General Court, in 1736, granted to a number of men living on Cape Ann a tract of land in what is now the State of Maine, it opened a way for the farmers of Gloucester to expand their activities, which the rough and stony character of the Cape had narrowly restricted. The emigrants began their "Down East" settlement in 1739 and named it New Gloucester. In three years they had cleared twenty acres, had constructed twelve miles of good road, and had built bridges, houses, and a sawmill. In 1744, at the outbreak of the French and Indian War, they abandoned the settlement for a time because it was dangerously exposed to attack; but in 1753 some of them returned, and although their old buildings were destroyed and a freshet had carried away a bridge, they at once raised a blockhouse and began to rebuild the little town. For ten years the community grew very slowly, but the peace of 1763 largely removed the danger from Indians, and thereafter the town thrived.

[ 75 ]

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

There was a boy on Cape Ann, Payne Elwell by name, who emigrated to New Gloucester late in the eighteenth century, took land, and made his way against heavy handicaps. Eventually he returned from New Gloucester to old Gloucester, where he wrote an account of his life, which has come to me in the original manuscript. I give it here, in nearly his own words, a first-hand picture of days and scenes of which few records are left; and in copying the narrative, which I have changed only to conform more nearly to the conventionalities of spelling, punctuation, and grammar, — it has been necessary to omit a few less legible passages, — I take my departure from the time when as a “bound boy” he was living by the sea and learning to fish and farm:

“In those days, boys were whipped innocent or guilty. I recollect, when we went a fishing, that a skipper of a boat, who lay near us, come on board and accused me of stealing his biscuit. I was, & protested to be, innocent; but the right of the strongest was law, and he threw me into his canoe, with the intention of carrying me to his vessel, and there giving me a sound basting. I watched my opportunity and the moment he sprang on board his boat, I shoved off, and paddled ashore, leaving him a prisoner, on board his own

### *Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

vessel. I ran home & told my master, who took my part, & my mother was so incensed at the conduct of the skipper that she determined to inflict corporeal punishment on him with her own hands. She met him one night. Off went her riding hood & she seized him & shook him tremendously, but though she could take up a cider barrel and drink out of the bung, she found that in this case she was the 'weaker vessel' & came off with a volley of hard words and the gratification of shaking the captain of a Cape Ann fishing boat.

"My chief employment, as I grew older, was fishing and coasting. Sometimes I went to the Banks and in the winter we took a trip to the Carolinas & Virginia where we exchanged our summer fares of fish for corn &c. About the age of sixteen, I began to go to school to Master Moor in the evening. It was in this house that I completed the small portion of education which I possess. I now began to be more of a man and at 16 I went afore the mast, a voyage to the West Indias, St. Christophers, in the schooner Mary, Capt. Stevens. Thence we returned to N. Carolina, and thence to the W. I. again, where we were taken by a French privateer from old France after an action of three and a half hours. We fought at long shot, pretty much, but as we were about

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

to lay alongside her, twelve Spaniards jumped over board and swam to our vessel. We were soon overpowered and surrendered. I received no injury during the action, but one of the enemy gave me a severe blow with the flat of his sword for not understanding the jargon he spoke.

“We were ordered on board the privateer and turned into the hole. There we were in fire, smoke, disease, and filth. Not liking my situation, I crawled out in the night and crept under the bowsprit, but I was soon discovered, and with a good rope’s end well laid onto my back, I was compelled to return to my uncomfortable prison, where I stood on my feet all night, for I verily believe, I should have died if I had laid down. In four days we arrived at St. Crus. The prisoners were set at liberty, & luckily for me I saw a cousin of mine come alongside in his boat. In I jumped and went aboard a vessel bound home. During the voyage with Capt. Stevens I learned to play a fiddle, and this fiddle, with a short-pair of shoes and a shirt, was all the property with which I set sail for America, where after two months passage I arrived in November, having been absent nearly twelve months. From St. Crus I come home in a sloop bound to Boston, shipping at \$6.50 per month and a few old cloathes. However, amongst

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

these there was an old jackett, with one sleeve, which was as acceptable to me in my then destitute situation as a laced coat would have been.

“Having arrived at Boston, I expected to have been paid off. But as ill luck would have it, the owners attempted to defraud the revenue by smuggling goods. The perpetrators were discovered and the vessel seized, & I was turned ashore as penniless as I entered the vessel in the W. I.; but I still kept my fiddle and one-sleeved jackett. Here I was a stranger, and in a strange place, without friend, money, home, or shelter. At length I found a good old lady who agreed to take me to board at \$1. per week. I was a gentleman at large. I walked up and down Long Wharf with my ragged jackett, as independant in feeling as the gentlemen in sea coats. At length, the Government and owners compromised the breach of law & I was paid my two months’ wages, amounting to \$13. After my return I became acquainted with Rebeccah Webber, a girl about my age to whom I had a great affection; and from our mutual meeting we agreed, when time would admit and my age would allow, we should be married. After this being well understood, I went by the wish of my master to Virginia. On my return I bought my time of my master, being then about



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

20 years old, for which I paid him fifty dollars, according to agreement, and then married having agreed with a Mr. Woodward to go skipper of his schooner to the Grand Bank. This I did and made four fares to the Grand Banks, of which I was fortunate and was enabled to pay my master and satisfy my agreement for purchasing my time. After going for Mr. Woodward one year, he, Mr. Woodward, being taken sick, I was offered and accepted of the charge of a schooner in Mr. Daniels Rogers' employ. After the expiration of the fishing season, I heard much about the eastern parts and as many of my friends had moved to New Gloucester I was induced there to go with my wife, and our child named Payn after my own name, who was the first fruits of our marriage.

"My means to remove my family was small, but from the great storys I had heard, I went. A Mr. G. owned a large tract of land and on certain conditions I took a lot in the state of nature. My first object was to build me a log house, which after much exertions with some assistance I affected. View me one moment in a wilderness with a wife and child and hardly food to last a month. To work I went cutting down the trees. When any of my neighbours needed help, — there was none who lived nearer than 2 or 3 miles, — I often

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

went out to work, they exchanging work with me. I made a kind of window to my house, and having no means to purchase glass, I took white paper and greased it, which answered the purpose instead of a better. (Necessity is the mother of Invention.) My chimney I made by piling a parcel of rocks. We had no crane, but as wood was plenty we sat our pot, when we had anything to put in it, on top of the wood. With the time taken up in my avocations of cutting down the woods, winter fast approached.

“Look and see me for one moment in my present situation among strangers — nay, if not strangers, none who are able to help me and barely to help themselves. One great consolation was I had a good gun and some powder and balls, and I could hunt. I made me a sled and my neighbor went with me. We were gone three days and were fortunate to kill 2 deer and one mous. We brought them on our handsleds through the snow. We were much fatiged. I took my proportion and set out for home, and it being night, with much rejoicing I was received. We cooked some of the meat and called up my children who had long suffered, as well as my wife and self, for food. Feeling so much elated and returning thanks to God with a sinceare heart, we made a harty meal.

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

“The next day I went to work with my neighbour. He had no money to pay me, but offered me a little pig which I agreed and bought of him. This added one more member to my little family. Shortly after my Wife delivered of a Daughter, which called R — .

“About this time, being near spring, I often went out a hunting and frequently killed bears and rackoons. I once found a hedge hog which I drove into his den. I used every mean to get him out in my power till I thought of a plan. Having a peice of rope in my pocket, I tied it round his tail and drew him out, and by the assistance of my dog Trim he was soon dispatched.

“Spring being now advanced so far, I set fire to the trees I had fallen and as soon as time would admit I commenced planting corn on the land I had burnt. I went and exchanged work with neighbours and through this means I procured seed corn and assistance. This season being a fruitfull season, I had a good crop of corn for my family and my pig.

“When winter came I renewed my hunting and often was fortunate. Once on a time I drove a large Moose with my dog and gun from the woods near Androscoggin River. I had an opportunity to shoot at him and I wounded him.

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

He took into a breathing hole in the river, and I, expecting to see him no more, called my dog to me, reloading my gun and obscured myself behind an old fallen tree. By and by Mr. Moose, seeing no one present, come out of his secure place and advanced towards me. I fired and wounded him in the shoulder and he again returned to the place in the river. Again I secreted myself behind the trees and he again made his appearance. Taking deliberate aim, I shot him through the heart, the meat of which was of much service to me and my family.

“As soon as the season would admit I again commenced cutting down the trees and set them on fire. The wind blowing hard, I come near loosing my house, which once caught on fire, but by good fortune I saved it from the flames. As soon as time would admit I commenced planting my corn, and by exchanging works — for hireing assistance I had no means —, I raised upwards of three hundred bushells of corn this year. I now began to feel as if I should live again. I exchanged my corn for the comforts of life which I stood in need of.

“This being a new settled town and no publick house in it, I thought I would undertake keeping tavern. Although I had but one feather bed, we contrived and made more beds out of straw

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

and I first began by buying one gallon of rum. From the proffitts of that and other things, after a while I was enabled to buy a barrel of rum and my custom increased. One of my neighbours, not feeling satisfyed opposed my having a licence but I applyed to the Selectmen of the Town and got their approbation. Afterwards, as soon as the Court of Sessions met, I went to Portland and presented my Aprobation, requesting a licence as an innholder. One of the Selectmen who had signed my Aprobation objected, stating that my house was not calculated for a public house, but that Mr. — who lived not far off had a good house and convenient out house, & and one Tavern would be sufficient for New Gloucester. Judge my feelings at the moment, without a dollar in my pocket and no means to pay an attorney. I asked permission to speak, which was granted. I told the Court in suitable words that I felt myself much imposed on by Mr. P. I granted I was a poor man, but I felt an independent spirit, and I said that I never kept a disorderly house, which I defy any one to prove to the contrary, and that I always gave good accomodation to those who call<sup>d</sup> on me, and for proof I requested my opponent to be call<sup>d</sup> on oath for the truth. He declined being call<sup>d</sup> on the stand and the Judge of Courts granted

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

me a licence, much to the mortification of the Mr. P., and I went home with a light heart as well as purse, and flying colours. I now began to think myself a man of some consequence after talking with lawyers, judges, and other great men. I directly sat up a sign post and made a temporary sign till I could do better, and with chalk printed my name thereon, and public house; and as the rain washed it out, I renewed the marks. In the course of a few months, having a considerable company, I began in earnest to hold up my head. I bought me a pair of steers and commenced keeping pigs. I made a large troughth which had never been used for swine, and meeting being some two or three miles distance, I proposed to wife that as I had a part of a chain, I would tackle up the steers to the hog trough and that she and the children could get in and ride to meeting, this being in the month of Feb<sup>r</sup>. After some perswasion she consented. The steers being young and wild, I of course must walk and drive. Wife with two children got into this new fashioned slay and we proceeded on very well, till going down a small pitch the trough struck the steers' legs and they started and upset the wife & children, but fortunately did them no injury. The steers turned into a yard and glad was I to get command of

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

them again. Wife & children had to trudge home again, this being their first ride since we built our log house.

“This year we raised about 365 bushells of corn, so I hired my neighbours’ teams and carried it to Portland and bartered it away for many things I stood in need of. Now feeling myself rich and a man of some consequence, I contemplated building me a suitable house and out-houses, which I roughly accomplished and moved in the following fall. There being no other public house near, I had my house filled with travellers. They would come at all times of night and rap at my door and glad was I to receive them; and by still carrying on my farm, which was productive, I began to lay up money.

“I concluded to occupy a part of my house for a shop. I went down to Portland and got acquainted with one Esq<sup>r</sup>. Isley and told my situation and wishes and he recommended me to a Mr. Robert Boyd. Upon Esq<sup>r</sup>. Isley’s recommendation I was supplied with what goods I wanted, which to begin with was but a trifling amount. I was fortunate in the sale of them by taking my pay in country produce, which I again turned for West India and other Goods with which my punctualitty gave me good credit. I now began to

### *Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

think myself a man of some consequence, young, active, strong and hearty, full of vigour and ambition, as happy as a king on his throne, and now living in comfortable circumstances.

“The next year the crops in the country were very much cut off and many families were much distress for want. My credit being good I purchased a considerable quantity of corn, rice, flour, and other necessaries of life. The needs of those in the interior being great, they were under the necessity of calling on me for subsistence. They had no money, nor neither did I know them, but they came saying they left their families quite destitute of food, and anxiously pleading for some rice &c, and promising the next season to pay me in corn or rye, or some kind of country produce. At first I was at loss to know what to do, but I took in consideration my own former situation and that a friendly hand assisted me, and I willingly granted their requests. With pleasure I say not a dollar did I lose by bad debts, but every one paid me, according to agreement, in produce at a price which I turned to advantage at Portland.

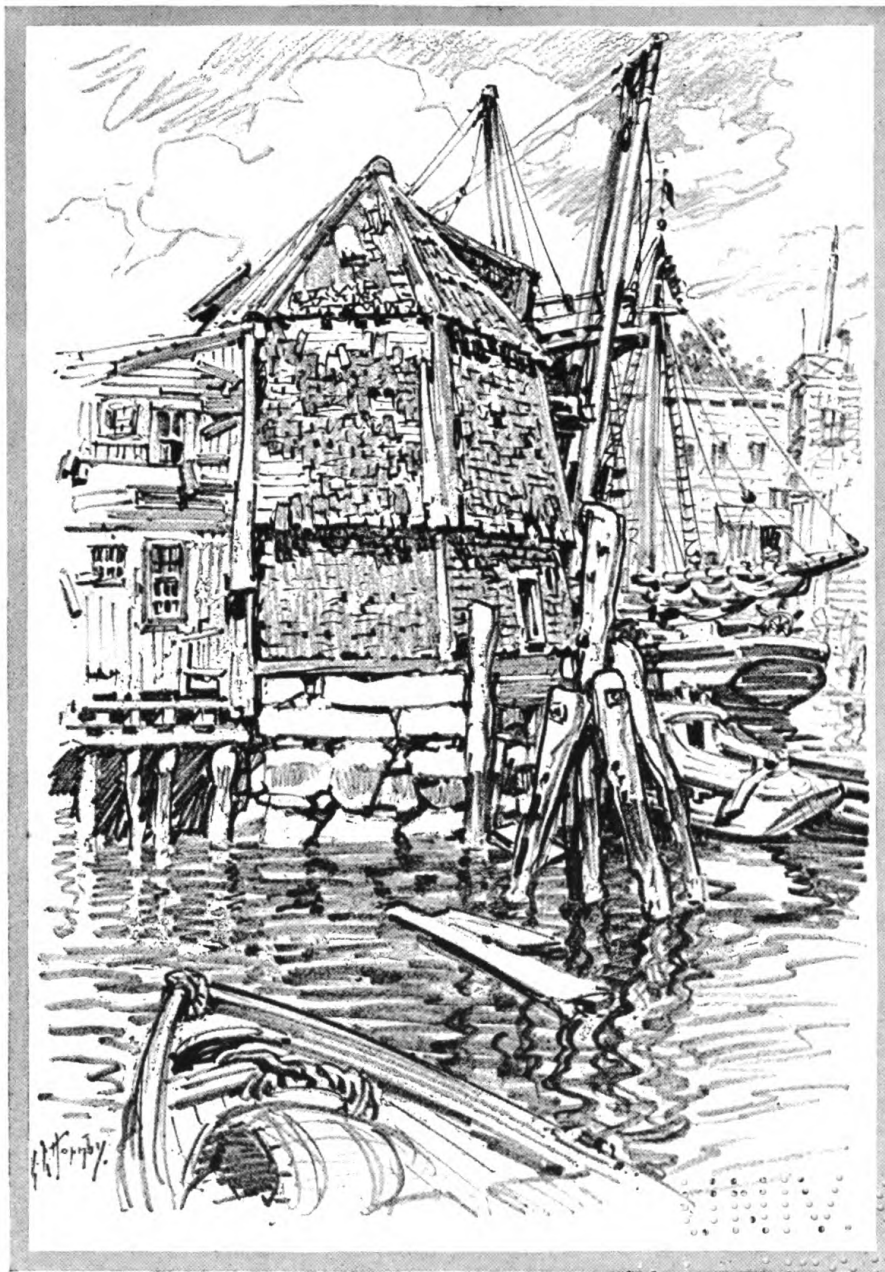
“I now by good economy had got me considerable of a farm and a store of goods, a part of which I owed for. My family grew in numbers and was of course of some help to me.



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

“My oldest son Payn, while looking after the cows, lost himself in the woods and was out two nights and three days. The neighbours all turned out in search of him, but their search was in vain. He found his way out to the main road about four miles from home, but being bewildered, he knew not which way to go. Happily he met a neighbour who knew him and inquired of him where he was going. He said home and the kind neighbour, being a-horseback and hearing of his being lost, took him up with him and carried him home, much to the joy of his anxious parents and friends.

“By industry and prudence I began to hold my head up as the richest man in New Gloucester, or at any rate I did think myself so. Shortly after this, my means were such I purchased me a farm adjoining, which I afterwards sold to Mr. Abraham Sawyer of Gloucester. I shortly afterwards sold my remaining property to Michael Webber, my wife’s brother, who removed from Gloucester. Together with my other means, this enabled me to buy a situation in North Yarmouth — a convenient dwelling house & a store where I commenced business. The second year after, I built a sloop of about 60 tons called the *Packett*, which I kept carrying wood to Boston. She once went seven trips in eight weeks and everidge me one



*OLD COAL POCKET  
GLOUCESTER*

THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

hundred dollars pr. trip, or thereabouts. In the course of four or five years I made a good deal of money and I built a brig called the *Rebecca*, which was an unfortunate transaction for me. I having loaded on my own acct. and having but little insurance, she was shipwrecked which amounted to about a total loss. What little I did receive from the underwriters I was obliged to seek by reference, as they never mean to pay if they can avoid it.

"After this I was concerned in fishing and other navigation and did extremely well. Two of my sons, to wit, Payn & Robert, I took in trade with me to give the two one half proffits. We continued in business in North Yarmouth; and business growing dull, I found it was best to remove. We accordingly did remove to Gloucester in April, 1801, where I purchased me a house and a part of a wharf. A while after, we dissolved co-partnersh<sup>p</sup> and divided stock. They each received about \$200 and I still continued my business of navigation and fishery and prospered.

"I now being worth in commandable property full forty thousand dollars, and the prospect of business having a bad appearance, I thought it most wise to dispose of my vessels and all other property and purchase a farm in the country.

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

Although much against advice of many of my best friends, I was determined thus to do and unfortunate it terminated. I bought real estate to nearly the amount of thirty thousand dollars, consisting of about 300 acres of land and five dwelling houses, barns, and a cyder mill, there being many fruit trees on the farm, which some seasons made 300 bbl. of cyder besides winter fruit.

"I enjoyed myself tolerable well for a few years, then my wife was taken sick. She remained ill some considerable time and died of the dropsy. Her remains was carried to Gloucester and deposited in the tomb. I, feeling lonsome without a companion, married a lady who lived in the house, although much against the wishes of my children and many of my best friends, which caused much unhappiness between me and children. Some ruffians came one night and by force caught hold of her to carry her away, but she being young and spry slipt through their fingers down celler and out the celler door and secreted herself for a while under the beehive. Not deeming it safe to stay there long, she got out and run down the bank of the river where she secreted herself.

"Believing they had cary<sup>d</sup> her away, I imeaditly had my carriage tackled and pursued the carriage which we heard drive on with great haste

*Life in New Gloucester and Old Gloucester*

on the Andover Road. I stopt at a tavern and found a carriage but no Betsy. I examined the carriage carefully to see if I could discover any blood in, on, or about it, but discovered none. I enquired where they were from, and they told me they was from — bound to Salem. I asked them to let me look in their carriage and I discovered blankets. I immediately returned home where I found her almost dead, and happy was I to find her and not a little fatigued myself. I was determined for the future to be stronger on my guard. I hired men to watch nights which was expensive. I now was determined at all events to be married and got published. My children prevented it for a while by their weekly remonstrances against granting, but as it must be done every week they soon got tired. At last I obtained a certificate and was married agreeable to the laws of God and man.

“I was now quite happy with my wife who treated me kindly. Finding the expense of carrying on my farm made great from hired labour & pillage of my corn, sheep and meat out of my house, I was determined to sell the farm. Although against the wishes of my wife, children and friends, I sacrificed it for about the paltry sum of thirteen thousand dollars. I went to Gloucester, pur-

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

chased my former dwelling house, and moved my furniture down. Unfortunately a while after the teams started it commenced to rain and continued to. It gave my friends some trouble, but finding a plenty of pine wood in my son's barn we soon got comfortable. We came down in my carriage therefore did not suffer much from the rain, and found our friends glad to see us. We soon got settled in our new situation and found friends and kind treatment."

Were not those old-time sons of Gloucester men "of infinite resource and sagacity"? From wild lands and the sea, by industry and shrewdness and enterprise, they built towns, reared families, and "made a good deal of money."

## VI

### CAPTAINS AND MERCHANTS — AND OTHERS

THE widely prevailing impression of the town of Gloucester, as it had grown during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and as it has continued to grow, down to the present time, is unjust because it is incomplete. It is natural that history to a large extent, and romance almost wholly, should concern themselves with the aspects of Gloucester life that belong exclusively to Gloucester, and the story of the town as the foremost fishing port of the western hemisphere is unique. The lives of the fishermen of Cape Ann, in their earliest boats and sloops, in their old-fashioned pinkies and bankers, and in their able schooners of later years, are what we think of first in connection with Gloucester; but Gloucester for years conducted a flourishing foreign trade, and Gloucester boys who went to sea to find opportunity to get ahead in the world became captains of ships and retired to their counting rooms, and many of them, settling eventually in Boston

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

or New York, became leading merchants of their time.

The old Gloucester stock of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries sent out branches that to this day show their native worth. The Davises were merchants of enterprise and ability. Elias Davis, who died in 1734, left an estate of £4500, which was no small accomplishment for a man living in a hard-working, simple community in those simple days. Ebenezer Davis, perhaps the first of Gloucester's substantial merchants, left a comfortable fortune, and his daughter Susannah, who married Moses Parsons, himself a Gloucester boy, bore a son, Theophilus Parsons, who gained distinction as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. Benjamin Ellery, son of William Ellery of Gloucester, "became a wealthy merchant of Newport, and a judge, assistant, and deputy-governor of the colony of Rhode Island." The second son of Benjamin, another William Ellery, was a member of the Continental Congress and signed the Declaration of Independence; and William Ellery Channing was a grandson of this second William Ellery. Colonel John Low, who went fishing out of 'Squam River and acquired by his fishing and trading a substantial property, was a member of the convention that ratified the Con-

### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

stitution of the United States, and his sons became merchants of prominence in the Boston of their day.

From the little villages of Cape Ann came other men — it is impossible to record them all without writing a mere catalogue of names — who were leaders of the bench, the bar, the church, and the commerce of Massachusetts. The Gloucester of early days was a community of readers and thinkers. Many men who worked at trades by day studied in their libraries by night. Fishermen took books on theology and church history and philosophy to the Banks. All this, which we are liable in these days to forget, since changing economic and social conditions, and the changing character of the people obscure it, was characteristic of its time: business enterprise rested on a strong foundation of intellectual ability.

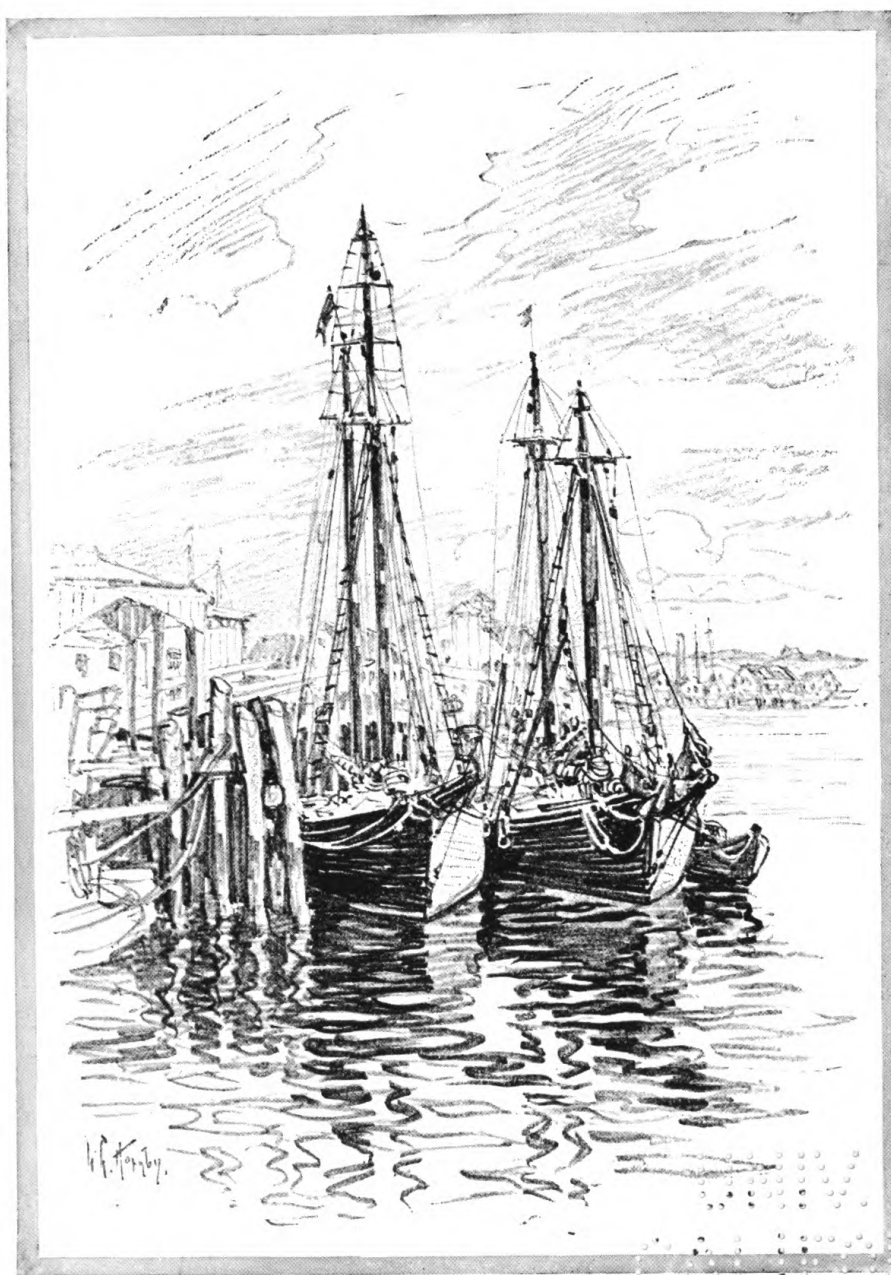
In the period following the Revolution, Gloucester's fisheries declined, but her foreign commerce grew. The Parsonses and Pearces and Sargents, forming a company to enter the East India trade, sent out the ship *Winthrop and Mary* to Sumatra, and if the venture had succeeded it might have changed the course of our maritime history; but the ship was lost, and the merchants of Gloucester, abandoning the project, centered their activities

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

on the thriving trade with Surinam, in which they were for many years preëminent.

The fishermen were often forced to struggle against debt, but the merchants of the period prospered exceedingly and so excelled in their social life that Doctor Bentley of Salem, who visited Gloucester in 1799, described with spontaneous admiration their parties and clubs and "their military parades."

Gloucester sent vessels laden with merchandise of cosmopolitan variety to the Baltic, whence they carried flax, hemp, sail cloth, cordage, and iron to ports in the east, west, and south. I have seen an old account book kept by Captain Moses A. Low of Gloucester, which gives a panorama of the varied enterprises in which he took part during the years between 1827 and 1848. In the ship *Cato* he touched successively at Cronstadt, Elsinore, Boston, Charlestown, Savannah, and Liverpool. In the brig *Old Colony*, he touched at Pernambuco, Philadelphia, Leghorn, and again at Philadelphia. In the ship *Charles* he touched at Havana, Rotterdam, Hellevoetsluys, Boston, Charleston, Liverpool, again Havana, Matanzas, Cowes, London, again Cowes and London, Boston, Charleston, New York, New Orleans, Glasgow, and New York. This brought him to



*SWORDFISHERMAN AND GRAND BANKER*

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### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

the year 1844. No further entries follow until 1848, when he sailed from Boston in the ship *Leodes* to New Orleans, to Liverpool, and back to Boston.

To Baltic ports our captains carried books published in New England, and from northern Europe they brought back the learned volumes of German scholars and men of science. Thus they conducted a commerce in ideas as well as in merchandise, and a clergyman who sent out a parcel of coffee or tobacco as a venture would get in return a new supply of theology or natural science.

Such exchanges stimulated education. In the old lecture courses, which began formally with the Lyceum in 1830, and continued in the Union and Popular courses, Ralph Waldo Emerson, George William Curtis, Henry Ward Beecher, John B. Gough, Wendell Phillips, and Horace Greeley spoke in Gloucester. The old Lyceum, which established a public library in 1854 and brought to the town musicians of note, ended its career when the town hall burned in 1869, but it is still vividly remembered as an important part of the Gloucester life of its day.

Old handbills, on which initials, written in blank spaces opposite the cast, record cryptically the names of modest actors, afford evidence of the dramatic activities of the town. I have seen one

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

issued apparently in January, 1830, although there is a puzzling contradiction in the dates that appear in it. "The Public are respectfully informed," it runs, "that by the desire of several Gentlemen, a company has been formed for the purpose of exhibiting Theatrical Performances, and will make their first appearance on Monday Evening, Dec. 24, at Union Hall . . . On Monday evening next, January 24th, 1831, will be presented Knight's Celebrated Comedy, in Two Acts, called the TURNPIKE GATE . . . To conclude with the Burlesque Tragedy, in 2 acts, of Bombastes Furioso . . . Tickets 25 Cents, to defray the expenses of the company, may be had at the store of Messrs. Hutchings & Stanwood, and at the Telegraph Office. Doors open at half past six o'clock, and Performance to commence precisely at seven o'clock."

The Gloucester of the early nineteenth century concerned itself seriously with the problems of education, and eighteen years after the performances of "The Turnpike Gate" and "Bombastes Furioso" the town made radical changes in its system of schools. To review briefly the earlier history of education on Cape Ann, let us go back to 1735, when a public grammar school that for thirty years had existed in the old center of the

### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

town, so far from the outlying parishes that its usefulness was sadly restricted, gave place to a circulating school, which traveled from district to district, staying in each district for a time in proportion to the district's relative wealth and importance. Thus the amount of schooling offered the pupils in the different districts reveals in a very practical way the place that each district held in the town as a whole. In 1757, when the school was apportioned on a basis of six years (actually, two masters were engaged for terms of three years each), the selectmen allotted to "the Cape" three months and sixteen days; to the "Squam Parish" thirteen months and twenty-seven days; and to the "Harbor Parish," the capital and metropolis of the little federation, thirty-three months. In 1795 the town dedicated a public grammar school on the present Granite Street, where it stayed until 1826, when the people voted to make it a circulating school. After a good deal of wrangling, they dropped it altogether and divided among the different districts, of which in 1804 the town had formed eleven, the money that the school would have cost. The state law required such a school, and in 1839 the town again opened it, closed it again in 1845, and opened it once more in 1849. By 1840 there had been twenty-three



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

school districts, and although Sandy Bay, becoming incorporated as the town of Rockport, took seven districts away with it, the town added others by further subdividing its territory, until in 1849, at one of the largest town meetings in Gloucester history, the citizens voted to reorganize the whole school system. And so, seventy years after the Reverend Eli Forbes presented to the town a report urging the need for educating females, "a tender and interesting branch of the community that have been neglected in the public schools in this town", it came to pass that there were two high schools in Gloucester, one for boys and one for girls.

In May, 1846, Annisquam had started a high school with Benjamin O. Swain as master, who held on August 7, at the end of the first term, an examination that lasted five hours. Many of the "scholars" were very young; many of them were "new beginners" in the studies they pursued. Consider, then, the list of subjects in which he examined them: "natural and intellectual philosophy", surveying, French, Latin, and Greek. The examiner neglected algebra and geometry, although the pupils were prepared in those subjects also, because at the end of five hours of rigid questioning he had not got to them.

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*Captains and Merchants — and Others*

A contributor to the *Light and Telegraph* pays Master Swain a notable tribute, but I fear, as I read the old editorial, that Master Swain was a little too exacting to suit the taste of school children of to-day :

“We see him now attending at an early hour of the morning upon some extra recitation, or to explain some difficult lesson — or attending upon a class in the open field giving mathematical lessons in the science of surveying — or if need be to make practical experiments in Geometry by measuring the heights and the relative distance from each other of the neighboring hills. And again he may be seen upon a bright and star-light evening making observations in the science of Celestial Geography. Open and familiar with all his scholars, yet dignified, and possessing the rare ability of inspiring his pupils with an ambition and emulation which cannot fail to lead them upward and onward in the progress of knowledge.

“The School is held in a large and airy hall, newly fitted up in the building formerly known as Elder Epes Davis’s meetinghouse — and is every way arranged for the comfort and convenience of the scholars. May it be sustained with generous patronage.”

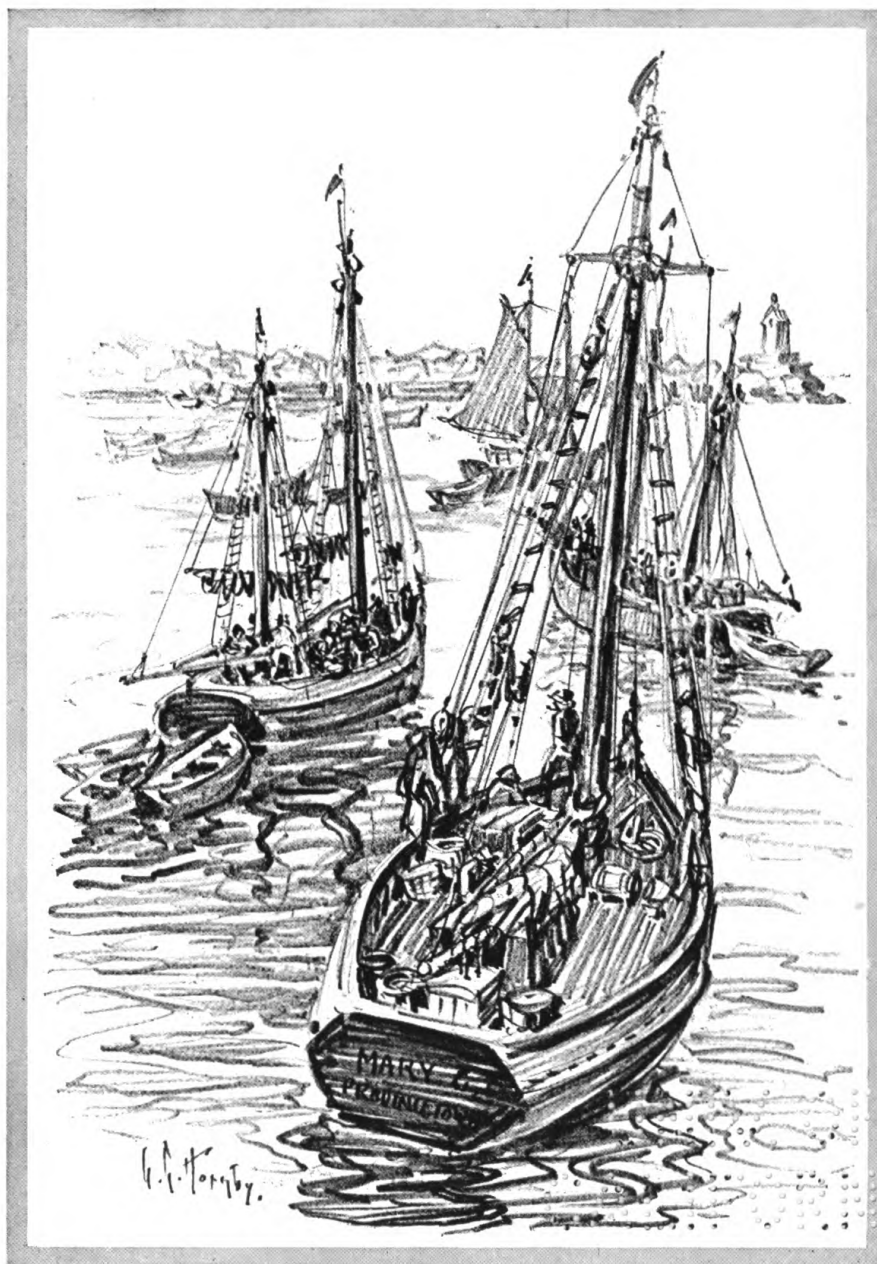
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There were many private schools hereabouts at that time. The advertisement of one, which I found in an old Gloucester paper, is typical of most of them. In November, 1846, Miss M. Barstow from Haverhill, N. H., announced that on Monday, Dec. 7, she would open a private school "for young misses & children" to be kept in the Orthodox vestry on School Street, and would give lessons "in the common English branches, French, Astronomy, Botany, Mental Philosophy, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Rhetoric, and needle work. Terms as follows: For the common English branches, including common or plain sewing, \$4.00. For any of the higher branches, including ornamental needle work, \$5.00. For children from nine to twelve years of age, attending to the common branches, \$3.00. Children under nine, \$2.00. No scholars will be admitted for a less term than six weeks, and no allowance will be made for lost time except in cases of sickness. There will be no extra charge for wood."

In various ways those old advertisements are illuminating. Fashions in education change as radically as fashions in clothes. But especially characteristic of the period is the educational problem to which Miss M. Barstow alludes in her final sentence, "There will be no extra charge for wood."

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*PROVINCETOWN FISHERMEN AT ANCHOR  
IN ROCKPORT HARBOR*

TO THE  
LIBRARY

### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

Miss Judith Millet, better known in her own day as "Judy", was a notable figure in Gloucester's educational circles during the first half of the nineteenth century. She kept a dame school in the Mackenzie house on Middle Street, and later at her home on Hancock Street. Tradition pictures her as snapping the heads of restless youngsters with a thimble worn for the purpose, and even extending her disciplinary measures to include small visitors to her school. One memorable summer day a little girl who had come dressed all in white to visit the school, replied to a whispered question by calling her name across the room, and Judy, to put an end promptly to this arrant breach of schoolroom etiquette, placed the small guest on the top of the stove. The cover gave way, and into the stove plunged the visitor, white dress and all.

It is of interest to note, in passing, that in 1817 a visitor to Gloucester harbor had attracted the attention of men of science and the general public the country over. Lonson Nash, a magistrate of the town, and various other citizens of unquestioned integrity, including sailors and master mariners, saw this visitor, and ten depositions were filed giving under oath a careful description of its appearance. The witnesses estimated the visitor's length at from seventy to a hundred feet.

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

In diameter it appeared to be about as big as a half-barrel. When it had got under way on the surface, it made twelve or fourteen knots, and under water, as well as the spectators could judge, it considerably increased its speed. It had a snake-like trick of darting out its tongue, which was about two feet long and — on the word of reliable men — barbed. It left a wake visible half a mile away, and as it circled about and played on the water, it moved by a vertical, sinuous motion, which revealed as many as eight “bunches” of itself at a time. It would sometimes turn so sharply that its head lay parallel with its tail, and when it submerged, it sank like a stone, instead of turning down its head, like a fish. It was the consensus of all opinions that the visitor was the famous sea serpent, or at least its descendant, that to seafaring men of ancient times was a source of constant perplexity and anxiety.

The files of old Gloucester newspapers throw a curious light on an industry that is little thought of now by Gloucester people but that took root briefly on Cape Ann at a time when nearly all New England ports were dabbling in it. The editor of the *Gloucester Telegraph*, filled with wonder at the bulk of a single whale as compared with a cod or a haddock, exerted his literary powers to

### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

persuade his fellow townsmen to give up fishing for “sprats” and “small-fry”, and to put all their resources into whaling. He was convinced that it would outlast fishing and would bring the town greater prosperity, and there was considerable reason behind his arguments, for in the early eighteen-thirties New England stood at the beginning of the golden age of whaling and no prophet had arisen to foretell the coming of petroleum products.

Gloucester vessels had gone whaling in the eighteenth century; but the business had died out many years before, when, under the heading “Blubber Wanted”, this advertisement appeared, week after week, in the *Telegraph*:

“1000 Barrels of Blubber Wanted. — The oil *must not be skinned off* in the process of melting to prevent fermentation, the Barrels must *all be in shipping order*, and a fair CASH price, for the article, *warranted genuine*, at rate of  $31\frac{1}{2}$  gallons to the Barrel, will be given on delivery to SIMEON BUTTERFIELD No. 38, Long Wharf, Boston.”

Whether Gloucester was aroused by the editorials in the *Telegraph*, or by the advertisements of Mr. Butterfield makes little difference now. In January, 1833, two ships — the *Lewis* and the *Mount Wollaston* — sailed from Gloucester for the whaling grounds.



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

The pessimists had prophesied that Gloucester sailors would not ship for a whaling voyage, but they were wrong; there was competition for berths, and for several years Gloucester kept a whaler or two at sea. It never really paid, though. Whaling out of Gloucester ceased again and the men of Cape Ann went back to the "sprats" and "small-fry" that their editor scorned, until 1853, when a Gloucester company sent the new schooner, *Flying Arrow*, to the Atlantic grounds, only to withdraw her from whaling in 1854. The old-fashioned whaling industry, unable to compete with petroleum products and electric lights (entirely aside from the scarcity of whales after several centuries of systematic blubber-hunting), has come nearly to an end the world over, and the attempt, fostered by the Government, to put whale meat on the market as food during the war caused scarcely a flurry in the whaling fleets; but for "sprats" and "small-fry" the market still holds good.

Meanwhile, the gold rush of 1849 had stirred Cape Ann to its rocky foundation and seven companies of 'forty-niners had sailed for California from the Cape. On January 31, the Cape Ann pioneers, a company of ten, sailed from Rockport in the schooner *Boston*, and after a passage of 157 days by way of the Strait of Magellan, arrived

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### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

at San Francisco, where they sold their vessel. On February 19, the "Gloucester Fishing, Mining and Trading Company" of twenty-eight men, with shares at \$150 apiece, sailed from Gloucester in the schooner *Paragon* and made the passage in 183 days. On June 4, the "Mattapan and California Mining and Trading Company" of forty-two men, in which the four northern New England States were represented, sailed from Gloucester and took 219 days for the passage. On November 8, the "Sea Serpent Company" of ten men, all from Gloucester or Rockport, sailed in the schooner *Sea Serpent* and made the passage in 150 days. On December 6, a company of fifteen men from Gloucester and Manchester sailed from Gloucester in the schooner *Billow*, and on December 11 a company of thirteen men — one from Rockport, two from Essex, and ten from Gloucester — sailed in the schooner *Astoria*. Another group, the "Eagle Trading and Mining Company" of twenty men, which went to California in 1849, may have sailed from Gloucester, but the records of that company are lost; and two companies of men from Cape Ann sailed from Newburyport in the ships *Euphrasia* and *Domingo*.

In his "Argonauts of Forty-Nine" Dr. Octavius T. Howe quotes two stanzas written to express

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the exasperation of the sixteen men of the "Rockport Granite Company" who sailed in the *Euphrasia* and made the passage in 149 days :

The Euphrasia was about to sail,  
And spread her canvas to the gale,  
To carry passengers and freight  
No difference 'twixt good and great.

To D. P. Day we did apply,  
Who told us many a flattering lie,  
He said your fare shall be so good  
That no one can find fault aboard.

"Then followed some twenty verses of the same caliber," Doctor Howe remarks, "and if the food in the *Euphrasia* was as bad as the verses we do not wonder the men objected."

One member of the company, George W. Cram, sent home a thousand dollars in gold dust soon after he reached the mines, and his statement that a Gloucester man, George W. Lake by name, was getting forty-six dollars a day for pointing shovels, shows that there were more ways of killing a cat than by choking it with butter.

For a hundred years after Cape Ann was settled, the people of the little town had communicated with Boston by the agency of fishing boats and small vessels that carried wood up and down the coast. In the course of time, a few small vessels

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### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

were regularly running between the two ports, but before the Revolutionary War, Gloucester people got their mail from Beverly, whither the ferry brought it across the river from Salem and the Gloucester messenger went twice a week to fetch it to Philemon Haskell's tavern where the citizens of Gloucester assembled to wait for it. The first post-office, which was established toward the end of the eighteenth century, was in a Front Street shop.

On April 25, 1788, Jonathan Lowe established a stage line between Gloucester and Boston, by way of Salem, Danvers, Lynn, and Malden. Sometimes Lowe's two-horse open carriage entered Boston by the Winisimet Ferry; sometimes it rolled up the Mystic River to Bedford, and so into town by land. The stage, which caused something of a sensation in its day, made two trips a week at first, and later, three trips a week. Finally, in 1805, a stage made the trip every day.

Inexorable progress replaced with four-horse coaches the two-horse carriages that had been a nine days' wonder a few years before, and set a new high-tide-mark of accomplishment when the stage owners added to their schedule a second daily stage, whereby passengers could actually go to Boston and return to Gloucester in the same day!

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

In September, 1844, the citizens of Gloucester met to consider ways and means of persuading the Eastern Railroad Company to build a Gloucester branch; and although a number of stage lines continued for years to run out of Gloucester, on November 2, 1847, the railroad began running trains on regular schedule. When the railroad began, the Winchester Express and the Merchants' Express were running between Gloucester and Boston, and the old advertisements, which you can read for yourself in newspapers of the period, offer passage on lines running between Gloucester, Manchester, and Salem; between Gloucester, Essex, and Ipswich; and between Gloucester and Rockport.

There is a curious fascination in sitting down with ancient newspapers to plan such a journey as our grandfathers might have made by stagecoach about the time the railroad reached the Cape. Those leisurely old journeys seem, in a sense, as far away as the old caravans out of Bagdad the Beautiful. Truly we have mastered the secret of the lamp; we have subdued "the people of the Jinn."

Even thus early in Gloucester history commutation rates were available to the traveling public; but *mirabile dictu*, they seem to have incurred

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popular ill will, for an editorial in the *Gloucester News* of June 28, 1851, protests against the injustice of granting a reduced fare of sixty-seven cents to the man who can afford to pay down thirty dollars in a lump sum, when the poorer man, who really needs the reduction, is forced to pay the regular rate of ninety cents.

In December, 1859, J. A. Cunningham announced that he had bought the line of coaches formerly owned by Messrs. E. W. & W. W. Chard, and that under his management coaches would leave " 'Squam port" at 6.30 A.M., and 12.30 and 3 P.M., and would leave "Gloucester harbor" at 9 A.M., and at 1.45 and 5.45 P.M., for the return trips. Later the trolley lines drove out the stage lines, and now, by the same law of progress, the 'bus lines have driven out the trolley lines.

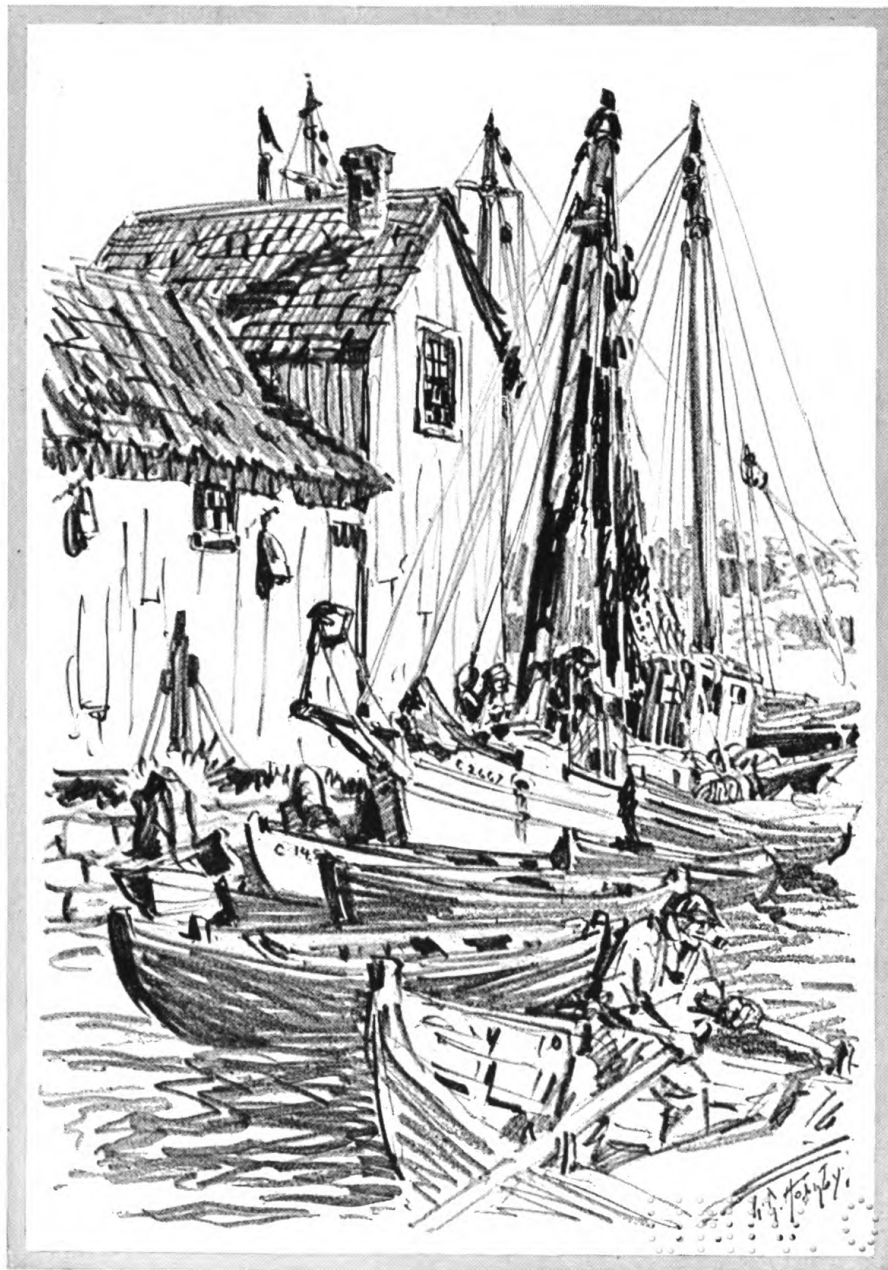
When the railroad ran its track across 'Squam River and into the town of Gloucester, the out-at-the-heels hamlet of Dogtown was remembered too accurately for the purposes of romance. There is abundant evidence that the Gloucester of the early nineteenth century, with ships at sea and full warehouses on shore, and with pride in its intellectual interests and activities and its substantial prosperity, would have been glad to forget its poor relations that lived on the back roads.

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

But it is the invariable effect of time upon history, that as years pass, squalor is forgotten, and picturesqueness emerges, and legends and traditions veil with romance affairs that in their own day wore quite another aspect. So now, after these many years, the forlorn hamlet on the back roads that are still to be traced by their straggling stone walls and nearly obliterated cellar holes is better remembered than many a more worthy neighborhood.

From Poplar Street the old and direct road to Dogtown, crossing Alewife Brook, leads under Fox Hill and past the empty cellar of the house on the left where old "Luce" George and her niece, "Tammy" Younger, lived more than a century ago. They say that from the door of her house Luce George, by witchcraft, would keep oxen standing with their tongues out at the foot of the hill until the driver paid toll of wood or corn, and that she would go to the wharves, when the vessels came in, and demand a fish from the trip. There is probably little truth in the tales of wild and lawless meetings at the old house during the years when Tammy — or Thomasine — Younger lived there after the death of her aunt. She had by all accounts a rough tongue for small boys, and succeeded in frightening some who were old



*AT SWEENEY HANSON'S WHARF*



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*Captains and Merchants — and Others*

enough to know better; and when she died on a winter day in 1829, she had established enough of a reputation as a witch to achieve after her death a sort of unholy canonization that has kept her memory green for nearly a hundred years.

If you push on over the hill, past the cellar hole of Luce George and Tammy Younger, and turn to the right both at the head of Reynard Street and at the Back Road, you will come, midway in the old Dogtown settlement, to where the house of "Easter" — or Esther — Carter used to stand, on a knoll opposite the home of Joseph Stevens, a nabob of the old Dogtown days who kept cattle and sheep and a good team. There was no cellar under the house of Easter Carter, Mann says; but it was one of the few Dogtown dwellings to have the dignity of a second story, and thither boys and girls came year after year for picnics. The stories of the proud Easter, who ate "no trash" at a time when her neighbors gladly eked out their diet with berries, and who boiled cabbages and told fortunes for the picnickers, are confused. There were those who said that the merrymakings at the Easter Carter house occurred after Easter had gone, when Becky Rich and her daughter, Rachel Smith, had moved out of their own house

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on the back road — narrowly anticipating its complete collapse — and into Easter's, and that the blithe widow, Rachel Smith, was the hostess. It now makes little difference whether Easter Carter or Rachel Smith boiled the cabbage. Some one tore down the house many years ago, and of the boys and girls that resorted thither, probably not one is left alive.

A little farther along the road, just before you come to Granny Day's Swamp and the present junction with the Dogtown Common Road, the cellar hole of Isaac Dade lies on the left. It is all that is left of a romance as strange as ever took root on this New England Coast. Isaac Dade, when a schoolboy in England, was impressed into the British Navy and ran away when his vessel lay off Gloucester. From Gloucester he sailed in a fishing vessel to Virginia, where he enlisted in the Continental Army, fought in three battles, receiving in one a saber-cut on the neck, from which he never fully recovered, was present at Yorktown when Cornwallis surrendered, and married a southern lady whose father owned the plantation adjoining the Washingtons'. To Gloucester the Dades eventually came to spend a single summer, hoping thus to restore the veteran's shattered health ; but in Gloucester they remained, with

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their two children born in Virginia, and in Gloucester Isaac Dade died.

The Government, it is said, paid his wife a pension, but whether she lived on in Dogtown, with memories of a girlhood spent on a Virginia plantation, the traditions do not declare. There are inconsistencies in the tale which suggest more than appears on the surface. At all events, it is a theme for meditation, as one goes on his way past the swamp to the point where the roads join, and turns sharply back along the Common Road to pick up the threads of other Dogtown stories.

Having taken the Common Road, you will find on the right-hand side the site of the home of that Abraham Wharf (a cousin of Theophilus Parsons, Chief Justice of Massachusetts) who committed suicide in 1814.

Beyond, on the hill at a distance from the road, is the cellar hole of the house where lived Peter Lurvey, one of the two Gloucester men killed when the *Falcon*, sloop-of-war, bombarded and attacked the town in 1775. Here, while his widow was still alive, their daughter and the daughter's husband, John Morgan Stanwood, better known in Dogtown annals as "Johnny Morgan" or "Gran'ther Stannard", lived too, so far as there

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is any record; and when they moved out, three old women and a boy moved in.

The three women were Molly Jacobs, Sarah Phipps, and Mrs. Stanley, and the boy was Mrs. Stanley's grandson, Sam Maskey, or "Sammy Stanley" as he was commonly known; and a queer crew they were, for the redoubtable Dame Stanley had reared her unlucky grandson as a girl in all respects except trousers, and he gave the three ancients such care as they got until the town was moved to mercy and had them carried away to the poorhouse. Sam Maskey then repaired to Rockport ("where," says Mann, "he went out washing for a livelihood, and laid up money, so that when he died he was quite a stockholder in the cotton mills"); and a mulatto, "Black Neil" Finson by name, moved into the cellar of the deserted Lurvey house — or, having already moved in, continued to live there — burdened with the delusion that somewhere thereabouts money was hidden.

Eventually Black Neil, too, departed and the house passed through the hands of Oliver Whipple and into the possession of Reuben and Isaac Day. The Days had it torn down but, finding the frame still sound, they moved it to Washington Street in Riverdale where they set it up and boarded it anew; and there it stands to this very day.

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## *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

Farther along, on the right-hand side of the road on the way back to Riverdale by way of Stanwood Street and Gee Avenue, lies the cellar hole of the house that "Judy Rhines", or Judith Ryan, occupied, and thither Black Neil resorted, on leaving the old Lurvey house. Like others of her generation in Dogtown, Judy picked up a wretched living by telling fortunes, and berrying, and — after a fashion — farming, and when she died Black Neil continued to live in her tumble-down dwelling until one winter day the town took him out of the cellar to the poorhouse. There was ice in the cellar when the constable came for him, and it is said that the mulatto's toes were literally frozen. When the constable stopped at a store to warm his miserable charge, a bystander said, "I'll bet he'll be so comfortable at the poorhouse that he won't live a week," and within a week the poor devil was, indeed, dead.

In all the annals of Dogtown there is scarcely one gleam of true romance. The settlement began brightly enough, early in the eighteenth century, but it fell upon dark days. In even the story of Fanny Brundle of Virginia, who married Isaac Dade and came from her plantation home to live beside the bleak road of that rocky little hamlet, which is the strangest true tale of Dogtown, the

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

tragedy of such an existence for one who had known the more gracious things of life is preëminent. If you will tramp over the old Dogtown roads, going north from Gloucester, or east and north from Riverdale, or south from the Whale's Jaw, marking the cellar holes, and reconstructing in that jumbled plain of weird boulders and sparse turf and small, dark cedars the low and rickety houses that once stood there, you can conjure up for yourself what is perhaps the most tragic phase of all New England life.

Dogtown lived in a kind of perpetual starvation, and it was in grim earnest that its people in later days picked barberries for preserves and bayberries for candles. The young men who settled there shortly after the last division of common lands in 1719 were sons of substantial citizens of the old first parish and of Annisquam, but their lands were barren, and the course of travel down the Cape swung to the west of the old back roads, so that by the end of the century some threescore widows of men killed in the Revolution or lost at sea, living alone with their dogs, were nearly all that were left in the hamlet. They gathered peat and dry cow dung for fuel; with produce and coppers they traded for the barest necessities. The only wonder is that no others emulated Abraham

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### *Captains and Merchants — and Others*

Wharf when he "sought relief from poverty, and the accumulated sorrows of more than threescore and ten years, by putting an end to his existence, under a rock, where he had crawled for that purpose." Such squalor and penury oppressed the old men and women of Dogtown, so little excitement or color or even plain devilishness illuminated their dull, claw-fingered lives, that the interest which visitors on Cape Ann to-day manifest in them is bitterly ironical, if indeed it does not cross the line that divides the ludicrous from the grim. Yet peripatetic romancers, all unconscious of the sardonic humor of their search, still persist in hunting for those poor, half-obliterated house sites!

In the trade with Surinam a happier side of the old Gloucester days is pictured. Square-rigged and fore-and-aft vessels, sailing from the Harbor and from Annisquam, carried south cargoes of fish and vegetables and New England manufactures, and brought home fruit and coffee and cocoa and molasses and sugar and wine. There was work along the wharves for carpenters and shipsmiths and riggers and sailmakers and stevedores, and the custom house was a livelier place than it is to-day.

Not long ago a contributor to the little Gloucester daily paper, recalling to mind the Surinam traders that he remembered seeing and visiting



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

as a boy, wrote of the plantains and tamarinds and pickled limes that they brought, and of the joy of spending afternoons on the wharves and going down into the cabins and staterooms of the "Surinamers."

The story of one Gloucester venture in the Surinam trade reveals that happy blend of shrewdness and good fortune which made so many New England fortunes in the early nineteenth century. The owners of the vessel built a big icehouse on board her and packed on the ice five hundred dozen cabbages and sent her to Parimaribo, where the soil is so rich and the climate so hot that cabbages, refusing every encouragement to head up, waste their energies in a riot of huge leaves. The good citizens of Surinam eagerly bought the cabbages at forty cents apiece and boiled them in milk; and until they had exhausted the cargo and had eaten the last leaf, the fragrance of cabbage dinners delighted the epicurean noses of the land. The captain gave away the ice to his customers, who used it to cool their drinks, and the cargo thus became doubly memorable in the annals of that country. It is a pity that the Gloucester merchant who sent it south did not appreciate his opportunity to outdo the Tudors of Boston by thus initiating a double trade in cabbages and ice.

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*FROM THE COAL POCKETS*

TO WHOM  
IT MAY COME

## VII

### FROM ANNISQUAM TO FOLLY COVE

CERTAIN of the various communities that have grown up on Cape Ann at a greater or less distance from the Harbor, which has become the city proper of Gloucester, command attention because they are in many ways set apart from the municipality to which they are connected by law, and because they have acquired, as villages, entities so distinctly their own as to deserve the name of personalities. Their position is anomalous, because they lack the rugged independence of village government. They muster relatively so few votes that in municipal politics their lives are one long scramble for representation and reasonable influence at the City Hall, and in recent years hard times and changing economic conditions have weakened various of their once thriving industries. But they are strongholds of the "summer business" on the Cape, and the growing value of their real estate has outstripped the most avaricious dreams of the old-timers who pastured sheep and cattle on the hills where sum-

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

to Havre with a cargo of cotton — and for aught that I have found recorded to the contrary, to larger vessels than the *Gloucester*.

The stories of Annisquam shipmasters are many. As notable a sea story as old Annisquam affords goes back to August 26, 1780, when Captain Isaac Elwell and his crew, who had sailed from the West Indies for Cape Ann on November 25, 1779, finally arrived in their home port. They had had for a time remarkably good weather, but about January 1, 1780, when they were within a few miles of the Cape, the wind suddenly shifted to the north, and losing their rudder, they were blown off the coast “and driven hither and thither on ye ocean till ye second day of August last, when they were taken off ye wreck by Capt. Henry Neal, on his passage from Dartmouth in England, bound for New York.”

Think of it! For six months and seventeen days, without bread or water, they were blown rudderless about the sea. They were eventually forced to live on parched cocoa and West Indian corn burned down; they suffered intensely for lack of water; and when fortune smiled on them, they ate raw fish. “In their greatest extremity a large fish providentially leaped on ye vessel’s deck, which served them for several days.” It is almost the story of the Ancient Mariner in the life.

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### *From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

On August 10, near Long Island, Captain Neal gave Elwell a boat, in which the Annisquam skipper and the survivors of his crew came home along the shore.

When a messenger reached the Harbor with news that the lost captain and his men had landed in 'Squam, his word was doubted. There had been memorial services for the captain in church, and the court was settling his estate. But once the town realized the truth, it made a holiday in honor of their safe return; and Captain Elwell, who lived to the goodly age of eighty-nine years, never went to sea again. "My father tells me that when the land at Annisquam was seen by Captain Elwell and the survivors of his crew," says an Annisquam writer, "Samuel Edmundson, who was very feeble and lying in the boat, was raised up, and when told that was Annisquam, his home, he was so completely overcome with joy, that he fell back in the boat and died in a short time; also that he [the narrator's father] had often heard Captain Elwell, who was his grandfather, say that no one who had suffered hunger and thirst as they did for so many months could waste a crumb of bread or a drop of water."

The same Captain Oliver Lane who commanded the *Gloucester* on her maiden voyage took a cargo

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

of small, finished houses to California in 1849 and lost money on the venture, but took next a cargo of rough lumber and made a good profit. He built up his own business in the China trade, but when the Civil War broke out and Confederate cruisers were raiding Northern commerce he refused to fly a neutral flag to suit the policies of the moment and lost his China business as the price of his blunt honesty. It was his ambition to have the best ship out of Boston and "the whole doing of it", and he got the Liverpool packet, *Neptune's Favorite*, built at Medford in 1864, which was finished in rosewood and carried a figurehead as beautiful as any figurehead of the day.

As a harbor of refuge Annisquam held for many years a notable reputation. When a fishing shallop with all on board had gone down in a gale in Ipswich Bay, the minister at the Isles of Shoals, "anxious to improve this melancholy event for the awakening of those of his hearers who were exposed to the like disaster", called from the pulpit:

"Supposing, my brethren, any of you should be taken short in the bay, in a northeast storm, your hearts trembling with fear, and nothing but death before you. Whither would your thoughts turn? What would you do?"

"What would I do?" an old fisherman replied,

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*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

with a promptness and a point-of-view somewhat disconcerting to the good pastor. "Why, I should hoist the foresail and scud away for 'Squam."

There was an old woman in the village long ago, Granny Haraden by name, and the traditions of the village describe her as going down to the lighthouse, sweeping the road on her way and saying, as she threw the stones aside, "Going to turn to gold ! Going to turn to gold !" A very old lady in Annisquam tells the story that she got long ago from another old lady who remembered that when she herself was a child in bed with her grandmother, a noise downstairs had frightened her. "It 's only Granny Haraden getting her nipper," the grandmother had said, and she had bothered no more about it. The tale of that old woman prowling about the village by night in search of a comfortable sleeping draught from whatever house she chose to visit, has lived thus more than a hundred years. They say that when the quarries began, not a few people regarded Granny Haraden's scatter-witted refrain, "going to turn to gold ; going to turn to gold", as pure prophecy, and the old woman herself as little better than a witch.

The quarries have played no small part in the business of the village, although to-day only the old pits are left. When Messrs. Bent and Wood



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

were working the quarry on Walnut Street in the 'twenties and 'thirties of the last century, they supplied the stone for the dry dock in the Charlestown Navy Yard. At about that time, too, Thomas L. Pulcifer bought out the one blacksmith in the village, Charles Roberts, and forged the ironwork for the vessels built in Annisquam, even to the anchors, which in those days they wrought by hand.

During the pastorates of John Wyeth and Obadiah Parsons, toward the end of the first half-century of its history, the village church experienced stormy days. Wyeth came in 1765 to an already divided church, for part of the parish had opposed calling him, and he seems to have had too much youthful combativeness — he was twenty-three years old — to win them over. Some of his parishioners whitewashed the minister's horse, and a miscreant, unknown to fame save by his deed, fired a musket ball into the parsonage. After three exciting years, Wyeth, dismissed by his parishioners, brought suit against the parish "to recover pay for his probationary preaching", and retired from the ministry to practice law in Cambridge.

Four years later, the church called the Reverend Obadiah Parsons, who began his ministry under more favorable circumstances than the luckless Wyeth. But eventually a young woman in

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### *From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

the parish bore a child of unknown paternity and charged the minister with being the father. The affair made a tremendous stir in its day, and the records of the ecclesiastical council that convened at the parsonage to try the case, which are still kept in the little safe in the meetinghouse at the head of the cove, show spirited charges and denials. The council declared conclusively that the charges were not proved, and although feeling in the third parish had become so bitter that there was "great alienation of affection" there, Mr. Parsons, going from Annisquam to the Second Parish in Beverly, continued in the ministry and later served for eight years as minister of the First Church of Lynn.

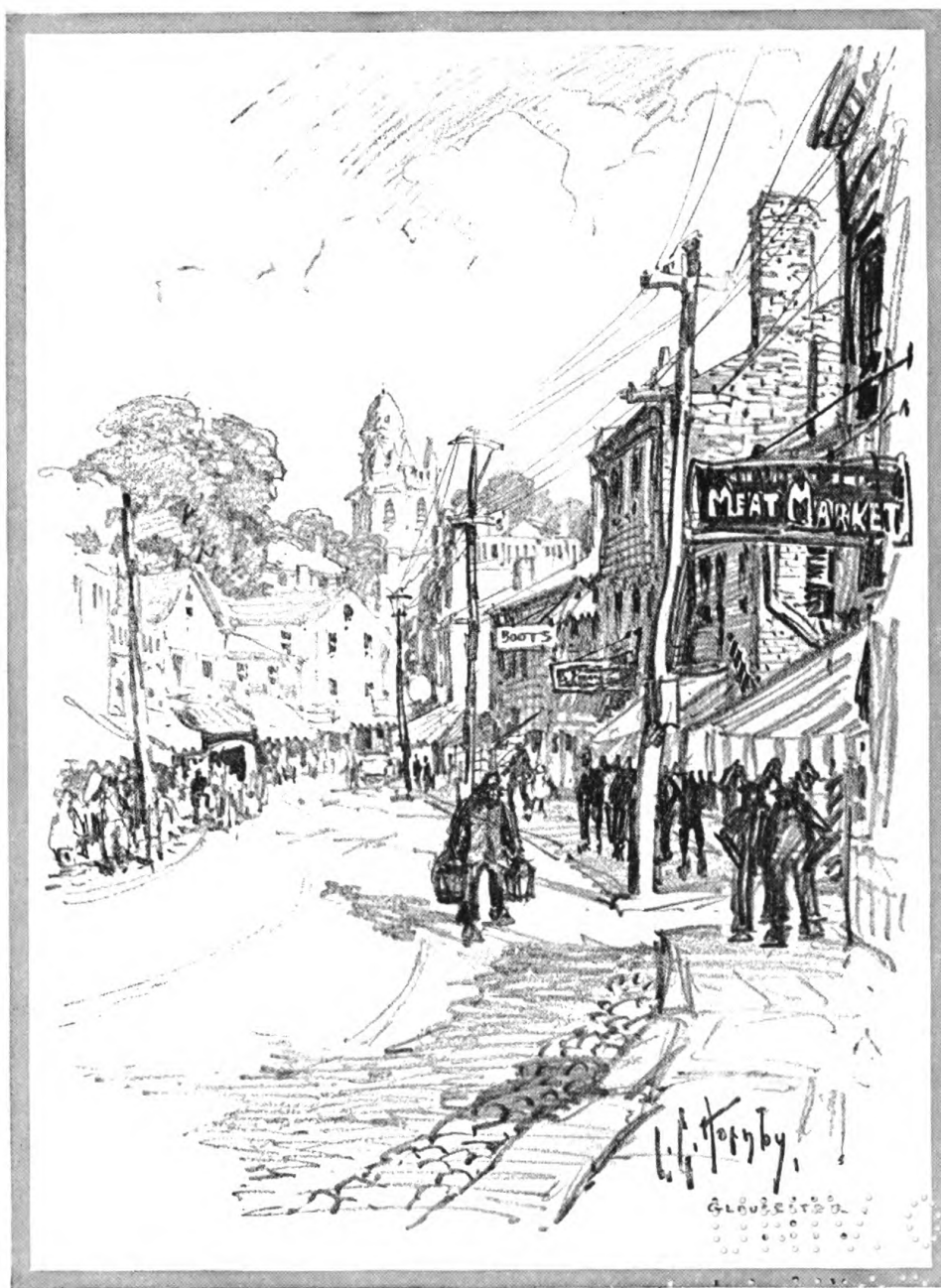
For many years thereafter no minister was regularly installed in the village church, but now and then preachers visited the village and conducted occasional services, until in 1804 the church called the man who has probably left his personality more deeply marked on the village of Annisquam than any one else who has ever lived there. His name was Ezra Leonard, but he is known to this day by the affectionate title of Father Leonard, and so strong was his hold on the parish that when in 1811 he became a Universalist, virtually the whole church joined him in deserting the "ortho-

### *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

dox" creed and rallying to the new one. The village school and the leading street in the village bear his name; and when, nearly ninety years after his death, a village club was formed, it called itself the Leonard Club.

A personality that can hold the affections of a community for more than a hundred years must be remarkable, and the more so when it is the personality of a man whose achievements, judged by wider and more worldly standards, were in no way notable. Father Leonard was a type of the better New England pastor in his day — perhaps in our day, too, although it is a human failing to regard the past as the only golden age — and the tales of his simple generosity and unaffected humanness that have come down in village history reveal a very lovable man whose virtues must sometimes have driven his good wife nearly to distraction. Consider her probable emotions when, after hunting high and low for the bellows, she elicited from her husband a mild rebuke for her impatience. "Oh, yes, wife, I gave them to Widow Werring, for on calling there, I noticed her wood was green; and ours being dry, I thought she needed them more than we did." Or when her benevolent husband, returning from the Harbor with a new pair of shoes he had bought for her, gave

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*MAIN STREET, GLOUCESTER*

THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

them to a barefooted old woman he met on the road.

In these particular tales, it may be observed, there is suggested the form of generosity that led Artemus Ward to offer all his wife's relatives for the army. But there was no hypocrisy or selfishness in Father Leonard's honest heart. In the old Ricker house where he lived (and where unlucky Obadiah Parsons had lived before him), he taught navigation to many of the village boys who afterwards became sea captains. He preached the last sermon in the old meetinghouse, which had been built in 1728 and was torn down in 1830. He continued his ministry in the new meetinghouse, which still stands, although the parish, in a moment of zeal for modern improvements, has altered the interior. In short, he brought his church to material and spiritual prosperity equal to the industrial prosperity of the community, and on a Sunday morning in April, 1832, at the age of fifty-seven years, he died, leaving "the memory of his untiring devotion to his people, and of his kind disposition and overflowing charity."

The coves of Annisquam have curious histories of their own. To Goose Cove, in the days before the milldam was built, the fishermen of Sandy Bay would bring their boats when a northeast

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

storm threatened their own exposed shore, and return home by the path across the Cape. In 1813 the British entered Lobster Cove, and having destroyed several vessels, spared the sloop *Federalist* in honor of her name, which she took from the political party that had opposed the war.

To-day, on the streets of the village, various old buildings link the past and present. At the corner of Curve Street and Leonard Street is the old tavern, which the elder Joseph Haraden built more than two hundred and twenty years ago. A swinging sign, bearing the picture of a huge glass of beer and surmounted by a gilt ball, used to hang from the west corner of the building; and in fulfillment of its promise, the visitor found, on entering, a well-equipped barroom of the good old-fashioned type. In that house the Haradens kept their black slaves, Lem and Cato, whose ingenious career culminated in stealing a pair of fowls, which they left hidden under a board in the attic floor until the smell became so objectionable as to start a general hunt.

In the George Dennison house on Curve Street, where William Babson lived a century and a half ago, there used to be a cage in the kitchen, in which at times they confined Babson's insane daughter. How strangely are tragedy and comedy mingled

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*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

in the tales of old houses! The other story of the house, that has survived, concerns a wedding when candles stood in every window, from cellar to garret, and the guests came "down the river in gondolas."

Among the Annisquam buildings that have become village landmarks is an ancient fishhouse popularly called "the old custom house." I am told that many years ago, when summer visitors were fewer than they now are, a group of them childishly and inconsiderately amused themselves at the expense of an old man who was quite shrewd enough to see through their nonsense. He said nothing to show his resentment until, as they were leaving, they asked what that particular old building was, to which he irritably replied, "the old custom house." Their own simplicity so far exceeded their victim's that they accepted without question his facetious retort; and the name, "old custom house", has endured from that day to this as a monument to the old man's triumph in the skirmish of wits.

In the old days the keeper of the lighthouse and his large family lived in a single room, kept a cow, and conducted their affairs with almost incredible simplicity. It is told of them that their kitchen gear consisted of a milkpan, an iron pot, and a



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

dozen wooden spoons. They milked the cow into the pan, boiled hominy in the pot and poured it into the milk, and taking each one a wooden spoon, fell to with a will. Once when the minister was calling, one of the boys attempted to step across the pan and by fearful blunder put his bare foot squarely into the hominy and milk. Not a whit disturbed, the rest rapped him sharply on the leg with their spoons and continued eating as eagerly as before. They moved the old one-room house away in 1850, and built the house that still stands there, and twenty-odd years ago they built the present lighthouse.

Like every place of its size, the world over, Annisquam has had among its residents men and women whose eccentricities have lived long after them. There was, for example, the keeper of a village livery stable who used to drive a spirited stallion around town. There are people in Annisquam who remember him as yelling "Giddap! Giddap!" and lashing the beast with the whip, while his third wife clung to his arm and shrieked with terror at their wild careering. He it was who dug a well, and laid a blast, and lighted the fuse, and was scrambling out when the ladder broke. He fell to the bottom of the well. He grabbed for the fuse, but it had burned down so low that he

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

could not put it out. So far as any human eye could see, he was on the point of departing for the throne of judgment; but unmoved by sentimental weaknesses, he expressed his emotions in a burst of profanity so peculiarly loud and wicked that the neighbors came to their doors to see what he was swearing at. And then, as if in divine irony, the blast failed to go off!

It is still told in the village that in the eightieth year of the life of another venerable and thrifty citizen, when a grain wagon ran off 'Squam bridge and lay in the water below, the aged man repeatedly dived to recover the grain, of which a part, by the laws of salvage, became his own. There is an almost Homeric quality in his feat. Think of that old Laertes, stripped to the buff and plunging like a schoolboy! But in no way conscious of having exhibited an epic enterprise the ancient hero filled his boat so full of grain sacks that it sank and he had to do the work all over again, and quietly returned to his spry walks through the village in search of the cigar butts that he ground up to smoke in his pipe.

One must take care, though, not to misjudge by such tales the general character of a community, and Annisquam, which, as one old lady remarked, "is kind o'pretty when you get used to it", has

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

never lost the dignity and charm of its earlier years. Odd people and odd ways are easiest remembered, and they lend humor to the story of a town; but they play, after all, a very small part in its affairs, and Annisquam is above all else a good place to live in. It has kept the substantial and independent qualities of its old seafaring days. In the activities of the Village Hall Association and the Leonard Club it finds, during the winter when fewer outside influences affect the course of village life, an expression of social and mental interests broader and stronger by far than those of most communities of its size, and in the summer its activities are many times more various.

If you go from the village of Annisquam past the head of the cove and the meetinghouse and turn to the right up Revere Street over old "Samp Porridge Hill", you will find, on the eastern side of the street by the old tan pit at "Mt. Hungar", the site of the house where Jesse Saville lived when the mob seized him and dragged him to the Harbor to pay him for his activities as revenue officer. From that house three sons went to sea and were lost. John Saville, who shipped before the mast when he was fourteen years old, was captured by a British frigate and taken to England, whence he never returned. Oliver Saville sailed for India

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

and died of smallpox at sea. David Saville went down in the ship *Winthrop and Mary*.

If you push on along Revere Street, to the north of Mt. Hungar, you will come, in an open field, to the old Dennison house. They describe old Isaac Dennison — he was the second Isaac to occupy the house and a veteran of the Revolutionary War — as a stout man who drove around the village in an old-fashioned, yellow-bottomed chaise. There is a rhyme about Isaac and his family, written long ago by some village poetaster :

Old Uncle Isaac and his wife Moll,  
Darn-needle Joe and great-limb Poll,  
Leather-breeched Isaac and white-headed Will,  
All lived under Nathan's Hill.

Molly put on her calico gown,  
Traipsed the neighborhood round and round,  
Telling tales and getting news,  
And wearing out old Isaac's shoes.

In the west when the sun sank low,  
Molly thought it time to go.  
With a cup of tea and a halibut fin,  
Then Molly traipsed home again.

Isaac Dennison died in 1841, at the goodly age of fourscore years.

If you return to Washington Street and turn to the right toward Bay View, you will come, shortly, to the house where Josiah Lane lived in

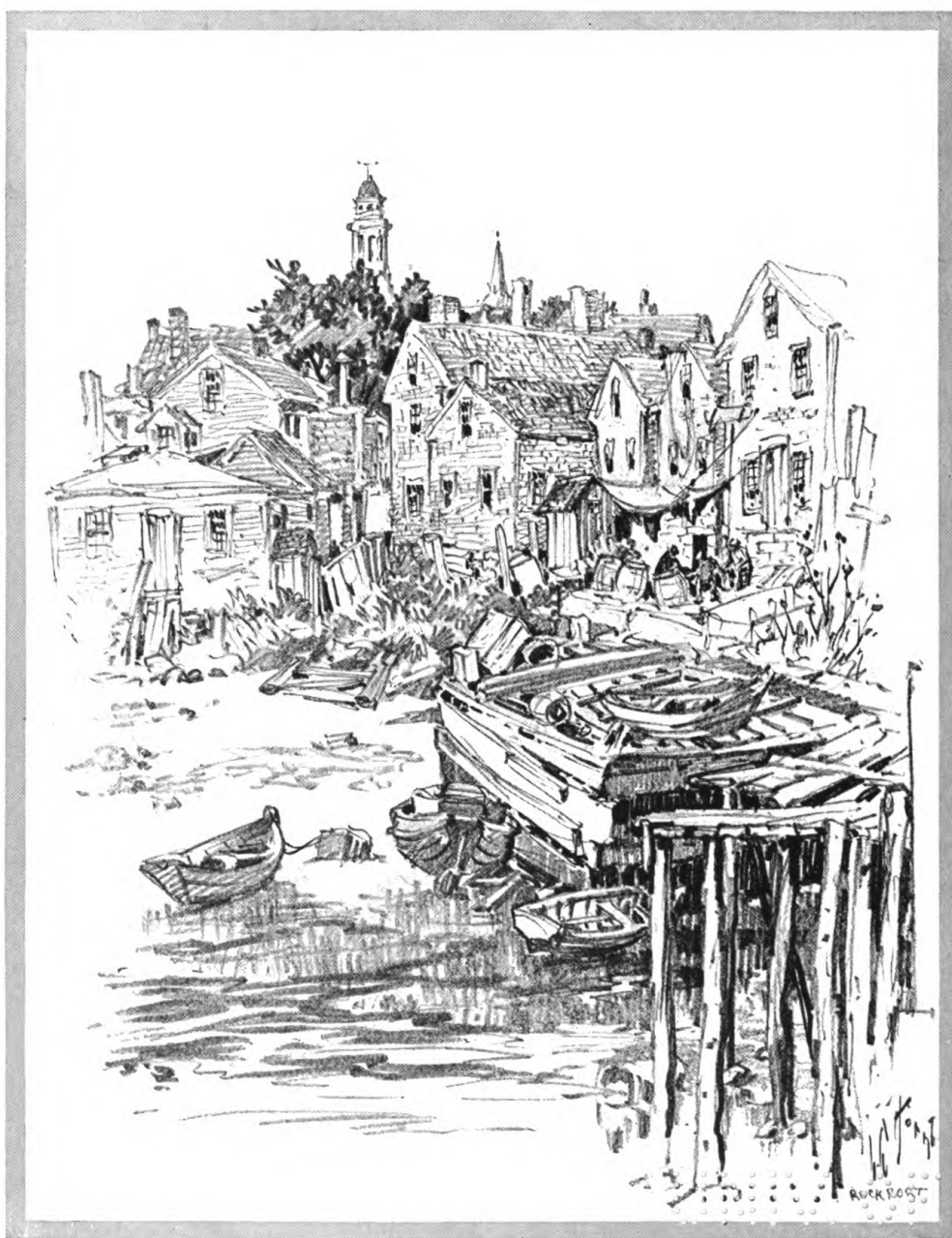
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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

the eighteenth century. Bay View is a quiet place where the highway and the lanes that ramble in from the pastures converge upon the granite works and the old Hogskin Cove (a name that parallels Bearskin Neck at Sandy Bay, but that has degenerated, as time has passed, into the less distinctive Hodgkins Cove), and there is nothing in the appearance of the house to suggest old wars and adventures at sea. But Francis Lane, the son of Josiah, fought in the battle of Bunker Hill, sailed in a privateer, made voyages to the East Indies and to the West Indies, and was once wrecked on Greenland and forced to spend the winter in the Arctic. He is said to have been "a slight built man with blue eyes and light hair" — there was nothing about him of the hard-handed old sea dog — and he eventually moved to Maine, where he died in 1829.

There is no pretense about Bay View, and although it has had among its residents until comparatively recent years two gentlemen of marked distinction, it bears its honors with becoming modesty.

"Foxy" Daggett, the first distinguished gentleman — I have never heard his real name — succeeded in making a leather mainspring for his musket; and as if that were not enough for any



*ROCKPORT FROM THE WATERFRONT*

THE  
MUSEUM

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

ordinary mortal to achieve, he proved by long and intensely practical tests that a man can live on a diet of corn meal and rum. The exact form of the leather mainspring seems to be lost to the world, for tradition has preserved the mere fact, rather than the manner, of his unusual contrivance. But they say he lived in an old house opposite the present Bay View fire station, where the dust was an inch thick on the furniture and trawl tubs were piled up all around his bed.

Nathan Norwood, the second distinguished gentleman, lives in the annals of his native place as the man who could not cross a line. Except for that single delusion he seems to have been sane enough. The thing savors of medieval superstition, of seventeenth century witchcraft, yet I myself know a dozen men who have known the old fellow well, and they say that little boys, by drawing a line across the road with a stick, would stop the old man short and keep him standing for an hour and swearing in futile rage. A woman up in Riverdale made such capital of his weakness that whenever he had to pass her house with a yoke of oxen, she would exact from him a sum of money as the price for not drawing a line in front of him and thus keeping him from going to Gloucester. Even when he came to the door of his own home,



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

he would be, for a time, unable to cross the threshold, and would back away and walk around, muttering to himself, until he had mustered up his courage to make a sudden dash and a flying leap, in a sort of hazy conviction that thus he caught his malignant familiar off its guard.

There was a haunted house in Bay View, too, its stoned windows and battered walls appearing gloomy enough by night; but a sea captain with more common sense than his neighbors bought it, and carpenters and painters laid the ghost, and people have lived in it ever since with no more than the usual share of human and unhuman mishaps.

A particular family, whose name you must learn for yourself, since of those who bear the name enough to ride me on a rail are still alive, was so peculiarly susceptible to ghostly presences that it is said an odd noise from the haunted house or from the ancient burying ground beyond would send any one of them off like a scared rabbit for home. I like, as I go walking in the evening under the maples by the stone wall, to think of some ancient of a generation ago scuttling along at prodigious speed, up the road past my own house, to outstrip —

“Black Azrael and Ariel and Ammon on the wing.”

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### *From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

As for dramatic incidents, those intense situations that call for more courage than a man in his cooler moments believes he possesses, we have our full share of them, as does every other community, and most of them are unrecorded and unknown.

One that I do know I want to tell here, because it happened in this neighborhood. A few years ago the city marshal came home to Bay View one night, completely tired out. He had flung himself down in his chair, when some one pounded fiercely on the door and burst into the house.

"For God's sake, marshal!" the man cried, "come down to Lanesville quick! A man's murdering his wife."

The marshal got up from his chair and ran out of the house just in time to swing aboard a passing trolley car. Seven minutes later he left the car, walked up to a door, and knocked.

The man opened the door and the marshal walked in. The place was in disorder. Children, frightened nearly out of their wits, peered from under tables and from dark corners. The woman stood in the middle of the room. On a table lay a butcher knife.

The marshal stepped between the man and the knife and told the woman to get out.

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

The man, snarling like a beast,—that is no idle figure of speech,—reached behind the door and brought out a .45 caliber repeating rifle.

“I feex you pretty goddam quick!” he yelled.

If you object to profanity in print, remember that I am telling, exactly as it happened, a story of real men in a moment when their blood was hot and their speech was charged with emotion.

That Gloucester marshal looked into the black muzzle of the gun and heard the sharp click that told him it was cocked; looked into the gun, but never turned a hair, though the sweat started on his forehead. In his pocket, out of sight, he held an automatic pistol, and his finger was on the trigger. He was determined not to fire the first shot; but equally he was determined to shoot the man dead if he himself did not fall at the first shot.

Knowing that the fellow was like an animal,—turn a hair and he’d be at you!—the marshal looked him in the eye and said, deliberately, “Jussalias, you God-damned fool, put that gun down.”

For seconds they stood thus, then the man collapsed,—dropped on his knees, thrust out the gun, butt foremost, at the marshal, and blubbered like a baby.

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*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

Very likely you will say that this is a commonplace incident; that it might have happened anywhere; that such things are happening all the time the world over. True enough, perhaps; but it required no less courage, for all that. And this particular marshal is the son of a Gloucester sea captain, and was born and reared in Gloucester where the thing happened. Surely, then, it has its place in Gloucester history.

It is a short walk from Bay View to Lanesville. At Hogskin — or Hodgkins — Cove you pass the sheds of the Rockport Granite Company; at Plum Cove you pass the spot where Abraham Robinson, grandson of the first Abraham Robinson of Cape Ann, and himself the third of his name in Gloucester, had “a grant of four acres of land on the southwest side of the brook” in 1706.

The next little harbor is Lane's Cove, which used to be the center of an uncommonly prosperous community, as the granite breakwater and the ordered piles of broken stone still bear witness. The fish houses on the shore of the cove are very old, and fishermen have used them continuously from an early period in American history. The sleepy little town of to-day is strongly in contrast, though, to the lively village that the old men tell about, when the quarries were all working, and

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

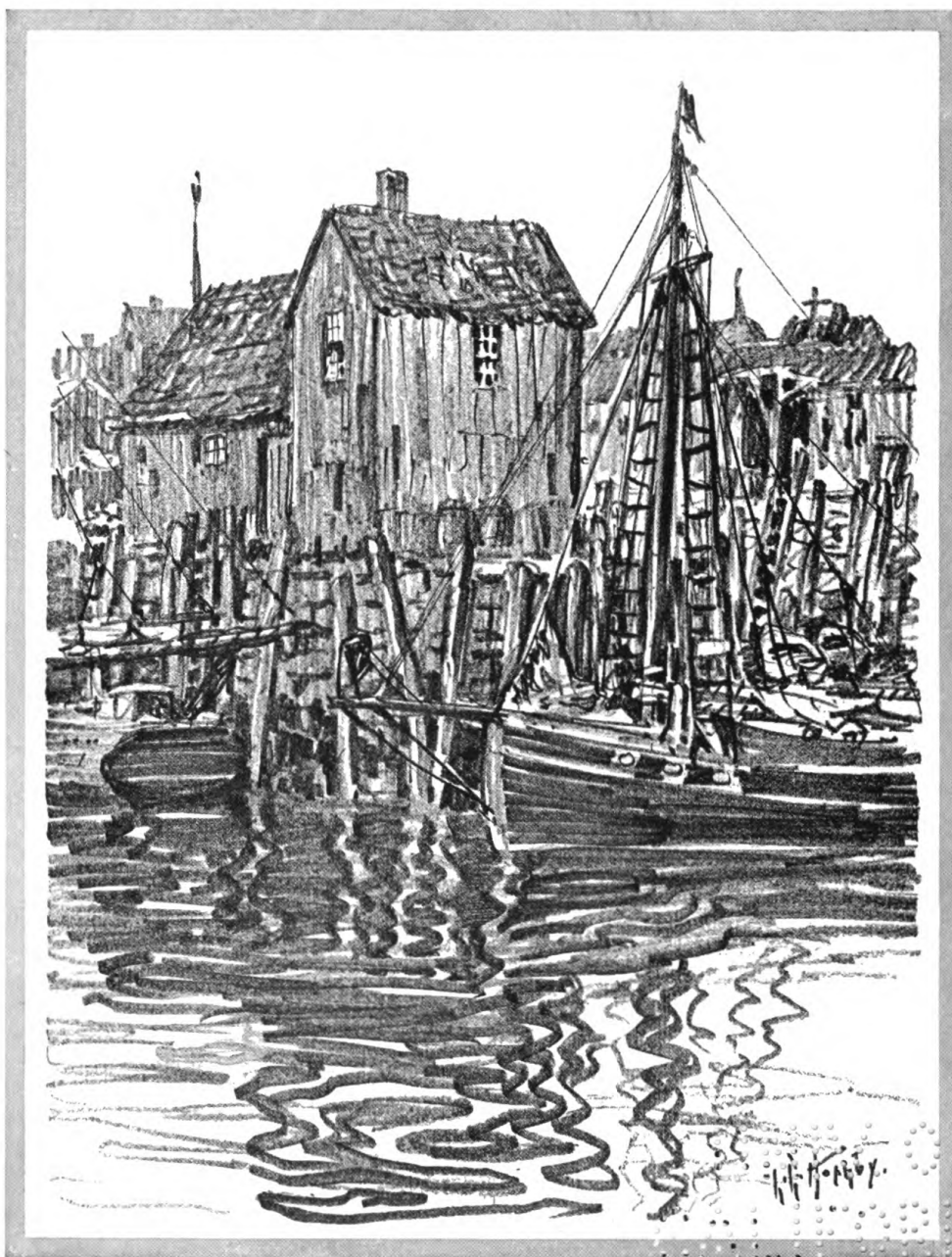
a single grocer would keep five delivery carts on the road "with all the work they could jump under."

It was in those good old days of Lanesville, which were a little more riotous than the present, that the village constable was attending a dance, when at a preconcerted moment some one put out the light and a couple of young men clapped the empty wood basket over the constable's head so hard that his head burst through the bottom. In fury he roared, "As an officer of the law I demand ye take it off."

There are men in Lanesville who live still in a world of the past. I found one of them in his store at the end of a winter day, where I went to try to persuade him to play chess. I am told that he made money in the old days of the town and that he has no real need to continue keeping his store, where he now does almost no business at all; but his whole life has centered on the one interest and the habit of keeping store is too strong to be broken.

Except for the faint light of the oil lamps from far back inside it, the store, with its dingy panes and broad, overhanging porch roof, might have been closed and forgotten for twenty years.

I entered. There were two lighted lamps in the big room, — one, dimly burning, which hung over



*FISH WHARF, ROCKPORT*

Digitized by Google

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

a counter on the left, a second, turned higher, which stood on a table beside the stove. Beside the table sat a man with a neat, gray moustache. His chair was tilted back and his feet were raised. He lifted his eyes from the magazine he was reading and looked at me with an oddly impersonal curiosity.

I addressed him by name and he nodded.

When I said I had heard he played chess, he asked me where I lived.

I told him, giving him the old name my house bears hereabouts, and a reminiscent look came into his eyes.

"I used to play," he said, "but I haven't played for fifteen years. I don't know as I could more'n remember the moves. The men I used to play with are all dead now."

I felt out of place in that big old store with the oil lamps and the deep shadows and the old store-keeper, yet he spoke with a kindly courtesy, as if I had not intruded unwarrantably. I leaned on the counter and we fell into conversation.

Suddenly he broke off and asked, "How long have you played chess?"

"I began about when you stopped," I replied.

A boy came in and bought some matches. The old man did not sit down again after waiting on him.



*Gloucester by Land and Sea*

"Frank Amazeen up to the Folly plays chess," he said reflectively. "He keeps an ice-cream parlor over to Rockport summers, but he must be home now with plenty of spare time on his hands. He might favor you." He got out the directory and looked up Frank Amazeen's address, which I wrote down. Turning, he asked in his direct way, "Are you a good player?"

I hesitated at that always awkward question, but finally replied that I was an ordinary player, — poor rather than good, but not much worse than the average.

"That's about the way I was," he said. "But I haven't played for more than fifteen years — maybe twenty. I used to play with the old doctor and Frank Jewett. They was the only ones that ever played 'round here."

I saw that he was hesitating. He seemed interested.

"If you'd try it, I could bring a board and men some day," I suggested.

"I have a board and men right here. They have n't been used for near twenty years." He looked beyond me. "I don't have much time to play. I'm an old man now. I come down here noons and go home at seven o'clock in the evening, and don't go out anywhere. There's not a good

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

chance to play here. I don't do much business, but some one's likely to interrupt the game." His air of reminiscence deepened. "The old doctor learned me to play. I don't know where Frank Jewett picked his up. I haven't played since they died."

When he looked round the store, my eyes followed his. I had stepped into a scene out of lives that had ended long ago. The big room with its counters and show cases was a place of shadows. The dim light made it seem browner, older, unreal.

I had trespassed on an old man's memories; I stood bodily, an alien, in a lost world. That man was living in the past. His face showed it. For the moment I stood in a borderland between two existences.

"I don't think I want to begin again," he said.

I was strangely relieved. It would have been downright profane to play chess with that man in that place.

Beyond Lane's Cove the road divides, but after running for a time almost parallel, the two branches once more unite and either branch leads to the Folly and Halibut Point. Langsford Street, to the left, gives the better view of the sea; Washington Street, to the right, runs past the old quarry pits and is perhaps a trifle more direct.

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

I have heard various explanations of the name of Folly Cove — Gallop's, or Gallupe's Folly, it is sometimes called — but many of them are far-fetched. The most plausible is that a pilot or captain, hundreds of years ago, mistaking the mouth of the cove for the approach to a safe harbor, drove his vessel on the rocks. It is a wild place on a winter night, with a northerly gale blowing; and the grout piles and gaunt derricks, silhouetted against the northeast sky, give it an appearance of waste and desolation and unspeakable loneliness.

Halibut Point, the northern tip of the Cape, was written on some of the old maps and charts, I am told, — of this I have no first-hand knowledge, — as Haul-About Point, or the point where vessels hauled about to reach for Annisquam Harbor. From the grout piles that thrust out high above the tide mark one can look to east and north and see only water as far as the eye can reach. From southwest to northwest the low blue line of land stretches past Ipswich and Plum Island and Newburyport and the New Hampshire beaches, and is lost in the sea to reappear again as the island-blue nubble of Agamenticus in Maine. Three States are visible on a clear day, and almost always sails; and at nightfall, when the lamps are lighting, it is possible to distinguish a long line of scattered

*From Annisquam to Folly Cove*

towns and summer colonies by the nebulous glow of lights clustered on the shore.

I would rather walk to Halibut Point at the end of a summer afternoon than to any other place on Cape Ann. Sitting on one of the great heaps of waste stone, you can see against the sky the network of cables supporting the deserted derricks, or watch the lights of the big hotels across the bay, or look down on the flat rocky shore, deserted now to herons and gulls, where years ago there was built, at the expense of many trusting and innocent investors, a plant to extract gold from sea water; and thus you can meditate comfortably upon the labors and vanities and credulities of man.

## VIII

### FROM SANDY BAY TO EASTERN POINT

IN 1695 John Babson acquired a tract of land at Straitsmouth Point "to sett up fishing upon", which eventually led to the settlement at Sandy Bay that has become the town of Rockport. The bay itself comprises the bodies of water bounded on the north by Andrews Point, which Hoop Pole Cove separates from Halibut Point, and on the southeast by Straitsmouth Island. It includes Pigeon Cove, the docks of the Rockport Granite Company, the cove by the beach that the village streets skirt, and the uncommonly quaint little harbor formed by Bearskin Neck and its tiny breakwater. To seaward lies the greater, still unfinished, breakwater, that people on the Cape refer to casually as a monument to political graft — and so, indeed, it is, if half the tales that are told of it are true! — which now forms the outer boundary of the bay.

It is debatable whether John Babson ever actually lived on his grant of land, "the first separate

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*PIGEON HILL — FROM BEAR SKIN NECK*

TO THE  
ARTISTS

*From Sandy Bay to Eastern Point*

grant" at Sandy Bay, although there was for many years an empty cellar hole upon the place to mark the site of a house; but some one of the Babsons gained great fame by killing a bear, single-handed, with only a knife; and he skinned the beast and dried its hide on a rock at the end of the point that has born the name of Bearskin Neck from that day to this.

About the beginning of the eighteenth century Richard Tarr and John Pool were living as near neighbors in the woods by the bay; and within a comparatively short time certain temporary residents, Peter Emons and Peter Bennet by name, settled in that end of the town, presumably to cut wood and haul it to the shore, which was for many years a thriving business thereabouts. Thus the remote community slowly grew. The Davises and the Bakers, John Wonson, Edmund Grover and his sons Nehemiah and Ebenezer, the Clarks, the Kendalls, the Withams, the Dressers, the Rows, and the Cooks had joined the little group of first settlers before 1740; and John Row was keeping a tavern at an early period in the history of the community.

There is an old house on the road to Halibut Point and Folly Cove, which people say two men from Salem built in 1692 as a hiding place for their



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

mother, who was accused of witchcraft. The story is old and generally accepted; and the statement I have more than once seen in print, that the house was built in 1698, very likely sprang from a single typesetter's blunder.

Another tale of a quite different sort, less romantic but more remarkable, which has come down from the early days of Sandy Bay, concerns a dog owned by Thomas Goss who came from Marblehead about the middle of the eighteenth century. Goss had taken his dog out in a boat on a fishing and hunting expedition, when a gale of wind sprang up and blew the boat to sea. A vessel bound south picked up the lost boat and took the man and his dog to Chesapeake Bay, where the dog disappeared. Unable to find it, Thomas Goss set out upon the long journey north; but when he finally reached home, the dog was there before him. It had reached Sandy Bay, exhausted and half-starved, a little ahead of its master.

The difficulties that the founders of Rockport overcame are typical of those faced by most early New Englanders. In those days they were desperately poor, but in 1725 they got from the town a grant of land for a schoolhouse "to keep a good school in for the godly instruction of children, and teaching of them to read and write good Eng-

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lish.” They got occasional preachers during the winter months, for otherwise they were obliged to take the long walk through the woods to the third parish meetinghouse in Annisquam, and on New Year’s Day, 1754, the Sandy Bay Parish — the fifth in the town — was incorporated. There is a tradition that when the children of Sandy Bay set out on Sunday morning to walk across the Cape to church, they wore their shoes and stockings to the edge of the woods, and there removing them, went barefoot all the way to Annisquam, where on emerging from the woods they again donned their Sunday footgear, and thus bravely clad, walked into church. But the newly incorporated parish built a meetinghouse of its own, and in 1755, having formally organized as a church, called Ebenezer Cleaveland to be its minister.

The meetinghouse stood for half a century, and Ebenezer Cleaveland, the only minister ever formally installed in its pulpit, lived until a month or two after they tore it down.

The story of his pastorate reveals graphically the ups and downs of the community during those fifty years. He had been expelled from Yale for attending a Separatist meeting during a vacation, in company with his father and many men prominent in the church, but so lively was popular in-

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dignation that the college gave him his degree as of his class of 1748. He came to Sandy Bay at a salary of sixty pounds a year — “it is a fact in their history, which their descendants may remember with pleasure as an evidence of their religious character,” says Babson, “that the salary paid to their minister in 1755 was more than four times the amount of their town tax the same year, and more than twice that of their town and province tax the year preceding” — and preached there regularly for twenty years except for three absences as chaplain in the army and occasional services at Annisquam.

As chaplain he went with the army against Ticonderoga in 1758 and with the expedition into Canada in 1759, and in 1765 he spent three months as chaplain at Fort Edward. In 1775, at the end of the first twenty years of his pastorate, his church granted him leave of absence to join the Continental Army as chaplain, and in subsequent years he spent more time away from his parish.

The Revolution played havoc with little Sandy Bay. As I have told in an earlier chapter, there was fighting in the town itself; and members of the parish were killed at battle and lost at sea, and died in foreign prisons and prison ships. When Ebenezer Cleaveland came home, the parish could

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neither pay him the money it owed for past services nor continue his salary in the future. It offered him all it could give — ninety quintals of hake a year — but he was forced to go elsewhere in search of a living and for a short time he served as superintendent of lands at Llandaff, New Hampshire, owned by Dartmouth College.

He presently returned to Sandy Bay and resumed his ministry, left to preach in Amesbury, and in 1797 returned again to spend, in the house that he had built long before, the last eight years of his life.

Such men as Ebenezer Cleaveland, faithful in service, strong in character, and beloved by their people, had much to do in shaping the future of their towns. They contributed more to the strength of the communities of early New England than is now easily perceived, and in tradition and in actual accomplishment their lives are more important in the heritage of their country than the more spectacular achievements of some men who are far more widely known.

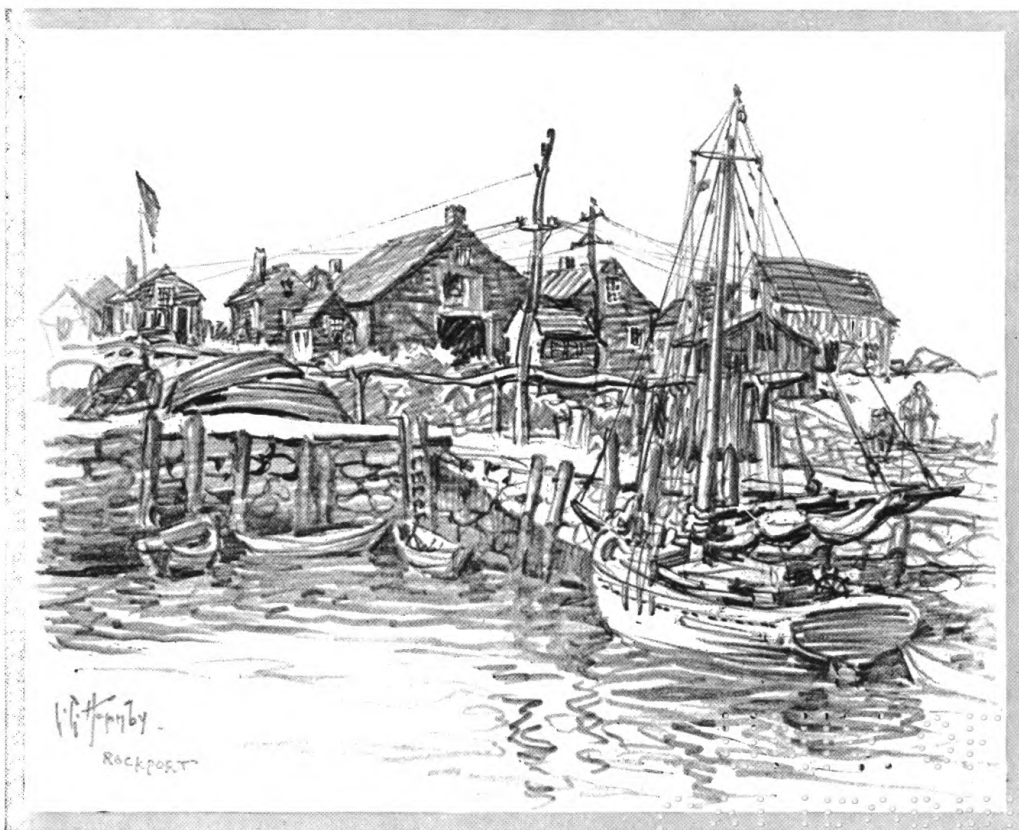
In general Sandy Bay fishermen confined themselves to shore fishing, and Sandy Bay farmers found poor soil for their farming; so prosperity came slowly and only in return for hard work. But the town grew steadily, in spite of every handi-

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cap, and by the end of the century it numbered some eighty houses. In 1811, having thus far in their history been forced in times of storm to take their boats to other harbors, the men of Sandy Bay built the little breakwater at the western point of Bearskin Neck, and eight years later they built the wharf on the opposite shore, which, with the breakwater, formed a tiny haven sheltered from every wind. In 1824 they began the quarries. In 1825 they established the Sandy Bay post-office. In 1836 the Federal Government began the breakwater at the end of Bearskin Neck, which now, after various vicissitudes in its progress, makes of Long Cove an inclosed harbor. And on February 27, 1840, the community of Sandy Bay, which was separate in interests from the other districts of Gloucester, as well as inconveniently remote, was incorporated as the town of Rockport.

The growth of quarrying on the Cape, which began with the assiduous labors of one Joshua Norwood, who cut flat blocks of granite some six feet square and a foot thick, more or less, for mooring stones, and himself progressed so far in the business as to make and sell millstones, did much to change the appearance of the countryside. In 1825 a second quarryman from the outside world followed the first, who had come the year before

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*THE FISHING VILLAGE ON BEAR SKIN NECK  
ROCKPORT*

# TO WHAT AMOUNTS

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from Quincy and had leased a ledge for cutting stone; and their activities, and those of others who followed their example, spread to Lanesville and Bay View and Annisquam. The granite of Cape Ann has gone the country over, and Gloucester paving blocks have built the paved roads of Cuba. Hundreds of men have found work in the quarries and stone sheds and at one time twenty-five sloops were employed in carrying stone out of Rockport and the coves down on the Cape. More modern forms of transportation have replaced the old stone sloops, but one of the later sloops, the *Albert Baldwin*, Captain William H. Poland, which is said to have carried the largest mainsail that ever sailed out of Gloucester, is lying to-day by a wharf in Annisquam.

Wherever you go, by the paths that wind back and forth on the northern end of the Cape, you will see, as from time to time you leave the woods, lonely derricks against the sky and piles of waste stone, and now and then, in some utterly unexpected place, you will come on a deserted quarry hole with a deep pool of still, green water far below.

The quarries, like the fisheries, have their grim tales. There is the story of a man who was standing by a derrick when the cable parted and the



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broken end whipped off the top of his head. They used to say, too, that a certain doctor on the Cape, who had a reputation for skill in setting broken bones, got his marked ability very naturally from the extensive practice that the quarries afforded him; and there is always present the more insidious side of stone cutting — occupational disease caused by the white dust that fills the air and lies like snow on the men's clothes. But the stone cutters are a good sort, and there are numerous yarns of quite another kind.

They still tell of the day when a blustering, bullying foreman tried one time too many to brow-beat an immense immigrant who had endured the man's attacks so long and so calmly that no one suspected the fierceness that lurked behind his phlegmatic exterior. The moment came at last when the foreman's abuse aroused completely the fellow's slow temper. He leaped upon the foreman, one hand grasping the nape of the neck, the other the slack of his breeches; and lifting him bodily, and holding him out over the edge of the quarry pit with eighty feet of empty air between his victim and the broken stone below, he shook him as a puppy shakes a shoe, and roared, "What you think if I open my hands now? Hey? What you think if I open my hands now?"

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*From Sandy Bay to Eastern Point*

Of curious old tales, Rockport, like every small town, has an abundance to reward the patient explorer of tradition. Near the old Babson farm at the Pigeon Cove end of the village lived for many years that Charles Smith who bore with exceeding ill grace the nickname of "Henry Berry." He was one of those unlucky souls with an irritable and futile temper, which made him the butt of practical jokers from all the country round. They painted weird designs and profane mottoes on his white horse. They fastened a cow in his little store on the wharf at Pigeon Cove. (That time they went to court and paid for the damage.) They nailed his dory to the wharf with long spikes clinched from below. Time and again they would persuade him to play the fiddle or accordion, which he did in a manner all his own; and making a stout line fast to his chair, they would pull it out from under him. They bewildered him, in short, with an ingenuity worthy of a better end, and it is said that some harum-scarum youths actually burned down his house.

At all events the house burned down in the night, and "Henry Berry", rushing out with little more than nothing on, retorted in cutting irony, when they asked him where his clothes were, "My clothes? I have no clothes."

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Some village Milton, inglorious although not  
mute, commemorated the incident in verse :

Henry's house it is no more.  
It caught on fire by the kitchen door.  
A very short time did then elapse,  
When Henry Berry run out in his flaps.

Henry now and then got the better of his tormentors, as on the notable occasion when they raised a ladder to a second-story window to enter his dwelling, which he kept closed against all comers. Discovering the trick, he got the ladder off the ground and hauled it into the window, sawing it into stove-wood lengths, foot by foot, as he did so. But nearly always luck was against him, and the surpassing exploit came when some evil-minded wight one evening painted every window in the house with a thick coating of coal tar and so effectually darkened the interior that Henry stayed in bed two days in the delusion that dawn had not yet broken.

The man's curious turn of mind, which put him at the mercy of practical jokers, expressed itself in all manner of ways. There is a story that once, when he was working on the Babson farm, his boss did not come back to the field as promptly as usual, so Henry marched up to the house and demanded the reason. Mrs. Pike explained that her hus-

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band was taking a short nap after his dinner, at which Henry straightened up with a remark that only he would have made under the circumstances :

“Tell him to get up at once, or I’m through. I won’t countenance such laziness.”

The wharves along Bearskin Neck are pleasant places on which to spend a spring or autumn afternoon. You can hear learned discussions of vessels and politics, of the relative merits of slack-salted pollock and corned hake as a breakfast dish, and of the good and bad characteristics of absent citizens whose morals and idiosyncracies provide an always interesting theme for such verbal clinics.

I once listened for half an hour, as I lay in the sun on the dry chips beside a vessel soon to be launched, to a variety of reasons advanced to explain the persistent bad luck of a certain Rockport fisherman. One of the disputants at last got up. “Oh, hell,” he said, as he walked away in disgust, “if the fish knowed what was on the other end of his line, they’d bite just to see what he looked like.”

Leaving Sandy Bay and following the shore, you pass Whale Cove and Loblolly Cove, Thatcher’s Island and Milk Island, Long Beach, Brier Neck, and Salt Island, and Little Good Harbor Beach, — which is said to mean “a quite bad harbor” —

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and so come to Bass Rocks. The twin lights on "Thacher's Woe" stand as monuments to the wreck of Anthony Thacher and the death of twenty-one men, women, and children. Indeed, there is scarcely a beach or headland on the outer shore, and not a community on all the Cape, that has not seen or suffered from wreck. More than a hundred and twenty-five years ago the ship *Industry*, of Boston, which had sailed in ballast from Portsmouth, England, passed the ledges of Salt Island in a blinding snowstorm and crashed on Little Good Harbor Beach. Every man on board was lost, and Gloucester recovered six bodies and buried them from the first parish church. On a winter day in 1807 the ship *Howard*, bound from Calcutta to Boston, was wrecked on Eastern Point; the master, mate, and two men were lost; the cargo of goods from India was strewn along the shore. There are many such tales, and small wonder! For a longer time than there is any record, the old Cape has thrust its rocky shores against the winter gales of the North Atlantic. The lost vessels range from the tiny sloops of the first settlers to a Dutch man-of-war.

In the old days title to the land around Bass Rocks was held in "cow rights" owned by various people, but in the eighteen-forties a Gloucester

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### *From Sandy Bay to Eastern Point*

merchant, George H. Rogers by name, became convinced that the land had value for other uses and began quietly to buy up the different "cow rights." Thus simply having got possession of all the "harbor pasture", he laid out roads and divided the land into building lots, but died when he was on the eve of completing his project. Others have carried the plan to fulfillment; but the man with the shrewd foresight to perceive the ultimate value of the "cow rights" in a rocky pasture was the real founder of the summer colony at Bass Rocks.

Passing Brace Cove and Niles Pond, roads, now diverging, now meeting again, lead to the tip of Eastern Point, where for so many years the grotesque profile, called by the imaginative "Mother Ann", lay unperceived and unsuspected among the rocks, and back past a long line of summer cottages into the community of East Gloucester.

On Eastern Point Andrew Robinson, the man who built the first schooner, acquired a piece of land the year he became of age, and there he built the house in which he lived whenever he was in Gloucester during the rest of his unusually adventurous life. While still a boy he gained note as a woodsman and hunter. He was an able shipwright. He owned fishing vessels and went himself to the



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

Banks. He led one expedition against the French. He attempted to organize a second, but failed because it made his fellow citizens "quake to think of turning out of their warm beds and from good fires, and be thrust into a naked vessel, where they must lie on the cold, hard ballast, instead of beds, and without fire, excepting some few who might crowd into the cabin." Time and again he matched his wits and courage against the Indian allies of the French.

The story of the first schooner is the best known of all incidents in the life of Andrew Robinson, and perhaps even the best known of all incidents in the history of Gloucester. He built the vessel, and while she was on the stocks, he masted and rigged her after the now familiar plan of schooners. The new sail-plan attracted much attention, but was nameless until the launching. As the vessel slid into the water, some one of the spectators — his name is lost, although his contribution to the language is known wherever English is spoken — called in admiration, "Oh, how she scoons!"

To which Robinson, prompt to seize the new name, replied, "A schooner let her be!"

This old-time Eastern-Pointer's Indian adventures reveal a side of seafaring life in colonial days that was "hair-raising" in an unusually exact

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*"LOBSTERS"*  
*BEAR SKIN NECK, ROCKPORT*

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sense. In 1708 he got a commission from the governor and armed a vessel and sailed from Gloucester for the double purpose of catching fish and hunting Indians. Of the result of his fishing there is no record; but he bagged two Indians, and taking their scalps to Boston, he applied for the bounty of forty pounds a scalp that the General Court had offered in 1703. The Colonial Government for some reason refused him the bounty, but it did give him a special reward of twenty pounds for his "good service." Nor did the incident mark the end of his career as an Indian fighter, for thirteen years later, when the Indians seized several fishing vessels, Captain Robinson again took to the warpath and scored six dead Indians out of the seven in a canoe that he overhauled; and in 1723, he commanded one of two sloops that pursued a band of Indians the French had sent against Canso to take a small fleet of Massachusetts vessels, and again he won a notable victory.

One of the narrowest escapes in the life of this adventurous son of Gloucester occurred when a band of Indians surprised and captured Captain Robinson and his crew of two men, when his sloop was lying in an eastern harbor. They killed Robinson's men and carried off the captain to make a

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holiday of butchering him; but that night they got drunk, and Robinson, watching his chance, pretended to sleep until his half-drunken guard was the only Indian left awake; then he sprang up, killed the guard, and departed to his sloop, which was three miles away. Getting safely on board, he made haste to raise the sail and be off, but at daybreak the Indians were after him again, and the wind was so light they they overhauled him in their canoes.

The triumphant career of Andrew Robinson would have ended there and then, had he not called to mind a trick that has more than once saved the day for American seamen when attacked by naked savages. On board the sloop he had "a large quantity of scupper nails, well known for their peculiar shape; being short and having a sharp point, and a large flat head, with a sharp edge." These he sowed broadcast on the deck, and the Indians, swarming on board with hideous yells, got their feet so full of nails that they could not stand, and floundered about until the resourceful skipper, his own feet protected by stout sole leather, knocked them on the head and threw them overboard. This so appalled their comrades in the canoes that they paddled away as if the devil were after them and spread to the farthest

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campfires of the Abenakis their conviction that the Gloucester captain had a charmed life and a more than human talent for killing Indians.

It is a far cry from the stirring days when Andrew Robinson lived in East Gloucester to the peaceful countryside of which that enthusiastic 'cyclist, John S. Webber, Jr., wrote in his hand-book for "the wheelman tourist and the summer visitor"; and it is a still farther cry to the summer activities of to-day, when artists abound on every hand and ambassadors from Greenwich Village open studios and tea-rooms. There are summer homes on the shore, such as good Andrew Robinson, who lived in "the great house" that he built on his grant of land, probably never in his wildest moments dreamed of, yet the old town still keeps its picturesqueness, its tales of adventure, and its homely touches of quaint life.

Fishermen whose vessels used sometimes to lie at East Gloucester tell curious tales, too simple to repeat, but full of the color and realism of old days, about going across to Rocky Neck to visit Hodgkins' net loft and get their nets mended, or to get a bottle of beer from Seth Brewer, who would hail the men from Annisquam, in the humor of riotous moments when he had been trying out his own wares, as "'Squam Point Indians."

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They tell the story, too, of a father and his son, the one too old for long fishing trips, the other too young, who used to go out from East Gloucester in a dory and set a net for cunners, which they sold to the summer people. Their dory was a relic of earlier times, and one day she sprang a leak.

"Well," the old man said to the boy, "I guess we'll have to shingle her." So they hauled her up on the beach and turned her over.

Now a fisherman, when the seams of his dory spread and she is so old that calking will not stay in place, sometimes drives cedar shingles into the cracks and trims off the ends flush with the planking, which was what the old man meant. But the boy misunderstood him, and coming down to the beach that afternoon, saw a chance to show his ability by doing the work himself. So he fell to it with a will and shingled the dory according to his own lights, beginning at the bow and working aft. And when he had finished, he turned her over and dragged her down below the high-water mark.

The tide came in, and the dory floated, and the boy went home and told his father he had shingled her tight and dry.

She was afloat next morning when they came down with their net. They climbed in and shoved

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*DRY-DOCKED  
ROCKY NECK, EAST GLOUCESTER*



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off, and the old man, mistrusting nothing, took the oars. But row as he would, the dory scarcely moved. He looked at his son, and scratched his head, and pulled again, harder than ever, and still the dory dragged. Scrambling forward, he stuck his head over the gunwale and found his worst suspicions realized. The boy had shingled the dory from end to end, but as one would have shingled a roof, and he had laid every shingle with its butt end forward.

The old man died long ago, and the tale is ancient history, but there is a native fascination in such history, and it is one of the charms of the old wharves that there is no end of opportunity for original research. To the man who has the slightest interest in homely stories of old days, the wharves present an insidious temptation to pursue scholarship by such pleasantly romantic, if not especially useful, byways.

## IX

### THE FISHERMAN

TIME, uninfluenced by the literary activities of a worthy man, has failed to substantiate the doleful conviction, which harassed the editor of the *Gloucester Telegraph* nearly a hundred years ago, that the business of pursuing great whales would outlast the business of catching the relatively unimportant cod and mackerel. The first white settlers on Cape Ann came for the fishing, and ever since their day the people of the Cape have depended to a greater or less extent on fishing as a means of livelihood. Gloucester is best known as a fishing town, and from earliest times she has looked to her fishing fleets for the true foundation of her prosperity.

"The abundance of sea-fish," Francis Higginson wrote in *New England's Plantation*, "are almost beyond believing, and sure I should scarce have believed it, except I had seen it with mine own eyes. I saw great store of whales and gram-pusses, and such abundance of mackerels that it

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would astonish one to behold, likewise codfish in abundance on the coast, and in their season are plentifully taken. There is a fish called bass, a most sweet and wholesome fish as ever I did eat; it is altogether as good as our fresh salmon, and the season of their coming was begun when we came first to New England in June, and so continued about three months' space. Of this fish our fishers take many hundreds together, which I have seen lying on the shore to my admiration: yea, their nets ordinarily take more than they are able to haul to land, and for want of boats and men they are constrained to let many go after they have taken them, and yet sometimes they fill two boats at a time with them. And besides bass, we take plenty of scate and thornbacks and abundance of lobsters, and the least boy in the plantation may both catch and eat what he will of them. For my own part I was soon cloyed with them, they were so great and fat, and luscious. I have seen some myself that weighed sixteen pounds; but others have had, divers times, so great lobsters as have weighed twenty-five pounds, as they assure me. Also here is abundance of herring, turbut, sturgeon, cusks, haddocks, mullets, eels, crabs, muscles, and oysters. Besides, there is probability that the country is of excellent tem-

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per for the making of salt ; for since our coming our fishermen have brought home very good salt, which they found candied, by the standing of the sea-water and the heat of the sun, upon a rock by the sea-shore ; and in divers salt marshes that some have gone through, they have found some salt in some places crushing under the feet and cleaving to their shoes."

Close upon the early days of fishing off New England, when a sea captain would put his ship in stays and take, "in less than two hours, with a few hooks, sixty-seven codfish, most of them very great fish, some a yard and a half long and a yard in compass",—when vessels large and small came out from old England to Cape Ann Harbor, and ships and pinnaces came from Plymouth on the other side of Massachusetts Bay — our fisheries passed from shallops and sloops and Chebacco boats to pinkies.

The sloops and ketches were ill-suited to the business, and early in the eighteenth century, schooners of the model of the old "Grand Bankers" began to replace them. Those early schooners, with their square bows and high sterns and stubby masts and bowsprits, were small and very clumsy, as judged by the standards of to-day, but they measured fifty tons and in their own time they

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marked a long step forward. Three score and ten such vessels were sailing out of Gloucester in 1741, and each man, it is said, kept his score of fish by cutting off the tongue of each that he caught. These tongues he delivered to the captain at the end of the day, who entered the number in his account book, and a man's lay was in proportion to his catch. In three trips of the schooner *Abigail*, which carried a crew of six men, the "high line" in 1751, Captain Paul Hughes, caught 6643 fish; the "low line", whose name is lost to fame, caught 3435; and the average catch of the crew was 4506 fish to each man.

On the eve of the Revolutionary War seventy or eighty Gloucester vessels were sailing every year to the Grand Banks; and some seventy Chebacco boats — smaller two-masted craft, built in Chebacco Parish, which has since become Essex, and carrying two gaff-and-boom sails, but with neither shrouds, bowsprits, nor topmasts — were fishing "for cod, hake, and pollock on the ledges near our own coast."

The Revolution virtually made an end, for a while, of fishing on the Banks, and although the business sprang up again when the war was over, the times were hard and there was so little money in it that once more it almost died out. The shore

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fishing, though, flourished famously, and when Gloucester passed from the eighteenth century into the nineteenth, two hundred Chebacco boats and six hundred Gloucester men, at a rough estimate, were engaged in it.

So greatly did the shore fisheries flourish, that the business outgrew the fifteen-ton Chebacco boats; and pinkies, ranging up to twenty tons or more, with their sharp, high "pink" sterns, and sometimes with shrouds and main topmasts and bowsprits, began to take the place of the smaller craft. For rails, or bulwarks, the pinkies had only a plank secured to the timberheads, which projected six or eight inches above the deck; they called the plank a "waist" in those days. In the cuddy, forward, were a couple of berths and a brick fireplace abaft the foremast, with a wooden chimney lined with plaster, or a brick chimney, as the case might be. They carried sails of hemp — "Raven's duck" was the name of the stuff — which was so loosely woven that they used a "scout horn" (a leather pocket on a fifteen-foot pole) to wet down the sails in a light wind. There were fore-and-aft standing rooms with hatches to cover them and tillers instead of wheels, and every vessel had her tinder box, to light by flint and steel the homemade matches dipped in brimstone, which

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burned with a smell that in rough weather was sometimes just enough to send to the rail any fisherman with a tendency to be seasick.

Such were the vessels in which our forefathers sailed without chronometer or quadrant. They navigated by soundings, compass, and judgment. In April, hauling their vessels up on the beach, they would calk them, smear the bottoms with pitch, and give them a smooth surface by "burning them down with a tar-barrel." They called the process "graving." Then they would bend the sails, and, having provisioned a vessel with "two quarts of molasses, five pounds of fat pork, four pounds of flour, seven pounds of hard crackers (baked by Captain Currier, or 'Captain Kier', as he was familiarly called), half a barrel of water, and a little New England rum, which in those days was considered both victuals and drink", they would put to sea for a week

There was a time when cod and haddock were the only fish the pinkies took to market. For halibut they then had no use, and if halibut came around a vessel in such numbers as to annoy the fishermen, they would up anchor and change their berth. If by mischance they got a good halibut on the line, they would take only the best parts, and cutting them in slices, hang them to cure in



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the chimney over the wood fires in the cuddy—or from the beams overhead, for the smoke circulated liberally in the little compartment. The smoked halibut they would carry home to use themselves or to give to the neighbors, so small was the value our fathers placed on that delicacy of the sea. Sometimes they salted the fins and napes in barrels, but the halibut showed few signs, then, of its future popularity and market value, and for pollock they had no use whatever. They considered a pollock, when they had the ill luck to catch one, as “a bad haul.”

For haddock, they would go for a trip of from two days to a week on “Old Man’s Pasture”, or the “Inner Bank”, or “Heart’s Ground”, and often they would take their catch to Charlestown and sell it to the hawkers, who in turn peddled it about Boston in handcarts. The smaller codfish that they took, they salted and cured to send to Bilboa; the larger they kept on the flakes for weeks, until they had turned to the reddish color that gave them the trade name of “dun fish”, for which there was local demand. The season for cod and haddock began in April; for hake, in July; for pollock, in September.

The simple stores of the earlier shore-fishermen came presently to include beans, rice, beef, and



*GRAND BANKERS  
SUMMER RIG - WINTER RIG*

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tea and coffee. On Sundays, as an appropriate way to begin the day of rest, for they were strict Sabbatarians, they would have for breakfast all the fried pancakes they could eat. They baked bread in a Dutch oven by the open fire; they cooked cakes on the trencher; with the pothook they hung their kettles on the crane.

There was a time when they dared not anchor their vessels on the Banks lest the tide should draw them under, and a record survives of the meticulous caution with which the first skipper to try it, a hare-brained daredevil in the estimation of the fleet and of his own reluctant crew, prepared for the worst before he let his anchor go. Yet they were bold, independent men, for all that, as old Captain David Sargent's retort to the witticism of a deep-sea sailor indicates, "Tell Cap'n Babs'n that I kin find ye way to ye Banks widout a quadrant as weel as he kin wid one"; and in their little pinkies they faced every danger of the sea, and hundreds of them proved their courage by heroic deaths. But it is good to remember them, rather, as they lived, crowding round the fireplace in the pitching, smoky cuddy, at the end of the day, in a blessed fragrance of chowder and coffee.

They wore the old-time monkey jacket or Guernsey frock, and the tarpaulin hat such as all

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merchant sailors of the period affected; and for their work they donned the old-fashioned barvel, or leather apron, and stout high-topped fishing boots. They were fishermen as good as any in the world, and as fearless; yet the half-clipper models and clipper models, when they came into vogue, were almost too much for them. The older generation called the man insane who built the first clipper craft owned in Gloucester, and declared she would never come back to port; but she sailed, none the less, with a full crew, who found her fast and able, and her first voyage marked the end of the old-time fleet.

In the old days they caught all their fish "over the rail." The vessels fitted for the Banks in March, sailed by April, and in a season made two trips. An ordinary fare was thirty or forty thousand fish. The Banker, arriving in Gloucester, would anchor in the inner harbor, and the crew would throw the fish into the "pound" alongside, where the harbor water rinsed off the pickle and salt, and would carry them ashore in boats and pile them to drain for a week or more, then spread them on the flakes to cure and dry.

In the season, vast schools of cod cross the Grand Bank on their way to the coast of Newfoundland where their food abounds, and there the trawlers

## *The Fisherman*

of the present day make a "flying set" to test their fishing ground. The schooner drops two men in a dory, who set a trawl at right angles with the course of the schooner, which drops another dory, and another, until all are at work. The schooner then picks up the dories, one by one. A few hours later, she again drops the dories, which haul the trawls. If the fish are there, the schooner anchors and the work goes on; if not, she sails away and tries again elsewhere.

There are three or four thousand hooks on such trawls as are used to-day, and the lines are thousands of fathoms long. Two men in a dory anchor the trawls, and buoy them, so that they lie in a straight line. They begin hauling at the farther end of the trawl from the vessel, and work toward her, loading the dory as they go. There is always the danger of fog, and the currents on the Banks are strong and treacherous. It is a matter for little wonder that the tragedy of lost dories is an old, old story.

The tale of Howard Blackburn, who forty years ago was lost on the Banks in a dory, is still told in Gloucester, and the hero of the tale is still living here. On January 25, 1883, he put out from the schooner *Grace L. Fears*, with his dory mate, Thomas Welch. When they tried to re-

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turn, they could not find the schooner and anchored for several hours. At last they saw the riding lights of a vessel to windward, but a gale was blowing and they could not row against it. Blackburn lost his mittens overboard and his hands froze. All night, all day, and again all night, they lay to a drag they had rigged; then Welch became delirious and died, and Blackburn tried to take his mittens, but his own hands were so stiff that he could not get them on. He had kept his hands curved as they froze, so that they would hold the oars, and when the wind moderated, he pulled for land.

The oars literally rubbed the frozen flesh off his fingers, but he rowed all day, saw land at nightfall, put out his drag until morning, began rowing at daybreak, again rowed all day, and again at nightfall had failed to reach the shore. Twenty-four hours later, still rowing with the hooks of frozen bone and tendon that had been hands, he reached a deserted fishing stage and an unoccupied house, in which he spent the night walking the floor and eating snow. Next morning he returned to the dory, and succeeded in gaining Little River where people saw him, and hurrying to his assistance, brought him ashore. He had been five days in the dory, and for three days he had carried

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### *The Fisherman*

with him the dead body of his dory mate. He lost the fingers of both hands, but by indomitable perseverance he escaped with his life.

There is a Gloucester story for you! No one knows how many men in lost dories fought for their lives as long as Howard Blackburn and suffered as much, only to die at sea in the end. Many a lost dory has never reached land.

In the old days of mackerel fishing, the boats kept only the largest and sold them for prices ranging from five to ten cents apiece. There was a time when they "trailed" for mackerel — that is, let the lines drag from poles rigged out on each side of a vessel, the longest forward, and each one shorter as you worked aft, with bridles bent to each line by which the men could feel bites. They "bobbed" mackerel, too, with bob lines of white hemp, seven fathoms long, a lead sinker, and a ganging a foot long for the hook. But in 1816, Abraham Lurvey, of Pigeon Cove, invented jigs, which he made by running lead round the hook; and though he tried to keep his very successful invention a secret, the news got out and made an end of the older forms of mackerel gear.

Before the "bait mill" was invented, the watch on deck at night chopped the bait with a hatchet, and it is said that Captain Andrew Burnham, a

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famous fisherman of the old days, left the sea when the mill replaced the hatchet, because he could not sleep in his vessel without the familiar din of chopping bait. His men drummed on the deck and beat the anchor stock in the efforts to relieve his misery, but mere substitutes had no soothing effect on his sensitive ear.

An old-time captain, of many years experience in fishing for mackerel, has left an account of the methods used by American vessels in 1851. "The vessel starts for the fishing ground," he wrote, "with the trail-line out: if it catches a mackerel, the vessel is hove-to on the larboard side. The baiter stands amidships, with the bait-box outside the rail: with a tin pint nailed to a long handle he begins throwing out bait, while every man stands to his berth. If they find mackerel, the foresail is taken in, and the mainsail hauled out with a boom-tackle. Then the fishing begins. You haul your line through the left hand with the right, and not hand-over-hand, as you do for cod: if you do, you are sure to lose your fish after it breaks water. When your fish is near coming in, you must take it by leaning over the rail, to prevent its striking against the side of the vessel, catching the line quick, close to the fish, with the right hand, unhooking it, with a sling, into the

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barrel : with the same motion, the *jig* goes out in a line parallel with your own berth. You must be quick in case a mackerel takes your other line, and entangles your comrade's. You fish with two lines, most commonly seven fathoms long — that is, in heavy weather. In calm weather, the jigs are lighter than when it blows hard. There is an eye spliced at the end of the line, so that the jig may be shifted at pleasure. There are two other lines used, called fly-lines, with smaller hooks : when mackerel are shy in biting, they will often take these. The fly-lines are only three fathoms long. Very often the mackerel stop biting. Then the fishermen take the gaffs, and work with these until the fish disappear. The gaffs must not be used while the lines are out, as they entangle them, and cause great trouble. No man must leave the rail to pick up fish which miss his barrel and fall on the deck, until the fishing is over. You must take care to dress your mackerel quickly, as they are a fish that is easily tainted. When you stop fishing, the captain or mate counts the fish, and notes down in the fish-book what each man has caught. Then the crew goes to dressing and splitting. The splitter has a mitten on the left hand, to keep the fish steady to the knife. Two men gib the fish, with mittens on, to prevent

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the bones scratching their hands. One man hands up the fish to the splitter, while the rest of the crew draw water to fill the barrels in which the fish are put to soak. The fish are put in the soak-barrels back up. In a short time the water is shifted, and the fish washed out for salting, the salter sprinkles a handful of salt in the bottom of the barrel, then takes the fish in his right hand, rolls them in salt, and places them skin down in the barrel until he comes to the top layer, which he lays skin up, covering the top well with salt. Herring or small mackerel are the best bait that can be used. They are ground in a bait-mill by the watch at night; if the vessel has no bait-mill, the fish are chopped up with a hatchet, or scalded with boiling water in a barrel or tub. When there is a fleet of mackerel-vessels fishing, they often lee-bow each other — that is, run ahead of one another — and so draw the fish towards the shore. There they anchor, and put springs on their cables, which is done by taking a strap outside the hawse-hole and fastening it to the cable, then hooking it to a tackle, and hauling it aft, at the same time paying out the cable. This brings the vessel broadside to the wind or current, and the fishing goes on. Boats may fish with the same success as vessels when moored in this manner. This is

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the whole system of mackerel fishing, British or American, and requires nothing but activity and energy."

There were exciting days when the fleet fished with hand lines. The men in a score of vessels would see instantly the sides of the fish flashing in the sunlight, when one vessel, more lucky than the rest, had found a school; and as the fortunate crew heaved and pulled their lines, as many as sixty sail would sometimes race for the lee of the discoverer. Scattering toll bait by handfuls, the first to come into the wind under the lee bow of the vessel that had discovered the school would cast her lines and draw the fish down the wind. Then another vessel would come into the wind to leeward, then another, while those to the windward strove to get free and clear and work again to leeward. There was shouting and swearing, a din of bawled orders and angry imprecations. Some were hauling in on the sheets; some were slackening off. Vessels even carried away main booms or jibbooms or sails, so furious was the excitement and so closely did the struggling schooners pack together.

The mackerel fishermen use nets now. If the masthead man sights the peculiar roughness on the surface of the water, caused by flipping heads

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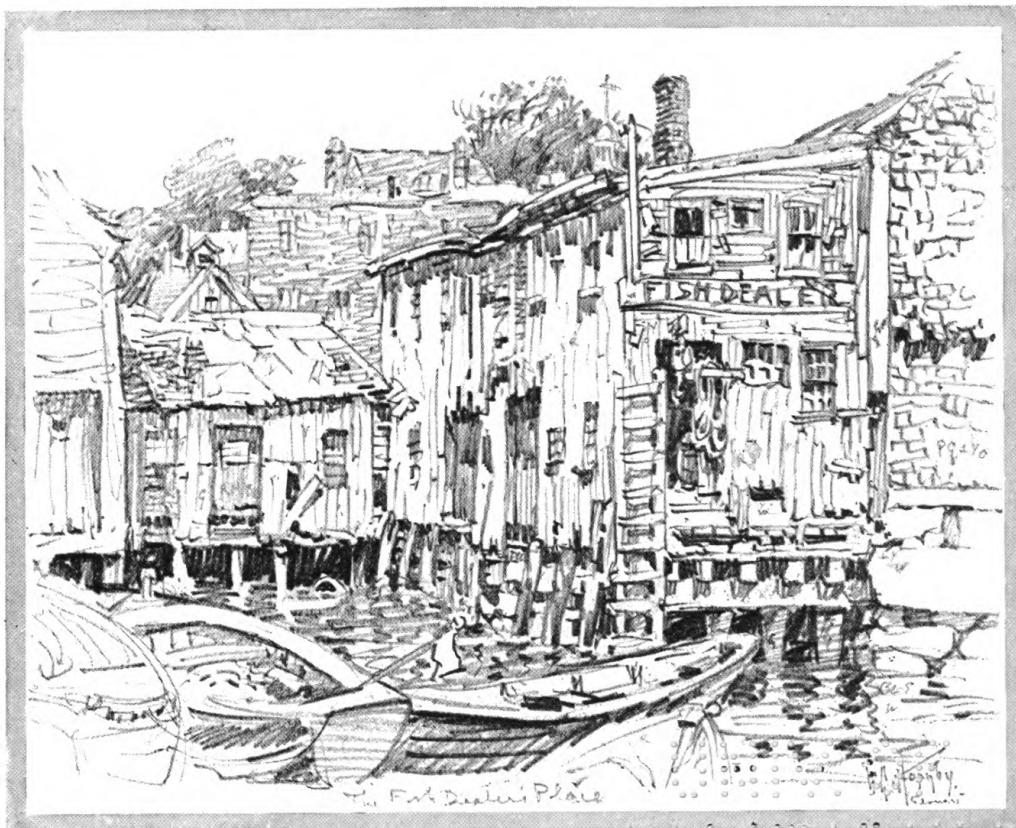
## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

and tails, or if he sees the dark patch that is equally the sign of a school, or if at night he sees the field of phosphorescence that marks the presence of mackerel, he calls his discovery to those on deck and from the masthead keeps them informed of the direction in which the mackerel are moving. In its preliminaries, the process somewhat resembles whaling.

As the big boat, rowed by nine men — or more — and steered by the tenth who stands at the sweep in the stern, bears down on the school, they throw into the water one end of the seine, which is made fast to a keg, and two men in a dory start towing it round the school in one direction, while the seine boat goes in the other. The “bight passer” passes the bights of the seine to the “seine heaver”; the “cork heaver”, who stands aft, throws the corks, which are laid toward the stern as the seine is piled in the boat. Slowly the circle closes on the school. The seine boat and dory meet. The men thrust oars up and down in the water to keep the mackerel from darting out between the two ends of the seine, and haul in the purse ropes that draw together the bottom of the great bag, and if all has gone well, the seine incloses the school.

All may not have gone well, though. “Mack-

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*THE FISH DEALER'S PLACE  
GLOUCESTER*

TO THE  
LIBRARY

## *The Fisherman*

erel are cunning," an old fisherman once remarked meditatively, as we sat with a chessboard between us. "It seems sometimes as if they knew as much as humans. I've seen 'em go straight down out of sight, just when we were pursing the net, and when we got done there was n't a one in it."

And when they are safely closed up in the net they can still make trouble. I never heard a more dramatic narrative than the tale a Portuguese fisherman told me of seining an immense school which nearly swamped his boat before they broke the seine and escaped. I wish I could repeat it in his own words, but I heard it years ago and I can recall only his concluding sentences, as he leaned back, breathing hard from the excitement of the memory. "I pretty damn glad them fish got away. Yes, sir, I pretty damn glad."

From the bunt of the seine, which is made of heavier twine, they bail the fish out on the deck of the vessel with a big dip net, then they haul the seine on deck and pile it again into the seine boat, which is no inconsiderable job, for a seine is some fourteen hundred feet long and a hundred and fifty feet deep.

There are few greater gambles than mackerel fishing. With good luck, a man will make a modest fortune in a season; with bad luck, he will

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lose one. But the "spiller", or "pocket", a smaller net extended by outriggers from the side of the vessel, betters his chances; for if a catch is so large that part of it will spoil while the crew is curing the rest, it is possible to turn them into the "spiller", whose coarse twine withstands the teeth of dogfish, and there keep them alive as well as in the ancient and leaky smacks that an earlier generation of fishermen used.

The Gloucester vessels get halibut, which have long since gained for themselves an honorable place among the fish of commerce, on trawls similar to those used for codfish, but heavier. They carry a "gob stick" in the dories to kill halibut, for a big one, taken into the dory alive, might injure the men or knock a hole through the bottom by its flapping. Our vessels have gone into Baffin's Bay and as far as Greenland and Iceland for the fletched halibut that is used for smoking, but the longer voyages did not pay, and halibut for the Gloucester market are now caught nearer home.

There is swordfishing on Georges in the season, whither Gloucester vessels of medium size go on two-weeks trips, and it has its own perils, for a swordfish is an unaccountable creature, and some have ripped their long snouts up through the bottoms of dories and have injured, and even killed

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men. But there is both sport and profit in harpooning a swordfish from a pulpit on the jibboom of a schooner, and the kegs and lily irons that go to make up the gear for the business are familiar sights on the wharves.

Gill-netting is a method of fishing that we have learned from Norway and have adapted to the larger cod and strong currents and rocky bottom along our coast. The nets, moored at intervals to twenty-five-pound anchors, and marked by buoys, are held straight up and down by weights below and glass floats above; and their light, strong twines, knotted in nine-inch meshes, entangle by the gills all fish of any size that run foul of them. They save bait and labor, and take, on an average, larger fish.

It is hard work, and little money. "Sometimes you think you 're going to get rich," the fishermen say, "but you never will; and sometimes you think you 're going to starve, but you never will." Yet, if their work is hard, their play is boisterous, which affords compensation of another kind. There are old tales of riotous nights when Gloucester crews landed in Canadian towns; and if Rogers and Commercial streets could talk, they would tell of wild times here in our own city.

Further, at sea, as on shore, the comical side of

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life crops out to relieve the monotony of hard work and rough fare, and many a voyage full of storms and bad luck lives in the joyful memory of some peculiarly felicitous catastrophe.

Once, on a bitter winter day, an old Gloucester fisherman came below and hung his socks to dry over the galley stove. The vessel rolled and a sock fell into the chowder, and the captain found it in his plate. In deference to the laws of the United States, I must leave the captain's remarks out of my book.

Another old fisherman sailed with his three sons as his crew. The sons took turns as cook, but none of them could satisfy the old man with a salt-fish dinner. "Ye freshened it too much," he would growl. "When I have a salt-fish dinner, I want *salt fish*." So they soaked the fish less and less, and at last they cooked a fish without freshening it at all, but although it was so salt they could not eat it, the old man roared as he started on deck, "When I have a salt-fish dinner, I want *salt fish*."

At that, the three brothers put their heads together and determined to give the old man, for once, "a SALT FISH dinner." They chose a cod that was fairly caked with salt and popped it into the kettle without scraping off a crystal; they

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squeezed a quart of rock salt into one of the old man's mittens and put that into the kettle, too, for good measure. The fish, when they had cooked it, was so heavily salted that no one of the boys could get down a morsel of it, so they filled the old man's plate and waited.

He came down, grumbling as usual, and crammed a quarter of a pound of salt cod into his mouth. A curious expression spread over his face. His eyes lighted. "There!" he cried. "That's what I call a nice corned fish!"

An old man from East Gloucester, who had safely weathered many eventful years at sea, and had finally risen to be skipper of a very small vessel, had an unlucky season, and putting into Salem harbor in the fall, with no money and with no supplies for the winter, went into a provision store near the waterfront and asked the proprietor to let him have two barrels of flour on credit. By exerting his imagination, he managed to tell a convincing story, and the proprietor gave him the flour, but in his delight, the old man was indiscreet.

"See here, Tom," he called to one of his crew, as he was rolling the flour down the wharf, "on Cape Ann no one would let me have seven pounds of flour on credit, but I can get trusted in Salem for two barrels."

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At a tap on the shoulder, he jumped up and turned round, and saw that the storekeeper had been standing just behind him.

"Roll 'em back," said the storekeeper.

The old man turned round and rolled them back. "What a fool I was," he growled, "to let the cat out of the bag before we got under way for Cape Ann!"

The story of the friction of our fishermen with Canada is a long one, and the resentment occasioned when Canadian officers seized Gloucester vessels was a long time dying. It has left a tale that is still remembered, although it happened more than fifty years ago.

In September, 1871, a Dominion cutter seized the Gloucester schooner *A. E. Horton*, on the charge of fishing inside the three-mile limit, and took her into Guysboro' harbor to stay until the court should decide the case. She was the second vessel belonging to Messrs. McKenzie Knowlton and Company that the Canadians had seized, and although the firm had already gone to considerable expense, they had got no satisfaction from the Canadian courts. So the owners laid certain plans, and one of the firm, Harvey Knowlton, Jr., went to a small town a short distance from Guysboro', dabbled in mining for a

## *The Fisherman*

few days lest his presence arouse suspicion, and visited Canso with some specimens of gold quartz. At Canso he mustered six American fishermen to lend him a hand, and early in October, the party of seven men went secretly to Guysboro', where the six sailors hid in a barn outside the town, while Captain Knowlton, concealing his identity, found the vessel, learned where her sails and rigging were stored, and completed his plans.

The six men waited five days in the barn. On Sunday evening, October 8, they came into town, arriving at eleven o'clock, waited there until the last lights in town were out, rigged the schooner, and bent her sails.

At one o'clock, when they were ready to get under way, they discovered she was aground. They got out a warp and hove her astern, and an hour and a half later the tide floated her. Making sail, they slipped out of the harbor, leaving an empty berth to puzzle the town, and on October 18, having taken a course across Georges Banks without charts or nautical instruments of any kind except the compass, they brought the *Horton* into Gloucester.

There have been days when the fishermen from the Provinces and the fishermen from Gloucester fought at sight ; but for three years, now, they have

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

engaged in contests of another kind. Twice off Halifax and once off Gloucester picked vessels from the fishing fleets of the Maritime Provinces and of Gloucester have raced for the international championship. The *Esperanto*, which won the first race with Captain Martin Welch at her helm, has gone down off Sable Island, and the *Bluenose* holds the cup, which she won for the second time, when she passed Eastern Point on the last leg of the last race in 1922, leaning before a stiff breeze and tearing through the sea as if she were a creature of animate power.

There is another side to this business of fishing, which no one can forget who knows Gloucester. The men of Gloucester have paid for her fish with hundreds of lost vessels and thousands of human lives. There are many men living who remember the gale of February 24, 1862, when in one night fifteen Gloucester vessels and a hundred and twenty Gloucester men went down, "leaving seventy widows and a hundred and forty fatherless children." And in 1871, Gloucester lost nineteen vessels and a hundred and forty men.

"Wha 'll buy my caller herrin' ?  
O ye may ca' them vulgar farin' ;  
Wives and mithers maist dispairin' ,  
Ca' them lives o' men."

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## *The Fisherman*

The vessels then were too small for the business, and the cables were too light for the vessels, and the anchors were too small for the cables. Men stood in the bows of anchored vessels, armed with axes to cut the cables if there should be no other resource, but every vessel adrift increased the danger of the fleet, and any two vessels that drove together went down, crushed like eggshells.

The vessels are larger now, and more able, and when a storm threatens they can haul up their anchors and claw off into deep water. But Lord have mercy on them! Four days ago word came to Gloucester from "Little Dan" MacDonald, master of the *Elizabeth Howard*, that when a March gale was carrying her down on Sable Island and he was forced to jibe her to clear the bar, she fell off a high sea into the trough, and while the crew was lashing the foreboom, shipped a mass of water over the lee rail and rolled almost on beam ends. She righted again and sailed out the gale; but four men had gone over the rail to leeward. What could a skipper do? The wind was blowing a hurricane and the schooner was fighting to keep afloat.

Two of the lost men, Herbert Blondin and Mike O'Brien, were dory mates from Newfoundland. Blondin had been fishing out of Gloucester for

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nine years; O'Brien, for not quite nine. The other two, James Murphy and John McLeod, were dory mates from Nova Scotia. Murphy had been sailing out of Gloucester for thirty years; McLeod for twenty-four. Gloucester is not losing so many men now as years ago; but fishing, nevertheless, is no mere boy's sport. A gale is a gale, the seas over; and in a foggy night on the Banks no human power can save the men in dory or fishing schooner that lies in the course of a transatlantic liner.

To step on the wharf from a vessel that has just come in with a trip of fish is to step from the world of seafaring men into an atmosphere of manufacturing and business. From the vessels the fish are pitched on the wharves and carried in wheelbarrows of an odd shape designed for the business to the "headers", who cut off the heads and lay the decapitated cod or haddock or hake or pollock on the big tables where the "splitters" are at work. A "splitter" seizes a headless fish, lays it against the cleat on one of the shelves that project from the table, and splits it with deft thrusts and slashes of his knife. From the splitting tables, after being washed, it goes into one of the big butts in which the fish are salted — they hold so much water that they make their own pickle — then it is laid on the flakes and cured. In stormy

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weather the fish on the flakes are piled and covered with boxes; in the hot sun they are covered with cloths to keep them from "burning." The degree of salting and curing depends in part on the place where the fish are to be sent. If to the tropics, they are salted until the crystals fairly coat them, dried as hard as sole leather, and packed under pressure in boxes and drums weighing from a hundred pounds to four hundred and forty-eight pounds.

On the wharves, in the "off season" when little work is being done, there are long piles of salted hake and ranks of empty butts, wheelbarrows turned up on end, nests of new dories, and groups of idle splitting tables, waiting for the spring and summer days, when the great sheds come to life and everywhere are men hard at work.

The fish, salted in the butts and cured on the flakes, go indoors, next, to the skinning department, where men with a few deft motions of knife and hand peel off the skins and slice out the bones and trim the edges. The skins go into one big pen and are sold to the glue factories; the bones and trimmings go into another, and eventually become fertilizer. Girls take the skinned and trimmed fish, and with incredibly swift pecks of their pliers draw out the bones left by the knives of the skimmers,

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

and running their fingers over the white meat to make sure that no single bone remains, toss one fish aside and reach for another.

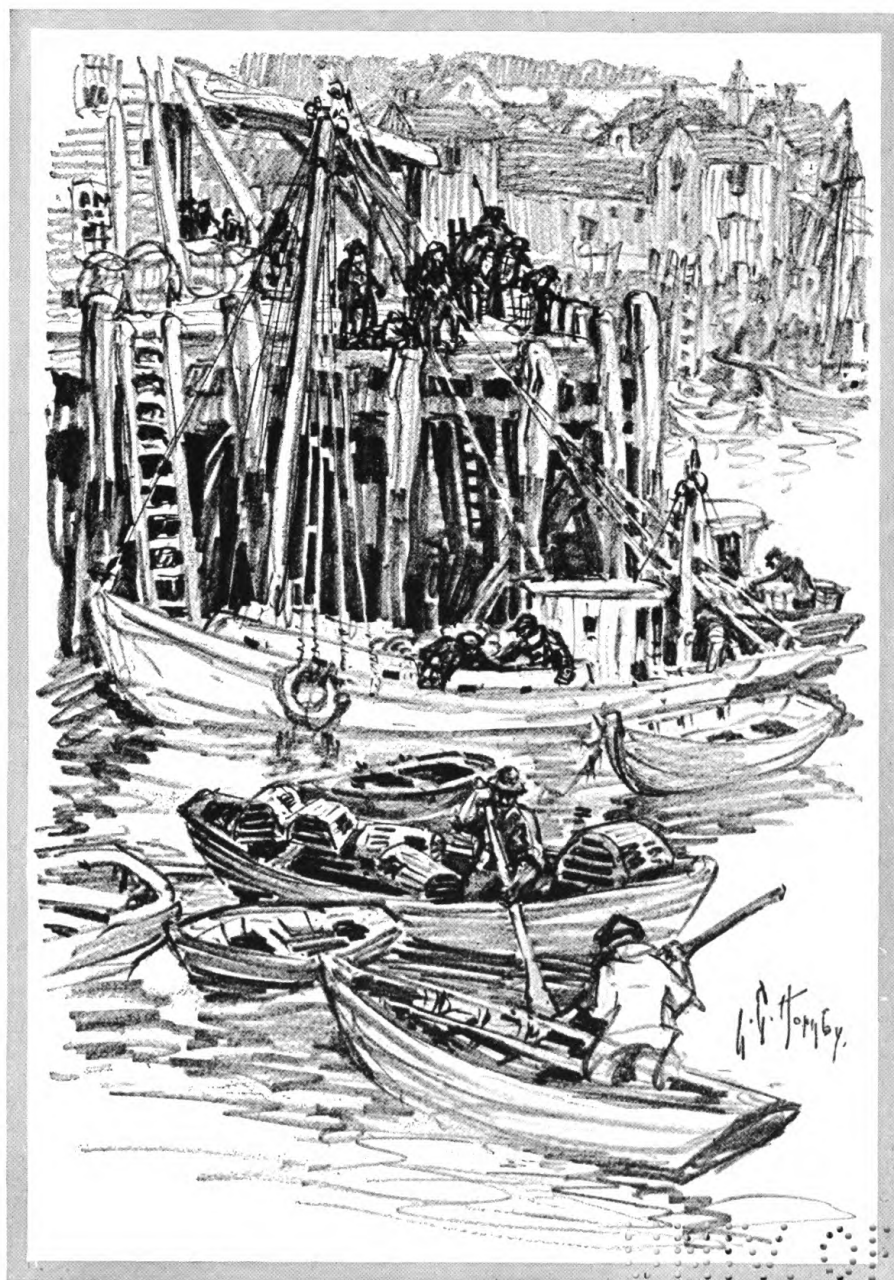
Some of the fish are cut into sizes for bricks, and weighed and thrown in two-pound masses into boxes, from which the "press boys" take them, and cramming them into compartments, under the press, push down a lever that squeezes them into solid oblongs. These they tie with strings, and send to another table where they are wrapped in paraffin paper.

The better grades of fish, after the bone-pullers, working with such deftness that there seem to be eyes in their pliers, have got out the last bone, are cut and sliced into a size and shape that will exactly fit the destined cardboard carton or wooden box in which they are packed when wrapped in paraffin paper. Here, again, is manifested remarkable deftness of hand and accuracy of eye.

Fish to be fibered goes through grinders, is laid in crates and put under a pressure of sixty tons to squeeze out the last drop of pickle, is ground again and sifted, and comes out in great masses as fine and soft as thistledown.

The business of curing herring flourishes during the winter months, for warm weather interferes with the smoking. The coldest water yields the

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GUINEA BOATS, CALIFORNIA

TO MY  
FRIEND

### *The Fisherman*

fattest herring, and the better grades come from Newfoundland. They are washed in tanks until many changes of water have got them clean, then they are scalded and (their scales having been removed by hand) strung on sticks and hung on racks to drain and dry. This done they are smoked over sawdust fires. The walls of the smoke house are an oily black, and the smell of "bloaters" is everywhere in the building.

Most of the Gloucester mackerel come into port already dressed and salted. They are tiered up and repickled, and packed in quantities that range from eight-pound pails to two-hundred-pound barrels.

In selecting and packing salt fish for different parts of the country and different parts of the world, the Gloucester companies reflect in a singularly revealing manner social and economic conditions. For Cuba, Porto Rico, and other tropical markets, heavily salted fish, dried hard, are packed, as I have said, under pressure in the big drums. Hundred-pound boxes are easier to store, but customers who are used to buying fish in drums prefer them. In Baltimore, where the negro population buys quantities of fish, they want the cheapest sorts, and there is good market for hake. Philadelphia calls for fish dressed and

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skinned, but not boned, — a little better grade than Baltimore, but not the best. The New York buyers demand the best fish that is packed. Washington, in which the extremes of population range from the White House to the negro section, buys both the best and the cheapest. Nine tenths of the fish that goes to the western States, where there is a large Scandinavian population which knows fish and can judge accurately its quality, is of the best “fancy” grade.

In a curious way too, other matters affect the fish business. Prohibition for a time destroyed the market for boneless herring, which the saloons had used in large quantities as a “free lunch” — an ingenious generosity, as every one knows who has experienced the thirst a single boneless herring can create! During the last year herring have been gaining ground as appetizers, and the wholesalers believe that at a reasonable retail price they would soon come back to their own. But the delicatessen shops, which buy herring at fifteen or sixteen cents a pound, wholesale, or at most twenty cents a pound with all charges for transportation included, and sell them for sixty cents a pound, retail, severely handicap the business by their zeal for three hundred per cent profit.

There are people here and there throughout the

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## *The Fisherman*

country who still insist on buying the whole salt cod, such as used to hang in many cellars a generation ago, but the products of the Gloucester fisheries have advanced far beyond that primitive form of sea food. There are many brands and many grades of boneless fish in cartons and boxes. There are preparations of codfish and haddock, lightly corned and canned. There is "salad fish", which closely resembles flaked fish, so prepared for salads that it tastes like the more expensive crab meat. There are clam chowders of various kinds — a "Down East" chowder made with milk; a "Manhattan Style" flavored with tomato and made to dilute with water. There are finnan haddies and smoked boneless herrings in wooden boxes and glass jars. There are soused mackerel in cans. There is canned roe, which has a large sale in the South, but a very small sale in the North.

One company, with chemists and cooks and housewives testing its results, has invented a process of canning fishballs ready to fry. Another company, the oldest mail-order fish house in the country, which has to-day a hundred and twenty-five thousand customers, has grown from an idea that in 1885 appeared ridiculous to most people. It maintains in Nova Scotia a plant that

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## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

cans lobsters and clams and clam chowder, which it distributes through the agency of its Gloucester office. It packs for its customers an imported crab meat. It sells by mail every kind of sea food it can put up in forms that will keep in first-class condition, and its name is known from one end of the land to the other.

These are two of a score of companies that are carrying on the old salt-fish industry. In fresh fish Gloucester deals little; that business goes to the Boston piers. But to the Gloucester wharves come cargoes of salt from Europe, and from those wharves cod, haddock, hake, pollock, halibut, mackerel, and herring (the boneless and the bloaters), — smoked, salted, canned, soured; cured in almost any way you please,—go to the four points of the compass.

Men from the Maritime Provinces, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Italy, and Portugal, make port in Gloucester. There have been stormy times in the old days on Rogers Street and Commercial Street, and men on the wharves have found bodies floating in the docks in the morning. Such things are true of every seaport of any size the world over. But for more than thirty years the Fishermen's Institute has been carrying on its work with the fishermen, and in its building on

### *The Fisherman*

Duncan Street it has such equipment as an Army and Navy Y.M.C.A. would provide. Men just off the vessels come in for a bath. There are books, magazines, checkerboards, pool tables, a lunch counter, and a dormitory. There is an assembly room and chapel, where lectures and entertainments are given and religious services are held ; and besides providing a place for men to live and "hang out" on shore, the Institute sends books and magazines to sea.

Farther from the water front, but not less closely associated with the seafaring life of the town, is the Net and Twine Factory, which buys five-hundred-pound bales of twine from the South, winds the hanks on spools and bobbins, puts them on netting machines, some of which tie at a single motion more than four hundred knots, and makes trap nets and seines and gill nets. From the basement the smell of tar rises to the highest story, where the netting machines, moving in fascinating rhythm, seize the strands simultaneously with hundreds of steel fingers, draw them out, knot them, and clicking, release them, — seem for a moment to be resting, — then advance again to their work.

Girls, moving back and forth, replace bobbins, check the machines, and work with nimble fingers

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on the strands, again start the machines, and return to winding bobbins, but always with an eye on the long strands and moving steel fingers. They are paid ten per cent extra for winding their own bobbins, and another ten per cent for mending the nettings if any defect occurs.

Through chutes the netting goes to the floor below where girls with darting shuttles put on a double selvage by "thumb-knotting" or "twine meshing"; or knit two pieces together, as for a salmon trap for the Pacific coast. On the lowest floor, nets pass through vats of pine or coal tar, and are colored with an extract of various barks, and dried and sent up to the presses, where they are pressed into bales to be shipped.

In the line walk, the long yarns drawn off the "beams" or "reels" and made fast to hooks that revolve rapidly at the motion of a lever, are twisted into lines for every purpose from the four-and-a-half-pound lines (the weight is of a dozen lines of twenty-five fathoms each) that are used for gang-ings, to the forty-eight-pound halibut ground lines that are sent to the Pacific coast. The air is full of fluffy dust as the whirling hooks twist the yarns; and the light strands grow firm and hard, until they are ready to pass into vats of tar and up through a hole in the ceiling into the "reeling

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*THE GUINEA DOCKS*



## *The Fisherman*

room" above, where they are "reeled off", and on into the hot "drying room" where they are hung on the innumerable hooks from the timbers overhead, then to the "tying and papering room", and then to the storehouse to be seasoned before they are shipped. The quick drying by artificial heat does not reach the heart of the line; it is the slow seasoning that gives it hardness and perfect strength.

On the strength of Gloucester nets and lines the prosperity of the chief industry of the city, with singular literalness, depends. But Gloucester lines go to the Banks in the vessels of our rivals from Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, as well as in Gloucester vessels. They go to fishing ports on the Great Lakes and on the Pacific coast; they cross the Atlantic and bring fish to the vessels of Scotland and Norway and Portugal. Nor does Gloucester send only nets and lines abroad; the products of the Gloucester fishermen have gone farther still.

This business of casting nets into the sea was a very old story when the waters engulfed the chariots of Pharaoh; when Julius Caesar crossed into that wild island of Britain which was to father our New England colonies; when certain fishermen were casting their nets in Galilee. It is no mean ac-

*Gloucester by Land and Sea*

complishment for a little town in a new world to have gone so far in so old a trade in a mere hundred years; but in the three centuries of Gloucester's history the affairs of the world have moved faster than ever before. We have come from an age of ox carts to aëroplanes.

## X

### GLOUCESTER TO-DAY

WHEN in 1871, the citizens of Gloucester voted in town meeting to petition the legislature for a city charter, their act was premature. The legislature granted the charter, but the town then voted by a majority of nearly two to one to refuse it. In 1873, however, the town in special meeting voted to repeat its petition, the legislature again granted the charter, and the citizens accepted it by a majority of a little more than two to one. At the first city election, which was held on December 1, 1873, the new city chose as its first mayor Robert R. Fears, and launched forth upon its municipal career with a city government composed of a mayor, eight aldermen, and twenty-four common councilmen (one alderman and three common councilmen from each ward), a form of government that has changed to comprise only a mayor and a municipal council of four members.

The strong, active life of the churches of Gloucester, both Catholic and Protestant, the flourishing



## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

Y.M.C.A. and the Sawyer Free Public Library contribute to make the city a good place to live in. The Cape Ann Scientific and Literary Society is reviving, in its lecture courses, the work of the old Lyceum, and is furthering by its historical researches and collections the antiquarian interests of the community. The stone sheds, after a season of idleness, are now, in the spring of 1923, once more filled with men and vibrant with the roar of drills and hammers. The villages of summer homes are growing along the beaches and on the moors.

A young Gloucester institution is the Cape Ann Community League, which maintains the Community House as a center for all forms of constructive recreation. Its women's club, its players' club, its musical society, its classes in handcrafts, its juvenile organizations, and its dormitory for women are to-day coping with needs unknown a century or two ago.

At a meeting of the Gilbert Club, the social organization of the Gloucester firemen, the guest who is lucky enough to be invited can immerse himself for an evening in the spirit and atmosphere of old-time New England fire fighters. The walls of the engine houses are hung with old pictures and ancient trophies, buckets and trumpets and signs

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## *Gloucester To-day*

emblazoned with such names of old-time engines as "Defiance" and "Cataract" and "Deluge." Old yarns of firemen's musters and hand-tub races are spun, and tales handed down from early generations are retold. I have heard the captain of the Annisquam Company describe at such a meeting the engine that his father manned in 1818 and tell how they filled the tank at the brook beside Washington Street, just under the hill where the village meetinghouse stands, and how at a fire the bucket lines passed water to the engine while the crew pumped with might and main.

It is an experience worth having, to share a "collation" spread on the long tables in the garret of an engine house, with the armorial devices of old engine companies on the walls, and their old leather buckets hanging from the beams, and old tales passing round. To sit down to supper with the Gilbert Club is to step back seventy or a hundred years into the enthusiastic days when all firemen were volunteers, and to feel again the old New England spirit of neighborly coöperation and good will; and this is not the less true because you know that downstairs is new motor and chemical apparatus that can respond to an alarm with a speed and effectiveness that our grandfathers would have regarded as black magic.

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As for the business of firemen, which concerns the present more than the past, the meetings discuss modern methods and all manner of suggestions for bettering the service. But whether the speaker is a New York fireman explaining the methods of receiving and transmitting alarms in a great city, or a member of the Gloucester Board of Engineers urging the need for retaining the smaller companies, or Toastmaster Marr telling again the story of a memorable fireman's muster, a fine spirit of comradery and of devotion to the service that is the chief interest in the lives of many of the men prevails.

The vessels lying at the wharves, the boys mending their nets, the fish curing in the flakes, the crowds that drift from the Fisherman's Institute to Fisherman's Corner and back again, the junk shops with their old anchors and gratings and propellers, the sailors in naval uniform and the men-of-war from which they come on liberty, and the summer visitors in their season, all lend color and animation to this seacoast town of ours.

Beside Western Avenue a wireless tower rises from the Hammond laboratories where a young man invented a method of controlling by radio the course and progress of vessels at sea. Across the harbor, on Rocky Neck and on the moors,

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## *Gloucester To-day*

are well-known studios and art galleries. Back in the town, two stone-throws from the head of the old Harbor Cove, now a public landing, there stands in front of the Legion Hall, in the old first road on Cape Ann, a bronze replica of Miss Hyatt's statue of Joan of Arc, of which others stand on Riverside Drive in New York City, and in Paris. A little farther down Washington Street from the Legion Hall is a monument to an earlier war to which Gloucester sent more than fifteen hundred men — the old Grand Army Hall.

Times and economic conditions have changed on Cape Ann. Most of our fishing captains of to-day were born in the Provinces and hard times in the business have driven from the sea many who used to go fishing. Some of the quarries are abandoned, and a large proportion of those men who still work for the granite companies are foreign born; and it is discouraging for farmers and market gardeners that Cape Ann still affords better harvests of stone than of garden produce.

Nothing can replace old days of independent business enterprises and bustling prosperity, as they are seen by the golden light of memory. It is sentimentally disappointing to find a fishing captain or an able seaman working on shore for a summer resident. But all this has its compen-

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

sations. The "summer business" has grown amazingly in recent years. New roads wind through the old pastures; summer cottages stand on the hills and knolls, and on the roads by the sea; and the work and trade that the summer brings, support many of the people on the Cape the year round.

Business in the city and in the villages thrives during the season. For those who like gayety and social activity it is at hand in abundance. For those who desire outdoor sports, there are the golf clubs and yacht clubs and tennis courts and beaches. Again, for those who prefer solitary tramps in the open country, or hours of meditation beside the sea, there are the moors and the Common, and the long stretches of deserted shore where there are still no cottages.

The ways of summer visitors are sometimes incomprehensible, but even those who suffer by their eccentricities are willing to give them the benefit of any charitable doubt. I once encountered a kindly woman who was standing in her door as I passed.

"Have you been up to the old Cooper farm?" she asked.

I had not.

"They say they 're making a fine place of it," she returned. "I 've never been there myself,

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### *Gloucester To-day*

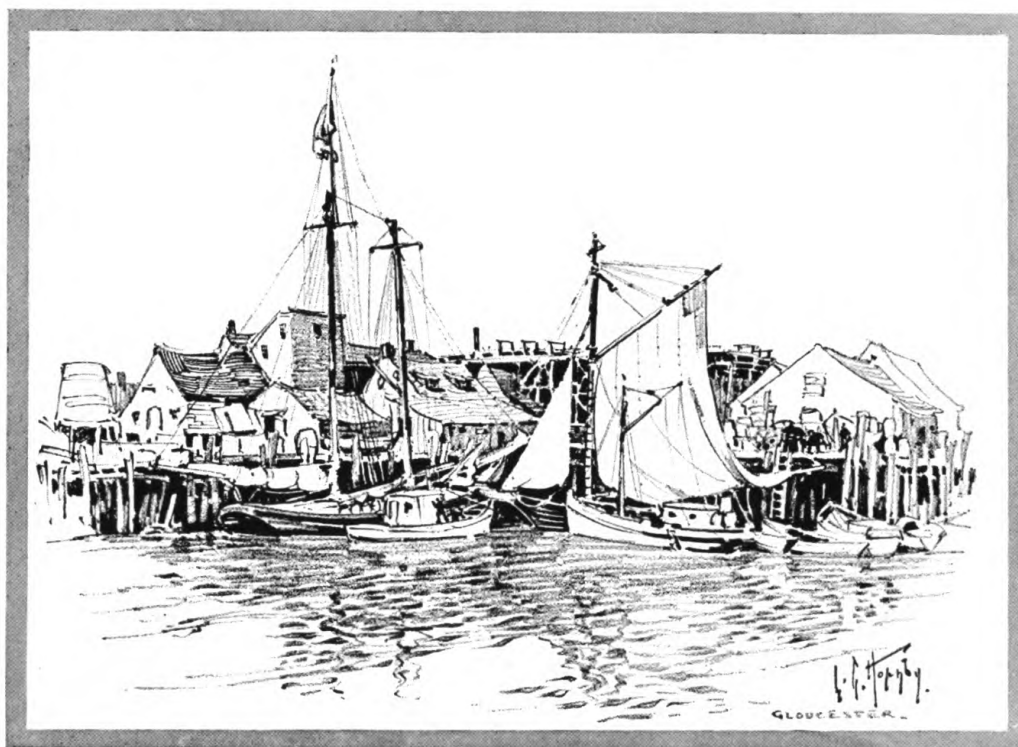
though." Then she asked me if I had been past another well-known old house. "There's summer people bought it and fixed it up," she explained. "The man made a great disturbance when he first come. He blocked up the path. He was bound nobody should go through there, but he could n't work it. You've a right to go through if you want to. He's put up a cow-way, but I think you've got a right to go through with a horse and cart." Meditating, she leaned on her broom and confidentially lowered her voice. "I've heard he had a sunstroke once and I think it's that did it. Sometimes he's real sociable. He'll come through my place five or six times in a summer, and he's real nice to the children too. But sometimes he's queer. I really think it's the sunstroke did it by going to his head."

There are the foreign settlements, — the Portuguese on the hill, here and there Italians and Greeks, and "down on the Cape" the Finns. They have cast their lot with the city; they man boats for the shore fishing; they work in the quarries. It would be hard to find quieter neighbors than many of them are; and the thrift and cleanness of the Finns is reflected in the complete confidence with which the hardest-shelled old Yankees among us use the milk they sell.

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

Occasionally some one whose accent betrays him as a newcomer to the Western hemisphere contributes a new and unexpected incident to the daily routine. One day a man with a fiery red moustache hauled his car up beside me with a jangle that would have impressed me as ominous if I had not been at the moment absent-minded. He smiled jovially and pointed to the vacant seat beside him, and not until I had embarked on my adventurous career as his guest, did I realize the situation in which I had so unwittingly placed myself. That car was literally tied together with twine. I do not exaggerate. Something had sprung adrift in the steering gear, which I cannot explain because my tastes are not mechanical and I have no knowledge of machinery. I know only that the wheel was amazingly loose, that ominous rattles came from underfoot, and that the blessed car swerved from side to side in the road so violently that only by prodigious contortions did my cheerful driver keep us off the sidewalk. He was as genial a soul as ever I met, and he drove as if the devil were at his heels.

Presently, when I had got sufficiently used to the motion to listen to what he was saying while I strove to stay on the seat, I discovered that he was telling me the story of his life, which he had



*IN THE "GUINEA" QUARTERS*





## *Gloucester To-day*

devoted to inventing a new form of engine. Taking one hand off the wheel, to my great alarm, for although he was obviously familiar with the erratic ways of his vehicle, I could not muster up much confidence in his judgment, he demonstrated the action of the automobile engine of commerce :

“She go yoomp! yoomp! yoomp!” he yelled above the rattles and bangs. “An’ ev’ry time, she have to stop an’ yoomp again. My engine, she goin’ to go pu-u-u-l-l-l!” His wild gestures changed from a frantic thrusting, like a piston, to a steady circling. “An’ when she get goin’,” he yelled, “she make her own power. You yoost use yoost enough gas to start her. Very cheap! I got her mos’ done now. Yoost one part left to do. I been workin’ ten years to get that part to work right. I get her pretty soon now; then I make a fortune.”

We had come to Stanwood Street. He did something with his feet and hauled hard on the brake. The car stopped with a crash. If the windshield had been left, I should have gone through it. As it was I shot out of my seat and landed with both hands on the hood.

“Me go no further,” he said and grinned.

I got out.

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He waved his hand and spun his wobbly wheel, and the car swung hard a-port. I leaped clear of the rear wheels, which tipped dangerously toward me, caught a last glimpse of his beatific countenance illumined by his flaming red moustache, and away he went, in headlong, abandoned, serpentine flight, trailing twine as if his machine had sprouted.

With my feet once more on the solid earth, I wished him luck in his search for the secret of perpetual motion, and in pious gratitude for my escape, I remembered the proverbial saying that the devil is good to his own.

Such adventures lend joy to life, nor are they always so wildly perilous. A subtler danger lay in the remarks of a gentleman who thus introduced a well-known Gloucester speaker :

“We have with us a man who has always lived in Gloucester, and whose ancestors lived in Gloucester before him. As Whittier said — least-wise, I think it was Whittier — I ain’t very familiar with these here versifiers — as Whittier said,

“Breathes there the man with soul so dead  
Who never to himself hath said,  
“This is my own, my native land,”  
When wand’ring on a foreign strand.”

A town without humor, conscious and uncon-

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scious, is a dead town, for if humor does not make the world go round, at least it oils the wheels. But there must be more than humor in life, and under the surface of Gloucester — for such incidents are merely of the surface — is the strong community of interests and effort, built on loyalty and honest good will. If it is proverbial that the nation is happy whose annals are uninteresting, the converse must be equally true: that the annals of a happy nation are uninteresting by their very nature. So, too, the lives of the substantial, intelligent citizens that are the great majority in such communities as ours, by their preponderance make the more conspicuous and memorable the doings of the more entertaining minority.

No writer, I believe, has ever really captured the spirit of Gloucester. How few are the cities that actually live in books! Probably no writer ever will capture that spirit, for the true spirit of a city is as elusive as Ebenezer Babson's French and Indian ghosts, which could be seen, heard, and shot at, but never caught.

There is more of Gloucester than her vessels on the Banks can show, and her men do not talk in prose of Biblical rhythm, as some writers make them. She is a town of many sides and many

## *Gloucester by Land and Sea*

moods; no single pen can reach them all. Her cottages and hotels throw their lights out to the sea from crowded verandas — there are people who keenly enjoy them, although I, for one, prefer the byways and the wharves. The city itself is abuzz with the political projects that are characteristic of any small town, and with enterprising social and business activities strung along on Main Street like beads on a string; there are people who live by just such interests. There is a more deliberate stir and bustle in early morning when men in sea boots and blue work shirts tramp down wet streets to the sheds and wharves, and shopkeepers open their windows and sweep their walks; it is the slow, steady, firm life that covers the Cape and does the real work of its world, and draws from the lighter activities a sort of mental subsistence. Around the town, at once encircling it and blended inseparably into it, the old Yankee stock lives nearer the soil and nearer the sea; such people are all that is left of the earlier New England.

There are the little cities from the Old World — the Portuguese, the Greeks, the Finns, and others here and there — men and women with the pulse of Italy, of Sweden, of Russia beating in their wrists. You can catch in their homes and in

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their meeting places, if you wish and have discernment, echoes of every movement of importance in Europe, from the Soviet in the north to the Fascisti in the south.

There are the moors and the Common, where the tramper who strikes out alone at the end of a winter day can see the water, gray as night or steel-blue, the sky, flaming in the west, or dark with banked clouds in the east; where he can face, as he walks across the frozen earth, such winds as blow only across a thousand miles of sea. Sometime builders may come with picks and shovels and brick and stone and lumber; but now from the bleak pastures inland, once grown with timber, we can still turn east or west and meditate, as it were, in company with those first settlers of three hundred years ago, seeing much the same things and thinking much the same thoughts; for three hundred years is a very short time, and Gloucester is a very young city, and some things — the wind, the sea, the sky, and human kind — never change.

“The folk that walked in Babylon, they talked of wind and  
rain,  
Of ladies’ looks, of learned books, of merchants’ loss and  
gain,  
How such-an-one loved such-a-maid that loved him not  
again.

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\* \* \* \* \*

“What other should men talk about five thousand years  
ago?

For men they were in Babylon, Babylon, Babylon,  
That now are dust in Babylon I scatter to-and-fro.”

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