

FOOTNOTES/NOTES

After four summers on Great Spruce Head Island the United States became involved in World War I. As part of the war hysteria/ frequent rumors of German submarines off the New England Coast spread/abound. To contribute to the war effort by helping to protect our shipping father offered to loan the Hippocampus to the Navy for anti-submarine patrol. At the same time Captain Green enlisted in the Coast Guard and the Hippocampus with a crew of four or five seamen was assigned to his command. To make <sup>her</sup> the Hippocampus a more seaworthy naval vessel for patrol in heavy winter seas she was completely remodeled. For stability a ton of concrete was poured into her hold, and for greater effectiveness against enemy ships a wireless was installed and a machine gun mounted on her forepeak/ bow. She never, <sup>however,</sup> <sup>came</sup> ~~however,~~ engaged in conflict with the enemy, but was engaged in/ during the stormy winter months in rescuing fishing boats in distress, and was sent on missions to carry sick and injured islanders to the mainland for medical care.

With the end of hostilities in 1918 the Hippocampus was decommissioned and hauled into drydock in the Charleston Navy Yard in as a preliminary to renovation for civilian use. Because of delays caused by disputes over government liability father finally requested that she be returned to him in Maine as she was. In ~~the~~ eagerness to be rid of her, she was launched immediately, but with her seacocks open so that she promptly sank into the mud in Boston Harbor. The Navy wanted to declare her a total loss and pay a token compensation, but father insisted that she be raised and towed to the Island

in her derelect condition. During the following winter the hippocampus was rebuilt ~~for day/excursions~~ without sleeping quarters, a bridge amid-ships, a galley forward, and a large after cockpit. For many years there-after we used her for day excursions in Penobscot Bay, but never again for over-night cruises. The concrete balast has remained in her hold to this day.

When World War I began we were new-comers to Pemobscot Bay, and new-comers anywhere, especially in New England, are looked upon with suspicion in times of anxiety and crisis. We did not escape the gossip and inuendo - mild though it was - to which strangers in such a situation are subjected. A story circulated around the bay that the rusticators (a colloquialism for summer residents) on Great Spruce Head Island were German spies who by means of their boat were in communication with enemy submarines. This opinion was fortified by a concrete tennis court that father had built in a clearing in the woods soon after our first summer on the Island. Tennis, a game at which father was very good, was not as well known then among the islanders as it is today. The large slab of concrete was <sup>structure</sup> a ~~mystery~~ they could understand only in terms of their wartime suspicions and experience which naturally suggested an obvious relationship. The tennis court became in their minds a secret gun emplacement to be used, when the oportune time arrived, against the United States.

Captain Green lived ~~in/a~~ with his family in a small house near the warf and boathouse that he had built <sup>for</sup> himself from materials father supplied. It was probably in comparison with this house that from the beginning the cottage (as <sup>The islanders</sup> all summer ~~houses~~ <sup>term for all summer houses</sup> no matter how large were called by the native-islanders)



we lived in was always referred to as the Big House. When Captain Green enlisted in the Coast Guard father hired Lewis Shepard, an elderly farmer from Little Deer Isle, as caretaker. He lived ~~in the house~~ with his wife and a son about my age in the house Captain Green had built. During his tenure this house became known as the Farm House because his work did not include care of the boats being only connected with the vegetable garden, haying, wood cutting and upkeep of the buildings. For ~~two~~<sup>three</sup> years we had no Hippocampus and depended on a small open motor boat to get us to Butter Island for the mail and to Dark Harbor or Deer Isle for provisions.

To our great disappointment, when the war ended, Captain Green did not return to us. He had obtained a more lucrative position elsewhere. From then on for a number of years a series of boatmen of varying degrees of competence worked for us. None stayed very long until two brothers from Eagle Island named Erland and Bonny Quinn took charge. They could do anything that had to do with boats, and they knew the bay as well as Captain Green. About this time Lewis Shepard retired and a young, taciturn fisherman, also from Eagle Island, named Rupert Howard, applied for the job of caretaker. I remember the day he came to ask for the job. He was a strong, self-confident man and father hired him. Rupert turned out to be not so taciturn or diffident, as he had at first appeared, when we got to know him. His observations on people and on us and our activities, and on nature were always to the point and entertaining. We were constantly quoting what he said and laughing at ~~his~~<sup>the</sup> humorous and kindly fun he poked at us. We were soon on first name terms with the Howards as was not the case with the Shepards with whom it was always Mr. and Mrs.

As the years passed we became so fond of Rupert and Lottie Howard that when they left after 25 years it was like the breaking up of a family. He kept the buildings and equipment in perfect repair; the garden under his care always flourished, <sup>inate</sup> ~~as much~~ owing to his/feeling for growing things - <sup>aptitude</sup> ~~what is called~~ the green thumb ~~as~~ - as that ~~we~~ we were seldom plagued by drought at that time. He always had time <sup>for</sup> ~~for~~ all the extra work that we asked <sup>him to do</sup> ~~to have done~~ during the winter months.

It was ~~Before~~ the Howards came, ~~if I remember correctly,~~ that the white clapboard barn with a hip roof was built in the little field above the harbor beach near the farm house. It had a large hay loft and stalls for four cows and a horse, although never more than two of the cow stalls were occupied. Rupert brought his own cows to the Island and we bought milk from him. Father built a new farm house in the same style as the barn for the Howards and the old house, ~~was converted into~~ which was much smaller and seemed tiny and completely inadequate in comparison with the new one, was converted to the use of chickens where Lottie kept hens whose eggs she sold us.

During our first years on the Island the plowing and hauling was done by a horse, but when the Shepards came we had ~~an ox~~ <sup>James Dyke</sup> because Mr. Shepard, ~~who was~~ <sup>who knew the art of driving oxen.</sup> an old world farmer from Nova Scotia, ~~had driven oxen before.~~ <sup>whose name was Dyke</sup> The ox could ~~draw~~ draw a wagon or pull a plow in his slow swaying gait, but ~~the mowing~~ <sup>Mr. Shepard did</sup> by hand with a scythe. We would watch him, fascinated <sup>swinging his arms and body together</sup> cut the grass ~~in~~ tirelessly/stroke after stroke as he advanced ~~in~~ around the meadow a step at a time. ~~And~~ <sup>Periodically</sup> he would stop to whet his scythe with a long stone like a carver at Thanksgiving



attacking the turkey. You could hear the rasping ring of stone on steel for a great distance and knew that Mr. Shepard was at the mowing long before you came upon him in some remote corner of the meadow. The ox came to a painful end, dying in bellowing agony on the beach after licking clean a can of white paint ~~left~~ inadvertently left within his reach where he was staked out during the painting of the barn.

Dyke was replaced by an aging horse named Prince, whose teeth were never inspected, and who in a few years became too feeble to work. Prince in turn was superseded by a caterpillar tractor. Rupert was very soft-hearted and would not dispose of Prince allowing him the run of the Island all summer and only occasionally when he could be caught hitching him up for light work. Rupert said Prince had worked hard all his life and deserved a comfortable old age. The haying was continued by tractor and the hay was stored in the loft for Prince and the cows in winter. For several years when Rupert kept no cows on the Island during the winter the hay was still ~~cut~~ cut for Prince until finally he became so weak he had to be shot. Rupert refused to perform the execution because Prince he said was his friend and trusted him so he hired a neighboring islander to do it.

When Rupert retired a period of bad times began. One caretaker followed another in quick succession; few stayed more than a year and they left leaving the buildings and equipment in disrepair. They could not bear the loneliness and isolation of the winter months or do the hard routine work that was required. Those that stayed longest had been raised on islands and understood the exigencies of island life. The job of a caretaker on a Maine ~~island~~ island is a demanding one requiring a more than ordinary

sense of responsibility, great self-reliance, a philosophical acceptance of isolation for prolonged periods of time, and a love of the life of an islander which is only possible for those who have grown up from childhood on the islands. The Lewis Shepards and the Howards had this background; their successors did not. Disintegration set in because the men did not make needed repairs in time, did not see the necessity for making them promptly, or did not have the will to get them done. They cannot be blamed because they simply were not equipped, either physically or psychologically, for this kind of responsibility. During this period the wharf was damaged in a storm, the boathouse doors blew off, the light plant failed and was not repaired, the tractor broke down, the houses went unpainted, insufficient wood was cut, and the garden was planted too late in the spring.

At last, a few years ago my youngest brother discovered a young man who combined in his temperament and skills all the attributes for this kind of a position. He had grown up on a neighboring island. He preferred island life to life on the mainland. He was responsible <sup>and</sup> conscientious, ~~and capable~~. He was skilled in many trades: in carpentry, in mechanics, in boat building, in farming, and in the lore of fishing and the sea. He accepted the position of caretaker and moved to the Island with his wife and children, and since he took over has maintained the establishment on Great Spruce Head Island in impeccable condition, thereby greatly reducing our anxieties. This man is Walter Shepard, the grandson of Lewis Shepard who ~~had~~ was in charge of the Island a generation before. He belongs to a breed of men rare today, who seek from life what few desire - room to maneuver and breathe freely in on the side-lines of our high-pressure civilization. His independence is an inseparable ~~part~~



part of the best tradition of island people shaped by their ~~deep~~  
association with the sea.