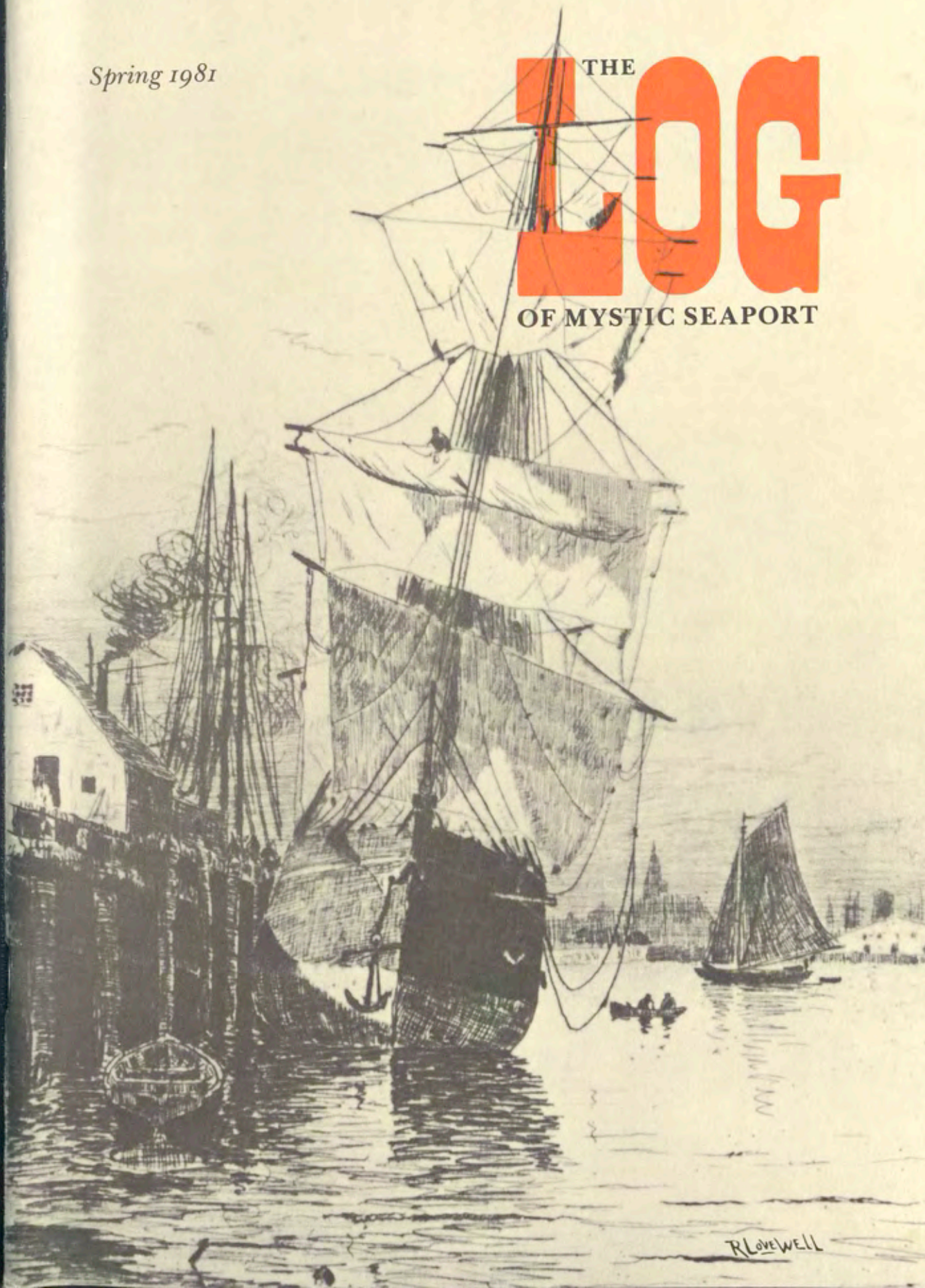
Spring 1981

THE LOG OF MYSTIC SEAPORT



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COVER: *Drying sails, Green's Dock, East Boston, an etching by Rominer Lovewell.* (80.107.4)

BACK COVER: *A house is built around the* Charles W. Morgan *to shelter her during restoration work on the Seaport lift dock, January 1981. (Photo: Mary Anne Stets)*

Volume 33, Number 1 / Spring 1981

THE LOG
OF MYSTIC SEAPORT

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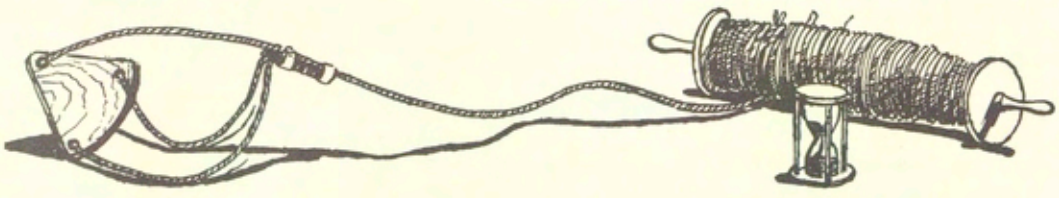
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SIGHTINGS



From the earliest days of this institution, scholarship and publication have been constant elements in the growth of the Museum. The first object accessioned was a book, and before this organization was a year old it had published its first work, Carl Cutler's *Important Types of Merchant Sailing Craft.* During those early years there were very few museum exhibits here in Mystic to be seen and to attract attention. Through publications that could be distributed widely, the message of Mystic began to spread, and through the work of our early authors, respect developed for the fledgling museum.

Over the years we have seen dramatic changes in the publication efforts of Mystic Seaport Museum. Initially, they were very simple editions, sometimes printed and bound here at the Museum. As we and our readers became more sophisticated we had to keep pace with the changes that were occurring in the publications field. We were exposed to better design and layout in all kinds of publications and consciously or unconsciously grew to expect this quality in the Museum's work. Our response to that demand is evident in our publications today. While good design is expected, it is obviously not the primary element of good museum publications. It is the substance that is most vital. The quality of the scholarship is the key to the lasting value of our books and monographs. If we publish poor material, or weakly documented research, the reputation of the Seaport will suffer. We, and those who follow us, will bear the responsibility for the dissemination of misleading material. On the other hand, what is good today, will always be good. Solid, scholarly research published now will form a foundation upon which students and researchers of tomorrow can build.

We are fortunate to have on our staff, or associated with the Seaport, many individuals with fascinating stores of knowledge. Ideally, that knowledge should be transferred directly in a one-to-one exchange, as between a teacher and student, or craftsman and apprentice, but this method does not reach the broader public audience we hope to inform. When these knowledgeable individuals become authors and record their knowledge to be distributed in printed form, they have an opportunity to reach thousands of people in future generations.

For the Seaport, the recent Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant has begun a new chapter in our publishing history. This grant will cover the publishing costs of one major book and five monographs, so that the income from the sale of these works can be completely devoted to additional publications. With this grant, a revolving publication fund has become a reality for us, and we should see benefits from it for many years to come.

Technology will bring changes in the publication field, and the Museum will keep pace, as it has in the past. As we continue to publish, it is our responsibility to meet the high standard of scholarship set for us by Carl Cutler, fifty years ago. Each time this is done, the author's reputation is enhanced, Mystic Seaport is strengthened, and a contribution is made in the field of maritime studies.

J. Revell Carr

Nixie

JOHN GARDNER

Reposing in the dim half-light of one of Mystic Seaport's storage sheds, an ancient yacht waits in suspended animation. Her deck is gone, her interior gutted, yet her basic hull structure remains, and in it her identity is powerfully present after the passage of nearly a century. She is *Nixie*, designed by Edward Burgess the same year he designed *Puritan*, first in that immortal triad of cup defenders, *Puritan*, *Mayflower*, and *Volunteer*, long since enshrined in memory. In 1885 *Nixie*, rigged as a keel cat, was launched from William B. Smith's yard in South Boston. How long she sailed as a cat is not known exactly, but in 1893 we find her listed on the roster of the Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead as a sloop among Third Class, keel yachts, waterline less than twenty-one feet, and as a sloop she remained for the rest of her days on the water.

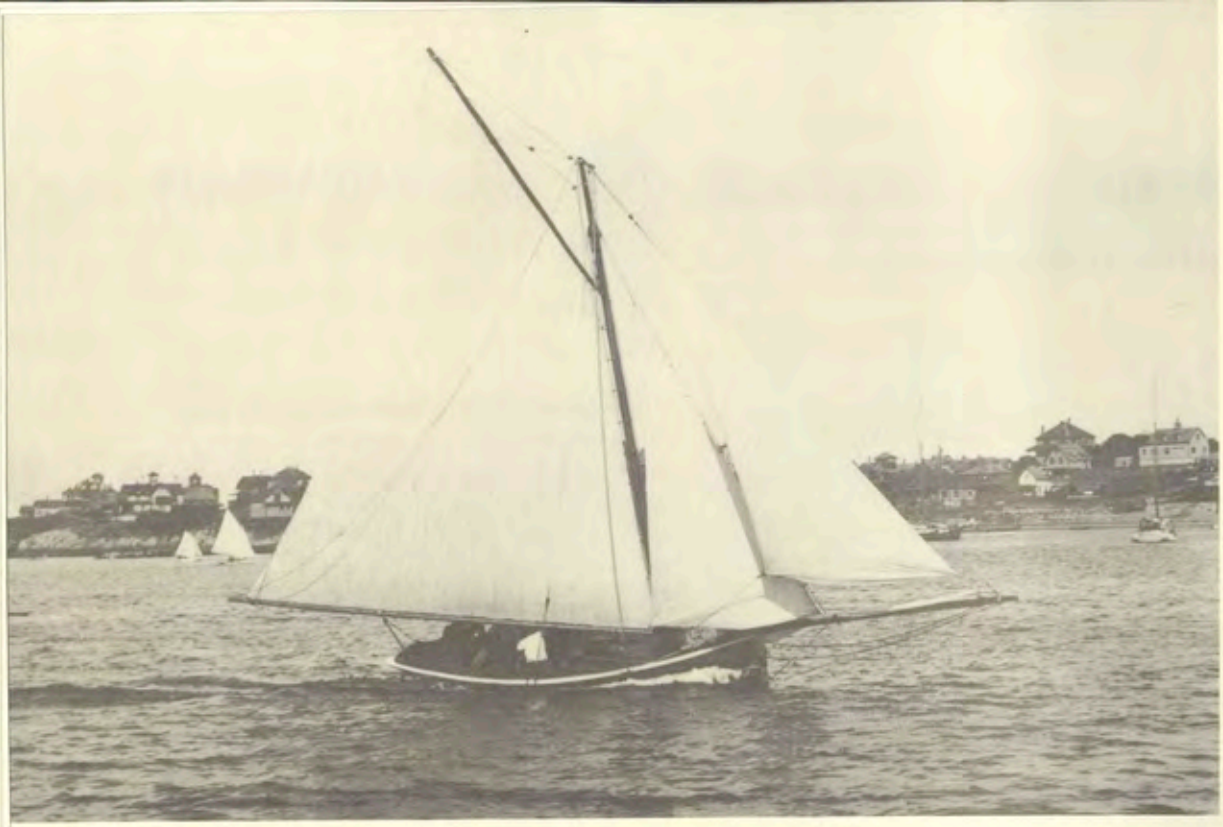
Her conversion to a sloop necessitated structural changes both to the deck and below. Just what they were is not fully known. When Captain Charleton Smith rebuilt her in the 1930s, her "second incarnation," as he put it, he did not suspect that she had once been a cat until he uncovered her original mast step floored over in the bow.

Nixie's rebirth, completed in 1936 or 1937 (it is not quite clear which), issued from circumstances which must be granted unusual. A. L. Cochrane of Beverly, Massachusetts, who had her built and who raced her with his brother at Beverly and Marblehead in the early 1890s, eventually sold her to another Beverly Farms resident, who appears to have been obsessively neat. Stepping aboard *Nixie* one day, as the story goes, and finding what must have been a monumental mess, the result of a riotous feed of clams which his children had neglected to clean up, he became so incensed that he straightway took *Nixie* to Tom White's yard in Manchester, where he ordered that she be smashed up. Demolition started with the removal of her rig and lead keel, but was held up when the owner of the yard died. Nothing more was done until one day when Captain Smith, on a visit to the White yard, noticed *Nixie*'s abandoned shell and, realizing its possibilities for conversion to "a splendid party boat," as he later put it, persuaded the widow to sell it to him for $3.00, its fire-wood value at the time.

Forthwith the hulk went into the drink and was towed over to Marblehead, where she was installed under Smith's boatshop, which overhung a very steep embankment at 12 Front Street. That was in 1911. (It is worth mentioning here that within the cavernous recesses of that same overhang, the Boston Whitehall now on exhibit in Mystic Seaport's North Boatshed lay forgotten and out of sight for many years.)

Once *Nixie* was safely ensconced beneath his shop, Captain Smith turned his attention to more pressing matters, but his resolve to bring *Nixie* back to life someday was never abandoned. Gerald Smith, Captain Smith's son, recalls that one cold winter's day when firewood for the shop's stove ran low, he suggested to his father that it might be time to start breaking up *Nixie*. "Not on your life, boy," or something to that effect, was the immediate and positive reply. Nevertheless, time dragged on, and it was not until 1934 that *Nixie* was finally hauled

John Gardner is Associate Curator of Small Craft at Mystic Seaport. A native of Calais, Maine, he received his Master's Degree as a teacher of English at Columbia University in 1930. He began working in Marblehead boatyards in 1940, and since has become an internationally known authority on small craft.



Nixie as a sloop, racing at Beverly, 28 June 1890.
(Courtesy: Hart Nautical Museum, MIT)

out from under the shop and her restoration begun.

If Captain Smith was anything, he was a perfectionist. He was one of those rare individuals who could do it all himself – design a yacht, build it from keel to truck, rig it, sail it, race it, and write a book about it afterwards. Resurrecting a classic like *Nixie* and bringing her back to life was just his meat.

That such a vessel as *Nixie* should fall into the hands of a Captain Charleton Smith was one of those rare conjunctions of fortune that occasionally happen, for just as *Nixie* exemplified the classic small yacht in purest strain as it took shape in nineteenth-century New England, so Captain Smith typified both the dedicated yachting skippers of that day and the talented builders and craftsmen without whom classic yachting in America could never have happened. Such names as Adams and Vanderbilt, Burgess and Paine, Herreshoff and Lawley are so well known that their contributions to yachting history hardly need further recounting, but there were others less prominent, like Captain Charleton Smith, who also had a part in it, and unless their part is apprehended and put in context, our view of that history is bound to be partial and distorted.

Charleton Smith was born in Chelsea, Massachusetts, in 1869, attended the Williams School there, and learned the rudiments of naval architecture and marine drafting at the Free Evening Drawing Lessons taught by John Frisbee of the Frisbee Shipyard in Chelsea, where Smith worked for a time. Forty years ago in Marblehead it was gossip around town that Smith had graduated from Harvard College. This was not the case, but it could have been. Fluent in German, he was also adequate in Spanish, French, and Swedish, apparently having picked up these three languages

when he went as ship's carpenter in the last of the square riggers and also in mahogany steamers. As for his English, Smith wrote features for the old *Boston Transcript*, as well as articles for *Rudder, Yachting, The New England Yachtsman, The Atlantic Fisherman, The Fishing Gazette*, also publishing two books of fiction for boys, *Bob Haskins in Southern Seas* and *Gus Harvey of Cape Ann*. As a boatbuilder, he worked in Provincetown, and later in Marblehead for Sterns & MacKay, and as a loftsman for Burgess & Packard, where he laid down boats for Starling Burgess, being the only one Burgess would trust to loft his designs. Later, when Smith had his own shop, he became the authorized builder of Brutal Beasts, designed by Starling Burgess for youngsters, and for years a popular and numerous racing class in Marblehead waters. Among the various craft turned out in his shop were eleven double-end power boats of his own design for local fishermen. Some of these boats are still in service fifty years later.

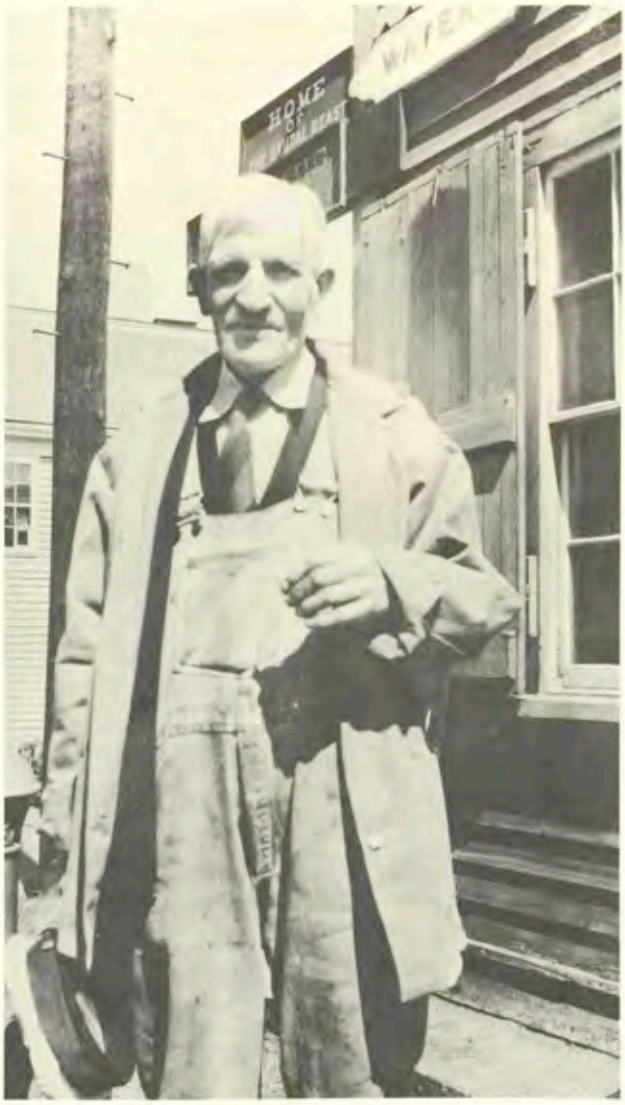
For twenty-one or twenty-two seasons altogether Captain Smith went yachting; for two years, or it may have been three, as skipper of *Norka*, a seventy-three-foot Lawley schooner; for three years as skipper of the Herreshoff New York 40 owned by L. F. Percival; and for sixteen years as skipper of T. K. Lathrop's Herreshoff Bar Harbor 31 rater, *Cricket*. Finally, it should be added that Captain Smith was collaborator and friend of W. P. Stephens, assisting him with his research into Whitehall origins, a project on which Stephens was engaged toward the end of his life.

Once the recrudescence of *Nixie* was started, Captain Smith's skill as a craftsman and his life-long experiences as a sailor and yachtsman came to the fore. He was not a man to go half way. No pains were spared in *Nixie*'s refitting. What was done to her is best described by the man who did it. His account which follows, taken from *The New England Yachtsman* for February 1939, is not to be improved on, and I do not propose to put words in his mouth or tinker with his crisp style.

A deck frame as is a deck frame she got; lodge knees and hanging knees of seasoned hackmatack; deck beams and house-top beams dovetailed in at each end. White pine bent deck 1⅝" x 15/16", edge of cabin and cockpit rim, or cap, mahogany, as is entire cockpit, companion slide and skylight.

The ceiling (she never was ceiled up before) and the under sides of main deck and house-top are white enameled. All else is paneled work of mahogany finished bright. Figured African mahogany is used throughout.

Captain Charleton Smith (1869-1944) outside his Marblehead boatshop, "Home of the Brutal Beast." (Courtesy: Captain Gerald B. Smith)



Now let me get a rap at the modern style–or lack of style–of cooking aft. *Nixie*'s layout is the result of a lifetime of studying yachts.

As you clamber down the rather long, four-tread mahogany ladder–*Nixie*'s main beam is not cut off and the threshold is on its top–you pass between two clothing lockers in regulation fashion. On each side is a divan (yachtsmen do like to call them transoms) six and a half feet long. Then come a pair of buffets of figured, paneled mahogany with little stanchions and railings near their top edges. In the starboard buffet are three drawers and just forward of it and forming a continuation of it is a folding-door refrigerator. Over this is the after end of a long, but rather narrow bunk, for a slim man or a boy.

Now the port buffet looks nearly like the one on the other side. But its face, or front, shows no drawers, but a one-panel door. Presto! You grab the top by its edges and the whole top goes up on four brass angle bars. You lift out the front door and behold there are two Primus stoves in a zinc-lined enclosure.

No smell, heat of cooking, etc. That's the argument for cooking near the companionway aft.

But a six-footer can lift off the skylight, shove it aft along the house-top, stand erect in the hatchway and with the cabin table close to his left side cook in comfort.

Just forward of the buffet-cooking department is a mahogany dish locker hanging from the deck beams, and a little forward of this, and on the middle line of the ship, is the curtained-off toilet.

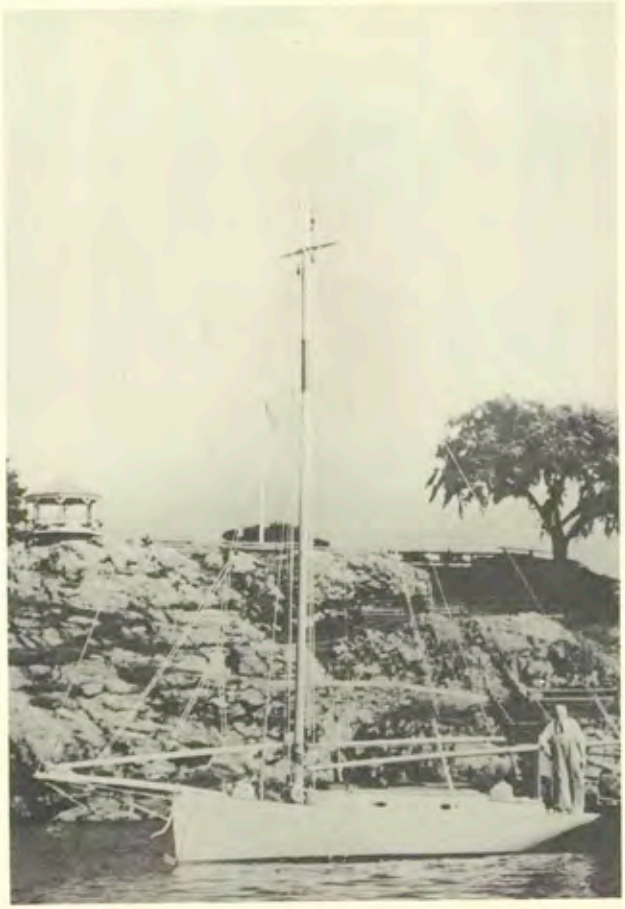
Water is carried in a tin-lined, copper tank that is inside the box-like cabin table. This table, by the way, seats seven people if one of them uses a camp-stool at the after end.

All the spars of *Nixie* are hollow, even the bowsprit and her pair of club topsail poles. She has 417 square feet of sail in the two lowers, 120 in her club topsail and 49 in the baby jib topsail.

After a season's sailing in the *Nixie*, I am convinced that Chapelle is right–'the old boats are best.' Where, for heaven's sake, can I get the beauty, the comfort, the roominess, the stability, the speed, the ability to be 'hove to,' the weatherliness of the incomparable *Nixie*?

To those intending building a small yacht for other than class racing, I can recommend nothing finer than a plumb stem, drag-line, keel craft with a moderate after overhang. If her profile is like *Nixie*'s, she'll stay nearly as quickly as any of the spoon-bowed variety.

Nixie after her "second incarnation," with Captain Smith aboard, lying off Fort Sewell, Marblehead. (Courtesy: Captain Gerald B. Smith)



Nixie, reborn, was probably launched late in 1937. We do not know for sure, but Captain Smith's account of her trial run published in February of 1939 seems likely to have been written no later than the fall of 1938. In it he mentions having sailed *Nixie* for a season, thus most probably the 1938 yachting season. If that is so, he could have gone party boating in her for only two more summers, for in 1941 she was sold to Eugene Godin.

No doubt Captain Smith was desolated to part with this pearl of small yachts, and moreover one into which he had put so much of himself, but in 1941 he was 72, and the Second World War was on. German U-boats ranged uncomfortably close to the

New England coast, so close that in Marblehead, Salem, and other North Shore towns, strict blackouts were observed at night enforced by blackout wardens, and hastily constituted squads of home guards were armed with shotguns and hunting rifles collected about town. Most of the large yachts were taken over by the Coast Guard, disguised with grey paint, and assigned for the duration to submarine patrol duty. It was no time for party boating.

Just how long *Nixie* remained in the possession of Godin after Smith sold her is not clear, but by the summer of 1946 she had been acquired by Oliver Rantanen of Salem. In July of that year, in a single-handed passage from Gloucester to the Isles of Shoals, on the way to Maine the staunch little vessel proved her mettle, for in the gale-whipped following seas encounted on that occasion a craft less able and responsive could easily have broached and foundered. An account of what took place that day is to be found in *The Second Book of Boats*, edited by William and John Atkin and first published in 1948.

Her owner and skipper that memorable day admits he should have used better judgment. Lowering skies, rising wind, flying scud, and great rollers that kept steadily building gave ample warning, but it was so exhilarating climbing the crests and sliding down again that reefing was put off until it was too late. Before he realized it, the tops of the giant combers were breaking white and wet, and *Nixie* was surfing down the long 30° slopes at a breath-taking clip for several minutes at a time. At the crests it was touch and go when half her rudder came clear, and she hung there for an anxious moment, shuddering. Except for the long run of her keel and her deep forefoot, she would surely have jibed or broached, and it would have been all over. Again and again, and for what seemed an eternity, towering seas lifted high the doughty little ship and hurled her down, but each time she managed to clear, eventually entering Gosport harbor in a smother of foam, her owner spent and shaken.

Nixie's second and final test, Rantanen tells us, came the following summer. Homeward bound from Boothbay, she ran into a fresh southwest breeze fighting the current and an ebbing tide off the mouth of the Kennebec. Vicious, nearly vertical seas had built up that were running close together and six to eight feet high. For nearly seven hours *Nixie* beat into the teeth of it getting around Seguin, and get around at last she did, but not until her hollow mast, the weakest part of her rig, and subsequently replaced by a solid stick, had opened a split six to eight feet long. That thrash to windward clinched it; that day *Nixie* proved herself a vessel.

When it came to a general evaluation of *Nixie*'s performance, her abilities, and all that sets her apart, Rantanen waxed eloquent and let himself go. Making all due allowance for an owner's pride, there can be no doubt that his enthusiasm was well founded.

"She was built to sail . . . a marvelous sailing machine and sea-goer . . . amazing performance in light airs; really ghosts along on a hat-full of air . . . In a good breeze she's a living, spirited, delightful performer. Her deep sharp forefoot holds her well in a close reach to windward in a choppy head sea."

In characterizing *Nixie* as "an exceptionally fast and able craft" Rantanen was definitely on the mark, according to all that others have said about her. Of course she was fast, as compared with many a modern yacht, yet not a racing machine, not built for speed and speed alone. This is one thing that should be clearly understood.

In reply to queries put to Captain Gerald Smith, and no one living is better qualified to say than Jerry, he assured me that her ability to stand up under a press of sail was phenomenal. More than sixty years on the water, as fisherman and skipper of racing Q-boats and luxury yachts, Captain Jerry, canny Marbleheader that he is, is not one to



A picture of determination, Captain Smith at *Nixie*'s helm. (80.132.2)

be wrong about a boat, nor is he one whose judgment would be influenced by the fact that it was his father who brought *Nixie* back to life. When I asked him if he could recommend a boat built on *Nixie*'s lines for general cruising, his reply was, "Absolutely!"

There is an old saying that a man is known by the company he keeps, and so it is with a boat. Consider, then, who was aboard that day in 1937 for the trial run out past Marblehead Rock, toward the Beverly shore and back, on the occasion of *Nixie*'s second launching or, if you will, "reincarnation."

At the wheel, as she filled away on the port tack across Marblehead harbor, stood Richard D. Sears, Jr., whose grandfather, Colonel Hugh Cochrane, and great uncle, A. L. Cochrane, had commissioned *Nixie*'s building and had sailed her in the early 1890s as members of the Beverly Yacht Club and the Corinthian Yacht Club of Marblehead. On the beat back into a fresh breeze that listed her hardly at all, it was Bowdoin B. ("Bodie") Crowninshield who took over at the helm.

Along for the ride that day were L. Francis Herreshoff and Howard I. Chapelle. Had Starling Burgess been able to come as he had planned, what a crew that would have made, five naval architects, counting Captain Smith.

Both Francis Herreshoff and Howard Chapelle are so well known that it is hardly necessary to more than mention their names. In 1937 Chapelle had already laid the foundations for the traditional revival

and his later reputation with his pioneer series on classic American small craft types in *American Small Craft*, published in 1935. And Herreshoff, with the designs of a number of distinguished yachts to his credit, and a local celebrity in Marblehead, must have already been building up to his *Common Sense of Yacht Design* and all the rest of that flood of inspired writing that in the 1940s was to lift *Rudder* out of the doldrums, making that magazine, so long as he contributed to it, the world's leading boating publication. Fame for B. B. Crowninshield has dimmed with the passing years. His distinguished achievements as a designer and naval architect are not now as widely known as they were forty or fifty years ago. Who today remembers that it was B. B. Crowninshield who designed the six-masted steel schooner, *William L. Douglas* or the seven-master, *Thomas W. Lawson*, the largest schooner and, indeed, the largest sailing vessel ever built? Cargo schooners, fishermen, yachts, he designed them all, and his output was prodigious. A whole generation of designers, of whom John Alden is perhaps the most renowned, sat at the feet of B. B. Crowninshield, and were known as "Bodie's" boys.

No less a yachtsman than Charles Francis Adams, in his introduction to the book *Fore-and-Afters* written by B. B. Crowninshield in his old age, has asserted that no one was better qualified than Crowninshield to open this page of history, not merely because of his professional achievements as a designer, but by inheritance as well: "From the earliest days of Salem, Crowninshields have been noted as successful ship captains and owners."

In 1801 George Crowninshield, Jr., master of the ship *Belisarius* of the East India and China trade, commissioned Christopher Turner of Salem to build him the twenty-two-ton sloop *Jefferson* to be sailed as a yacht, the first American yacht, although *Cleopatra's Barge*, also built for George and launched 21 October 1816, was the first American yacht to make a transatlantic crossing. And so it happened that on 15 June 1801 Captain George invited the Reverend William Bentley of Salem for a trial run from Salem Harbor to the Beverly shore and back. In his diary, Bentley notes that the *Jefferson* was a "remarkably fast sailing boat," further stating: "I never did sail so much at my ease in any other boat." Thus it was far from a mere coincidence that 136 years later B. B. Crowninshield, Captain George's grand-nephew, stood at the helm of a small yacht on her trial run over the same stretch of water that the *Jefferson*, with his great-uncle at the helm, had traversed so many years before.

Although *Nixie* was built in South Boston, her inspiration came from across the Bay to the north, that is from Salem, Beverly, and Marblehead. Beverly yachtsmen commissioned her design, and her designer's knowledge of boats and love of sailing, by his own telling, was kindled in Salem waters.

Writing in 1888 not long after the triumph of *Volunteer*, the third and most illustrious of his victorious cup defenders, and only three years before his untimely death, Edward Burgess tells us how it began. "My thoughts go back over nearly thirty years to a time when, as a small boy, I began sailing with my older brothers in Salem harbor. The only cabin yacht on the whole of that coast was a small schooner, the *Humming Bird*, about thirty-five feet long; and there were not more than three or four sail boats. What seemed to us then like a long cruise to Boston was made exciting by the rare glimpse of a few larger pleasure boats, the old *Mist*, *Tartar*, and *Scud*, all built by Smith of Stonington, the *Whip*, *Breeze*, and a few others whose names I no longer recollect. A few years earlier General Paine began his career as a yachtsman in a small cat boat in these same waters of Salem harbor. Our own boat was a little sloop of about twenty-one feet, the *Cassie*, built by the same Stonington builder just mentioned."



Edward Burgess (1848-1891) designed *Nixie*, as well as America's Cup defenders *Puritan*, *Mayflower*, and *Volunteer*, and 133 other yachts, pilot boats, and fishing schooners in a seven-year professional career. (*A Testimonial to Charles J. Paine and Edward Burgess from the City of Boston* [Boston, 1888])

Nixie (dark hull, second from left), several keel cats, and the cat-rigged Gloucester waterboat *Wanderer* racing off Beverly, 28 June 1890. (Courtesy: Hart Nautical Museum, MIT)

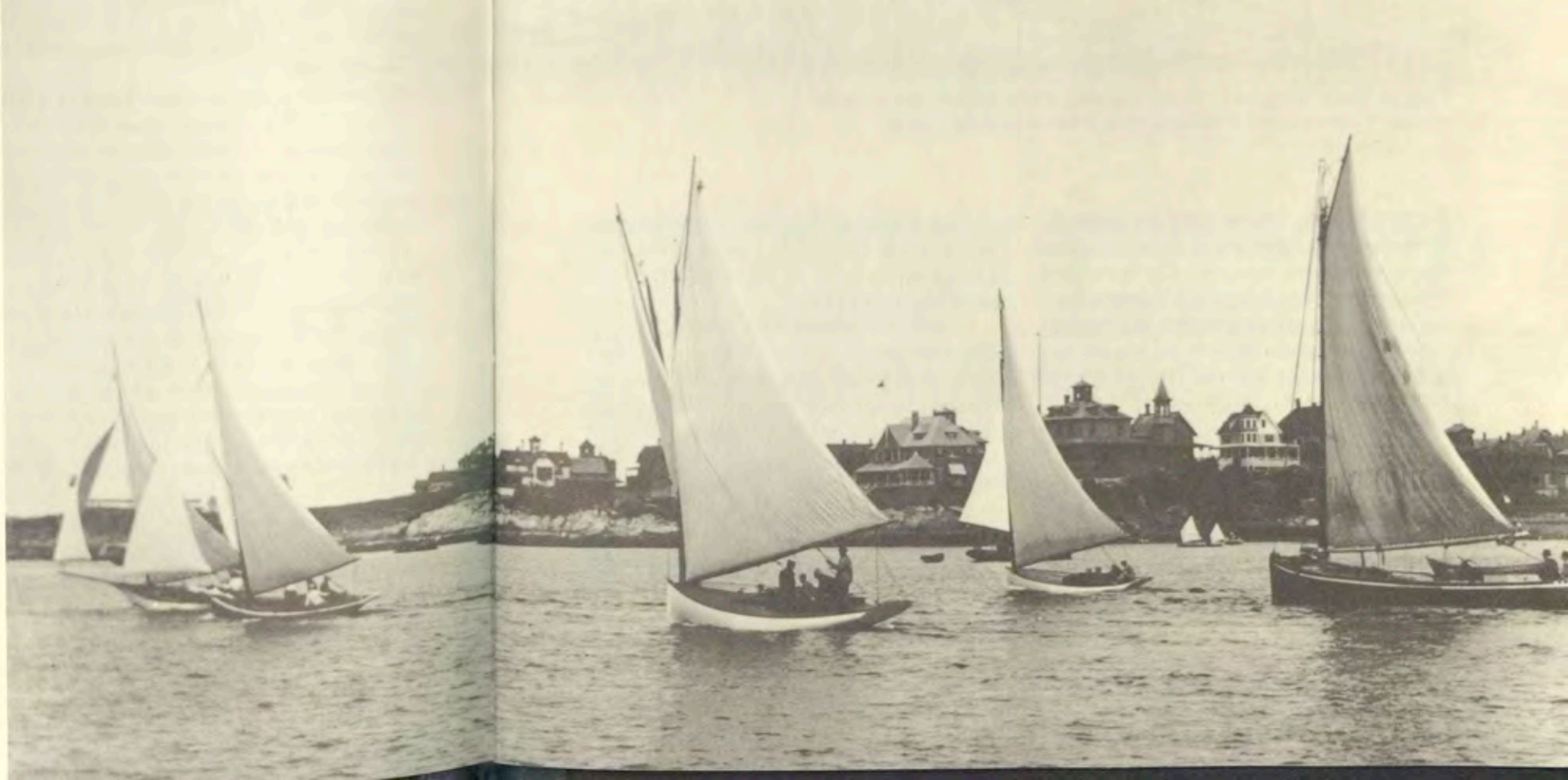
These were fond memories, and we may be sure they had a part in *Nixie*'s conception.

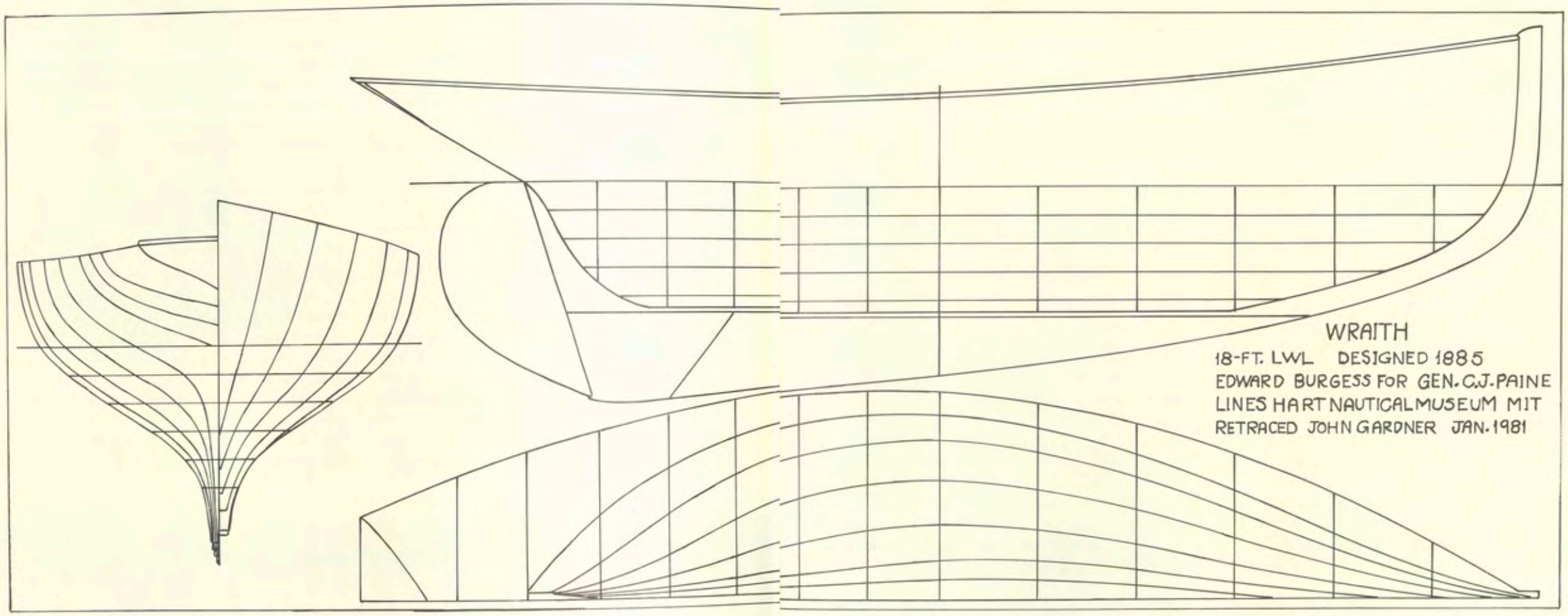
With an overall length of 23′7″, *Nixie*, launched as a keel cat, was not so very much larger than the 21-foot *Cassie*. *Wraith*, *Nixie*'s sister ship, was two feet shorter than *Nixie*. And the small cat boat in which General Paine learned to sail, was she also a keel cat? We are not told, but it is more than likely that she was. A hundred years ago keel cats were more common than in our day. Mott's *Yachts and Yachtsmen of America* (1894), pronounces the keel cat "a superior cruising boat to the centerboard cat, which is better suited to smooth water than a heavy sea."

According to B. B. Crowninshield, whose opinion in such matters is worthy of our respect, General Charles Jackson Paine, whose yachting career, as we have seen, began in Salem harbor in what was probably a small keel cat, ranks as the foremost American yachtsman of his time. A member of the syndicate that commissioned Edward Burgess to design *Puritan*, General Paine alone bore the cost of *Mayflower* and the victorious steel sloop, *Volunteer*. However, it would be a mistake to conclude from this that his contribution was solely financial, for Paine was an accomplished designer in his own right, as was established by the success of the ninety-foot *Jubilee*, designed and built by General Paine and his son, John B. Paine, two years after Edward Burgess's death. Crowninshield sums it up as follows: "General Paine put a lot of time and thought into all his boats, and it was due to him, quite as much as to Edward Burgess that the first *Puritan* was designed, later to be followed by the improved and faster *Mayflower* and finally by the still faster *Volunteer*."

Following *Volunteer*'s victory, Burgess found instant fame and was bathed in a flood of acclaim, the extent of which is not easy to comprehend in our day when yachting does not stir the wide popular excitement that it did then. A gala reception and testimonial held at Faneuil Hall and arranged by the Mayor of Boston on behalf of a grateful and admiring city brought together such a resplendent assemblage of Boston notables as had seldom been seen before, all primed with oratory that reached for the sublime. The distinguished Rev. Dr. William Everett, an orator only less distinguished than his distinguished father, took for his gambit Edward Burgess's academic specialty, entomology.

"Now, there are many remarkable things about insects;" Dr. Everett observed, "but most of all is their amazing muscular strength, which enables them to get over the ground as no other animals can. This wonderful power of locomotion has been made the subject of a beautiful little poem. Mr.





Lines of *Wraith*, designed by Burgess in 1885. *Wraith* was identical to *Nixie*, except two feet shorter. (Courtesy: Hart Nautical Museum, MIT)

Burgess knows all about these energetic little bodies. He determined to build yachts better and faster than any that ever came from Liverpool or Glasgow. He determined to do so on scientific principles. He brought to bear the knowledge that his insects had taught him in the Natural History Rooms (at Harvard), and I can give you the result in four lines:

> *"The Mersey builds her keels of steel;*
> *The Clyde her keels of flame;*
> *The Burgess lays no keels at all,*
> *But he gets there just the same."*

Thus it became apparent to what an extent in those far-off days an eminent clergyman and scholar could be affected by a mere yachting victory.

In 1981 the Burgess cup defenders are a dim memory getting dimmer, yet the solid remains of *Nixie* are very much with us. The sea does not change, nor have *Nixie*'s essential qualities, a craft consummately contrived for the sea, for its pleasures and able to cope with its rages when required. I do not believe *Nixie* will, or should, undergo yet another restoration. I would definitely not advise it. But it would be a shame if boats like her, and modeled after her, were not seen on the water again. She is a true classic, a last survivor from those feisty days when American yachts and yachting were young.

The year of her launching, 1885, was also the year in which *Forest and Stream* Publishing Company brought out C. P. Kunhardt's *Small Yachts*, the first American theoretical work on yacht design, as well as the first to deal with native American small yachts including keel cat boats. Five years would pass before Thomas Fleming Day would begin to publish *Rudder* at Watertown, New York, at first devoted mainly to sailing canoes, and five more years before the editorial offices would be moved to New York City and editorial attention focused on yachting. *Yachting Magazine* was still twenty-two years in the future. 1885 was the year the Corinthian Yacht Club in Marblehead was founded, with Benjamin W. Crowninshield, B. B. Crowninshield's father, the first commodore.

It is true that the New York Yacht Club goes as far back as 1844 and that the first organized yacht race in this country was in 1845. But yachting activity was quite limited

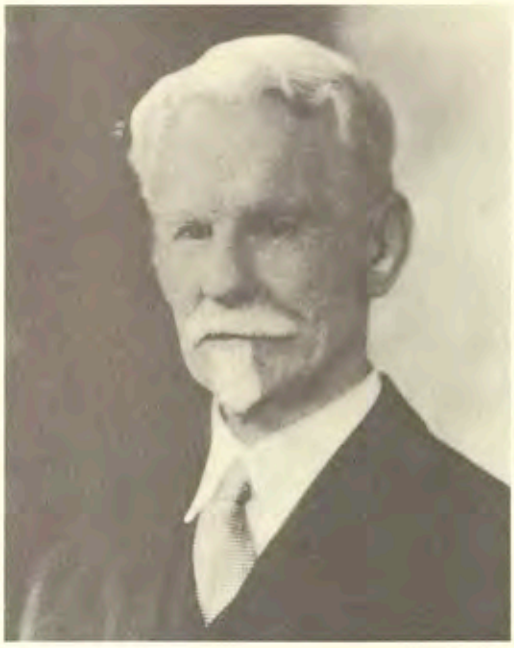
and restricted at first, and it was not until the '70s and '80s, following the Civil War, that yachting interest and activity began to be widespread. From the rapid industrial development in the North which the war produced came the leisure and the means that made the flowering of American yachting possible. It was not until the war years were behind them, and they had established themselves financially, that men like General Paine were able to direct their attention to yachting and, in a measure, to return to, and to recapture the most cherished experiences of their youth.

The survival of *Nixie*, and her final acquisition by Mystic Seaport Museum, even in her partially fragmented condition, after all the vicissitudes she has experienced over the course of nearly a century, is little short of a miracle. From Rantanen her ownership passed to Edwin K. Bennett of North Kingston, Rhode Island. Bennett was editor of the short-lived *New England Yachtsman*, in which Captain Charleton Smith's account of *Nixie*'s second incarnation had appeared, as will be recalled, and possibly it was because of this that Bennett was moved to buy her. How long he had her, and what happened to her after that is not clear. She must have fallen on hard times, for when Russell Clark, then of Chatham on the Cape, found her in Rhode Island at the beginning of the '70s, she was in a sad state of disrepair and dilapidation.

It was Clark's intention to bring her back to life a second time. After starting the job and following the investment of considerable time and money, circumstances forced a change of plans, although Clark was reluctant to stop work and could not bear to think of *Nixie*'s likely destruction if he did. Word, however, reached Frederic Tudor, M.D. of Milton, Massachusetts, grandson of Edward Burgess, who purchased *Nixie* in order to donate her to Mystic Seaport Museum as a memorial to his illustrious grandfather. That was in 1973. Since then, *Nixie* has occupied a unique place in Mystic Seaport's small craft study collection. Even in the condition in which she now is, there is much to be learned from her that is not to be found elsewhere. Even in what remains there is inspiration and guidance for present-day yachtsmen.

Rominer Lovewell: An Artist Rediscovered

STUART PARNES



The artist, ca. 1925.
(Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)

Do you recognize this man?

He was a marine artist.

He was born in 1853.

He lived in Chelsea, Massachusetts, and sketched shipping activity along the East Boston waterfront from 1875 to 1925.

He exhibited at Chicago's Columbian Exposition in 1893.

Well, don't feel disappointed. Up to a few months ago there were only a handful of people anywhere who knew who this was. Then a stroke of luck led us to the rediscovery of an artist who was nearly lost.

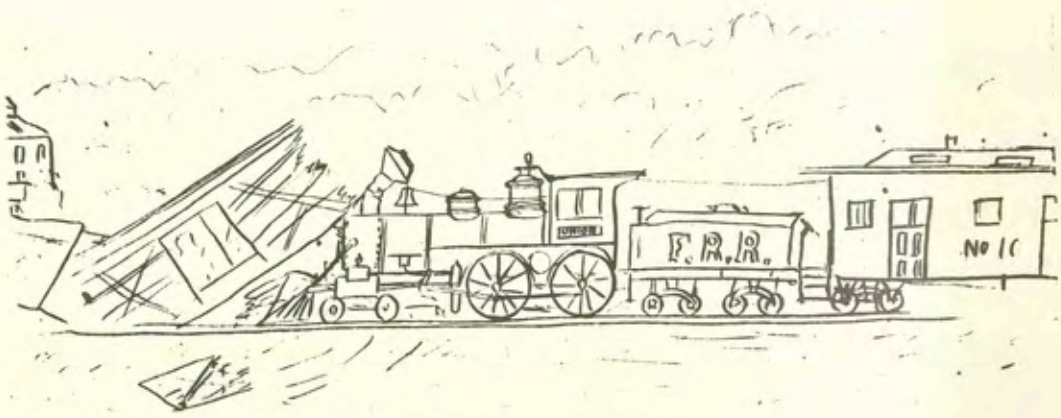
Stuart Parnes, also a native of Gardner, Massachusetts, graduated from Middlebury College in 1970 with a B.A. in Art History. He was a Thomas J. Watson Foundation Fellow in 1970-71, and joined the Seaport staff in 1974. He is currently Associate Curator for Exhibits.

During the nineteenth century Gardner, Massachusetts, was a very small, rural community. Located sixty miles west of Boston, it was not the sort of place that you would expect to produce an accomplished artist. Yet on 4 September 1853, a child was born there who would develop an exceptional talent. Named Rominer Lovewell, he was the first child of Caroline Lamb, the daughter of a farmer, and Sewell K. Lovewell, a blacksmith. The boy's great-great-grandfather was Captain John Lovewell, a notorious Massachusetts Indian killer.

For the first four years of his life, Rominer lived in the Lovewell ancestral home on Lovewell Road in Gardner. Then, in 1858, the family moved ten miles eastward to the growing mill town of Fitchburg. Sewell Lovewell had decided to leave the small forge where he worked and begin a new career as a machinist.

It was in Fitchburg that Rominer started his schooling and, according to family legend, it did not take long for the young boy to be punished by his teachers for "doodling in class."

Rominer's earliest sketchbook and scrapbook were both begun during these early years in Fitchburg, and they betray the boy's fascination with railroads and train wrecks. In those days a main railroad line reached westward out of Boston through Fitchburg, so the great steam trains were a common sight. The thundering engines and howling whistles would have turned the head of any



"Smash between the 6.20 PM and the hog train . . . ," Fitchburg. Pen and ink drawing from a sketchbook, ca. 1868. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)

Detail from one of several sheets filled with studies of vessel and rig types, dated 1876. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)



young boy, but Rominer took more than a passing interest. He captured the trains and their crews on paper.

Rominer Lovewell might have become a painter of railroad scenes had not Sewell Lovewell decided to move again. In 1871, when Rominer was seventeen, the family moved into a house at 39 Walnut Street in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Chelsea was a fast-growing working class suburb of Boston, across the Charles River and Chelsea Creek to the northeast of the city.

Sewell joined with Mark T. Greenwood to form Lovewell & Greenwood, light machinery manufacturers. It is assumed that he expected his son Rominer to join him in the business. In the Lovewell family being an artist was not considered a suitable profession for a man. Nevertheless, Rominer somehow found a way to take art classes. In 1872-73 he attended Richardson's School of Art at 460 Washington Street, Boston (opposite Jordan Marsh), and in 1874 he was instructed by W. A. Titcombe at the same address.

From the studies and sketchbooks done soon after his arrival in Boston, we can see a clear and sudden transformation in the young Rominer Lovewell. The artist turned his sights to the sea. Sheet after sheet of copies and studies show almost nothing but maritime scenes and seascapes. Drawings of vessels became more ambitious and detailed

and the marine paintings of artists like Thomas Moran were chosen as models for style and composition.

By 1876, the artist had set a course for himself. Even though he may have been working part time for his father, Rominer Lovewell was listed for the first time in the Chelsea business directory as a "marine painter." That listing would remain for over twenty years.

When Mystic Seaport opened its exhibition of drawings, prints and paintings by Rominer Lovewell, it was the first time in this century that his works had been on public view. It all started with a phone call, in April 1980.

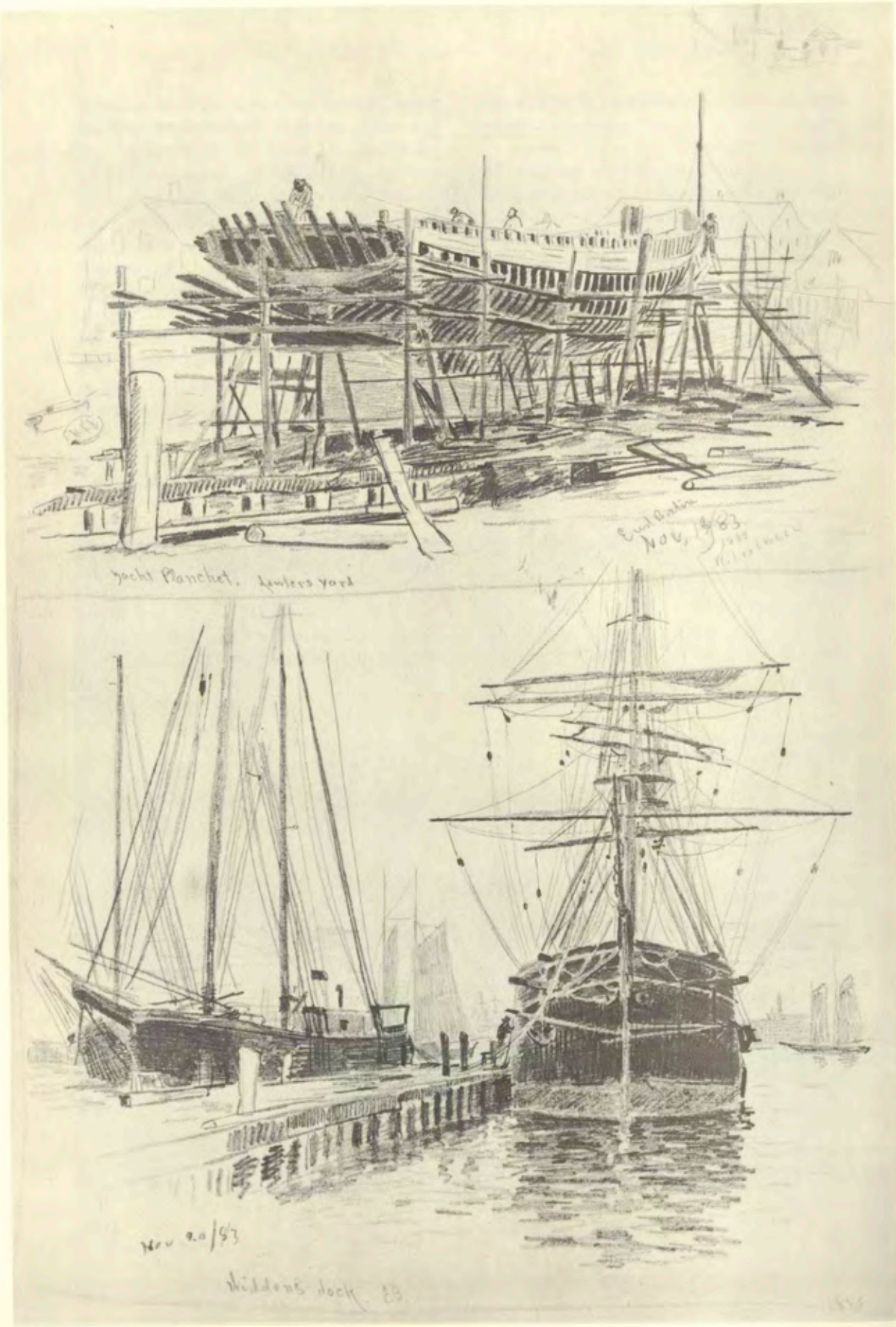
"My name is Gwendolyn McLeod. I have a box full of paintings and things done by my grandfather, and we're moving in a couple of weeks. Could you come over and have a look?"

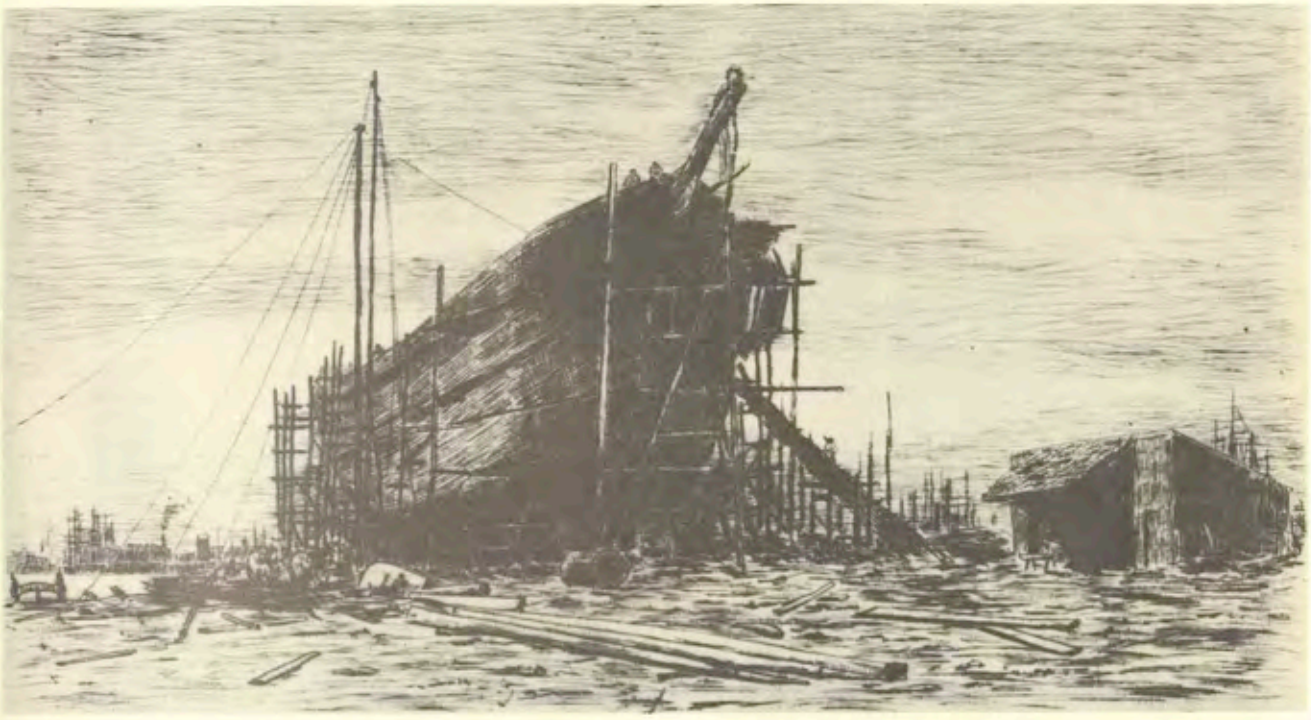
Museum curators dream about phone calls like this. What we found was an old trunk filled with letters, newspaper clippings, photographs, and stacks of unsorted drawings, etchings, watercolors, and oil paintings. A quick look through was enough to kindle the Museum's official interest. There were more than 400 works in all. Over half were detailed pencil and pen-and-ink drawings of dockside activity along the East Boston waterfront between 1875 and 1925. There were scenes of ships under construction and under repair. There were studies of marine railways and spar yards. There were views of shear legs and floating grain elevators and even a ship-caulker's boat. And most significant of all, the majority of drawings were dated and captioned with the names of docks and vessels. When we finally got them into chronological order, the group of drawings not only documented a half century of Boston Harbor shipping, but traced with unmistakable clarity the growth of Lovewell's artistic skill.

And there was more. A group of about forty different etchings, generally undated and uncaptioned, proved to be some of the

Pencil drawing dated 5 May 1881 showing Lawlor's Yard in East Boston. Of special interest are the pile of ship's knees and the set of shear legs. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)




yacht Planchet. Lawlers yard
Nov 20/83
Hiddens dock 83



This etching shows the three-masted schooner *Minnie Rowan* on the ways at the Smith & Townsend Yard in 1884. It is entitled "Sublime in its enormous hulk . . .," a line from the long poem "The Building of a Ship" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (80.107.5)

artist's best finished work. They showed Lovewell as a real master of the etching technique. Through this medium he was able to extend the dramatic potential of his pencil and pen work to produce some of his strongest images. Here we found the artist dealing with themes like the decline of sail and the takeover of iron and steel. What little notoriety Lovewell received during his lifetime evidently came from his etching. A few of the prints carried such tantalizing inscriptions as "exhibited in the N.Y. Etching Club, 1882," and at least one was purchased for publication by *Youth's Companion Magazine* of Boston.

And finally there was the color work. About 150 watercolor and oil paintings literally shed a whole new light on Lovewell's talent. There were fewer harbor scenes and more landscapes and seascapes. Many were painted outside the Boston area, marking Rominer's travels from Martha's Vineyard to Maine. Some of the early paintings seemed stiff and uncertain, but those done during the 1910s and '20s were drawn so freely and with such flowing color that they are almost impressionistic.

Clearly, we had the makings of a solid exhibition. The family agreed, adding that Rominer was probably overdue for the public recognition he deserved. It was not until much later, after weeks of dead-ends and

Opposite: Pencil drawings, dated 13 November 1883, showing the yacht *Planchet* at Lawlor's Yard, and 20 November 1883 with vessels awaiting cargo at Widden's Dock. The yacht *Planchet* has still not been found in any official shipping records. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)



This etching of two schooners heading into port is undated, but shows Lovewell's technique at its very best. (80.107.14)

disappointments, that we appreciated just how "overdue" Rominer was. No one had ever heard of him. Only two of his paintings were discovered in public collections anywhere in the country. He was not included in any index of Boston or New England artists. Libraries, historical societies, and museums from Gardner to Boston were searched, but none had anything to offer. We began to wonder if Rominer had ever really existed.

Retreating, we turned again to his artwork. Although the notations contained obvious contradictions and inaccuracies, we were able to categorize the dates and inscriptions on the drawings and paintings. The clues we could pick up were followed through. Solid leads were tracked down. Forgotten exhibition catalogs and dusty records from the Massachusetts State Archives grudgingly yielded a few supporting facts. Gradually, artistic trends and work patterns began to emerge from Lovewell's œuvre, but his personal and family life remained a mystery.

A few pieces of the puzzle were found back in Chelsea. There, Rominer's ninety-year-old daughter Edith still lives with wonderfully vivid memories of her father. Rominer married Marion Covell of Nahant in 1888. Edith, their first child, was born in 1890, and when she was four years old she contracted a severe case of meningitis and almost died. She recalled, eighty-six years later, that because of the ordeal her father gave up the etching work he was doing "for a Philadelphia company" and took a full-time job for his father at S.K. Lovewell & Co., Machinists.

This did help to explain the sudden drop

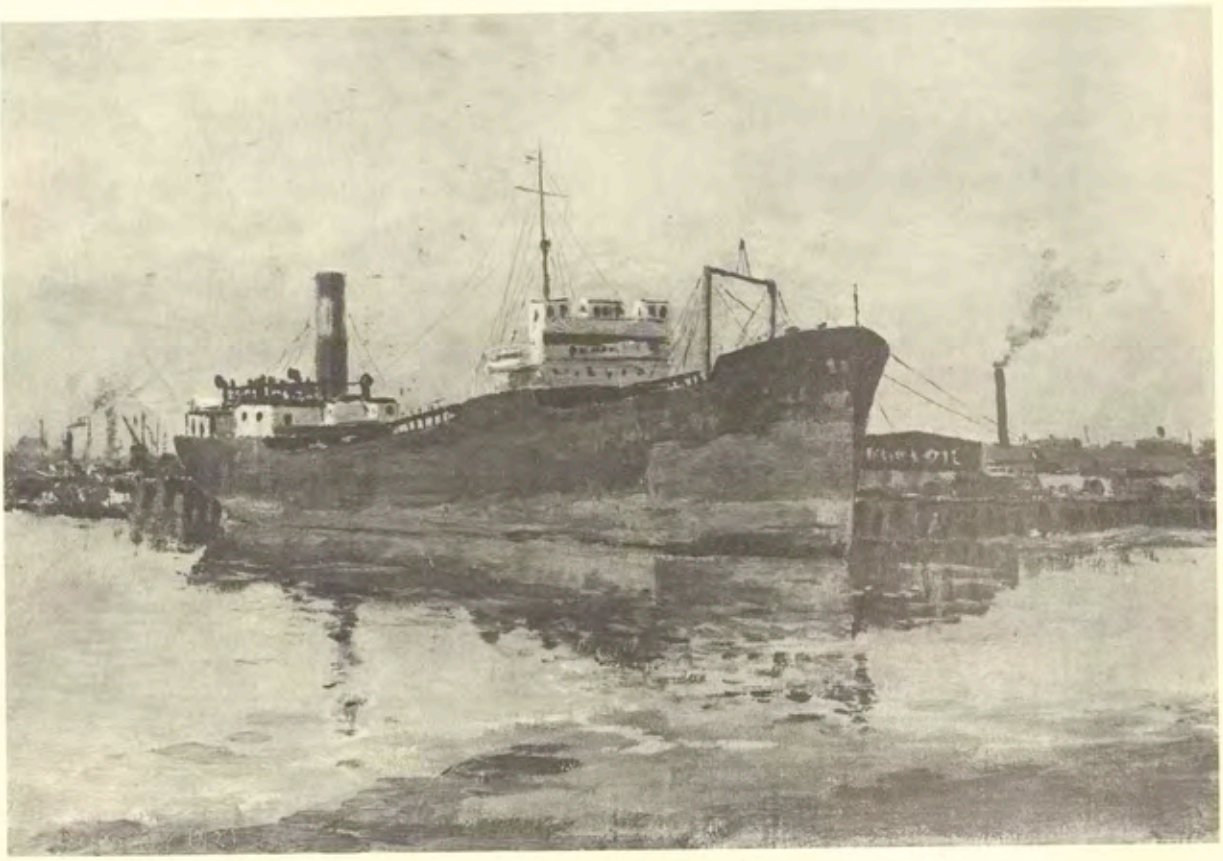
in the artist's output after 1892. It seemed that during the 1880s, before he was married, Rominer had attempted to break into the mainstream of professional art as part of the new etching movement. His inclusion in an exhibition at the New York Etching Club in 1882 might have been very significant. The club had been formed by the premier "painter-etchers" of the day to legitimize the medium of etching. Rominer was never accepted as a member of the club, although he did exhibit there again in 1884, 1885, and 1886. Yet he was one of the few New England etchers represented at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893. Likewise, the only record we have of any Philadelphia connection was Lovewell's inclusion in various exhibitions there during 1883 and 1884. Clearly something interrupted Rominer's career – possibly his marriage.

Edith had a clear recollection of the years that followed. She alone of Rominer's four children encouraged her father to continue his artwork in the little free time that his machinist's trade left him. She accompanied him on weekend excursions to watch him draw or paint. On trips to Nahant, for example, they would take the train together from Chelsea to Lynn and then board a horse-drawn "barge" that slowly made its way along the bumpy roads that led out to the beach. There, the two of them would walk hand in hand along the shore, Rominer with his paint box strapped to his back.

What a splendid memory. And yet the pieces don't quite fit. Was Rominer really working full-time as a machinist after 1894? The Chelsea directories continue to list him as a "marine artist" until 1902. What's more, the dating of his drawings and paintings from this period continue to show that most were being done on weekdays, not week-

Mayo's Lighthouse, Wellfleet, Massachusetts, in August 1886. This watercolor painting is actually a rich blaze of vivid, flowing color. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)





Oil painting of a tanker lying empty at the Texas Oil Works, Chelsea, 24 August 1921. Loosely-painted scenes like this one, with a strong play of light and color on the surface of the water, characterize Lovewell's late paintings. (Courtesy: Gwendolyn McLeod)

ends. There is still much we have to learn.

The business directories do concur that from 1902 to 1924 Rominer Lovewell was working as a machinist for the Lovewell-Henrici Company of Chelsea, manufacturers of laundry machinery.

In 1925, Rominer retired and moved with his wife to neighboring Everett, Massachusetts. There, on 26 November 1932, he died after a long heart ailment. His etching plates and small press were taken to the dump. His daughter Edith and son Percival divided the paintings and drawings they wanted and the rest were discarded or sold. Those that were saved lay tucked away until Percival's daughter thought to contact Mystic Seaport.

Now Rominer Lovewell's works are on exhibit again in greater quantity and variety than ever before, and he is beginning to receive the appreciation and acclaim that eluded him in life. The retrospective show, "The Artist Who Might Have Been," which contains over 100 examples of his works, his painting kit, and other memorabilia, will remain on view through 3 May 1981 at the Seaport. It will then travel to the Mariners Museum, at Newport News, Virginia, to be displayed 12 June through 1 September. The Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts, will present a final showing from late September to January 1982.

"Bony-Fish": The Menhaden Fishery at Mystic, Connecticut

WILLIAM N. PETERSON

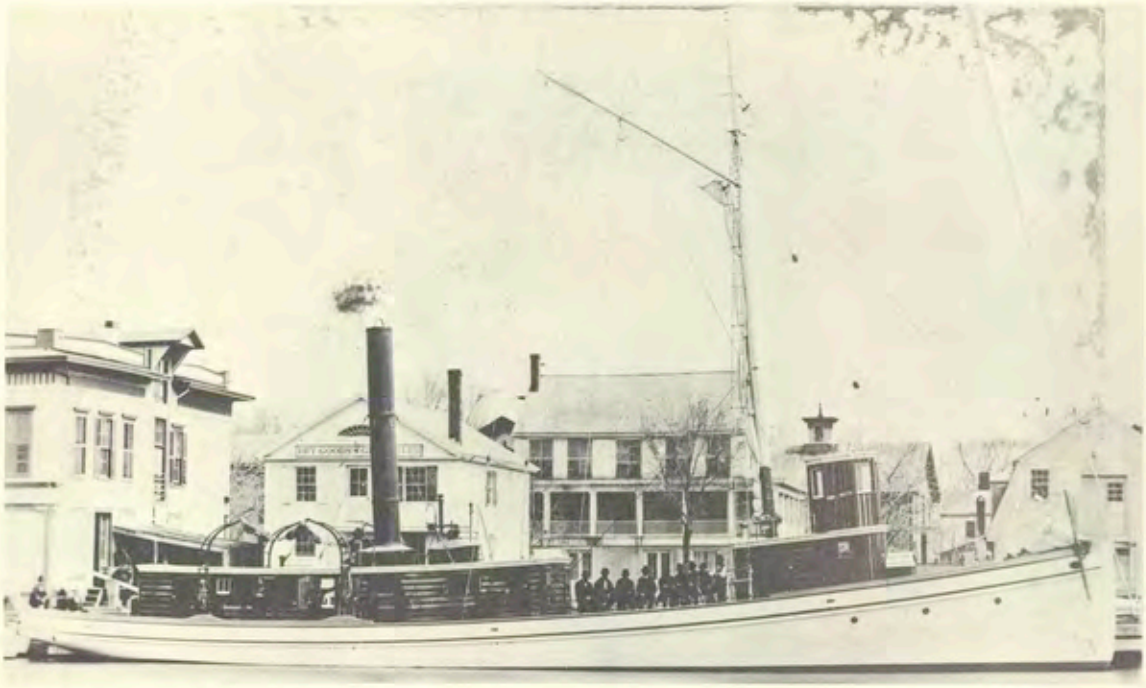
The menhaden fishery in the United States has been largely overlooked by maritime historians. It is not surprising, therefore, that its economic importance to the Mystic River region has also been neglected. It certainly has been overshadowed by studies of whaling, sealing, and shipbuilding, which are more often associated with Mystic's maritime past. Nevertheless, the menhaden fishery was a vital industry to Mystic and its environs during the last third of the nineteenth century. This fact became especially apparent as the century wore on and the other maritime industries declined or disappeared altogether.

When recently asked what he remembered about the local menhaden fishery, one eighty-eight year old Mystic native commented: "Do I remember the fish works? How could you forget it! What a stink!"[1] One hundred and seven years earlier, the editor of the *Stonington Mirror* said the same thing, but perhaps a little more politely.

> –and now the boquet [sic] de menhaden comes wafted on the breezes that blow soft o'er Mason's Isle. The quality of the perfume is unimpeachable. It is highly concentrated and a little goes a long ways. It is the most economical toilet article out.[2]

As can be gathered, processing menhaden to extract its oil and produce fertilizer from the resulting fish pumice was an ill-smelling operation. It was, on the other hand, very profitable. It was certainly profitable enough to become a basic strength in the economy of Mystic and its environs between 1865 and the First World War. For example, fully one third of all the shipbuilding still carried on at Mystic between 1875 and 1883 was connected with building sloops and steamers for the menhaden fishery. For nearly a decade, the demand for these vessels, local and otherwise, helped to forestall the eventual collapse of shipbuilding in Mystic. In 1875 alone, the shipyard of Charles Mallory & Sons launched the menhaden steamers *Aeronaut*, *Henry F. Sisson*, and *Garret Polhemus*.[3] Shipbuilders Haynes & McKenzie, renting the old yard of George Greenman & Co., built the *Samuel S. Brown* (1879) and *Edwin Dayton* (1881). Mason Crary Hill at his Pistol Point shipyard launched *Gypsy* (1876), *G. S. Allyn* (1878), *Annie L. Wilcox* (1878), *Arizona* (1882), and *Hiram R. Dixon* (1883). In addition, at least twelve other menhaden steamers were built at nearby Noank, Connecticut between 1874 and 1923. From 1850 to 1878, it is estimated that about thirty sloops were also built in Mystic and Noank specifically for the menhaden fishery.[4] Extensively involved in building these sloops were David O. Richmond in Mystic and the firm of Hadley & Davis in Noank. Richmond's boatyard was also involved in building carry-away boats, driver ("striker") boats and seine boats, as well as sloops. The following item from the 3 May 1883 *Mystic Press* reports a typical Spring day just

William N. Peterson graduated in 1972 with a degree in history from Eastern Connecticut State College. He is currently Associate Curator for Nineteenth-Century Collections at Mystic Seaport. He has also served as Curator of the Mystic River Historical Society since 1974 and has previously contributed to *The Log*.



Leander Wilcox & Company's first steamer was the *Annie L. Wilcox*, built at Mystic by Mason Crary Hill in 1878. Everett A. Scholfield photographed her at Fish's Wharf, Mystic, in May 1879. (39.2225)

prior to the opening of the annual menhaden season.

> The menhaden boats are now nearly all ready for the season's work. Mr. Richmond has had quite a job of repairing the scores of seine boats belonging to the different steamers and his yard has been alive with fishermen of the several gangs engaged in painting their different boats. Mr. Richmond is also building five new boats for the new steamer the *Hiram R. Dixon* launched last week by Mr. Hill.

Aside from the various boat and shipbuilders, other local industries sprang from the menhaden fishery. In 1879 the Mystic Net and Twine Company was started at Greenmanville, and in 1884 the Mystic Net Manufacturing Company, a seine works, was established at Pistol Point. Both companies were making seine twine and seines for many of the east coast menhaden companies. These industries, taken in conjunction with the employment offered at the various fish factories and on the fishing boats themselves, make it easy to understand the importance that this fishery had on the local economy. The Mystic correspondent to the *Narragansett Weekly* of Westerly, Rhode Island, noted on 17 January 1878, "All our shipbuilders are busily employed constructing steamers for the fishing business. This happens very fortunately, for there are many mechanics who have had little work for months."

Early in the nineteenth century, New Englanders discovered that immense quantities of valuable oil could be extracted from menhaden by boiling them in large numbers and skimming off the oil. A simple tryworks such as used in the whaling industry was all that was necessary in the beginning.

The menhaden fishery actually began in 1811 at Portsmouth, Rhode Island.[5] That year two men, Christopher Barker and John Tallman, appear to have set up the first tryworks used especially for separating



The steamer *Rowland H. Wilcox* was photographed along the west side of the Mystic River by Everett A. Scholfield, ca. 1913. She was built by Robert Palmer in 1911 at Noank, Connecticut. Compare this vessel with the *Annie L. Wilcox*, built thirty-two years earlier. (Seaport Photo Archives)

the oil. For the next thirty years, Tallman apparently remained a central figure in the progress of the new fishery. About 1840, near Portsmouth, he established the first large-scale factory with steam boilers and screw presses. He was also instrumental, along with others, in inventing the purse seine about 1826.[6]

As more efficient methods of catching the fish were adopted, larger and more complex boiling or "cooking" tanks were used. After 1870, hydraulic presses were used almost exclusively, in place of the screw presses.

The "fish scrap" or "gurry" that was left over was soon discovered to be a highly valuable product when it was dried, pulverized, and sold as a fertilizer. Often it was sold under the name "fish guano" and was a favorite of many New England farmers. Connecticut tobacco growers found it particularly beneficial for their plants. The term "fish guano" or "guano" was often used interchangeably with the word fertilizer, especially in the 1860s and '70s.

The local shoreside operation is explained in a description of the Leander Wilcox & Co. factory in Mystic, from the *Mystic Press* edition of 27 August 1885. The company had just constructed a new works following a fire which had completely destroyed their old factory seven months earlier.

> The upper story of the main building... contains in two rows fourteen large tanks, each capable of holding twenty-five to twenty-eight thousand fish, with a railway between the rows, on which are hauled up by steam power as loaded from the vessels, cars containing some four and a quarter thousand fish. These are dumped into the tanks, which have steam pipes perforated with holes surrounding and crossing their bottoms, and through which when the tanks are full steam is sent to cook the fish. When cooked and partly cooled, the fish are shoveled into powerful presses outside the rows of tanks which are operated by hydraulic pressure, and

by which the oil and water is pressed out, running into tanks below. The lower or first story, besides the engines used to run the works, is occupied by these oil tanks where the oil is separated from the water by its lighter gravity and is drawn off. The pressed scrap also, dumped from the upper story, is here broken up and subjected to still greater pressure, removing every possible remnant of oil or water and the better fitted for the further operation of grinding and drying in a steam cylinder in which it is kept stirred while hot till completely dryed, when, if the fish are cooked while fresh, it will be without unpleasant odor and ready for shipment. Where the scrap cannot be dried soon after it is made sulphuric acid is used to prevent decomposition. The oil from the separating tanks in the building is drawn into other tanks on the outside, where it is dipped out into barrels...

The Wilcox plant, it could be noted, was completely rebuilt and enlarged again in 1887 after a second fire, and in 1900 it was improved and enlarged once more.

Menhaden had been used in its raw state for fertilizer as early as the seventeenth century. (It was probably the fish that the Indians showed the Pilgrims.) It was also highly prized, from early times, as a bait fish. Even late in the nineteenth century lobstermen and cod-fishermen from Mystic and Noank often purchased it as it came in to the local factories. However, it was the immense quantities of oil that made the menhaden commercially profitable in the nineteenth century. The oil was used primarily in the leather tanning and currying industry. It was also used to adulterate other "purer" oils, such as whale and sea elephant oil. George Brown Goode believed that a large portion of the whale oil sold in the mid and late nineteenth century was actually menhaden oil or whale oil adulterated with menhaden oil.[7] Menhaden oil was also marketed extensively as a paint thinner and, to a limited extent, as a machine lubricant.

As a food fish the menhaden was never very popular, being extremely oily and bony. Locally, it was always referred to as "bony-fish," and the menhaden factories and boats likewise were known as "bony-fish works" and "bony-fish boats." Elsewhere on the Atlantic coast menhaden were known as "pogies," "bunkerfish," "moss-bunkers," "alewives," "old-wives," or simply menhaden.

The annual season ran locally from late April to mid November, with the largest catches generally coming in late summer. In Mystic, each steamer celebrated the last day of its fishing season by flying all of its flags and pennants as it came into harbor.

By the end of the Civil War the fishery had come into its own, especially along the New England and Long Island coasts. In Maine, prior to 1879, the menhaden fishery saw some of its greatest success.[8] Although the annual season opened late on the Maine coast, the migrating fish, weighing from one to three pounds, were at their heaviest when they reached Maine waters. Consequently, more oil could be extracted from Maine's late season catches. This basic fact became so tempting that two local firms from Poquonnoc Bridge, Gallup & Holmes and Gallup, Morgan & Company, established fish works at Boothbay, Maine, at least as early as 1868.[9]

Franklin Gallup and Hubbard D. Morgan of Poquonnoc can be properly credited with establishing the local menhaden fishery. Their original works, which may have been established as early as 1845, was located on Baker's Cove on the Poquonnoc River "about a mile from its mouth," just a few miles west of the Mystic River. They later moved their works to Pine Island to be closer to the mouth of the Thames River. This "Pine Island Works" was purchased in 1857 by the Quinnipiac Company of Wallingford, Connecticut.[10] After 1871 the company changed ownership again and became the Quinnipiac Fertilizer Company, with its home office at New Haven, Connecticut. This firm became one of the largest on the Connecticut shore by the end of the 1880s, and is credited with operating

the first menhaden steamer on Long Island Sound, the *William Spicer*, built in 1874 at Bristol, Rhode Island.

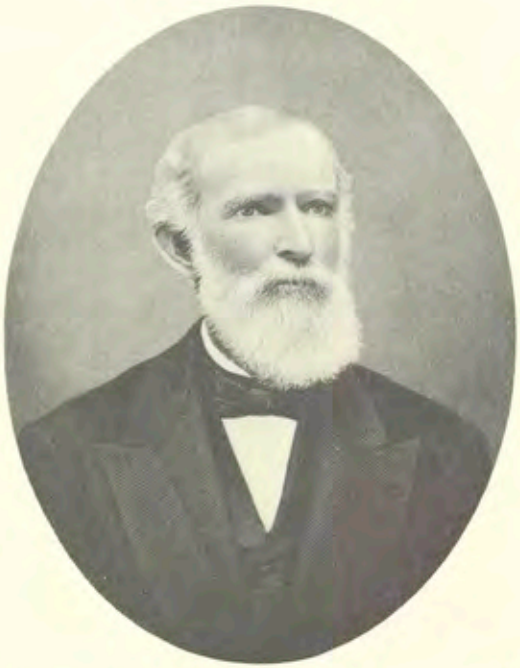
It is difficult to ascertain who was the earliest fish oil capitalist on the Mystic River. John Chapman and his son Reuben established a "kettle works" at Ram Point on Mason's Island in the early 1850s.[11] Captain John Green also established a works about the same time on Noyes Neck (known today as Latimer Point) just east of Mystic.

Two other names which appear early are Gurdon S. Allyn and Elias Wilcox. Gurdon S. Allyn began a "bony fish" factory on the east shore of Mason's Island about 1856.[12] He had probably operated a "kettle works" prior to this. This was done in partnership with Captain John E. Williams, also of Mystic. Much of Allyn's business life was spent in the menhaden fishery at Mystic. He received a number of patents for improvements on various aspects of the shoreside operations. For nearly thirty years, G. S. Allyn & Company was one of the two major companies operating at Mystic. Allyn died in 1876 at the age of fifty-nine, but the company continued under the leadership of his son, Louis P. Allyn. When, in 1883, a fire (always a danger at the fish factories) destroyed the "Allyn Company" factory, Louis associated himself with Brown & Lennen, another Mystic-based menhaden company. Later, about 1898, after the death of Mr. Brown, he joined James Lennen & Company, also based in Mystic.

Both Samuel S. Brown and Captain James Lennen were prominent individuals in the local fishery. Both had previously been associated with Leander Wilcox & Company. In fact, they were instrumental in starting a fish works for that company at Chincoteague Island, Virginia, in 1881. In the mid-1880s they formed the Atlantic Oil and Fertilizer Company, also known at various times as S. S. Brown & Company, and Brown & Lennen. They operated a works at various times on Mason's Island and at Quiambaug, east of Mystic. In 1883 they

The factory of G. S. Allyn & Company was located on the east shore of Mason's Island in the Mystic River. Although depicting the factory in 1876, this view was painted in the 1930s by G. B. Mitchell from the remembrances of Louis P. Allyn. The factory was destroyed by fire in 1883. (Courtesy: James H. Allyn)







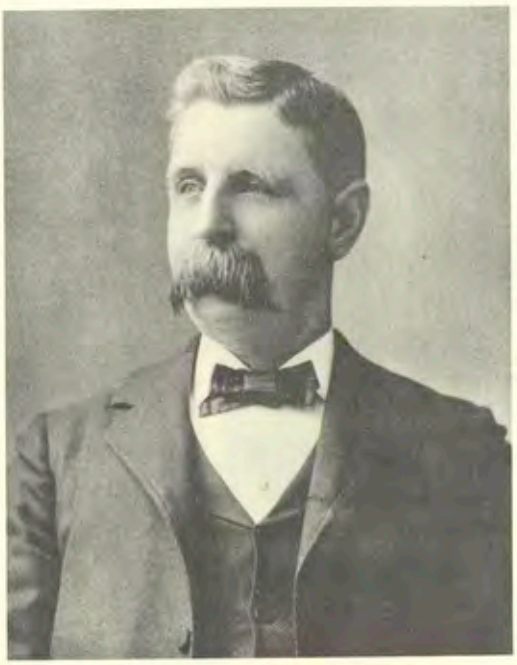
Franklin Gallup and Hubbard D. Morgan established the first menhaden works in the Mystic area, perhaps as early as 1845. Their factory was located on Baker's Cove at Poquonnoc Bridge, a few miles west of the Mystic River. (Hurd, *History of New London* [Philadelphia, 1882])

also set up a facility at Lewes, Delaware, and about 1889 they established still another works near Sag Harbor, Long Island. Louis Allyn became the superintendent of all the Brown & Lennen factory operations when he associated himself with them in 1883.

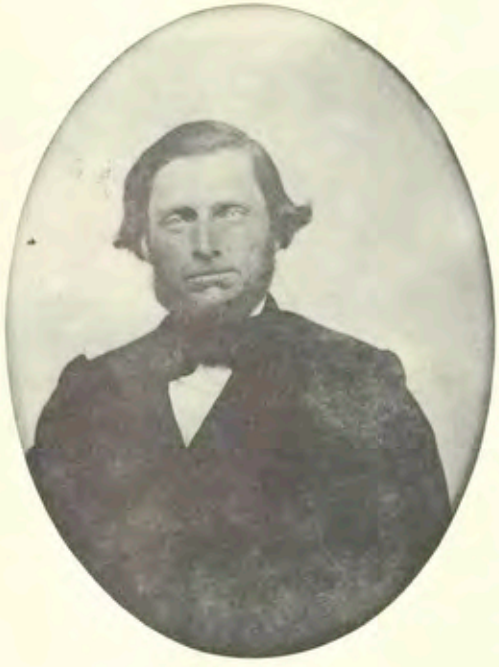
The other early pioneer in the Mystic area was Elias Wilcox. He began a factory at Quiambaug in February of 1865.[13] Elias's five sons, Leander, Elias F., Rowland, Steven, and Orrin may be credited with making the Wilcox business a success, with special credit to Leander, the oldest brother. He had charge of the company when it was still young and growing, and under considerable financial strain. In 1876 the company officially became Leander Wilcox & Co. Leander's expertise in factory operations was so well regarded that he was asked at least twice by competing companies to manage their operations as well as his own.[14] After Leander's death in 1895, the other brothers took over the active management of the Wilcox Fertilizer Company. Captains Elias F. and Rowland seem to have been the principal figures. Prior to Leander's death, Elias, Rowland, and Steven all commanded steamers for various other menhaden companies while maintaining an interest in the Wilcox factory. Rowland, for example, was captain for many years of the steamer *John L. Lawrence*, owned by Cronshaw & Wisner at Orient Point, Long Island. All of the brothers except Orrin, who specialized in sales, became successful and highly competent menhaden boat captains. Rowland, Elias F., and Steven became especially respected for their knowledge of Long Island Sound. All three had started as young boys on the Wilcox Company sloops, quickly rising to the rank of sloop captain. When steam came into the picture they made an easy transition to that mode of operation.

Sloops were used by all the local menhaden companies until the late 1870s, when steamers gradually began to come into use. The Wilcox Company's first steamer was the *Annie L. Wilcox*, built in 1878 by Mason Crary Hill of Mystic. By 1879 they were also operating the *Samuel S. Brown* and in 1882 they purchased the *Annie E. Gallup*. About this time they also added to their fleet the steamers *William Spicer* and *Kingfisher*, for use at their Chincoteague Island works. The combined fleet by 1882 comprised five steamers and about the same number of sloops. At this time all of the locally-owned sloops were either laid up or operating in southern waters.

The sloops were usually referred to as "sail gears." Each sloop or "sail gear" had one "gang" or seine crew which numbered between ten and twenty men, depending upon the size of the boats and seines being used. Each "gang" operated two seine boats and one smaller "driver" or "striker" boat. When steamers came into use, they were often categorized as "single gang" or "double gang" steamers, depending on the number of seine crews they carried.



Louis P. Allyn continued the Allyn company after his father's death. In 1883 he became associated with Brown & Lennen, another Mystic-based menhaden company, and superintended their Lewes, Delaware, and Sag Harbor, Long Island, factories. (*Genealogical and Biographical Record of New London County* [Chicago, 1905])



Gurdon S. Allyn established one of Mystic's earliest "fish works" in 1856. At his death in 1876 he was among the town's principal menhaden fishery capitalists. This photograph was taken from an ambrotype of about 1858. (Courtesy: James H. Allyn)

The sloops were usually accompanied by one or two smaller, wide-beamed sail boats known as "carraway" or carry-away boats. They were so named in this fishery because it was their function to transport the catch to the factories while the sloop stayed out to make another haul. The steamers had the great advantage of being able, in theory, to make two or three hauls in one day and still have time to steam in to the factory, but it

was not uncommon for steamers to stay out two and three days or longer if the fishing was light.[15]

The Wilcox Fertilizer Company, located at Noyes Neck (Latimer Point), became Mystic's largest menhaden operation and it continued in business, at least in name, until 1935. As time went on and the shore area became more settled, the disagreeable odor emanating from the factory became more and more of a problem. Eventually the town of Stonington passed an ordinance prohibiting the plant from operating when the wind was blowing onshore. "But," as James H. Allyn (great-grandson of Gurdon S. Allyn) notes, "they couldn't pass an ordinance prohibiting a wind change."[16]

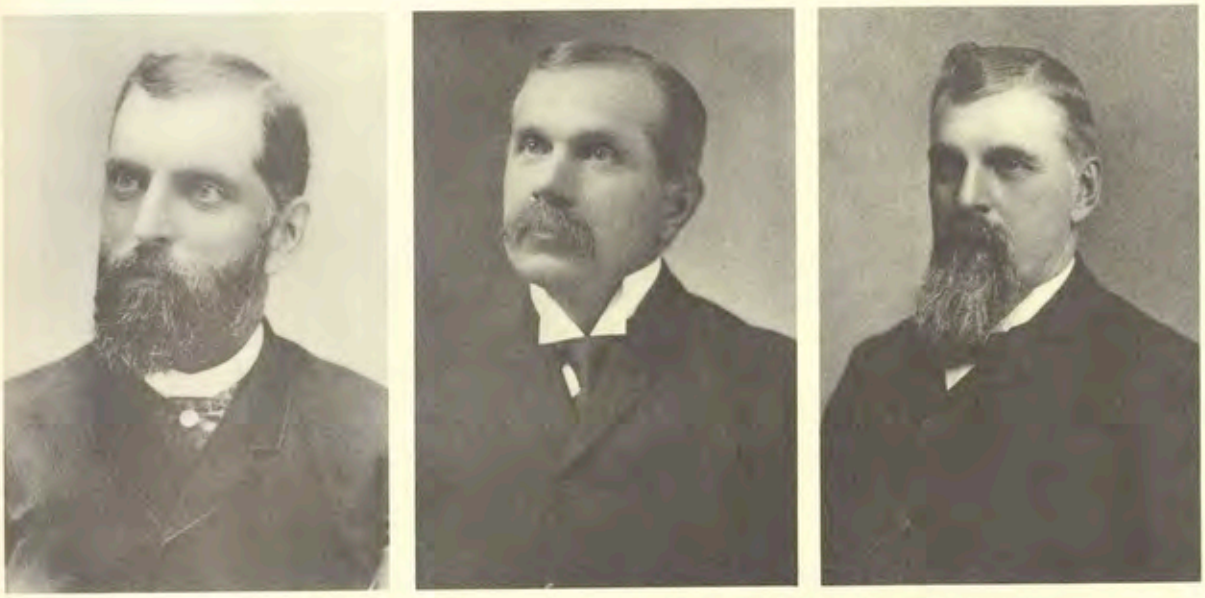
In an attempt to diminish the odor problem, the Luce Brothers Company at nearby Niantic, Connecticut, purchased the *Union*, a former railroad ferry, and converted her into a floating factory. The high cost of maintenance and the extra men required to run this offshore plant made its operation financially unrealistic, and after a few years the *Union* was sold. Gurdon S. Allyn spent the last few years of his life trying to devise a deodorized process for drying the fish scrap, but he was never able to solve the problem fully. Throughout the life of the local fishery, this vexing problem was never overcome.

Aside from G. S. Allyn & Company, Brown & Lennen, and Leander Wilcox & Company, numerous other firms were established in Mystic from time to time. Establishing names and dates for these smaller concerns is a researcher's nightmare. It is difficult because partnerships, firm names, and factory locations all change repeatedly, especially during the period between 1855 and 1880. Also complicating the picture is the fact that many individuals had investments in more than one company.[17]

While the menhaden fishery was not particularly glamorous or dangerous, it was hard work. A fisherman's day often began at 3:00 or 4:00 in the morning, when the

The Wilcox Fertilizer Company "fish works" at Noyes Neck (Latimer Point), photographed ca. 1895. The schooner is probably loading "fish scrap" to be sold as fertilizer. Note the oil storage tank on the right. (Seaport Photo Archives)





Captains Leander, Rowland, and Elias F. Wilcox were the principal figures in Leander Wilcox & Company. All three started as fishermen on their father's menhaden sloops. Aside from managing the company, all three were highly skilled sloop and steamer captains. (*Genealogical and Biographical Record of New London* [Chicago, 1905])

vessel would get under way to be out on the fishing grounds by daybreak. Once on the grounds, a sharp lookout was kept for the telltale fluttering in the water which indicated a school of menhaden. Experienced fishermen could recognize a school also by the reddish or brown color of the water around it. Spotting a school was normally the job of the mate, stationed at the masthead of the steamer. The shout, "'They play!', brings everyone to attention. 'Where away?' hails the skipper and, once directed, his long-accustomed handling of such matters soon decides whether the school is worth while. If it is worth while, he calls 'all aboard,' and there is a hustling into oilskins, the engine is stopped, the net boats are lowered, the driver boat put over, and the work begins."[18] Each seine boat carried one-half of the purse seine. Once in front of the school, they would "begin throwing out the seine, each boat going in an opposite direction around the school, the drivers in the meantime doing what they could by splashing to check the fish in case they attempt to run out of the seine."[19] Once the school was entirely surrounded, the seine was closed into a "purse." At this point, the real work began.

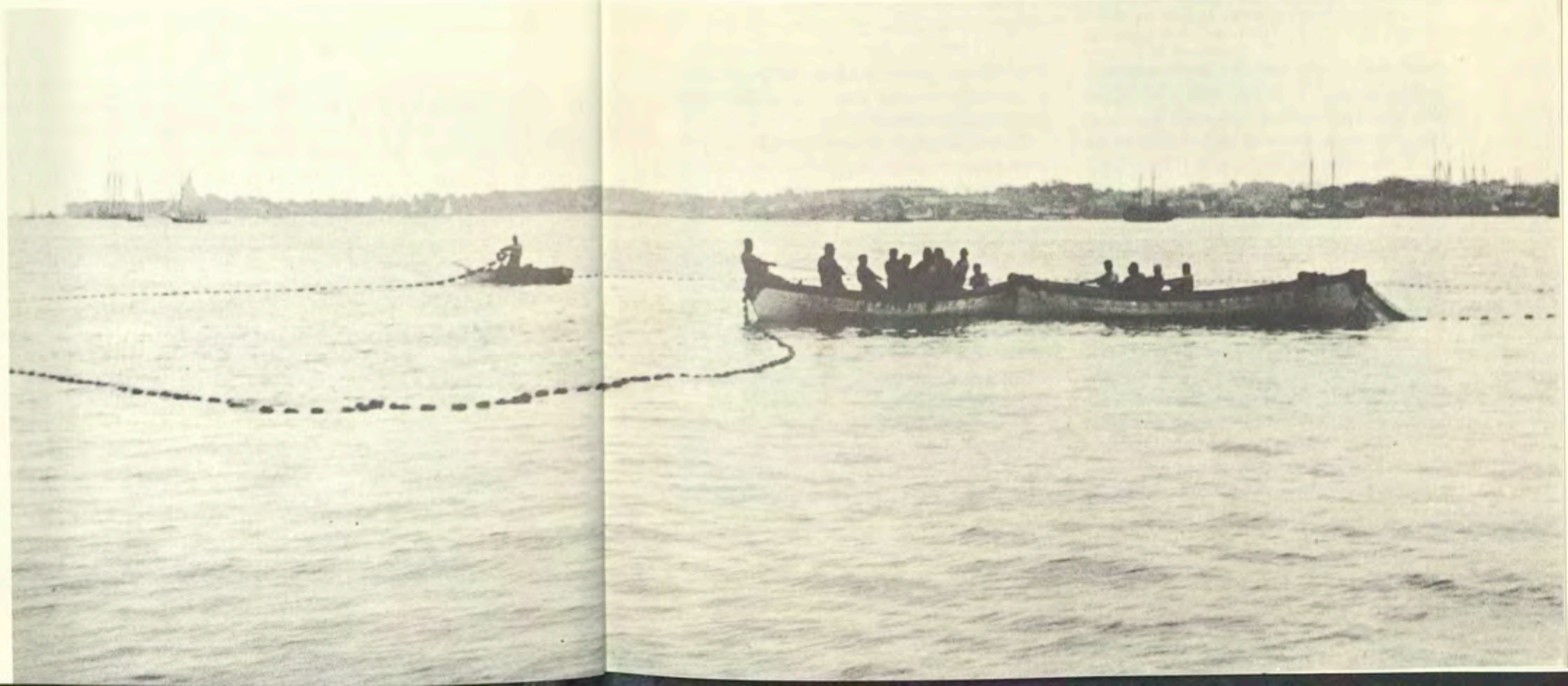
> Hand over hand, mesh by mesh the great net... is slowly hauled aboard to be stowed orderly, fold on fold in each boat. In gum boots, oils and sou'westers, with the sun beating mercilessly down, or in the rain and spray dashing in their faces, the patient crews heave away, the sole occupant of the driver boat across the way keeping his end of the net up. Hauling in is as hard as it is cautious work, for give these bony fish a slack place in the net and with a rush they rip it open and are gone. It may be an hour before the boats are ready for the steamer to come alongside. When she does, the nimble mate is first over the side to unlimber a mighty scoop net which has been lashed to the rigging, and which is now to be used in emptying the seine.[20]

These long-handled scoops were used on both the sloops and the steamers; however, the steamers also used large basket-style dip nets which were operated by a donkey engine located in the forward part of the engine deck house. Although one seine haul could bring in over 500,000 fish, half that number was more the average.

Throughout the history of the industry in



A local steamer operates its mechanically-powered dip net, about 1900. The net full of menhaden will be guided over the steamer's main hatch and emptied into the hold. (Seaport Photo Archives)



About 1905, Edward Newbury photographed this "fishing gang" closing a purse seine at the mouth of the Thames River. Note the man standing in the small "driver" or "striker" boat to the left of the two larger seine boats. (80.41.97)

the Mystic area the fishermen and factory hands were predominantly local. However, by the end of the nineteenth century there is evidence that at least some help was imported from elsewhere. The presence of black labor characterized the industry in the Chesapeake Bay region and it seems that after the early 1880s some of this "cheap" labor was imported to cut the costs of running the local factories. The *Mystic Press* in March of 1890 mentions briefly that "The colored battalion from Virginia have arrived to go to work at the Wilcox Fish Works." The following year, the *Press* again mentioned that "Four of the colored men from Virginia arrived Wednesday morning." It can be deduced that as Mystic capitalists set up operations in the south, the financial wisdom of importing low-waged help became all too apparent.

Obviously, the size of the catch was important to the crew. On the Wilcox vessels, each fisherman received a percentage of the profits from each boat load.[21] This was apparently a long-standing procedure. On 25 November 1875 the *Stonington Mirror* reported "...the steamer *Aeronaut*'s men received about $400.00 for five months' work...a fair wage." The owners and factory superintendents were also anxious to know, as soon as possible, how many fish were being brought in. While still miles away, the steamers would signal ahead. The 29 May 1880 *Stonington Mirror* explained how. "The fishing steamers at Wilcox's Neck and Mason's Island have a means of signaling the amount of the days catch to the owners at Mystic. It is done by the steam whistle, and each blast is for twenty-five thousand fish."

It is important to note that almost all of the men who were investors or operators in the Mystic-area menhaden fishery were not wealthy to begin with, and none ever really made a fortune in the fishery. However, it did provide a better-than-average living and seems to have been a secondary or partial livelihood for many, especially those who pioneered in the industry.

Gurdon S. Allyn, for example, was also a



This view, taken ca. 1885 by Everett A. Scholfield, shows part of the crew of the steamer *Annie L. Wilcox*. The *Annie L.*'s forward deck house was enlarged a few years after she was built, accounting for the differences between this photograph and the 1879 view. (Seaport Photo Archives)

merchant, quarry operator, and house contractor. Samuel S. Brown was a hardware and grocery merchant, "though for many years his main business and source of income has been the menhaden fishing business..." Elias Wilcox began his career as a lobster fisherman and later ran a packet to New York. His sons, of course, all began their business careers in the menhaden fishery, continuing in it throughout their lives. Louis P. Allyn began in his father's menhaden business and was likewise involved for the rest of his life. In fact, by the late nineteenth century he became the Secretary for the Menhaden Oil & Guano Company of Harborton, Virginia, a large commercial syndicate. Hubbard Morgan began his career as a shoemaker and farmer. Franklin Gallup similarly began as a farmer. Both of these early pioneers prospered through their involvement in the menhaden fishery.

Although great wealth did not come to any of these enterprising men, they became prominent and well respected in the community. Gurdon and Louis Allyn, as well as Hubbard Morgan, served in the Connecticut General Assembly. It can be said that these men provided themselves and their community with a solid industry which helped stabilize Mystic's economy following the decline of whaling and shipbuilding, when economic depression and viability hung in the balance.

Mystic's economy after the Civil War was given a boost by the success of the menhaden fishery, which helped sustain its economy until textile industries and a shipbuild-

ing revival in the early twentieth century re-established some of the prosperity that had prevailed in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Today there are no menhaden companies in the Mystic area, and only traces of some of the old factories can be seen at Quiambaug. The last factory, owned by the Wilcox Fertilizer Company, closed in 1935. Diesel-powered menhaden boats can still be frequently spotted on Long Island Sound, but they hail from Virginia or Rhode Island. Many older residents miss the steamers and the activity they brought with them, but it is safe to say that they don't miss the "heavily ladened . . . breezes that blow soft o'er Mason's Isle."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to express my deep appreciation to James H. Allyn, who provided valuable material on G. S. Allyn & Company. I am also in his debt for use of the painting of the Allyn Company factory on Mason's Island and the ambrotype of Gurdon S. Allyn. To Carol W. Kimball I am indebted for providing important clues concerning the Poquonnoc companies and to Robert Palmer for assistance in identifying Noank-built steamers.

I also wish to acknowledge my appreciation to Warren Murphy ("Captain Murphy" to his Mystic Seaport friends), who provided important first-hand recollections of the Wilcox Fertilizer Company, for whom he worked as an oiler on board the steamers *Annie L. Wilcox* and *Elias F. Wilcox*.

NOTES

[1]Conversation with an anonymous Mystic native, 18 February 1978.

[2]*Stonington Mirror*, 29 May 1873.

[3]George W. Mallory was the man principally involved with securing the contracts for the Mallorys.

[4]The author has compiled a list of 22 sloops, 31 steamers, and 6 other vessels used in Mystic's menhaden fishery.

[5]*New London Evening Telegram*, 3 May 1882.

[6]George Brown Goode, *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States* Sect. V. Vol. 1, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887) p. 269. The purse seine was an improvement over the gill nets and stationary menhaden weirs used previously, and greatly increased the size of the annual catch. The purse seine was described by George Brown Goode in his *Fisheries . . . of the United States*, V, 1: pp. 335-36.

> When set in the water the purse seine is a flexible wall of twine hanging from a corked line on its upper edge and extending from 75 to 150 feet beneath the surface and from 750 to 1,800 feet long. This wall is made to encircle the school of fish, and then the lower edge is gathered up by a rope passing through rings, thus forming an immense bag. . . . About 60 pounds of lead weights, each 2 ounces are fastened along the bottom of the seine at intervals of 4 inches apart. . . . In operating the seine a large, heavy weight, called purse-weight or 'long-tom' is used, and allowed to run down to the bottom . . . , thus holding together the ends of the leadline before the pursing begins.

[7]Goode, *Fisheries . . . of the United States*, V, 1: p. 368.

[8]After 1879 the menhaden inexplicably disappeared from the Maine coast and did not return for more than a decade. This caused a major disruption of the fishery. Many Maine-based companies went out of business or relocated elsewhere, principally on Long Island and further south.

[9]The firm of Gallup & Holmes comprised B. Frank Gallup of Poquonnoc Bridge and William K. Holmes of Mystic. Later this firm also established a factory at Barren Island, New York, near Sandy Hook. The other firm was Gallup, Morgan & Company, which comprised Franklin Gallup, Captain John A. Morgan, Frederick Gallup, Calvin Burrows, and A. C. G. Rathbun, all of Poquonnoc, and Alexander G. Manchester of Portsmouth, Rhode Island. Gallup & Morgan, an earlier firm with a confusingly similar name was also located at Poquonnoc.

[10]George Brown Goode, *A History of the Menhaden* (New York: Orange Judd Co., 1880), p. 492. (The Quinnipiac Company was originally established in 1852 at Wallingford, Connecticut. They relocated to Poquonnoc Bridge in 1854.)

[11]James H. Allyn, *Swamp Yankee from Mystic* (Mystic, Connecticut: Roy N. Bohlander, 1980).

[12]James H. Allyn, *Major John Mason's Great Island* (Mystic, Connecticut: Roy N. Bohlander, 1976), p. 67.

[13]Elias's brother, Elnathan, has also been credited with establishing the Wilcox family in this business possibly as early as the 1850s. There is also some indication that he may have had an operation that was totally independent of his brother.

[14]The early history of the Wilcox Company saw Elias, the elder, in partnership with Captain John Green and Elias Davis under the name of Wilcox & Green. In later years the company had many names and numerous financially interested backers. Other names associated with it are "Quiambaug Oil & Guano Co.," "Mint-Head Oil Works," "Noyes Neck Oil Company," "Leander Wilcox & Co.," and "Wilcox Fertilizer Company."

[15]A good indication of the transition from sail to steam can be seen by noting that the Mystic companies did not have any steamers on 21 May 1875, when the following was printed in the *Stonington Mirror:* "The waters about Mason's Island are alive with fishing vessels just now, some nineteen sloops and other boats [carry-away boats], besides the *Union* floating fish works and gangs, altogether making eighty to one hundred men engaged in scooping the unctuous bony-fish, and extracting their true inwardness." Exactly four years later the same newspaper reported that the two major Mystic Companies, G. S. Allyn & Company and Leander Wilcox & Company, were operating six steamers and only five sloops, and the Wilcox Company alone employed 95 men, "50 on vessels and 45 at the works."

[16]Interestingly, it was the odor problem and the popular outcry against it that directly caused the sale and dismantling of the Quinnipiac Company works on Pine Island in the late 1880s. In Mystic, the problem surfaced early, as the following from the *Mystic Pioneer* dated 3 March 1860 indicates:

> Olfactories versus oil factories – A southerly wind used to be a thing desired, but of late it has become a thing dreaded. The reason for this radical change of feeling toward that particular atmospheric current, is that instead of bringing us, as it was its wont, the pure and unadulterated and invigorating breath of spring, it now comes ladened with the disagreeable odor of fish oil. This result, we are told, has been brought about by one of our enterprising citizens, who has started at the southern part of the village, an establishment for refining fish oil.
>
> We admire the enterprise which our good friend displays in turning to such good account the most worthless of the finny tribe, but in common with others of our fellow citizens, we would respectfully suggest, that if he intends to carry on the business very extensively, a location rather more remote would be agreeable. 'Distance lends enchantment,' &c.

[17]Other firms were J. Green & Company, later referred to as the "Mint-Head Oil Works" located at Quiambaug (ca. 1868-74), "Ram Point Fish Works" operated by John and Reuben Chapman (ca. 1855-69), Whaley & Company at Poquonnoc Bridge (ca. 1870-80, name variations are Gardner & Whaley and Miner, Whaley & Company), Green & Davis at Andrew's Island (ca. 1868), C. B. Rogers Company at Mason's Island (ca. 1872), David S. Mills Company at Mason's Island (1867), the Mystic Oil Company, also at Mason's Island (ca. 1866), and Bridgham & Mull (1865).

Of the ten Connecticut companies listed by Goode in 1882, six were located in the Mystic area. They were the Quinnipiac Fertilizer Company at Pine Island, G. S. Allyn Company at Mason's Island, Leander Wilcox & Company at Quiambaug, Gallup & Holmes at Poquonnoc, and Gallup, Morgan & Company, also based at Poquonnoc. The sixth firm, Fowler & Colburn, based at Guilford, Connecticut, had a works at Andrew's Island (east of Mason's Island). Samuel Colburn operated there independently from about 1868 to at least 1874. He had previously operated a factory on Mason's Island in 1866 with Donald McDonald.

[18]*Mystic Times,* 1 September 1906. An account of a voyage aboard the menhaden steamer *Leander Wilcox,* by a newspaper reporter. The captain of the vessel was Rowland H. Wilcox.

[19]Goode, *Fisheries . . . of the United States* V, 1: p. 337.

[20]*Mystic Times,* 1 September 1906.

[21]*Mystic Times,* 1 September 1906.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Thomas Welcome Roys: America's Pioneer of Modern Whaling. By Frederick P. Schmidt, Cornelius deJong, and Frank H. Winter. (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press for the Mariners Museum of Newport News, 1980. 193 pp. Illustrations, glossary, appendices, index. $15.00.)

Given the concern voiced over the excesses of modern whaling, it is hard to imagine a person less in need of a laudatory biography than Captain Thomas Welcome Roys. Roys, after all, is generally accepted as the seminal figure in the transition from the oar and sail technology of nineteenth-century whaling to the mechanized fishery of the twentieth century. Fortunately, while Schmidt, deJong, and Winter respect Captain Roys's ability as a whaleman, they are equally conscious of the results of his experiments with explosive harpoons, steam powered whaleships, and shore-based processing plants.

As a whaleman Thomas W. Roys had few peers. He not only made extraordinarily lucrative voyages–his 1849 cruise on the bark *Sheffield* of Cold Spring Harbor alone grossed $100,000–but also took an exceptional interest in his quarry and its biology. A few examples: Roys produced a twenty-nine page manuscript entitled "Description of Whales" which was praised by Matthew Fontaine Maury and cited by Charles Melville Scammon in his classic study, *The Marine Mammals of the Northwest Coast of North America* (1874). Roys is also credited with the first description of the "bunch back" whale, a subspecies of bowhead later named for him (Balaena mysticetus Roysii Dall, 1874). Of all his accomplishments, however, the most memorable occurred in 1848 when, as master of the Sag Harbor whaleship *Superior,* Roys and his crew sailed through the Bering Strait and opened the Pacific Arctic to commercial whaling. The repercussions of this expedition were enormous: in 1849, 154 ships visited this new whaling ground, followed by 144 in 1850. The whale products returned by these vessels were valued at eight million dollars.

The authors have taken some pains in chronicling the good Captain's accomplishments in the old style whale fishery, but considerable space is also reserved for accounts of Roys's generally unsuccessful experiments with whaling rockets, hybrid whaling stations, steamships, and devices for raising sunken whales. Yet, as the authors note, while Roys personally failed in his attempts to modernize whaling, his work was closely monitored by other parties, most notably Svend Foyn, inventor of the modern whaling cannon. While it may seem a left handed compliment to Roys, much of Foyn's success was a result of his study of Roys's failure.

On the whole, this book is a praiseworthy achievement. Although information on Roys's life just prior to his death in Mexico in 1877 is sketchy, and those portions of the book dealing with the technology of whaling may be a bit turgid for casual readers, there is plenty of information on the evolution of modern whaling and Roys's participation in that evolution. The image left by his biographers is that of a pragmatist who, while deeply interested in whales and their natural history, devoted considerable time to planning more efficient means of harvesting them. It is difficult in retrospect to praise Roys's work, but as a major figure in the history of whaling he certainly deserves a study of this caliber.

Robert D. Farwell, *Director*
Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum

Rocks & Shoals: Order and Discipline in the Old Navy 1800-1861. By James E. Valle. (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1980. x + 341 pp. Illustrations, appendices, glossary, index. $18.95.)

In addressing the topic of naval justice and discipline in the pre-Civil War American navy Professor Valle has reached beyond a mere compilation and recitation of judicial statistics. *Rocks & Shoals* is, in a real way, as much a social history of America's sea service, 1800-1861, as it is a study of that branch's legal apparatus.

"Rocks and shoals" was the sailor's colloquial term for the Articles of War of 1800, officially known as "An Act for the Better Government of the Navy of the United States." Some thirty articles, supplemented by additional rules and regulations, formed the naval code of justice under

which the navy's officers and enlisted personnel served. Indeed these same articles formed the basis of the naval justice code until 1950.

Aside from occasional exposes like Melville's *White Jacket* (1850) and infrequent public scandals, the pre-Civil War navy was largely "out of mind" to many Americans; not surprising as the force was almost literally "out of sight," on far-flung duty stations, for much of the time. Valle makes the point that the navy's system of order and discipline, though arbitrary and brutal at times, was by and large a product and reflection of the times. The authoritarian temper of the period was considerably heightened by the shipboard necessity for discipline and subordination. In judicial matters the good of the ship and the service overrode most considerations for the individual.

The author discusses at length the seeming double standard of discipline dispensed through the various judicial arrangements, from captain's mast through general court-martial. Enlisted personnel not only labored under a more specific list of proscriptions, but they were much more likely to draw real punishment than officers for similar infractions. The sentence, whether a dozen lashes with the "cat" for the seaman or a written reprimand for the young officer, was always considered to be "in the best interests of the service."

Professor Valle has done naval historians a great service in exploring the records of the navy's Judge Advocate General Department, a task which by his own admission has only scratched the surface of possible research opportunities. The author's efforts are complemented by readable statistical tables, crisp illustrations, useful appendices (including a facsimile of the Articles), and a concise glossary, elements which we have come to expect of Naval Institute Press publications.

Richard C. Malley
Assistant Registrar, M.S.M.

Connecticut River Master Mariners: A Brief Record of Some of the Blue Water Shipmasters of the Connecticut River. By Thomas A. Stevens. (Essex, Connecticut: The Connecticut River Foundation at Steamboat Dock, 1979. 51 pp. Photographs, introduction, index. $3.00.)

Thomas A. Stevens has spent many years investigating and preserving the maritime history of the Connecticut River Valley, and in 1974 his efforts were rewarded in the creation of the Connecticut River Foundation at Steamboat Dock, in Essex, Connecticut. It is fitting then that the Connecticut River Foundation has issued the results of some of Stevens's research as its first publication, *Connecticut River Master Mariners.*

After a short introduction, explaining that the Connecticut River Valley provided a pool of blue water captains for the shipowners of New York City, Stevens gives brief entries on eighty-nine masters active between 1750 and 1900, with the majority concentrated in the 1825-1875 period. Known commands, business connections, and occasional anecdotes are mentioned. The eighteen illustrations include portraits of captains, ship portraits, and photographs of captains' homes.

This little book will be valuable for students of Connecticut River history, genealogists, and those interested in the lives of nineteenth-century seafarers.

Sixteen Times Round Cape Horn. By Isaac Norris Hibberd. (Mystic, Connecticut: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1980. vi + 44 pp. Illustrations. $7.00.)

Few unpublished autobiographical manuscripts of superior quality come to light half a century after they were originally written. *Sixteen Times Round Cape Horn: The Reminiscences of Captain Isaac Norris Hibberd* is such a work. The author initially writes about his first deep-water voyage on the full-rigged American ship *Jane Fish* in the year 1881. Although he was only a ship's "boy" of nineteen years of age, the vessel's officers could see that he had the capability of eventually becoming a first-class officer. Six years later, he had risen to command the lofty, three-skysail-yard ship *Cyrus Wakefield.* Hibberd's account ends in 1892 when he relinquished command of the full-rigged ship *Alex Gibson* and left the sea.

Especially interesting are Captain Hibberd's comments regarding supposed "bucko" officer brutality toward foremast hands, as well as his opinion of "hard-case" sailors. No doubt, many of the charges brought against officers of that era were substantiated; however, Hibberd's examples give the sailing ship officer's side. Discipline had to be maintained on the deep-water Down-Easters of that era. Unfortunately, gross incom-

petence among the shanghaied crews sometimes pushed ship's officers to use strong-arm methods to make the crews work. Captain Hibberd writes of one voyage where three-quarters of the crew were initially untrained, as well as being drunk. The officers forced them to sober up and get to work. At the end of the voyage, some of those sailors couldn't wait to go ashore to get revenge on the officers.

Captain Hibberd made a record round voyage, in the *Cyrus Wakefield*, of eight months and two days from San Francisco to Liverpool and return, which stands to this day. Although he doesn't say it in the text, the Captain was obviously a "driver," and to top it all, he was making his first voyage in command.

The text is easy to read, especially as the author made an effort to couch many unfamiliar sea terms in layman's language. This is an outstanding contribution to the limited number of first hand accounts available on wooden full-rigged ships of the American Down-Easter period.

Michael Jay Mjelde
Bremerton, Washington

LETTERS

I have been a member of the Mystic Seaport Museum for a good many years and have always looked forward to receiving the *Log* with great interest.

However, I must say that the article on Matthew Fontaine Maury by Douglas Stein [Fall, 1980] left me with a very bad taste.

Perhaps as a southerner I am more sensitive than I should be about the War Between the States but to speak of the "defection" of Maury and to state that his "reputation was forever tarnished by his activities during the Civil War" is ridiculous. Southern officers of all services resigned their commissions and followed their states into the Confederacy. I have never seen any other indication that they lost the respect of their colleagues who stayed with the Union.

Very truly yours,
W. R. Crutcher
Captain USN (ret)

Ever since reading your article on Matthew Fontaine Maury, I have wanted to express gratification that his services to his country are being recognized. School-books of my youth did not mention "The Pathfinder of the Seas."

When I left my native Connecticut for Richmond, I learned that his exploits were not accepted by the North because of his association with the Confederacy.

For many years the Maury and Noland families were friends. I enjoyed knowing the Commodore's granddaughter, Ann Herndon Maury and hearing her speak of the old home "Green Branch."

Referring to the current [Fall] issue of the "Log" of Mystic Seaport, I think the chart is very nicely shown on its cover, making it an instructive and distinctive publication.

I hope that you will continue writing, in the same vein, and with similar success.

Sincerely yours,
Mary Bleecker Noland





ACQUISITION

Half model of Long Point ducking skiff. Long Point, Ontario, is a twenty-five-mile-long sandspit along the north shore of Lake Erie and since 1886 has been the site of the Long Point Company, a private club for the gentlemanly sport of duck hunting. The decorative half model was donated to the Seaport by Henry S. Morgan who also donated an actual Long Point skiff. Both model and boat were made by Jack Reeves (b. 1904) whose family for three generations has been associated with the Long Point Company. Beside building models and boats, Jack Reeves has continued the family occupations of making decoys and working as a punter for the club. The skiffs were built to be used by two people. The gunner, a club member, sat in the chair with his shotgun, and the punter, a club employee, maneuvered the boat. All the items needed for a day's duck hunt accompany the model in miniature–weighted decoys, paddle, push pole, tackle box, shotgun, a sickle to cut reeds to make a hide, and even a lunch pail, pipe, and tobacco pouch. Dim: l.o.a. 31⅜", half beam 3⅜". [80.153]



GIFTS AND BEQUESTS

The development of the museum–the buildings, ships and wharves, the exhibits, books and manuscripts–give eloquent testimony to the generosity of members and other friends of Mystic Seaport Museum. There are continuing opportunities for gifts and bequests which will help assure its future strength and development.

Members of the Seaport who have not already done so are urged to perpetuate their interest in the work of the museum through a bequest. Some members will want to make a specific bequest while others may want to designate Mystic Seaport Museum as a residuary or contingent beneficiary of all or a portion of their estate.

Mystic Seaport Museum is a nonprofit institution publicly supported by gifts and grants. Contributions are deductible within legal limits for Federal income tax purposes. Inquiries regarding gifts and bequests are encouraged and may be directed to the Director of Resource Development.

SUGGESTED FORMS FOR BEQUESTS

General

I give and bequeath to Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., a corporation existing under and by virtue of a charter granted by the State of Connecticut, and located in Mystic (Town of Stonington) in said State, $ . . . . . , to be used (or the net income to be used) at the discretion of the Trustees of said Corporation.

Residuary

All the rest, residue, and remainder of my real and personal estate I devise and bequeath to Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., a corporation existing under and by virtue of a charter granted by the State of Connecticut, and located in Mystic (Town of Stonington) in said State, said estate to be used (or the net income to be used) at the discretion of the Trustees of said Corporation.



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OF MYSTIC SEAPORT

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