

The Newsletter of the Tremont Historical Society

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Published periodically at Bass Harbor, Maine. The Society is a non-profit organization whose officers are: John MacDuffie, President; Charles Liebow, Vice President; Muriel Davisson, Secretary, Michael Smith, Treasurer, Priscilla Keene, Program Chair. The Newsletter is mailed to members and contributors. Extra copies are available. Newsletter Editor is John MacDuffie.

THE STEERSMEN

By Arthur Kellam

Here is episode 4, concluding the mystery written by Art Kellam of Placentia Island, found in his desk which was donated to the Historical Society a few years ago.

Because of the unconscionably long interval between the publication of these episodes, let me recap just a bit what has preceded the events of this concluding one:

Dr. Vernon is serving the medical needs of a small coastal village. The story begins when he receives a registered letter from a law firm. The village immediately surmises that he has inherited a vast fortune, and of course will soon depart from this humble field of service.

The gossip mill gets a real boost when a letter from the doctor to someone on a very stimulating subject somehow gets mixed up with bills he is mailing to local folks. It looks as if someone is contesting the will that will make him wealthy.

Next he happens upon, while walking for exercise, a strange construction site where a foundation is being prepared. No one seems to have anything to say to him about what is going on.

Now Dr. Vernon receives a telegram which apparently offers him a job. Oddly enough, it seems that the party line had a number of patrons with handsets off the hook while this message was being read to the Doctor.

Now the doctor visits with his cousin, who happens to be the local preacher, Rev. Stone. Vernon shares his discouragement with this community where he feels he is not being accepted. The pastor seems to know things that the doctor has missed, so a bit of hint and a little larger dose of cat-out-of-the-bag happens in the next-to-last and final episodes. The purpose of the construction project becomes more clear, and the question about acceptance by the community does, too.

Can you take it from there and put together A and B to arrive at Z? Ed.

Episode Four

Vernon was staring straight at the fire, obviously affected. He seemed almost unwilling to hear any further disclosures. The minister took a lighter tone.

“There probably never was such a ground-breaking ceremony; it’s a great pity you had to miss that. Dan insisted that I do it, so down we went, with a few others, one sharp morning not long ago. He had staked out the foundation lines, much as you may have seen them, and one of Danny’s boys had managed to sink a spade right in a corner, all ready for me. However, the wind had swung into the northwest overnight, and I couldn’t even get the spade out. I broke it, trying.” He chuckled.

“I think most of us were full of the idea that we meant well, but this unlucky beginning made old Dan a little cross. He roared out some strong prose and dealt young Bob a smart clip on the side of the head. Then he thrust the mattock into my hands and stamped over to another corner, grumbling that his cat could make a better job of it than we were doing. We felt all right after this, and when I’d finished my stint, the rest fell to plugging away at it, like good ones. It’s rather slow work, but they’d been there only a day and a half, when you saw them.

“With luck, they’ll have it dug and the forms ready in time to pour the foundation during the next southwest thaw. Give it a week under straw, and then you can see how Maine men but up a building in winter, when they want to badly enough.”

“But why in winter? When did all this start?” Vernon’s voice was only a little shaky. The other laughed gently and leaned back, eyeing him speculatively.

“That is odd, isn’t it? I tried to tell . . . sit still, Charles, I’ll take it. Our busy evening.” The closing of the hall door passed unnoticed by Vernon.

When Stone returned, he remained standing on the hearth. When he spoke, his face was impassive and his voice toneless, at first.

“Summerlee and two others are coming to see you. They seem to sense some new development, and I think I know what they are going to do. Don’t treat them badly, Doctor.” Stone jerked his gaze away from his cousin, and began to pace the floor, slowly and heavily.

“Your second year, so nearly over, would have been your hardest. Mine was, too. Their little building can be viewed as enlightened selfishness, and perhaps you choose to see it that way. But I was not asked to be a selectman until five years had passed, and if the village offers you that tonight . . . it is not worth everything. It is but a small honor and an accolade – the only one they have to give. You’re in, then. Make no mistake about that. Accept it if you can; decline it if you must.”

He half turned, when he reached the door. “I have already excused myself from the meeting. To pretend to know nothing of what they have started to do for you would be a kindly deception. They need one.”

The subsequent creaking of the floor overhead was followed by a short interval of fitful typing. When this ceased, Vernon became acutely aware of the slow, deep tick of the hall clock.

He ran quickly up the stairs and stopped in the doorway of the minister's study. A small desk lamp shone on the disordered script of a sermon, abandoned again, conspicuous with its short phases and varied spacing. In cold shadow at one end of the long, low room, Stone was standing by the window, stooping slightly, with his hands clasped behind him. In the square of blackness, a pair of approaching lights appeared, dim in the slanting snow.

His voice abrupt and husky, all that Vernon could say was, "Who's been writing to himself now?"

But it sufficed.

THE END



Art and Nan Kellam, rowing their dory BLB in which they traveled from their home on Placentia Island to Bass Harbor for nearly 40 years.

Photograph by Nancy Rigdon; courtesy of E. Northwood Kenway

The Barque of Barque Beach in Bernard

by

Charlotte R. Morrill

Meredith Hutchins and I, archivists for the Southwest Harbor Public Library Collection of Photographs started researching Barque Beach in Bernard when we were gathering information about a photograph of the house there, "Grey Rocks" or "Barque Beach Inn." We wrote the following bit in our first account of the property

"Mt. Desert Island historian Ralph Warren Stanley remembers reading something about a barque in distress out between Gott and Duck Islands. [barque - A sailing vessel of three or more masts, with all masts but the sternmost square-rigged, the sternmost being fore-and-aft-rigged.] The barque was brought in to Bass Harbor and while there, broke away in a storm and foundered on what is now Barque Beach. The vessel had been built of teak in India over 100 years before she foundered. Researchers are pursuing this story. Local history tells us that trading vessels often stopped at the "Grey Rocks" dock and sold goods from the dock. The crews were said to have stayed in Bernard at the Benjamin Benson House [14 Steamboat Wharf Road, Map 17 - Lot 28, the MacDuffie house, the "Red House," in 2014]. Sometimes crews stayed at "Grey Rocks." There is a bell and a chair in the "Grey Rocks" cottage that have been handed down from one owner to another and are said to have come off the wreck of the barque."



*Barque Beach, Bernard, Maine
Postcard - unknown publisher*

Number 12484 - The Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Reference Archive

I mentioned the search for information about the wreck to the Board of the Tremont Historical Society in January. Chuck Liebow, a member of the board, went hunting and found this newspaper account, which, though mistaken in some parts, was the key to solving the mystery:

"Everyone here is familiar with the name "Old Bark." In the fall of 1862, after the abatement of a southeast gale, it was reported about here, that a wreck lay below Bass Harbor Head; Capt. Philip Moore and others boarded her, and it proved to be the English bark "William Carey," of London, Capt. Williams, bound from Callao to St. John, via St. Thomas.

The vessel being in a disabled condition, the captain ordered the pilot to take her into a place of safety. The windlass was not in working condition, and they were obliged to slip her chains.

Captain Moore took her in over Bass Harbor bar and let go the only remaining anchor; this being insufficient to hold her, she dragged and grounded upon the rocks [at Barque Beach], proving a total loss.

The historical incidents relative to the Old Bark are well worthy of remembrance. The more important and interesting is that she carried the first missionary, William Corey [Sic], to China and all little people that drop their mites into the missionary box to aid in the salvation of the heathen Chinees would do well to remember this and if possible catch a glimpse of the life size figure of William Corey [Sic] which is now preserved as a relic, and once adorned the bows of the Old Bark, and at the time of the wreck was taken off, and placed in the care of Capt. Benj. Benson. The wood of which the vessel was built was very hard, fine grain, and capable of taking great polish. It was in a remarkable state of preservation, the bark being at that time about one hundred years old. There are to

be found in the houses about here, rules, boxes, and other articles, valued as mementoes, made from this wood.
Bar Harbor Mount Desert Herald, Thursday, November 16, 1882.

Note: William Carey (1761–1834) was an English Baptist missionary and a Particular Baptist minister, known as the "father of modern missions." Carey was one of the founders of the Baptist Missionary Society. As a missionary in the Danish colony, Serampore, India, he translated the Bible into Bengali, Sanskrit, and numerous other languages and dialects. It is Robert Morrison (1782-1834), however, who is regarded as the first missionary to China.

Chuck Liebow told Ralph Stanley about the above newspaper article. Ralph discussed it with us. Armed, at last, with the name of the barque, we were able to solve the mystery and tell the story. First we found this more complete newspaper account:

The *William Carey* at the time of her wreck was one hundred years old. She was built of East Indian teak, a wood which never decays. She carried the first missionary to India, and was called after him *William Carey*.

Pieces of the ill fated craft can still be found scattered over the vicinity. Some of the wood forms part of other vessels and some adorns cottages in the way of stair railings, rolling pins, etc. Hardly a house in Bass Harbor but can show a relic of the old barque. And on the vessel which carried the first Christian enlightenment to heathen India, left her bones to bleach on the shores of Bass Harbor, in Mount Desert. President Eliot might consider this a hint that the missionary should have found his way there too; but the people of Mount Desert have enough of the missionary when they have the venerable President and his dictionary." *E.N.B. - Bar Harbor Record, Thursday, December 4, 1890.*



*"Grey Rocks" at Barque Beach, Bernard, Maine - Chair from Barque "William Carey" - October 2010
Collection of the Samuel A. Cousins Family - Photograph by Charlotte R. Morrill
Number 10758 - The Southwest Harbor Public Library Collection of Photographs*

History is not always kind to researchers, but this search proved the exception. We next found: "The Federal Cases comprising Cases Argued and Determined in the Circuit and District Courts of the United States, Book 29, Walker – Williams, Case No. 17,060 – Case No. 17, 746" published in 1897. And there, lo and behold, was Case No. 17, 688 and Case No. 17, 689.

The Master of "William Carey," Edward Williams, stranded in Maine and appalled at the wreck of the vessel under his care, now on the beach at Bernard, yielded to Wreck Master, Benjamin B. Benson Jr. (1801-1875) and Pilot, Philip Moore (1799-1880) who had hauled the vessel from the Gotts Island area, and immediately sold everything there was to sell. "William Carey" foundered off the Duck islands on November 4, 1864, arrived at Bass Harbor on November 10th. She and everything left of her cargo were sold by 4 o'clock in the afternoon on the 11th at the strong suggestion of everyone in Bernard. Her British owners, whom we have not yet been able to identify, were outraged, holding the opinion that she might have been saved or at least sold later for more money. They took Captain Williams to court, and hired "Mr. Hale and S.C. Strout" to represent their interests. Captain Williams hired "Shepley and Dana" to defend him.

The court, after exhaustively reviewing the facts, and helpfully (to us) recording them, understood the ship owner's distress, but decided for the Master of "William Carey," in February 1865, realizing that he had been rather in a fix. The decision was upheld upon appeal. The complete transcription of the proceedings is attached to the Southwest Harbor Public Library Collection of Photographs database and will soon be available for all to read.

The fate of barque "William Carey" was still remembered locally in 1979 when Mount Desert Island author Ruth Moore, who famously drew from the local stories she knew as a child for the events in her stories, used the story of the wreck of the barque and the name, "William Carey" for an incident in her novel, "Sarah Walked Over the Mountain." - "Sarah Walked Over the Mountain" by Ruth Moore, William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York, 1979, p. 38-40.



*"Grey Rocks" at Barque Beach, Bernard, Maine - Bell from Barque "William Carey" - October 2010
Collection of the Samuel A. Cousins Family - Photograph by Charlotte R. Morrill
Number 10757 - The Southwest Harbor Public Library Collection of Photographs*

Barque "William Carey" is most probably a wooden vessel built at the William Jones & Son yard in Pwllheli, Llyn Peninsula, Gwynedd, north-western Wales in 1848 and named for missionary

William Carey. There were several vessels named in his honor, but this one seems the most likely. For one thing, the builder, William Jones, was not only a major shipbuilder, but a very successful timber merchant who shipped and would have had access to all the teak he wanted. If this was his ship, she was a 659 ton vessel. We are still searching for her other measurements.

Those in the story are:

Captain Philip Moore - Pilot - Philip Moore (1799-1880) – author Ruth Moore’s great grandfather.
Captain Benjamin Benson - Wreck Master - Benjamin B. Benson Jr. (1801-1875).

Shepley and Dana for the libellant, Edward Williams, master of the barque.
George Foster Shepley (1819-1878) and John W. Dana were associated in law in Portland, Maine.
John W. Dana may have been John Winchester Dana (1808-1867).

Mr. Hale and S.C. Strout for claimant, the owners of the “*William Carey*.”
Eugene Hale (1836-1918) - member of the law office, Howard & Strout, in Portland, later of Ellsworth.
S.C. Strout - Sewell Cushing Strout (1827-1914) of Howard & Strout.

We have been unable to find the identity of Edward Williams.



"Grey Rocks" from the Water - Circa 1926
Photographer unknown - Collection of the Samuel A. Cousins Family
Number 10718 - The Southwest Harbor Public Library Digital Reference Archive

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EBENEZER EATON

From Traditions and Records of Southwest Harbor and Somesville, Mt. Desert Island, Maine by Mrs. Seth Thornton, 1938

It will be remembered that until 1905, Southwest Harbor was a part of the Town of Tremont. Ed.

Ebenezer Eaton of Sedgwick was a man of natural ability, very religious, and had conducted "meetings." He came to Southwest Harbor and preached several times and was pleasing to the people. He keenly felt his lack of education and refused ordination because of it, but a letter written by Rev. Peter Powers in 1799 says "our Association has licensed dear Mr. Eaton to preach." ... A call was extended to him in 1801. He bought 270 acres of land which included all of Clark Point ... built his house and allowed his parishioners to bury their dead on the sunny hillside on his land, first without regard to plan, but later arranged with some design, and being the first public burying place on Mount Desert Island.

Any account of the Congregational Church of Mount Desert would not be complete without a full tribute paid to the memory of Ebenezer Eaton, the beloved minister who served the church, the community and the whole island for nearly half a century. That he was not as severe toward the erring ones as most ministers of that day is inferred from a record of the first clerk's book where it is noted that on July 5, 1803 the church, after a day of fasting and prayer, felt called upon to censure Brother Eaton for "not having dealt with (a certain member of the church) so seasonably as he ought." ... Perhaps this leniency brought him more of the affection of the people and accounted for his long pastorate among them.

Mr. Eaton was the son of Theophilus and Abigail Eaton of Deer Isle. They came in 1768 from Haverhill, Mass. where Theophilus was born in 1720. He first moved to Sandown, NH, then to Brunswick, Maine and from there to Deer Isle. Mrs. Eaton, mother of Ebenezer, died in 1824, aged 102 years, 8 months at the home of her son James Eaton in Prospect, Maine.

Ebenezer's educational advantages in youth were very limited but he was a close student and his principal books, according to a letter written by his grandson Herrick Eaton, were the Bible and Henry's *Commentary*. His days when in his home were spent in study and he preached entirely without notes. He always rode horseback. He began preaching when 26 years of age.

In 1823 he yielded to the wishes of his people and consented to be ordained. After this the records refer to him as Reverend or Father Eaton.

In 1831 as Elder Eaton was advanced in years and the task of riding over his wide territory was taxing his strength, it was decided to obtain an assistant for him ... Elder Eaton now wished to resign his pastorate. His wife had died and was buried in the little burying ground on their land with a son and daughter, and the health of the old man was failing. So a call was issued on May 24, 1834 to Rev. Micah Strickland ...

Rev. Eaton soon after went to Sedgwick to visit his daughter, Mrs. Currier, and died while there, in 1841 at the age of eighty-seven. The older people of the church hoped that his body might be brought back to the town where he labored so many years, to rest on his own land by the side of his wife; but the years passed and it was not done.

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From the Editor

Being a retired clergyperson, I have a good deal of interest in the history of churches here on the west side of MDI. As the above brief article suggests, the church on the High Road in Southwest Harbor, known as the Mt. Desert Congregational Church because of its very early establishment as (perhaps?) the first church formed on the island, deserves its place in the succession of articles which we should run in this Newsletter.

We possess a much more extended biography of another clergyman, who served the Baptist Church in Center first, then the Seal Cove Baptist Church, in early days. But in one place he is referred to as Methodist, then later as a Baptist. So along with documents which we would wish to share, there are questions which bedevil us with their seeming contradictions!

This is an inquiry seeking any and all information that any reader might possess about the earliest churches, their denominations and clergy, which have been part of the history of this west side of MDI. Pictures, of course, would be most welcome, along with printed materials of any sort which were published by these churches. (Readers may remember a brief article sharing the picture, a budget, and a list of names of those associated with the Methodist Church on Wesley Ave. in Southwest Harbor, at the time while that community was still a part of the Town of Tremont.)

For example, it would be my special pleasure to develop an article on the Seal Cove Baptist Church, which still stands along Route 102 in that section of town, as to its earliest history as well as later occasions when it has been of service to the community.

John MacDuffie

In Memoriam—Mary Jones (1937-2014)

Mary Guild Leighton Homand Jones spent the last years of a long and productive life in Bass Harbor, where through vision and a great sense of design, she renovated a turn-of-the-century fisherman's cottage, making it both comfortable and a feast for the eyes. Her contributions to life and an appreciation of history on Mt. Desert Island included the design, planting and care of the MDI Historical Society's heirloom garden in Somesville; the establishment of a nature trail skirting the upper regions of the Marsh in Tremont; the cataloging of the architectural work of Fred Savage, one of the island's turn of the century "summer cottage" architects; the cataloging of historically significant homes in Southwest Harbor; helping to plan and establish MDI's Acadia Senior College; and recently, while serving on the Board of the Tremont Historical Society with her dear friend Muriel Davisson, leading an effort to record the oral histories of longtime residents of Tremont and Bass Harbor. She also served as President of the MDI Historical Society, and as a member of the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission.

The Directors of the Tremont Historical Society acknowledge the value of Mary's time of service, brief as it was before the onset of her illness, and the legacy of the Oral History project to which she was devoted. Further, the Board is gratified that the family suggested memorial gifts might be made to the Tremont Historical Society.

Excerpted from the Mt. Desert Islander, April 4, 2014 issue

BOOKS FOR SALE!

| <u>Author</u> | <u>Title</u> | <u>Price</u> | <u>Plus 5.5% Tax</u> |
|---|--|---|---|
| NEW! | | | |
| Capt. Ray Williamson | Maine Windjammer Cruises <i>Keeping the Tradition Alive</i> | 48.00 | 50.64 |
| | 11" x 14" "coffee-table" book filled with photos of schooners in old and newer times, pursuing the windjammer trade pioneered by Capt. Frank Swift in the 1940's and thriving today. | | |
| DVD | | | |
| Chummy Rich: Maine Boatbuilder | Members | 14.95 | 15.77 |
| | <i>The Building of Andromeda</i> | | |
| Peter B. Blanchard III Photos by David Graham | We Were an Island <i>The Maine Life of Art & Nan Kellam</i> | 27.95 | 29.49 |
| Raymond C.S. Finney | Summers with Percy <i>A Biography of Percy Reed</i> | 15.00 | 15.83 |
| Dean Lunt | Hauling by Hand <i>History of Frenchboro</i> | 25.00 | 26.38 |
| Christina Gillis | Writing on Stone <i>Gott's Island</i> | 24.95 | 26.32 |
| Ruth Grierson (text) Richard Johnson (photos) | A is for Acadia | 15.95 | 16.83 |
| Wayne Libhart | The Jury is Out The Jury is Excused | 10.00 14.95 | 10.55 15.77 |
| Virginia Libhart | The Enchanted Land Carrie's Dream (ages 12-15) Carrie Makes Waves (ages 12-15) Makin' Do (ages 12-15) | 8.95 8.95 8.95 8.95 | 9.44 9.44 9.44 9.44 |
| Ruth Moore | The Weir Spoonhandle The Fire Balloon Candlemas Bay Speak to the Winds A Walk Down Main Street (NEW) Time's Web (<i>poems</i>) | 14.95 13.95 15.00 10.95 10.95 10.95 13.95 | 15.77 14.72 15.83 11.55 11.55 11.55 14.72 |
| <i>Ruth Moore, native of Gott's Island, whose novels received the following plaudit from the New York Times: "It is doubtful if any American writer has ever done a better job of communicating a people, their talk, their thoughts, their geography and their way of life."</i> | | | |
| Sven Davisson, Ed. | Foley Craddock <i>Stories by Ruth Moore and Eleanor Mayo</i> | 14.95 | 15.77 |
| Sandy Phippen, Ed. | High Cloud- <i>Letters of Ruth Moore</i> | 16.95 | 17.88 |

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|---|--|-------|-------|
| Paul S. Richardson | The Creation and Growth of Acadia National Park | 29.95 | 31.60 |
| Wendell Seavey | Working the Sea <i>Autobiographical</i> | 15.95 | 16.83 |
| Sheldon "Smitty" Smith | Memories of a Lifetime (poems) | 10.00 | 10.55 |
| Craig Milner & Ralph Stanley | Ralph Stanley: Tales of a Maine Boat Builder | 24.95 | 26.32 |
| Tremont Women's Club Muriel Trask Davisson, Ed. | Two Tall Tales | 9.95 | 10.50 |
| <i>Serially written by 24 members of the Tremont Women's Club, 1940's and '50's</i> | | | |

Book Orders should be sent to Tremont Historical Society, P.O. Box 215, Bass Harbor ME 04653. Please add shipping costs of \$3.00 per book, and 50 cents for each additional book in the same order.

The charge for shipping the Chummy Rich DVD is \$3.05.

We also have many copies of a booklet published in 1998, "The Historic Homes of the Town of Tremont," with photos and historical facts on 85 structures in the Town of Tremont. These booklets are available free on request. If mailed, we ask for a donation of \$1 to cover mailing costs.

The following Response Form gives readers of the Newsletter an opportunity to show support for our work in recording Tremont history and making various artifacts and materials available to the public through the Country Store Museum. Membership by payment of dues is only one way of doing this. Another is by responding to our Annual Appeal each year in late summer or early fall. For those who live in the area, we invite your offer of time and effort to help by staffing the Museum or work in other areas of interest to you. Please let us know of your interest in contributing to the fulfillment of our Mission.

RESPONSE FORM

Please clip and mail to Tremont Historical Society, P.O. Box 215, Bass Harbor ME 04653

Yes ___ I/we wish to begin membership in the Tremont Historical Society

Yes ___ I/we wish to renew membership for another year.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$10.00 per person for annual dues.

Please make checks payable to Tremont Historical Society

Dues, or contributions to the Annual Fund in any amount, provide membership through the next June.

Please list names of all persons for whom dues are paid, or all donors of contributions.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Check if this is a summer address _____ If different, please enter winter address below:

Address _____

E-mail address for meeting notices ___ or this Newsletter ___ (please check which)

MISSION STATEMENT
Adopted June 24, 2002
By the Membership
Tremont Historical Society

The Tremont Historical Society shall be dedicated to preservation of the history of the towns of Tremont and Southwest Harbor and adjacent islands. It will achieve this mission by gathering, cataloging, preserving, and making available to the public historical materials, such as genealogies and information showing the growth and development of the towns, as well as artifacts.

Tremont Historical Society
P.O. Box 215
Bass Harbor ME 04653

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