

BEALS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF BEALS ISLAND SCHOOLS

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The following is Part II of another article in the series, "Time and Tide," researched and compiled by Daniel F. Davis (Historian), Beals Historical Society, entitled "A Brief History of Beals Island Schools. Its purpose is to preserve local history for current readers and for future generations. Sources for this installment are: Town of Beals Comprehensive Plan, August 2003; 150 Years of Education in Maine by Kermit Nickerson, Deputy Commissioner of Education, State of Maine; a 2001 interview by Velton Peabody with the late Vernal Woodward of Beals; memories of Beals as shared by Erroll G. Woodward (published in the BHS Newsletter); and this author's personal knowledge of the evolution of local education. Part I focused mainly on first-settler Manwarren Beal's commitment to the pursuit of education for himself and his family, along with his influence on education as Beals' first settlers. Part II deals with the island community's efforts in providing opportunities for educational advancement at the local level.

PART II: Providing for Local Educational Opportunities

It is assumed that Manwarren and his wife, Lydia Welch, educated their children in a home-school setting, as did his descendants; but as the population increased, so did the demand for a more structured educational system to serve the needs of the youth. It was with that in mind, and the fact that the federal census of 1850 revealed that nearly half of the heads of households on Beal's and Great Wass were unable to read and write, that the governing Town of Jonesport made a concerted effort to provide greater access to formal schooling on its territorial islands. Thus followed the establishment of several facilities for this purpose, scattered throughout the island landmasses.

With that in mind, we have attempted to compile what is hoped to be some pertinent information regarding the schools on Beal's and Great Wass Islands in particular, going back a number of generations—an effort that further shaped Manwarren's Quaker perception of a culture that enhanced the individual,

as well as the community at large.

With the passing of our older generations, it is impossible to garner first-hand detailed information regarding the schools on the two islands that make up the Town of Beals. However, a few verbal and written recollections have been handed down through the years, and with additional research and a certain amount of speculation, a few connections have been made between what is known and what has been lost.

It is hard to state with any measure of certainty when the first school was constructed on the islands, or where it might have been located. We do know,

BHS will be hosting their Fall program with a presentation given by Renee Gray and Debbie Welch regarding their most interesting European tour. Come hear Big Ben strike the noon hour and watch the changing of the guards at Buckingham Palace and much more.

The program will be held at the Beals Town Office on October 4, 2024 at 6PM.

UPCOMING PROGRAM MEETING

BHS Heritage Center Hours:
Monday – Thursday
9:30AM to 1:30PM.

however, that McLane refers to some of the early schools in his book *Islands of the Mid-Maine Coast* (a source cited in the Beals comprehensive Plan of 2003). Additional information has been obtained from the *Jonesport Register of 1905*. Having said that, we will be using McLane as our primary source.

According to McLane II, there were no public schools on the mainland (of what would become the Town of Jonesport) or on the islands of the Moosabec Reach (Long Island, Evans Island, Vass Island, Head Harbor Island, etc.) as of 1832, although home schools with visiting

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PERSONALIZED BRICKS

Any time is a good time to purchase personalized bricks for either the Veteran's Monument Park or the Patio. For the 4"x 8" brick, you have three lines each with 21 letters and spaces for \$75. The 8"x8" brick offers four lines with 21 letters and spaces for \$125. The Veteran's brick information includes the rank, name, branch of service, war and years served. You can be creative with the Patio brick. It can be your favorite Beal's Island memory, memorialize your loved ones, honor the living, a school memory, etc. It's your choice with the patio brick. Please find the personalized brick application attached. Thank you!

teachers were in existence. By 1848, three schools had been built, all on the mainland of Jonesport. The date of the first school on Beal's island is not known, although there were two schools in Beals in 1869 and one at Slate Island Harbor on Great Wass island in 1891. The Machias Union reported on May 17, 1881, that the residents of Slate Island District on "Beale's Island," Jonesport, voted to build a school building in that year. The lumber and materials were indicated to be on site at that time, and Mr. Jordan S. Wright of Indian River, Addison, was to do the work.

The location of the Slate Island school, based on Velton Peabdy's interview with life-long resident Vernal Woodward, was out on the point at Slate Island Harbor (on the lower end of Great Wass Island), although some maintain it was at the head of Slate Island Cove (Harbor) on Great Wass. We do know, however, according to McLane that the Slate Island school was closed in 1890 and moved to its new location adjacent to the beach bordering Alley's Bay, also known as "the hauling out place," and there became the Alley's Bay School. Vernal Woodward recounts that his mother, Rose (Alley) Woodward, attended school at Slate Island Harbor, a school being necessary since a number of families lived there "year 'round", fishing the adjacent waters of the Western Bay and living off the land, along with those who lived there and on Slate Island seasonally.

The land for the relocation of the Slate Island (Cove) School to Alley's Bay was deeded to the Town of Jonesport by Isaac and Rebecca ("Betsy") Alley, dated June 30, 1898, for the sum of \$50, and refers to a boundary stake driven twenty feet from the "North East corner of the School House." This would indicate the Slate Island School had already been moved to that site as of 1898. That building was used as the Alley's Bay School until the "new school" was built in the field behind Levi and Adeline Alley's home, just a few hundred yards east. That school is now the home of Chad Libby.

The "new" Alley's Bay School was constructed and opened in 1905 and was included in the list of assets (Schedule A), valued \$1,325.00 plus fuel at \$42.00, to be turned over to the newly incorporated Town of Beals. Having attended that school, this writer can offer a few details that might be of interest to the reader. The "new" school was located in what is now the Libby residence, on land adjacent to "the heath," just across Alley's Bay Road from the Wesleyan Mission (formerly the Reformed Baptist Mission). It was a single story building with a bungalow style roof and small bell housing (later removed) over the main entrance facing down the field in a northwest direction. Students entered a foyer that served as a cloakroom, and to the right was another small room that served as a paper and storage room. A porcelain water container was kept there, which was filled, at least part of the time, with water that Levi Alley brought (out of the kindness of his heart) in a galvanized bucket from the well just across the field. There was one main room that originally accommodated grades 1-8, but was later downsized to grades 1-5.

There was no indoor plumbing at the school, but a divided hallway connected the main room with two adjacent outhouses, one for the boys and one for the girls, on the eastern side of the building. Each spring, after school closed for the summer, someone (Clifford Alley, for many years), would open the compartment under the two toilets and drag the heavy wooden boxes down back and bury the contents, rendering them suitable for another school year. There was a large open playground to the north of the school where we students would play ball and shoot marbles, and the woods and rock outcroppings provided an expanded playground that went all the way to the Iron Mine and Pool down back. A flagpole stood just to the north side of the entrance of the school that some of us boys climbed as a special challenge when the teacher wasn't looking—or guardedly after school hours. The swing

sets were always in use with someone often pushing us as hard and fast as possible, only to release ourselves from the seat to fly through the air, seeing how far we could go before landing.

A rather humorous, but enlightening story of the hardships associated with educational facilities in Beals and Great Wass, has its setting in the 1950's at the Alley's Bay School, which in its early days only accommodated in its eight grades 20-30 students at any one time. The school was heated by a tall, potbellied coal stove in the early decades of the twentieth century. (Wood may also have been used.) Often a responsible eighth grader was assigned the task of arriving early to build a fire to make the one-room school as comfortable as possible for the day. (My father, Ralph O. Davis, Sr., served in this capacity at the end of his time there.) The inadequacy of the heating source for the high-ceilinged open room caused students to wear their winter coats and mittens for all or most of the day.

This adverse condition continued on into the 1950's, with complaints from the teacher continuously falling upon deaf ears among the school committee and superintendent. One board member in particular made it abundantly clear that she would not support replacement of the coal stove with central heating, since it was a small, one-room school and such expense was unnecessary. This issue was cleverly addressed one bitterly cold winter night when one of the board members who supported the improvement invited the contrary minded member to attend a school Christmas program put on by the students. Despite being clad in her heaviest winter garments, the holdout nearly froze to death during her mere one-hour visit. The next day, she relented and rallied her fellow board members to order a new oil-fired furnace to replace the old potbellied stove. Although it did not fully remediate the heating issues, it made school life a lot more bearable and the outerwear was able to remain on the hooks in the cloakroom at the front door,

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of the Great Wass District in the Town of Beals.

A second and much larger school served the children at the "Head of the Island" in Beals, and was active from sometime in the mid- to late 1800's until a new school was built in the center of town. Woodward recalls that the "old" (original) school was located below the Lenfestey farm, near to the main road (Bay View Drive), about where Luther Beal's home is now situated. It was a two-story building, but Woodward indicated the upstairs was not used as classroom space. Susie (Beal) Carver was the teacher there, at one time, as well as Viola Alley, wife of Erastus Alley. The school accommodated all eight grades. When the "new" school was built in the center of town (around 1914), Newman Wilson, also a teacher at Beals, bought the old school, tore it down, and used the salvaged materials to build his house in Jonesport.

The Jonesport Town Report of 1912 gives reference to this second school, stating that action was taken to appropriate \$1,000 for the "new" Beals School, which was not completed as of 1914. It was later listed as an asset of the Town of Jonesport on Schedule A, dated July 31, 1925, to be conveyed to the Town of Beals upon its incorporation in 1925. It served as the elementary-grammar school and was enlarged in 1925 to accommodate Beals High School when the two towns separated. It served as the local high school until 1968 when it was consolidated with Jonesport High School to form Jonesport-Beals High School on the mainland at Snare Creek just off Route 187. Prior to its expansion, Woodward recalls there were two huge doors on the east side facing what is now Stanley Beal's Trap Shop. The town's fire engine and equipment were housed in the basement and later moved into the "hearse house," located at the north end of the Beals Village Cemetery. (According to Woodward, that building was later purchased by Erroll Woodward and moved to a lot on the western side of what later became Octavia Alley's Store (that store replaced in more recent years by Calvin Beal's Boat shop). The hearse

house eventually became a home, said to be now owned by Erroll's daughter, Kay (Woodward) Seefeldt.

Kay's brother, Erroll G. Woodward, wrote some time ago of his memories of the school at Beals in an edition of the BHS Newsletter. In that article, Erroll recalls it as an attractive building, located between where the present Beals Town Office and the BHS Heritage Center stand today. The two entrances were on the east side facing Ami Beal's store (more recently Stanley's Trap Shop). This writer's recollection, however, based on photos of the original structure, puts the main entrance on the north side with the "Cracker Box" gym and upstairs classrooms added to accommodate the high school. The archway above the double doors remained in place and served to frame space for the stage for the old gym, which was used for school plays and other activities, as well as public entertainment, including traveling country singers and the like. Movies were often shown in the "old gym," both for the students' entertainment and that of the public. While the downstairs housed grades 1-3, the upstairs provided for grades 4-8 and the high school, consisting of one main room and a science lab that doubled as a small classroom. That the entrance was on the north side of the school is further supported when compared to the former Reformed Baptist Church as seen in at least one older photo. That building faces north and is almost parallel with the school. Once the school was enlarged, the entrance faced the east toward Ami Beal's store. Erroll also relates that school started at 8 A.M. and ended at 4. Those who lived nearby walked home for dinner at noon, while others brought their lunches with them to eat during the one-hour break.

A small belfry stood atop of the building for many years with a trap door leading to it. It was used during the war as a lookout site for passing aircraft, but was later removed. When the town was incorporated in 1925, the building was doubled in size to accommodate the high school, rather than to continue sending students by passenger boat to

Jonesport High School on the mainland. Providing an island high school was the primary reason for incorporation in the first place. Ascending and descending vertical ladders at the ferry wharves was extremely risky, and the walk to the landing sites (as much as two miles) was brutal in the winter, especially for young girls dressed properly in the day in skirts, blouses, and winter coats.

Beals High School had a small gymnasium on the first level (slightly lower than the main floor) that was often referred to as the "cracker box," due to its inadequate size. The ceiling was low, as well, which meant an ascending basketball would sometimes hit and be deflected out-of-bounds. Visiting teams frequently complained about its limited space and volume and disliked playing there. This was remedied in 1963 upon the completion of a new, concrete block gym which was constructed on the western side of the school and ran the entire length of the building, giving lots of floor space and ceiling height for many exciting games against neighboring competing teams. The new gym was used from 1963 until the school closed in 1981, hosting the first Beals High School graduation in 1964. The entire structure was razed in 1982 (after being condemned as structurally unsound and contaminated from years of leakage that often flooded the court). Much of the material was salvaged for reuse by Bo and Penny Beal. The old school, along with its "cracker box" gym had served the community well for many years. Audiences packed the little gym for local talent shows, school programs, movies, and numerous well-known country singing groups and entertainers of the 40's and 50's, such as Hal Lone Pine. After the closing of the old Beals School, a new K-8 school in the Mill Pond was built in 1980 and is still in use today. (Beals High School had already consolidated with Jonesport in 1968 and had taken up residence in a new building, Jonesport-Beals High School, at Snare Creek on the mainland. With the demolition of the old Beals school, the lot was made available for

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the relocation of the Beals Town Office and the construction of the home of the island's historical society's Heritage Center.

Other schools were located on Beal's Island and Great Wass Islands, one of which was the Flying Place School, situated just north of the Flying Place where Nancy Berry later made her home, and more recently owned by Josh Kelley. The Flying Place School was established in 1876, and when it closed, was moved to Alley's Bay and served as the Consumer's Cooperative Store, organized and incorporated by local citizens, with the profits going to its members according to the number of shares owned. Gertrude Kelley served as bookkeeper and clerk, along with Muriel Kelley, for a number of years. When the Cooperative Store disbanded, the building was purchased by Vernal O. Woodward, who operated it as Woodward's Grocery, along with Warren Peabody as the head clerk. Woodward enlarged the building, doubling it in size. It was operated as a grocery/variety store under other names after Vernal went out of business.

According to Schedule A, a document stating the assets of Jonesport at the time of Beals' incorporation and separation from the Town of Jonesport, dated July 31, 1925, the Flying Place School was still located at the Flying Place and was conveyed to the Town of Beals at a value of \$350.00, plus fuel at \$21.00. Woodward recalls in his interview with Peabody that Hannah Kelley was the teacher at that school and taught there for a number of years until her employment at the "new" Beals School in the center of town.

There was a tiny school located on French House Island in Moosabec Reach, off the eastern point of Beal's Island on outer edge of Alley's Bay, but no information has been forthcoming concerning it. At one time, French House Island was a thriving little settlement Island, complete with houses and businesses connected with the sea. There was a natural spring there that provided water for the residents, a source used by many on Beals and Great Wass

during extreme droughts when private wells ran dry. The Heritage Center has a crude map of French House Island, showing the locations of the homes and businesses that existed there at one time. Most of the houses were moved to Beals and Jonesport when the settlement was finally disbanded for reasons unknown to this writer.

Another school was said to be located at the Sand Cove on the lower end of Great Wass Island, but little is known of that structure. Since people lived along the shores of Great Wass seasonally, and some all year, it is conceivable that a school would have been needed to serve the families in the surrounding area prior to the construction of the Slate Island Cove School in 1881.

There was also a small school at Black Duck Cove, according to Vernal Woodward. Sylvina (Carver) Alley Woodward, Blanch (Gould) Alley, and possibly Nella (Alley) Gower and Wellington Alley, may have attended that school. Again, with the year 'round residents, in addition to the seasonal campers, a school would have been needed in that section on the lower end of the island, since transport to other island schools would have been most difficult and inconvenient.

One of the highlights of attending the island's schools was the annual visit of missionaries from the Maine Seacoast Missionary Society, incorporated in 1905 and headquartered in Bar Harbor. Prior to the construction and opening of the Beals Bridge in 1958, the Mission's boats, including the Sunbeam, would dock at one of the many wharves on the waterfront and provide much-needed services to the island's residents, including medical and dental assistance, emergency transportation, distribution of Christmas gifts for children and the elderly, religious ministry, volunteer work, and visits to the schools to promote and facilitate educational programs involving healthy food choices, good sanitary practices, distribution of vitamins, and supplying seeds in season for hands-on experiences in home gardening. Edith Drury was one such missionary who endeared herself to the

children of the island with her many visits over the years and her unique ability to tell stories that both entertained and inspired children of all ages—teachers and adults included. Some of her whimsical stories still live on in the hearts and minds of many of us even today. (At a later time, we would like to feature the ministry of Ms. Drury in the BHS Newsletter. Any related memories our readers might have to offer would be most welcome.) In addition, Cecilia Piper, who was also a special and much admired missionary to the islands (and former missionary to Alaska), would sometimes serve the coastal islands in the absence of Ms. Drury.

It is also interesting to note that in 1915, the State of Maine, in conjunction with the Federal Government, extended educational opportunities to children living at the numerous light stations scattered along the Maine coast. This was accomplished through a traveling "Lighthouse Teacher," who would make visits to each light station and remain several days at a time. During her absence, parents were responsible for maintaining a routine schooling, following the plans and instructions left by the itinerant teacher. This plan worked well for the younger children, while those of high school age in many cases were afforded lodging on the mainland in order to further their education at an advanced level. Although Libby Island and Nash's Island benefitted from this service, among others, it is not clear if Mistake Island (Moose Peak Light), located just east of Great Wass Island, participated in this service. The Maine Seacoast Missionary Society was also instrumental in providing services to the children living on the lighthouses along the Downeast coast.

A great deal of additional information is yet to be garnered concerning early education in Beals, but to date it has not been obtained. If any of our readers have any information to share (including clarifications and corrections regarding this article), please feel free to contact us at Beals Historical Society, so that we can make changes to the historical record.

AN ARTICLE ABOUT BHS HAROLD GOWER BOAT,

Written by Velton Peabody

I usually slept in the northwest bedroom upstairs, while my great-grandmother Lucy Harding, grandmother Ina Beal's mother, occupied another tiny upstairs bedroom. At the other end of the upstairs hallway was a larger bedroom that served as the first home for my parents, Clyde and Arlene (Beal) Peabody, before I was born and for a short while afterwards. The room was quite well suited for an apartment in that day, providing as it did a small anteroom that I recall served for many years as a bedroom for my grandparents' visiting grandchildren. This "apartment" had its own closet and a wooden dry sink. The most fascinating room of all for me, however, was the "store room" at the head of the stairs. It was always crammed with all kinds of family treasures. A night with Grandmother and Grandfather Beal was not complete without at least a peek into this room. Over the years I saw a spinning wheel beneath years of accumulation, old ornately framed portraits of relatives whose identities no one could remember, old clothing that would have made a great gift to a theatrical company and miscellaneous parts of beds and other pieces of furniture, along with canning jars and outdated Sears catalogs. Perhaps my greatest find of all, years later, was a set of brass running lights that I was told came off my grandfather's lobster boat.

The call to an early breakfast on those special mornings usually came from my grandmother. "Velton, it's time to get up," she'd call from the bottom of the stairs. By the time I was dressed and downstairs, the breakfast table in the kitchen would be set for Grandfather and me. His lunch pail, packed with an extra sandwich or can of Vienna sausages, a banana and a bottle of Hires root beer or Nesbitt's orange soda for me, would be waiting by the door.

Soon, before daylight, we'd be out the door, on the way to the skiff for the first leg of a day's lobstering trip. The skiff, a rather nondescript utility boat of perhaps eight or ten feet in length, was an open wooden craft with a flat bottom and three thwarts or crosswise seats. My grandfather would occupy the middle seat, facing the stern, as he rowed the craft generally seaward while I kept a careful eye forward to be sure he wasn't going to hit some protruding rock or the remainder of the wreck of the vessel Abbie C. Stubbs as we rounded Calvin Beal's Point on Hick's Head on our way to his moored lobster boat, the "Velton."

I suppose it was only natural that he would have my name painted on the bow. I was, after all, his first grandchild. The Velton was the eleventh built by Harold Gower, the fifth one that year. Gower's business register, owned by Douglas Dodge of Beals, indicates that the "Velton" was 32 feet long and eight feet wide, small by today's standards for lobster boats. She was open except for a canvas hood and an open frame cabin

that afforded the captain and passengers some protection from the wind and the salty spray. Total cost: \$470.

As we secured the skiff to the mooring and headed for Pig Island Gut and the Eastern Bay, we could see the lights coming on at other fishermen's homes on Hicks' Head. Lined up along the shore were the homes of Calvin Beal, Eben Walter Alley, Archie Alley, Herman Backman and Isaac Seavey, all of them related to both of my my grandparents by blood or marriage. Soon we would pass the Alley's Bay Cooperative store, where my grandparents owned shares and where they did most of their grocery shopping. The store still stands, now much expanded, beside the Beals Town Landing.

A little farther along, as we passed through the narrow stretch of water separating Pig Island from Great Wass, we'd pass the home of Ralph Davis. This one, a frame structure somewhat larger than others in the neighborhood, had been moved some time before from the Back Field, where it had served as my grandparents' first home. It was difficult for me to envision how this house could have been floated from one section of the island to another, as was the practice, I was told. One of the houses I grew up in at Alley's Bay, known as the rain splitter for its steep roof, had been moved in this way from Head Harbor Island.

Soon, we would move slowly past the homes of Uncle James Alley, my grandmother's brother, and the home of Uncle Andrew Alley, the oldest man on the island. He was not really my "uncle," but everyone called him that, probably out of respect for his advanced years and his kindly, saintly appearance. For me, Uncle Andrew was the picture of old age. He seemed like someone left over from a much earlier period. He was, in fact the last living grandson of settler John Alley. I can still picture him sitting quietly, whittling those tiny wooden pegs lobstermen used to place in the claws of lobsters to prevent their damaging each other or, perhaps more importantly, from grabbing their human handlers. Uncle Andrew died in 1954 at age 97, but memory of him lives on. The point of land where he spent the closing years of his life with his son and daughter-in-law, Clarence and Elnora Alley, is still known as Uncle Andrew Alley's Point.

As we slipped past the last houses on Great Wass and past tiny, uninhabited Alley's Island to our right, we entered the Eastern Bay. The sun was beginning to climb above the horizon, above the cliffs of Grand Manan Island in Canada, and it was becoming easier to distinguish one island from another. My grandfather's 100 or so wooden lobster traps, each marked by a wooden buoy painted red and white, were strewn mainly along this eastern shore of Great Wass, all the way south to Freeman's Rock. I remember that landmark

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Beals Heritage Center



Beals Historical Society Membership Application

Please check one: Renewal New

Name(s) as you wish it to appear on membership card and member roll on website:

(Please type or print clearly)

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Type of membership (Please review all types and check the one that applies)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual Annual | \$10 annually |
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Over and above dues, I wish to donate _____ for __ operating expenses, __ building fund, or __ endowment fund. Receipt and membership card will be sent to you.

**Instructions: Please print, complete and mail this application, together with tax-deductible check or money order payable to Beals Historical Society to:
Membership Chairperson, Beals Historical Society, P.O. Box 280, Beals, ME 04611**

Annual memberships are for the calendar year and expire Dec. 31.

well, because of the gulls and cormorants and other birds that congregated there. Grandfather would slap an oar on the deck of the boat to make a loud noise as we passed and great numbers of birds would scramble into flight.

Perhaps another reason this landmark is so fresh in my mind is that by this time in the day, perhaps 10 a.m., we had made dozens of stops to check lobster pots. My grandfather would slowly approach a buoy, taking great care not to entangle another fisherman's trap line in his wheel. The boat engine now on idle and the boat slowly turning and rocking in its own wake, he would use a narrow wooden pole with a hook in the end to grab the rope connecting the buoy with the trap, pulling the trap line, hand over hand, until the trap broke the water's surface and was manually lifted onto the side of the boat to reveal its content. Small lobsters and big ones, those that did not fit the size range that made them legal, were returned to the sea. Legal lobsters were laid carefully in a container on the boat's flooring, crabs went into a pail for Grandmother to cook, while sea urchins, star fish, sculpins and other creatures of little or no value were tossed back into the sea.

I would pay particular attention when Grandfather approached two traps that had been specially marked, one for Grandmother and one for me. We were to get the earnings from any keeper lobsters coming from those. I was reminded of this practice years later when I read Erskine Caldwell's "God's Little Acre," in which one character digs for gold on his farm. In the novel, the farmer sets aside an acre for the church, with the idea that if the gold were discovered on that acre it would benefit the church. But he keeps moving God's acre around and it is never dug up, so there is no chance the church will benefit. Not so with Grandfather. The special traps were clearly marked with our names and though the traps might be moved around a bit during the lobster season, he checked them the same as he did his own.

Perhaps it was the smell of the ripe herring and other foul-smelling fish in the bait tub, or the rocking of the boat, or the shifting horizon, or the undigested soda in my stomach, or a combination of these factors. But by about mid-way through the day, my head would begin to spin and I would head for the side of the boat to "feed the fish," as they say. I was, and still am, especially prone to motion sickness, on land, on sea and in the air. But this seasickness sticks in my mind as the worst. I recall thinking, even wishing, as I leaned over the side of the boat, that it would be an act of kindness if someone took me by the heels and dropped me overboard. I think it was in such moments that I realized it could never depend on the sea for a living.

The run up the bay, back toward Pig Island Gut and home, was always welcome. There was the anticipation of being back on firm land, seeing family and friends. But first, there was the trip to Jonesport or Beals Island to sell the lobsters

and obtain more bait and fuel.

The waters of the Moosabec Reach, between Beals and Jonesport, were smoother than those of the Eastern Bay. On this leg of the journey, we might make several stops, at Bert Look's, George Beal's, Jonesport Packing Co., or the Underwood's sardine cannery in Jonesport or Vernal Woodward's lobster wharf on Beals. One of my favorite stops was at George Beal's wharf to sell lobsters or re-supply for the next day. While Grandfather was handling his end of the business, I would find my way up the stairs to the business office where the secretary, Vina Noyes, sold candy on the side. Another favorite destination was the William Underwood sardine cannery, which was located where the Coast Guard base now stands, at the Jonesport end of the Beals Bridge. While my grandfather waited in line for his turn to fill his bait tubs with cuttings from the sardine operation, I would pass the time fishing for the countless harbor pollock attracted by the spillage from the factory operations. There was no limit then to the number of these tasty little fish I could take home for pickling and drying in the sun and it was not uncommon for me to fill my grandmother's clothesline with them.

Soon, the "Velton" would be back on her mooring off Hicks' Head and I would be back home in Alley's Bay, prepared to report to Grandmother how many lobsters we had caught that day and how many of those had come from our personal traps. By this time, early afternoon, everyone would be up and about and I would be left wondering: Why do lobstermen have to begin the day at 4 a.m.?

My grandfather fished from the "Velton" for many years, from as early as I can remember until he retired from the sea. He sold her to Clarence Alley of Beals. Over the years, she changed hands many times, going to Carl Presley, Russell Batson and Allan Alley of Jonesport, Ben Bean of Beals, Burton McGuire of Cutler and John Williams of Columbia Falls, among others. She bore several other names, from "Arlantine" to "Turk" to "Rascal." She was used to fish from the Western Bay of Beals to Cutler. But now she is coming back home to Beals Island, a few hundred feet from Barney's Cove, where she was built. Eventually, she will be displayed by the historical society that I helped found 10 years ago. That was years before I had any idea that the "Velton" might be made available for historical display.

THE CURRENT BHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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