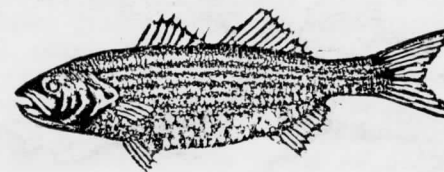


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THE STORY OF PASQUE
AND
THE PASQUE ISLAND CLUB
BY ALICE FORBES HOWLAND

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THE STORY OF PASQUE and THE PASQUE ISLAND CLUB

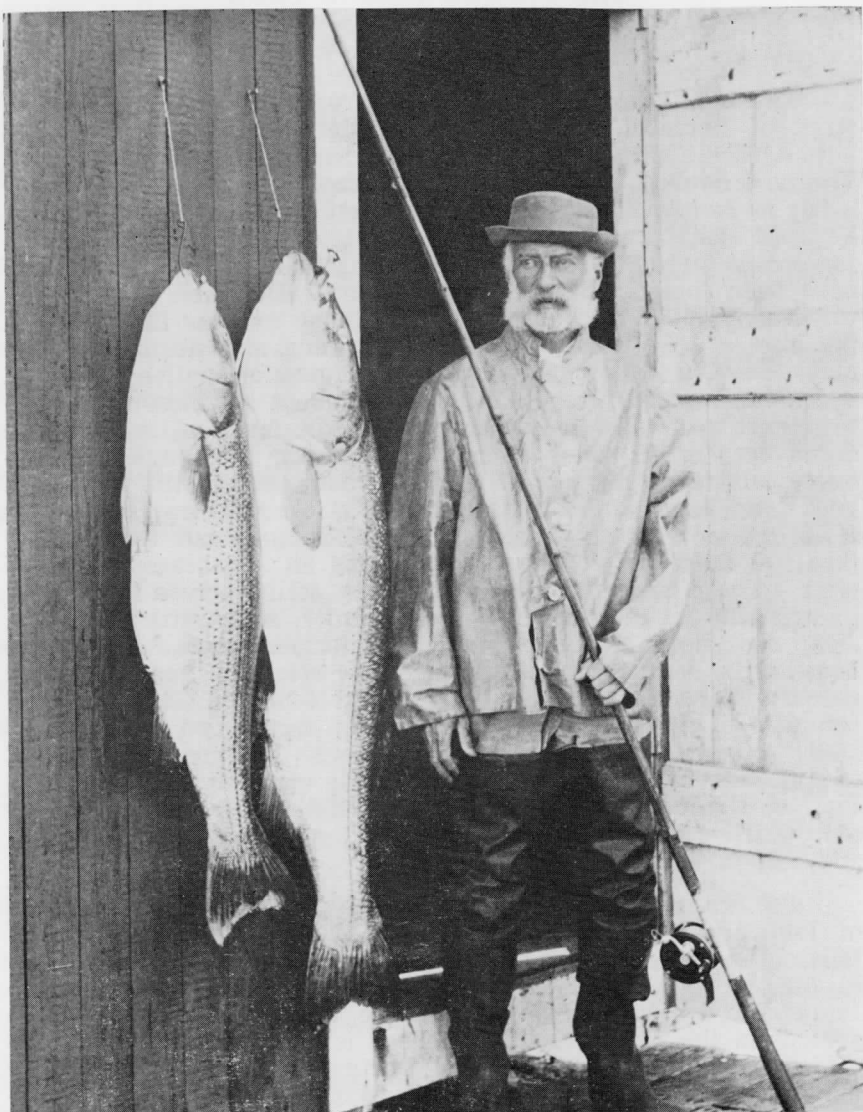
by Alice Forbes Howland

The little island of Pasque lies across the narrow, tide-swept strait of Robinson's Hole off the western end of Naushon, the largest of the Elizabeth Islands which separate Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound. In the Indian language it appears spelled variously as Paschachnest, Pesh shammeesett, Peshkehtanesit and Pesketanest and is translated both as "the blue place" and "where the sea breaks through," the latter indicating that the islands may well have been joined within Indian memory. Doubtless it was well wooded, as much as Naushon is today, but ruthless lumbering in the late 1600's, generations of sheep-grazing and storms have denuded it of trees except for a small clump of moth-eaten pines and a few stunted birches. It contains about a thousand acres of boulder-strewn hills, grassy dales and salt marshes, with half a dozen very small ponds tucked away among the tangles of bayberry, huckleberry and wild rose. At both ends of the island are good sand beaches, the best one being at the west end on Quick's Hole; while a twisting creek that makes up about a mile into the land from the southeast side forms an anchorage for small craft. There are no roads, only a few trails, across the island, though half a dozen scattered cellar holes, some with large flat, stone door steps, are mute evidence of former homes. The Farmhouse is by far the oldest building now standing, and there is a romantic legend about it. This is that some of Gosnold's men returned to that region — which would have been in the early 1600s — and that one of them built a house for himself at the east end of Pasque. We cannot accept this as fact, but it is quite true that the Farmhouse IS at that location and it is known to be very old. Furthermore, it was so well built that it is in good condition and still in use as a home.

The first recorded owner of Pasque was a sachem by the name of Tsonoarum who, in 1667, sold the island to Daniel Wilcox of Dartmouth Township for twelve pounds.¹ There is another deed in the Archives, however, dated 1670 from Thomas Mayhew to Daniel Wilcock (sic) relating to Pasque, and this one bears out the records in the Tucker family where it is stated that the Mayhews sold Pasque to Daniel Wilcox of Dartmouth prior to 1696. The Mayhews' interest in the Elizabeth Islands was acquired by purchase from the Earl of Stirling and Sir Fernando Gorges, both of whom claimed possession. We also have the "testimony" of Old Hope, the Indian sachem of Mannomett,² to the effect that he

1—Original deed in the Dukes County Historical Society Archives.

2—The Mannomett of those days seems to have comprised an area extending from Sandwich or even farther north, south to include much of the Buzzards Bay region.



Mr. John Scott 1893 — 33 lb. and 57 lb.

knew "another little island called Pesh shameesett to belong to Webacowett," the date being about 1678. But it would seem that whether Tsonoarum or Webacowett was the original owner, Indian ownership of the island passed to the white man around 1680. In 1696 Wilcox conveyed Pasque in equal parts to the brothers Abraham and John Tucker, also of Dartmouth, and for many years thereafter it was known as Tucker's Island.

In this connection it is interesting to find that there was a Daniel Tucker who came over with Gosnold in 1602 and whose name was given to Tucker's Terror, identified by some scholars as a shoal (now submerged) lying northeast of the old "Isle of Nawset" off Orleans. He was uncle to the three brothers Robert, Henry and John Tucker who later came over from England and settled in southeastern Massachusetts, mostly Milton and South Dartmouth, where their descendants still live.

Of Indian life on Pasque we know little. Since 1642 the Mayhews had been successfully converting the Vineyard Indians to Christianity, and from their own writings we know that they extended their efforts to the Elizabeth Islands as well. Sometime after 1694 the Rev. Experience Mayhew writes of twelve or fourteen families (presumably Indian) on Tucker's Island and on Slocum's Island (Nashawena) with an Indian preacher; and he also mentions the death in 1713 of James Nashcompait of Gay Head, on Peshkehtanesit or Tucker's Island. And finally, Dr. Edward Tucker of Dartmouth writing in 1880, mentions that there were a few Indian families still living on Pasque as late as 1720, but from then on we find no record of these original inhabitants. Unlike the Vineyard Indians, they seem to have left no trace of themselves, as practically no artifacts have even been found.

From the records of the Tucker family we also learn that on Abraham's death in 1725 his son Henry came into possession of the west half, while his (Henry's) uncle John still held the east half; and that from 1696 to 1866 the island was owned by successive generations of the Tucker family. They ran sheep there and employed one, or sometimes two, caretakers to live on the island, but with some exceptions, they apparently did not live there themselves, although they undoubtedly sailed over from the nearby mainland now and then to oversee their property and employes.

All the Elizabeth Islands were a part of the Township of Chilmark and were therefore required to pay taxes to that town, from which they received no benefit whatever. This was a source of much irritation to the owners of all those islands, but matters came to a head in 1724 when Chilmark decided to erect a new Meeting House (on the Vineyard) and levied a tax on all the property owners. This was too much for John Tucker and for Peleg Slocum, the well-to-do owner of Nashawena, who was a staunch Quaker, and they rebelled outright. The Chilmark officials, however, had the law on their side, so "to satisfy the tax" for the erection of their church they descended on the two little islands and

carried off 80 of Peleg's sheep and one horse and one heffer (sic) of John's.

Of the families who lived on Pasque about that time was one Elihu Robinson who lived there for many years and had two sons. His uncle, also Elihu, born in Falmouth in 1741, married Sarah Sanford of Chilmark and all their nine children were born on Pasque between the years 1763 and 1781. None of them remained on the island, however, because according to the Robinson genealogy they all moved to New York State and died there. And from the records of the Falmouth Congregational Church under date of August 14, 1781 comes this quaint little item: "at a lecture at his house on Pasque, Matty Gifford son of William and Molly was baptized."

Pasque was the scene of a small but important intrigue in 1779 when British warships were still cruising those waters and harassing the islanders by seizing livestock and other provisions. A group of British officers from a fleet lying in Tarpaulin Cove "spent the evening of April 2nd in a frolic at the house of John Slocumb on Pesque Island." Now Slocum was a Quaker and well-known for his Tory sympathies, but after hearing his "guests" discussing plans to attack and burn Falmouth the following day, his loyalties to his neighbors overcame his Tory leanings, and he sent his son secretly down the islands and across to the mainland to warn the people of their danger. The British met a well-organized force and were successfully repulsed; and they must have wondered how their plans — laid so carefully two islands and ten miles away — could have been discovered.

We next hear of Pasque in the account of the Rev. James Freeman in 1815 which tells us that the island contained 1002 acres, was inhabited by two families and pastured between 500 and 600 sheep. He further says that "Robinson's Hole is about twelve feet deep and has a very crooked channel." We cannot find out whom this Hole was named for, although we know that many families by the name of Robinson lived on the Vineyard and on Naushon over the years. A five to six knot current swirls through the narrow strait at each change of the tide and a ledge extending out from the Naushon shore further adds to make it one of the meanest small waterways on the coast. A freaky set of the tides pouring into the Sound and meeting the sweep of waters from the Bay through Quick's Hole has caused the destruction of many a ship along the south shores of Pasque, so that this area has long been known to mariners as "The Graveyard."

From 1815 until 1865 we have no records to tell us what took place on "Tucker's Island," so we can only assume that it continued to bask in the summer suns and bear the brunt of winter gales, while the sheep grazed or huddled in the little sheltered valleys and the caretakers and their families eked out their lonely existence, isolated from neighbors and the pleasures of town life, except for occasional trips to Cuttyhunk or New Bedford.



Clubhouse and Buildings about 1890.

About 1865 striped bass were found in great numbers in that area and as a result a fishing club was formed the following year. This was incorporated under the name of the Pasque Island Club by a group of New York, Boston and Philadelphia businessmen, of whom John Crosby Brown of the private banking firm of Brown Brothers and Company¹ was the leading spirit. In June 1866 the brothers Jesse and Samuel Tucker of Dartmouth sold the island and everything on it in two separate transfers to the Trustees of the Club, thus ending a Tucker ownership which had lasted for 170 years.

The new owners put up a large frame clubhouse facing Robinson's Hole, also servants' quarters, an ice house and other buildings, and for the next fifty years the island was used constantly during the summer months by the members, their wives, children and friends.

At first the membership was limited to forty and among the guests the first year were two couples from Cincinnati, which was quite a journey to make in those days. Expenses must have been heavy because we find that early in 1870 the east end of the island was mortgaged for \$8500. In May of that year ten or fifteen fishing stands were erected at various points around the shores, the necessary hands hired, and 5000 bait costing \$2.00 a hundredweight, were put into the creek. A Capt. Holmes was engaged to make the round trip to New Bedford twice a week for supplies, mail and passengers, and the following year a cook, waitress and chambermaid were hired and seeds were bought for a vegetable garden. Members were allowed to build, at their own expense and subject to the approval of the governing board, additions to the Clubhouse with the exclusive right to a sleeping room therein. It ulti-

¹—After 1930, this firm became Brown Brothers, Harriman & Co.

mately comprised three separate buildings tied together by an L-shaped verandah.

By 1876 it was found desirable to engage a farmer-caretaker to live on the island the year round. He was to receive no salary but was to be paid fifty dollars for filling the ice house from the island's little ponds.

The importance of raising trees and shrubbery was stressed as follows: "the attempt which has been made was just enough of a success to convince us that the matter is of easy attainment if followed up with energy. A small quantity of seeds was planted three years ago and the day we left the island we counted over fifty vigorous small trees, some of them two to three feet in height. This alone shows that this is an easy matter to cover the island with a growth of young trees, which in a few years will become a forest. We recommend a small outlay annually in this direction." Alas for their hopes! Possibly there had been no hurricanes or severe storms to discourage their optimism or possibly the necessary "energy" was not applied; but whatever the reason, Pasque has never been able to boast of any growth of trees, let alone a forest.

In today's era of high prices it is interesting to see how various charges ran ninety years ago. A two-hour boat trip to New Bedford was \$3, board and room at the Club \$2.50 a day, servants \$6 a week. Wines and liquors were dispensed at the following prices: a bottle of champagne was \$3, a bottle of gin or bourbon \$2, and a bottle of ale 75 cents.

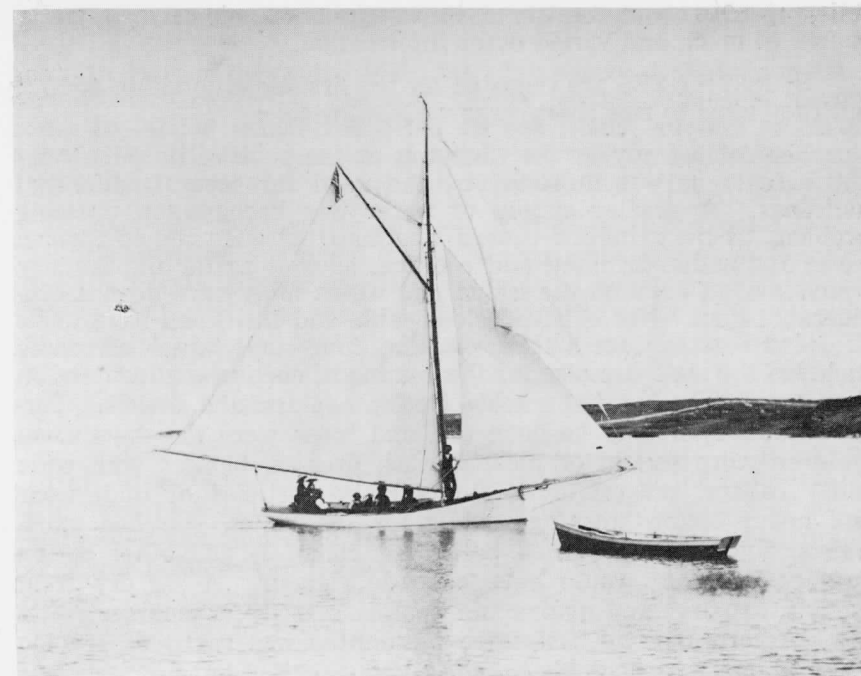
In 1875 an arrangement was made with the Cuttyhunk Fishing Club to share a boat, the HELEN AUGUSTA, for the trips to New Bedford, but the next year the 68-foot steam tug NELLIE was engaged for the run. A report of the fish taken that year shows 210 fish totalling 2488 pounds which averages only twelve pounds each; but other records tell us that bass weighing from 35 to 50 pounds were not unusual, and the accompanying picture of Mr. John Scott proudly holding up his 57-pounder is ample evidence.

Ira Reed was the year-round caretaker at this time and we find that an arrangement was made with him for his brother to come to Pasque for one year on payment of \$150 and to use such parts of the island as were not required for Club use. For the next four years he was to pay \$200 a year for this privilege, this rent to be deducted from his salary of \$500. He was to be allowed to keep up to 100 sheep, a team of horses and three or four cows, and to have the right to cultivate cranberries in the bogs, except at the west end, which were strictly for Club use.

In 1877 an experienced gardener was hired who made such a success of the vegetable garden that there was a surplus for market. Nevertheless, the season ended with a deficit of nearly \$700 so an assessment of \$24 a share was levied on the members.

From time immemorial the year-round residents of Cuttyhunk and the Vineyard had set their lobster pots and fish pounds

in all the waters of Buzzards Bay and Vineyard Sound, both as a traditional right and as a very necessary source of income, so they resented the Club which undoubtedly set out its own lobster pots and whose members only took fish for the sport of it. The Club's officers made various, but vain, attempts to prevent these "outsiders" from setting traps and pounds in the waters immediately surrounding Pasque, and it is not surprising that hard feelings developed between the two groups. Finally, in 1879 a petition was sent to the State Legislature asking that a law be passed forbidding pots, traps or seines within 500 yards of the shores of Pasque, but apparently nothing came of it and the "Lobster Pot and Fish Pound War" went right on. Three years later a resolution was passed by the Club "that the Executive Committee is required to adopt such means as it may deem efficient to protect the beaches of Pasque against seining; the requisite expenditures therefor to be limited only by the requirements." That the Battle of the Beaches continued is evident from a motion passed a short time later, again authorizing the Executive Committee "to take the necessary steps to correct the beaches against seiners, this time by sinking obstructions which will render it absolutely impossible." The lines were being drawn with the conflict unresolved, and one can only have considerable sympathy for the caretaker, Mosher, who was probably from the Vineyard or New Bedford, and undoubtedly was friendly with most of the local fishermen, yet who was bound



The yacht "Pasque" in Robinson's Hole.

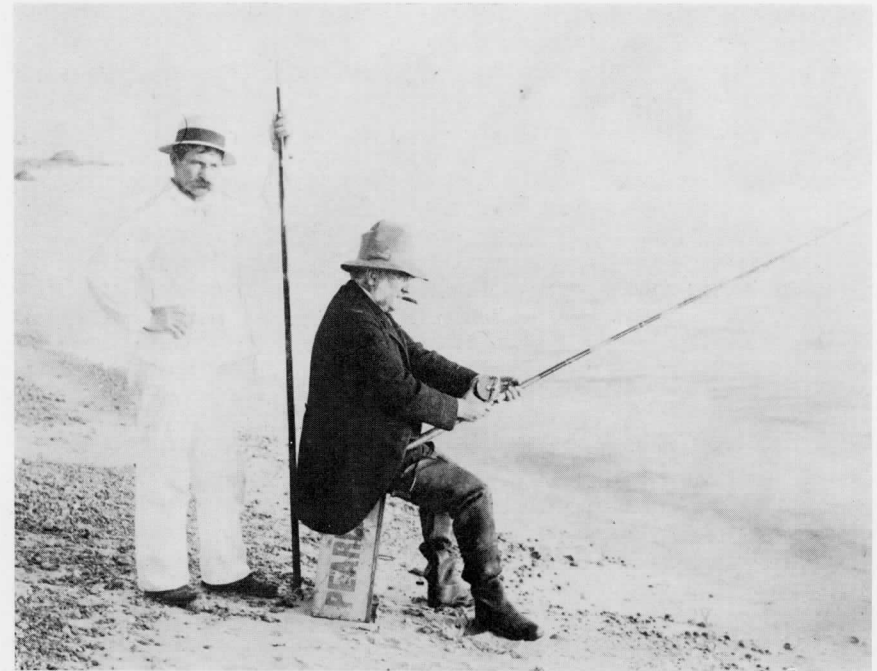
to try and protect his employers' interests. This Mosher had been hired to replace Reed, who had been discharged, and he seems to have given complete satisfaction because he remained in the job for the next ten years.

In spite of some resignations and a few members dropped for non-payment of dues, the Club was growing. A sailboat was purchased and the offer of two donkeys from Cyrus Field was accepted.

The year 1883 brings us the first and only mention of the yacht PASQUE which was very popular as a day fishing boat, and we are fortunate to have such a good photograph of her. Members' children were often taken out in her to fish for flounder, tautog and scup and were always roped to their seats by the rail, as there were no child-size life jackets in those days. It was in that year also that we first hear of Gilbert Wilcox, later to be referred to as Capt. Wilcox and known to everyone as "Gib." He had been a fisherman who came up regularly from Noank, Conn. and seined all around the shores of Pasque and even in the creek. The Club tried every means of getting rid of him, but he is reputed to have been an "ornery sort," and finally, to stop his activities, they hired him. One wonders if he could have been a descendant of the Daniel Wilcox who owned the island more than a hundred years earlier. He is remembered by the younger generation as a wonderful old man, a fisherman par excellence, who knew just where the fish were by the wind and the weather, a teller of tales about the island, its wrecks and their salvage, and a source of much and varied other information.

In 1887 TAXES are reported for the first time, totalling \$56.71, but they were to rise sharply, as we shall see.

The following year the Club was at the peak of its popularity and activity as was indicated by the need for several additional buildings. A greater supply of water was becoming a pressing problem, as the rainfilled cistern was far from adequate to furnish water for baths, drinking and cooking, as well as for the laundry which was all done on the island and which must have been a considerable item. Not only did clean table and bed linen have to be provided regularly for all those making long stays (which of course included the staff) but also for the coming of each new guest, and in that era this meant linen table cloths, napkins and towels. Personal laundry had to be done too, and those were the days when children wore tucked or pleated wash dresses, blouses with wide sailor collars, several (quite unnecessary!) articles of underwear and heavy cotton stockings; while for the ladies, starched shirt-waists, flounced and ruffled petticoats, chemises and other cotton "unmentionables" would have been de rigueur. A far cry from today's drip-drys and nylons and healthy scarcity of summer clothing! Accordingly the Executive Committee was asked to provide an additional water supply for the coming season, but how this was done the records do not show.



John O'Donahue fishing, Gilbert Wilcox chumming.

In May of that year, 1888, the Club received a communication from Gen. Greeley¹ of the U. S. Signal Service requesting permission to land a submarine cable on the island, subject to certain conditions. Permission was granted, but that problems apparently arose in this connection is indicated later.

Bait had now become an item of considerable expense and so an arrangement was made with a Woods Hole fisherman to supply the Club twice a week with 1000 pounds of menhaden at 3½ cents apiece. All this time the local fishermen had gone right on setting their traps and seines around Pasque, and one can almost see the Club members become choleric in helpless wrath over the continued depredations of their shores and waters!

It now became desirable to secure the services of a steward in addition to the usual servants; and as enough of the members felt the need of keeping in closer touch with their business affairs to warrant it, an improved telegraph instrument was bought and an operator hired to run it. By 1890 more outside help was needed so Frank Parlow was hired as gardener and to take over in Capt. Wilcox's absence.

¹—This was the famous Adolphus W. Greeley (then a Lieutenant) of the ill-fated U. S. Army scientific expedition to Cape Conger, Ellesmere Island, 1881-1884.



*Members setting out for the day's fishing. Capt. Wilcox on wagon step.
Chummers on ground.*

"Chummers," an important factor in the fishing, were men who took care of the members' gear, cut up and put out the fish and lobsters used as bait, and stood by with a gaff to help bring in the fish. Mrs. Wilcox boarded the chummers at \$4.50 a week, but apparently the type of men hired was not proving satisfactory since the next year the Executive Committee was asked to arrange for "a better class of chummers," getting them, if possible, from Nantucket, and if necessary, offering higher wages. Where the chummers lived prior to 1900 is not indicated, but by that time it had become necessary to put up a barracks-type frame building with ten bedrooms for their use and to hire a cook to feed them. This building was known as "Chummers Hall" and is still in use today as a workshop.

During the 1890 season only 152 bass were taken, a definite sign that they were becoming scarcer, probably due to the increased activity of the menhaden fishermen who were seining great quantities of that unpleasant, oily fish which formed the principal food of the striped bass.

By 1896 the faithful old steamer NELLIE was replaced by a steam tug, the SAMUEL C. HART, and Capt. Wilcox's salary was raised to \$900. As a new mule was bought this year it seems a good time to describe island transportation, chiefly provided by the wagon shown in the above photograph.

This must have been a bumpy ride as the "roads" were mere trails and the driver must have had merely to pick out the most level stretches and avoid the rocks, with which the island was only too well supplied. This was the daily routine for the male members, who would fish all day on the stands — a stout wooden chair lashed to the end of a plank well out over the water, the planks being supported by iron rods sunk into holes drilled in the rocks. Here the fisherman sat with his chummer nearby, and at the end of the day the wagon would again make the rounds to bring them all back to the Clubhouse, stopping at the Fish House for the serious business of weighing in the catch. Mule teams were used to bring up the supplies and baggage from the wharf, and they were put to good use on one occasion to haul a wagon-load of watermelons which were salvaged from a ship wrecked on the "Graveyard."

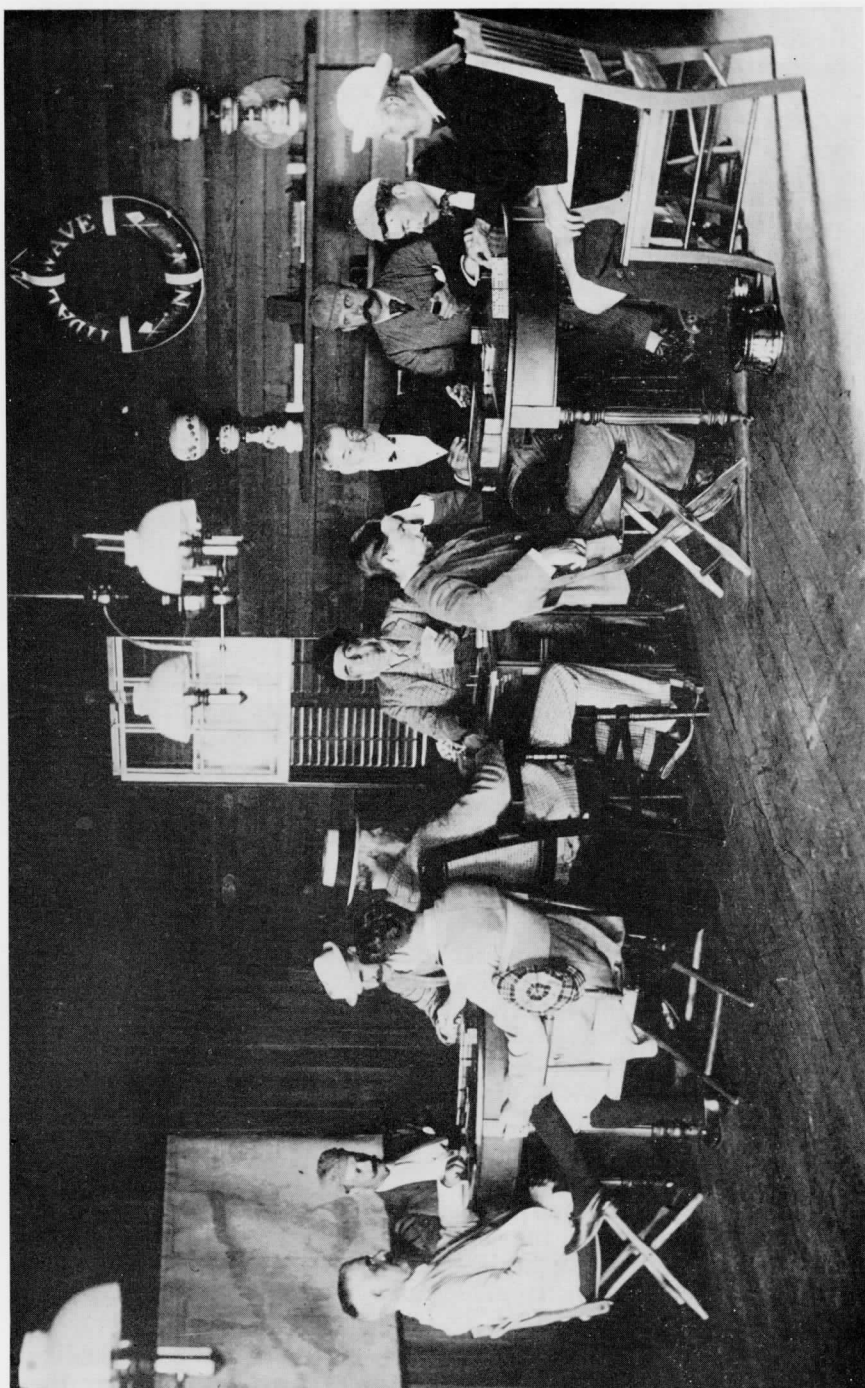
In 1898 a letter was received from Lt. J. S. Swift of the U. S. Signal Corps asking permission to station an operator on the island who would occupy two rooms of the Club, also asking for the use of the flag staff for signalling; offering in return to transmit Club telegrams free over the U. S.-owned wires. After considerable discussion it was voted NOT to grant the permission, the feeling being strongly that it would be an undesirable invasion of the members' privacy, that the Club should have entire control of everyone on the island, and that the experience of the past year which resulted from allowing Government wires to run across the island had been such as to make unwise the granting of further privileges. Two years later the Government advertised the wires for sale, but we are not told if there were any takers.

The year 1909 brought the death of the Club's President, John Crosby Brown, after more than forty years of devoted service to the Club and its members, and the election of his second son, James Crosby Brown, to succeed him. In 1910 the first telephone cable was laid to the island and taxes had jumped to \$481.

For reasons now unknown, it was not until June 1910 that a post office was established at Pasque, which continued until 1917, with Capt. Wilcox's wife as its first and only postmistress. The mail was brought to the island daily by a young man who made the trip on foot from the Tarpaulin Cove farmhouse on Naushon, where there had been a post office since 1891. The members used to sit on the porch of the Clubhouse watching his progress through the big telescope as he appeared over the horizon on the last lap of his trek across the hills and down to the shore to row across Robinson's Hole.

For an eyewitness' and participant's account of life on Pasque during the summers of the first two decades of the twentieth century, which were also the last twenty years of the Club, I will quote, with permission, from letters received from Alexander Crosby Brown, a grandson of its late president.

"Each family owned rooms in one of the three barracks-like weather-worn buildings at the east end of the island. By day the



Evening in the Smoking Room.

older generation fished for bass, played tennis or sailed their boats in Robinson's Hole. If Father, (James Crosby Brown) had been lucky in his catch, he might give us (children) a taste of his daily "tipple" of port before supper. This formal meal concluded, the male members drew lots for the stands to be used next day, which was done by up-ending a leather bottle and allowing one small numbered ball at a time to fall out, the first choice going to the newest member. This done, they withdrew to the smoking room to the stimulating pastime of dominoes, chess, or cards, which to credit an old photograph, they played with their hats on, till bedtime. Sunday night we all sang hymns.

"Children were restricted from many of the activities, but there were plenty of things to occupy us, and I know of no more exciting place for the young. I was born in 1905 and my memory spans two phases, the first of which was from my earliest recollections up to World War 1 and embraced the period when the Club itself was still a going concern and there were always a lot of children on the island, mostly relatives."

But to retrace our steps a bit. At the end of the 1911 season the venerable Capt. Wilcox resigned, to be replaced by Clarence King of New Bedford, with the help of a man named Gomez. Later King married, but his wife found it too lonely, so in 1919 they left to take over the Tarpaulin Cove farmhouse where Mrs. King found it "lovely and sociable" after Pasque! Taxes this year amounted to \$559 and this sharp rise led to a joint protest with the owners of Nashawena, with the result that the next year saw a sharp drop in the taxes on both islands. The Club now had only eighteen members and the type of fishing seems to have changed because considerable less money was being spent for chummers and bait.

In 1915 the Club was approached by the State asking if there would be objections to the use of the neighboring island of Nashawena as a State Penitentiary and leper retreat. Needless to say, this brought prompt and serious objections, not only from the Club members but from the owners of Naushon as well; with the result that the idea of a penitentiary was abandoned and the State Department of Public Health bought the nearby island of Penikese and established a small leper colony there.

The summer of 1917 found the United States at war, so the Club was not officially open, although the members could occupy their own rooms if they could make arrangements for board with Mrs. Wilcox.¹ The Club was again closed in 1918, and by 1921 the expenses had soared to such a point that the annual dues had to be raised to \$250 and the annual levy varied from \$100 to \$400, resulting in several resignations.

In October 1919 the Richard Nortons of Edgartown went to the island to replace the Kings and remained there for twenty

¹—Although Capt. Wilcox had resigned as caretaker in 1911, he seems to have continued to live there, perhaps as a sort of pensioner.

years. In 1917 Mrs. Norton's father, Edward Vincent, had gone as caretaker to Nashawena and she had often visited her family there, so one might say that Pasque was a way-station between the two places. Eight milking cows were kept to supply the Club with milk and cream during the summer months and there were also chickens, pigs, two horses and a big vegetable garden. During the other nine months Mrs. Norton made butter and cheese for her own family but sometimes when they could not get to the mainland to sell the surplus, she had to give it away to fishermen or anyone who happened by. That first fall the steamer ANTHONY O'BOYLE went ashore at the west end of Naushon, and while waiting for the salvage operations, the captain and crew used to land and walk around on Pasque. The Nortons shared their surplus milk with them and in appreciation the captain gave them a 50-lb. bag of sugar — a highly-prized commodity then, due to the war-time sugar shortage. During the winter trips to Woods Hole were made when weather permitted, but supplies and mail often came up with John Olsen, a lobster-fisherman, who, with his wife, had been living in the cottage on the west end of Naushon across Robinson's Hole since 1914.

The only telephone on the island was in the Farmhouse where the Nortons lived, and all messages (mostly telegrams) came via Woods Hole and were received there. In an emergency, however, there was a telephone connection with Cuttyhunk through the farmhouse on Nashawena; but these difficulties of communication only served to insure the peace and privacy of the little island kingdom.

In the cottage where the help lived there was an organ, but later Mrs. Norton brought a piano to the Farmhouse, where the Browns and their guests went each Sunday to sing hymns. In the summer of 1920 Mr. Norton built a windmill and put running water into all the buildings, which was a most welcome convenience. Soon after they went to live on the island the Nortons found a very old sword in a dilapidated building. This had a short brass handle with an illegible inscription — possibly in French; but except for this and the old stone walls and cellar holes, nothing else has been found to tell us of earlier occupants.

From Mrs. Norton, to whom we are indebted for so much of Pasque's history during the years between 1919 and 1939, we hear also of some families who lived on the island in the early days. Besides the Robinsons who are mentioned earlier, Mrs. Norton remembers talking with an elderly man named Simmons of New Bedford, who told her that his uncle (name not known, unfortunately) had lived on Pasque and used to raise turnips which he sold in New Bedford to pay for his year's provisions. Nor was Richard the first Norton to live on the island. After the separation of the Elizabeth Islands from Chilmark the notice of the first Town Meeting of Gosnold in 1864 was posted on the door of one Ebenezer Norton on Pasque, advising the occupants of that island that the meeting would be held on a given day in the West End

house on Naushon. Perhaps all these were caretakers for the Tuckers.

Prohibition brought excitement and grim drama to the area during the period when liquor laden ships lay just off the twelve-mile limit. Early in the afternoons small fast boats from the mainland would go out, often through Robinson's Hole, returning in the early hours of the morning to unload their cargoes on the New Bedford and Fairhaven beaches. If in danger of being caught by the Revenue Cutters, the load would be dropped overboard in some shallow spot off the nearby shores of Naushon, to be picked up later. Many were the tricks employed to fool the government men, one ruse being to use a fast boat with no cargo as a decoy, while the bootleg goods were taken ashore in a slower boat which attracted no attention.

In the spring of 1922 a big, dragger-type vessel, the JOHN DWIGHT, was noticed hanging around the Bay and Sound for several days, and then one night the Lighthouse keeper at Tarpaulin saw a number of small boats and considerable activity towards the west end of Vineyard Sound. He took his own boat up to Pasque, picked up Norton, and the two men went out to see what was going on. Other boats had arrived at the scene but the only evidence of what had happened was the finding of one of the DWIGHT'S life boats with a dead man wedged tightly under the seats and the body of another man floating nearby. Neither was ever identified. Apparently the DWIGHT had been scuttled, although the divers who went down later found no cargo in her, so why she had been sunk remains one of the mysterious tragedies of the Prohibition era. A second lifeboat, which had been seen at the time of the incident, had disappeared, only to be found several days later, empty, drifting off the north shore of Naushon. If there had been any survivors from the DWIGHT, no one ever knew.

In March 1923 it was voted to dissolve the Club and to convey all property and assets to James Crosby Brown who had, through the years, bought up the shares of resigning members and now held a majority of them. So ended the Pasque Island Club after 58 years. To quote Alexander Brown again: "When the Club ceased to exist after the war, Father took it over and it became virtually a "Brown Family Preserve." From then on until I finished college in 1928 it was our summer home. We had countless friends and guests and all in all it was a lot of fun. Fishing, picnics, sailing dories, tennis — there was even an attempt at a 9-hole golf course, but the loss in balls was terrific as they hit rocks and bounced. Excursions, both on foot and by boat to the Quick's Hole side of the island: — I look back at it with complete delight."

The summer of 1928 was the last that the Browns spent on the island as a family. Mr. Brown died in 1930 and the children were now grown up and scattered. As individuals, however, the younger members returned now and then, either for duck hunting or just to renew old ties, staying at the Cottage (later called the

Brown House) and taking their meals at the Nortons'. The cows were sold off soon after Mr. Brown's death and the island began slowly to revert to what it had been in the days before the fishing club.

The following is Mrs. Norton's description of the 1938 hurricane, when her two boys were seven and four. September 21st was a bright, breezy day and her husband had made an early start for Woods Hole in the CAPRICE, a sturdy, lobster-type boat he had built himself in the former Chummers' Hall, and which he put on her mooring in Robinson's Hole on his return. The wind increased steadily and in the early afternoon the water began to rise, slowly at first, but much faster by four o'clock, and this was greatly increased because the tide was rising, a dangerous factor in a hurricane. Robinson's Hole became a swirling, tumbling welter of foam and spindrift as the gale tore the tops off the waves which were tearing at the beaches and crashing ever higher on the shore. First the Fish House, nearest the beach, crumbled; then a good-sized boat house with skiffs, canoes, and gear was lifted up and went out as though on a raft, never to be seen again. Next, the bridge over the creek went, narrowly missing the CAPRICE. Inexorably the water rose, higher and higher, till it was a full 12 inches deep around the Farmhouse and seeping in over the kitchen floor, lapping at the steps of the Clubhouse and filling the well. The Nortons had, meanwhile, packed up what food and clothing they could carry and taken refuge in Chummers' Hall, which stood on higher ground. Through the torn grey veils of rain and gale-lashed spray they watched with dismay as John Olsen's fishing boat TEASER broke her moorings over on the Naushon side and disappeared into the Bay.

The rush and roar of the hurricane was deafening, shaking the building and sending shingles, loose boards and anything not nailed or tied down flying to leeward, while the crashing and pounding of the surf as it thundered in on Cobbley Beach, half a mile away on the south side, seemed to shake the whole island. Darkness came early that afternoon, and by eight o'clock when the water had receded, the Nortons ventured outside and groped their way back to the Farmhouse over and around tangled heaps of seaweed and uprooted bushes, planks, rocks and flotsam of every description. Before going to bed they decided to take a last look around and stepped out of doors into a complete and utter stillness. Not a breath of air stirred, the falling tide crisped softly on the shore and overhead a few stars shone dimly through the overcast. The great storm was over.

The next morning they awoke to bright sunshine and to a scene of damage and chaos which was no surprise, but what they had not expected was the silence and the sense of isolation. Nothing broke the emptiness — not a sail or even a bird: "It was as though we were the only living things on earth."

Somehow the CAPRICE had managed to come through unharmed, so that Mr. Norton could take her to New Bedford to meet Mr. and Mrs. J. Crosby Brown, Jr. who came from New York a few days later to see the extent of the damage to the property. Considering that the height of wreckage was some twenty feet above high tide mark on the southwest side of the island, there was little really serious destruction. Many of the 30 or 40 telegraph poles which had recently been brought to the island as replacements were strewn along the beaches or reduced to kindling, while others had been carried out to sea. The telephone line was never restored.

In January 1939 the Brown family sold Pasque to J. Malcolm and William H. Forbes, who set up a trust consisting of themselves and two other members of the Forbes family. With the change in ownership and because of the problem of school for their boys, the Nortons left the island, their place being taken by the John Olsens who had been their nearest neighbors for many years. John continued lobstering and fishing, and in his spare time worked on dismantling the old Clubhouse which was in a state of disrepair and for which the new owners had no use. In this he was helped by his brother Jens, who was then living with them, and who also went fishing on his own. A few months after Pearl Harbor, however, Jens joined the Merchant Marine and was lost a year or so later when a German submarine sank his oil tanker in the Caribbean: — the only man from Gosnold to lose his life in World War II.

During the war an Emergency Ration Experiment was carried out on Pasque to determine whether men could live exclusively on a modern concentrated product akin to the old-time pemmican of the American Indian. The results were not too conclusive except to indicate pretty clearly that few Americans can — or will — adapt to such a radical change of diet.

Mrs. Olsen died in 1953 but John continues to live on the island except in the mid-winter months. At this writing the buildings still standing are the Farmhouse, the workshop (formerly Chummers' Hall) and the servants' quarters, now known as the Brown House, and used by the present owners during their stays on the island. Although two of the original Forbes shareholders are no longer living, Pasque is still owned by members of the family who use it for fishing and hunting trips and occasionally as a summer home.

John Olsen writes in November 1961 "The island has been going down a little more each year and Nature is gradually taking over, which is what it should be. It is very interesting living here, but just why, I can't put down on paper." But anyone who has lived on those islands over the years, so close to Nature and in tune with the elements, and seen the seasons come and go, knows just what he means. It is something that **cannot** be put into words.

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To the late John Stettinius, known as Pasque's "Official Photographer" credit should be given for some excellent photographs used to illustrate the story. — A. F. H.