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Warner F. Gookin, Historical Detective

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BY HAROLD C. WILSON

This is the story of Warner F. Gookin's search for truth concerning the English navigator, Captain Bartholomew Gosnold.

Gookin was a pioneer in the field of rewriting history. In his study of Bartholomew Gosnold, he discovered new information that elevated this navigator from an obscure phantom in our history to an important figure in England's attempts to settle America. Like a master detective, Gookin uncovered previously unknown and discarded facts about Captain Gosnold. His research was accomplished with patience and determination.

In studying the early accounts of Gosnold's landings on Cape Cod and the Islands, Gookin showed that previous historians had been guilty of "glaring errors" in their supposedly final conclusions on Captain Gosnold's voyages.

But before the story begins, something should be said of Gookin's life-style, for it contained essential elements needed by those engaged in difficult research.

Gookin was a loner. Of his death in 1953, the *Vineyard Gazette* said: "The esteem in which he was held by his former students and the regard they felt for him, have constituted a most revealing light upon the character and career of a man who could not be judged accurately by neighbors and acquaintances of later life."[1] Gookin was, at times, considered to be a very intense and stubborn person and, at other times, a quiet, fragile and soft-spoken man. Few of his friends understood him.

The fact that he had good rapport with younger people is brought out in his writings. Much of his work reveals strong inspiration and enthusiasm, a youthful characteristic.

Gookin, a clergyman and teacher, graduated from Columbia University in 1902 and, later, attended the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His formal education also included a two-year stay in Europe where he studied German.

1. H. Hough, 'Rev. Mr. Gookin, Island Historian, Dies At Age Of 72, *Vineyard Gazette* (6 March 1953).

He was ordained in 1908 and soon became canon of Trinity Cathedral in Pittsburgh. In 1917, after serving as assistant minister of the Church of the Holy Trinity in New York City, he was appointed Vicar of the Church of the Ascension in Boston.

In 1928 he began his teaching career at Avon Old Farm School for Boys where he was instructor of English and German. He also served as chaplain for the student body. In 1944, he retired from teaching because of a heart condition. Gookin was a life-long summer resident of the Vineyard, and it was at his cottage on East Chop that he spent his last years.

He loved the Vineyard and when askeed by the Dukes County Historical Society to contribute something on the Island's past, especially on the question of the name *Martha,* he saw this as an opportunity to provide himself with a challenging and interesting task. It would also keep his mind off his poor physical condition.

Immediately he became completely involved in the study of Island history, and particularly in the story of Captain Bartholomew Gosnold. Although confined most of the time to his cluttered card table, he was able to collect a mass of information on Gosnold and his associates. During the interval between 1946 and 1952, six short years, he published several articles in scholarly journals, some of which were recognized by authorities as important contributions to history.

In July of 1952, the *Boston Globe* asked him why he was writing a book about history's 'forgotten man', Captain Bartholomew Gosnold. Gookin responded with the following words:

"The purpose of my book is to try to rescue him (Gosnold) from complete obscurity because many Americans have forgotten that Bartholomew Gosnold brought to these shores the first small group of Englishmen to make good their will to stay. He opened the way for a trickle that became a flood and turned small colonies into a great nation.

"The average American is almost totally ignorant of early American history. There isn't one in a thousand who ever heard of Gosnold, yet he is one of the most romantic figures of his period, and came as near to being a real founder of our country as any one man could be." [2]

2. E. Banner, (Bartholomew Gosnold: Real Founder Of This Country), *Boston Globe* (29 July 1952).

Within a year Gookin was dead. His unfinished manuscript had to wait ten years before it was published. However, as a result of his work, Gookin was then recognized as the unquestioned authority on Gosnold.

Gookin possessed an uncanny way of seeking out bits and pieces of information and fitting them together as one does a picture puzzle. This helped him in detecting flaws in previous accounts of Gosnold's exploits. Only a master detective would be able to do what Gookin accomplished: that is, to solve some of the mysteries surrounding the career of Captain Bartholomew Gosnold.

The early result of Gookin's detective work first appeared as a series of articles in the *Vineyard Gazette* in 1946. These reports answered the question that had plagued previous historians for years. Gookin established that the island of Capawack (the Indian name for the Vineyard, or at least one name for it) was the place Captain Gosnold called Martha's Vineyard in 1602. He also discredited those who claimed that Nomansland was Gosnold's Martha's Vineyard.

In 1947, the Dukes County Historical Society published the revised Gookin articles. It was a short book of fifty-eight pages called *Capawack: Alias Martha's Vineyard.*

In this book, Gookin showed that the following English voyages between 1612 and 1619 produced evidence of the fact that Gosnold landed on the present Vineyard:

The Captain Edward Harlow Voyage of 1612
The Captain Hobson Voyage of 1614
The Captain John Smith Voyage of 1614
The Captain Thomas Dermer Voyage of 1619

In 1612, Captain Harlow was sent out by the Earl of Southampton to find an island 'supposed about Cape Cod' in this voyage, he landed on the Isle of Capawack where trouble ensued with the natives. The result was that the English captured some of the Indians, notably, Epenow. Captain Harlow sailed back to England with his captives where they were displayed in that country for a few years.

While in England, Epenow convinced the English that if they returned him to America, he could lead them to gold. Subsequently, in 1614, Captain Hobson with Harlow and Epenow

returned to Capawack. Of course, Epenow's suggestion of gold was only a ploy for escape, which he managed successfully to do. The bewildered and discouraged Englishmen returned hastily to England.

Gookin, in appraising the Epenow incident stated:

"It should be remembered that Epenow's capture by Harlow took place not more than nine or ten years after the Gosnold expedition in 1602; Epenow therefore, even though a boy may have been an eyewitness of the landing. It is reasonable to suppose that Epenow's story, repeated by Assacomet, described landings by Gosnold on Capawack and so identified it as the Martha's Vineyard of Brereton's Relation."[3]

Gookin further connected the name Capawack with Martha's Vineyard by the following convincing deduction:

"Mr. Richard Vines, steward to Gorges, immediately appeared, declaring that the Province of Maine held these islands under the name, 'The Islands Capawock alias Martha's Vineyard', thereby making known that Capawack was the island Gosnold had discovered, and called Martha's Vineyard.

"The names used by Vines in his identification are taken from a photostat of the grant recorded in New York Deeds (III, 66), a copy made when Mayhew presented the original to Governor Lovelace in 1671...

"Vines, as has been stated, was employed on the New England coast, for a period beginning about 1617. He was in a position to know the history and the facts about Capawack. He was in intimate touch with Gorges and almost certainly had contacts with Dermer, who was also employed on the coast by Gorges. Both of these men, Gorges and Dermer, had talked with Epenow, an Indian from ,Capawack within whose memory span Gosnold's landing had been made."[4]

By successfully identifying Capawack as the present-day Vineyard, Gookin thereby disproved historian Jeremy Belknap's claim that Nomansland was Gosnold's Martha's Vineyard. In fairness to Belknap, it must be said he did not have access to the

3. W. Gookin, *Capawack Alias Martha's Vineyard* (Edgartown, Massachusetts. Dukes County Historical Society, 1947) pp. 9-10.

4. W. Gookin, *Capawack*, p. 22. Sir Ferdinando Gorges, leading colonial pioneer in New England, may have been associated with Gosnold in other colonizing ventures. This writer has in preparation, an article on a possible Gorges-Gosnold connection.

John Brereton account of the Gosnold Voyage. Had he had the added information it no doubt would have helped him to alter his decision.

Even so, Belknap was too hasty in his conclusions. For example, by taking too literally the statement of the English navigator, Martin Pring, that "we, for the most part followed the course of Captain Gosnold," Belknap concluded that Pring must have visited the present Vineyard in 1603. Historians Edward Decosta and David Quinn have since disproved this by showing that Pring actually entered Cape Cod Bay and did not explore the islands south of Cape Cod.

At any rate, here is what Belknap had to say on his theory: "The island which he (Gosnold) called Martha's Vineyard, now bears the name of Nomansland. This is clear from his account of its size, five miles in circuit; its distance from Shoal Hope, eight leagues, and from Elizabeth Island, five leagues; the safety from approaching it on all sides; and the small but excellent cod, which are always taken near it in the spring months. The only material objection is that he found deer upon the island; but this is removed by comparing his account with the Journal of Martin Pring, who, the next year, found deer in abundance on the large island, now called the Vineyard...

"For what reason, and at what time, the name of Martha's Vineyard was transferred from the small island so called by Gosnold, to the large island, which now bears the name, are questions which remain in obscurity. That Gosnold first took the southern side of this large island to be the main, is evident. When he doubled the cliff at its western end, he knew it to be an island; but gave no name to any part of it except the cliff."[5]

It is beyond the comprehension of this writer why Belknap, an outstanding historian of his day, would ever suppose that a skilled navigator such as Gosnold would, at any time, mistake the Vineyard to be the mainland. No matter from which direction Gosnold approached the Vineyard, whether from the eastern entrance to Vineyard Sound, or from the southeast in open water, he could not possibly have believed this island to be the main or part of it.

5. J. Belknap, *American Biography* (Boston, 1794), Vol. II, pp. 112-113.

Belknap further attempted to correct a mistake concerning the name Martin which was often applied to the present Vineyard in the 17th century. He offered as a solution that the Island was named for Martin Pring whom, he thought had landed there in 1603. As has already been mentioned, Decosta and Quinn have since disposed of the fact that Pring explored the Island.

Gookin showed that the name Martha was always intended for the present Vineyard and not for Nomansland. The following passages from his *Capawack* illustrate this:

"It is true that both Brereton and Archer seem to describe the island as an uninhabited,one, about the size of Nomansland, a mile or so in length. But there is reason to believe that this was purposely misleading, to conceal from Sir Walter Raleigh, then holder of the patent to all of the new world, the chief discovery made of an expedition undertaken without his consent, about which he made difficulties on their return.

"The place described by Archer and Brereton as the island where a profusion of vines were found, has, according to the latter, a lake a mile in circumference, with streams flowing into it through the woods. Neither Noman's Land, nor any other islet hereabouts, has such a lake. The island of vines is so large, according to Archer, that to get from its north shore to its northwest shore, the ship weighed anchor and sailed until evening. There, according to both writers, Indians appeared, with gifts of cooked fish and of tobacco. Obviously these descriptions of the island of vines are not of Noman's, nor any other uninhabited isle of similiar size.

"Archer's measurements place the island exactly. The explorers first came to Martha's Vineyard eight leagues from "Shoal Hope." This is the distance from the Nantucket opening of the sound to East Chop. At the other end, Archer reports that Martha's Vineyard is 'half a league over the sound' from Dover Cliff (Gay Head), believed to be a separate island. This is the distance across a chord of Menemsha Bight, from high land to high land. The intervening land from East Chop to Menemsha is therefore the island named Martha's Vineyard.

"Starting home, the explorers sail five leagues to the place of the vines and of the lake, to get some of the birds they had seen as fledglings. This is the precise distance from Cuttyhunk to

Lambert's Cove, where there is such a lake and where wild grapes still flourish. These three measurements, without other corroborative evidence available, identify the island beyond doubt."[6]

Gookin credited Fulmer Mood, Harvard historian, for finding the baptismal records of Gosnold's children, thereby identifying the name Martha. Included in the list was a Martha, daughter, baptized at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, on 24 April 1597. Along with other corroborating evidence, this, unquestionably, established that Gosnold named the present Vineyard for his daughter.

Gookin also attacked the Vineyard historian, Dr. Charles Banks, for his clumsy statement concerning the name Martin. Banks proposed that the present Vineyard, was named for Captain John Martin whom he thought was a member of the Gosnold expedition of 1602. Alexander Brown, in his *The First Republic In America.* published in 1898, did assert that Captain Martin was with Gosnold on the voyage Brown, but had no documentary proof, whatsoever for the statement. Banks used the Brown reference without hesitation, and concluded it was a satisfactory deduction. This was nothing more than grasping at a straw of unsupported fact in frantically reaching for a solution.

In studying the list of Gosnold's company, Gookin showed that there was no evidence supporting the theory that a Captain John Martin had been with Gosnold in 1602.[7]

Finished with the preliminaries, Gookin, now tackled the difficult problem of tracing Captain Gosnold's obscure career. Over the next few years several of his articles appeared in professional journals, steadfastly claiming that Captain Gosnold was the 'unsung hero' of American history. Gookin insisted that the Suffolk explorer, as a result of his voyage to Cape Cod and the Islands, "opened the doors" to English colonization of America. In showing the importance of the Gosnold voyage, Gookin said:

"Gosnold's actual accomplishment was that he had shown the way to the part of the American coast that was to become New

6. W. Gookin, *Capawack*, p. 32.
7. IBID, Note 34, p. 56.

England. He had shown the feasibility of a short direct crossing in about six weeks. He had demonstrated the healthfulness of the climate and the fertility of the soil to be cultivated here. He had shown that the land had products available at any time which could be sold in England."[8]

Gookin further declared that Gosnold's outstanding achievements in organizing and participating in the Jamestown enterprise had been hidden altogether too long. He made it clear that previous scholars committed a "needless error" in not emphasizing the important fact that Captain Gosnold worked diligently for four years in planning for what eventually became the first permanent English colony in America.

Gookin was convinced that Gosnold was a founder of this country. In appraising his claim, he states:

"Now he (Gosnold) no longer stands alone, but emerges from the mists of uncertainty as a memorable representative of England's ruling classes, who gave his life in the founding of this nation."[9]

Was the late Vineyard historian correct in his statement that Gosnold had been overlooked by historians? Let the reader decide, after reviewing the following summary of Gookin's detective work.

Gookin first established that Bartholomew Gosnold, son of Anthony of Grundisburgh, Suffolk, came from a prominent English family.

The Gosnold's of Suffolk and Norwich held many manorial lands in England, notably that of Otlay, where Bartholomew spent most of his boyhood. Sir Walter Scott, England's great novelist, could have woven a romantic tale from the history of the Gosnolds. As landed gentry they participated in many of their nation's enterprises with patriotic vigor. Many of them married in the nobility and became major contributors to England's overseas expansion. Some of them advanced to great stature as counselors to the monarch and, others served more than creditably as army commanders. In short, "they allied themselves with the great in

8. W. Gookin and P. Barbour, *Bartholomew Gosnold: Discoverer and Planter* (Hamden, Conn. and London: Archon Books, 1963) p. 166.
9. W. Gookin, "The Ancestry of Bartholomew Gosnold", *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* (January 1951), p. 5.

the land" and were considered influential members of Elizabethan Society.

One of them, John Gosnold, a first cousin to Bartholomew, served as courtier and usher at court to three monarchs, Elizabeth I, James I, and Charles I, Bartholomew's granduncle, another John Gosnold, was a member of Parliment in the reign of Edward VI and held the post of Solicitor General. Elizabeth Gosnold, sister of Bartholomew, married Robert Tilney, a distant, although recognized, relative of Queen Elizabeth.

Gookin found that Bartholomew was born at Otley in 1572. This was based on the fact that young Bartholomew was mentioned in the will of his great grandfather, Robert. Gookin supposed that since no other evidence was available on the explorer's birth or baptism, he must have been around a year old at the time the will was issued. This is strengthened by the certainty of Gosnold's matriculation at Cambridge. He entered the University in 1587. Since most college-bound English boys at that time began their studies at age fifteen or sixteen, it is reasonable to suppose that Bartholomew did, also.

Bartholomew's mother, Dorothy, was a member of the very influential Bacon family. Gookin was unable solidly to link her with Sir Francis Bacon, the great Englishman of letters, or to Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the great seal under Queen Elizabeth. However, he did find that Sir Nicholas acted as overseer to the wills of Dorothy's grandfather and uncle. As Gookin noted, this function was usually performed by an honored member of the family.

As was their custom, many of the Gosnold sons obtained their formal education at Cambridge. Bartholomew's intention was either to pursue a career in law or the ministry. There is no record of his receiving a degree but the baptismal record of one of his children refers to his as *magistrate,* a civil title which indicated he finished his college work.

Gookin showed that Bartholomew, because of his family's prestige, had the opportunity to mingle with many of the prominent people of his time. For example, while young Bartholomew was at Cambridge, Henry Wriothesley, The Earl of Southampton, was also studying for his degree there. Southampton, later, was to become the prime backer of Gosnold's expedition to New England and an important contributor to the

Jamestown enterprise. More important, Southampton was also allied with Robert Deveraux, Earl of Essex. It has recently been discovered that both Captain Robert Gosnold and Sir Henry Gosnold, first cousins to Bartholomew, were closely associated with the affairs of Essex. These Gosnolds may even have been related to the Earl.[10] Captain Robert was a well known army commander having obtained his recognition by heroic deeds in Ireland and on the continent. In 1596, Queen Elizabeth appointed Sir Henry as Attorney General of the Province of Munster in Ireland. He later served with distinction as Lord Chief Justice in that country.

In commenting on Gosnold's sea experience, Gookin suspected that the explorer, because of his family's connections with Essex, served under the Earl on at least two notable ventures. Gookin hinted that Bartholomew participated in the assault by the English on the Spanish Treasure Fleet near the Azores in 1597 and, also, the bombardment of Cadiz a year later.

These inferences bring to mind the fact that Bartholomew was captain of a privateer in 1599. He commanded the ship, *Diamond,* out of Southampton and managed to bring back a prize totaling 2000 pounds. The Dukes County Historical Society possesses a copy of the list of goods Gosnold captured which indicates that he probably waylayed a Spanish galleon returning from the West Indies.[11]

One of Gookin's most important discoveries concerned the extensive genealogy of the Gosnold family published by Henry Lea in 1903. Lea's work was a very valuable research aid for Gookin. However, the Vineyard historian discovered a startling mistake in it. Lea had Captain Bartholomew married to the wrong girl, one by the name of Catherine Barrington. Gookin went on to prove, beyond doubt, that Bartholomew Gosnold actually married a Mary Golding of Latton, Essex. This discovery linked the

10. Correspondence from Mrs. Mae Guild Atwood Barrett of Seattle to Harold C. Wilson, 23 June 1972. Mrs. Barrett, a direct descendant of Sir Henry Gosnold, has in preparation a genealogy on the Gosnold/Gosnell family which should add further information to the exploits of this leading English family.

11. Professor Kenneth R. Andrews of the University of Hull in England discovered the list in 1952. This writer obtained a reproduction through the courtesy of Mr. Philip L. Barbour, Newtown, Conn., a copy of which he presented to the Society's library.

Suffolk explorer with key individuals in English overseas projects. In 1949, the *William and Mary Quarterly* published his findings. The following exerpt from that publication shows the great significance of Gookin's discovery:

"Mary Golding, Bartholomew's wife, was a daughter of Robert Golding and Martha Judd and a granddaughter of Sir Andrew Judd, a wealthy London merchant with a long record of service as alderman and in other high offices, including that of Lord Mayor of London from 1550-1551. His monument in St. Helen's Bishopsgate, which names Mary Mathew as his third wife, states that he had a daughter by her. This Martha Judd, the only child of the marriage, became the mother-in-law of Bartholomew Gosnold. The facts identifying Mary Gosnold are proved beyond doubt by entries in the parish register of Latton, Essex and by recently discovered wills of Dame Mary Judd, the Lord Mayor's widow and of Martha Golding his daughter. These records throw bright light into the shadowy area surrounding the genesis of the Virginia project of 1606-1607, for they bring together Bartholomew Gosnold and Sir Thomas Smith, the London merchant whose wealth and influence played so large a part in the formation of the first Virginia Company.

"As is well known, Sir Thomas Smith, founder and Governor of the East India Company and Treasurer of the Virginia Company from its conception was likewise a grandchild of Sir Andrew Judd. Bartholomew Gosnold's mother-in-law was therefore the great financier's aunt and Mary Gosnold his first cousin... Bartholomew's marriage, which has the appearance of one arraigned with forethought, brought together a young man of high standing among the landed gentry and a young lady whose antecedents were found chiefly among the wealthier merchants of the city of London."[13]

Gookin pointed out that Bartholomew's mother-in-law had some excellent ties, with these revealing comments:

"Martha Golding, was an aunt by blood of Sir Thomas Smith, and an aunt by marriage of Sir John Scott, both of whom are

12. J. Lea, *Gosnold and Bacon: The Ancestry of Bartholomew Gosnold* (Boston: David Clapp and Sons, 1904) pp. 1-34.

13. W. Gookin, "Who was Bartholomew Gosnold?", *William and Mary Quarterly,* VI (1949) pp. 401-402.

known to have had a leading part in the first Virginia Company. She was connected by kinship, and doubtless by social ties, with other influential merchants of the day. Her husband, Robert Golding, was admitted to the Inner Temple and subsequently became bencher, reader and treasurer of the Temple."[14]

Gookin's information that Gosnold's father-in-law was involved with Inner Temple activities brings to mind that Bartholomew was also a member of another exclusive club, the Middle Temple. These Inns of Court whose membership included successful people of many endeavors, were the "spawning grounds" of colonization plans. For example, in Gosnold's company in the Middle Temple were such important pioneers as Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh and Sir Ferdinando Gorges, to mention only a few.[15]

Gookin showed that Gosnold was within the influence of those interested in pioneering ventures. He wove a web of almost certain association between Captain Gosnold and the men who could aid him in his colonization plans.

Because of Gookin, the following statements by Captain John Smith and John Stowe, both contemporaries of Gosnold, take on special significance. Smith in his *History of Virginia* describing the preparation for the first permanent colony to be at Jamestown, states:

"Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, the first mover of this plantation, having many years solicited many of his friends, but found small assistance, at last prevailed with some gentlemen, as Master Edward Maria Wingfield, Captain John Smith and divers others, who depended a year upon his projects, but nothing could be effected, till by their great charge and industry it came to be apprehended by certain of the nobility, Gentry and Merchants, so that his Majesty, by his letters patent, gave commission for establishing Councils, to direct here, and to govern and execute there.[16]"

14. IBID, p. 404.

15. This is almost conclusive evidence that Bartholomew Gosnold and Richard Hakluyt, England's leading propagandist for colonial enterprise of that time, were in frequent contact with each other. Professor Theodore K. Rabb of Princeton University suspects that further research in this area is needed. See T. Rabb, *Enterprise and Empire* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967) p. 102.

16. E. Arber, ed., *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith* (Edinborough, 1910) p. 89.

Stowe, recalling the efforts by his countrymen in colonizing America, finds it proper to mention only Gosnold, as the influential force behind the enterprise at Jamestown, by writing:

"And amongst other of worthy memory in this plantation, you shall understand that Captain Gosnold, a brave soldier and very ingenious, spent much money, and adventured his person, and drew in many others, at the beginning of this plantation."[17]

Both of these statements, taken together, show that Gosnold was a key figure in recruiting others for the Jamestown Colony.

Gookin established that Gosnold was the leading personality in the early days of the Jamestown Colony. Most of his array of information came from contemporary sources such as Edward Maria Wingfield who was a distant cousin to the explorer and the first President of the Jamestown Colony Council. Wingfield, no doubt, another of Gosnold's recruits, describing the colony's early problems,had this to say concerning Bartholomew's death:

"About this time, divers of our men fell sick. We missed about fifty before September did see us; amongst whom was the worthy and religious gentleman Captain Bartholomew Gosnold, upon whose life stood a great part of the good success and fortune of our government and colony. In his sickness time, the president did easily fortell his own deposing from his command."[18]

Gookin described Gosnold as the "man behind the scenes" at Jamestown; as the stabilizing influence in the colony and as the one to see when something of importance was to be accomplished.

Available sources seem to support Gookin's portrayal. Gosnold's name appeared first on the list of councillors who were to govern the colony. The Virginia Company's *set of instructions* mentioned only two people who would perform important tasks. Captain Newport was to investigate the headwaters of the James River to seek out a possible 'Northwest Passage' and sites for future settlements. Captain Gosnold with a squad of men, was to explore the interior for valuable minerals such as gold.

Bartholomew was also Vice-Admiral of the small fleet transporting the original settlers across the Atlantic. He had

17. J. Stowe, *Annals or a General Chronicle of England...*, (London: Meighen, 1631) p. 942.

18. E. Arber, *Smith's Works, p. 76.*

command of the *Godspeed* which had on board many of the explorer's followers.

The fact that Gosnold was overlooked by historians and did not obtain the great reputation foreseen for him by his friends and backers, might be termed an accident in history. The tragic loss of the early records of the Virginia Company plus the fact that he died too soon after his arrival at Jamestown, delegated him to almost complete obscurity.

Many years before Gookin, William Cullen Bryant, author of a history of the United States, seemed to be in accord with the late Vineyard historian with the statement:

"In the glimpses we have of Gosnold here and elsewhere, he seems to be a man of thoughtful mind, calm judgement and self reliant temper. He probably deserves to be remembered next to Raleigh among the direct founders of the American colonies."[19]

Warner F. Gookin attempted to show that Richard Hakluyt, the great English geographer, and Bartholomew Gosnold were associated in colonization projects, especially that of the 1602 voyage to New England.

Hakluyt "had his fingers in almost every pie" concerning English colonization attempts during the Elizabethan period. He led young aspiring colonizers, such as Gosnold, by the hand, so to speak, and gave them valuable information, if not inspiration, that helped them in their trans-Atlantic voyages. His great work was the compilation of a record of almost all the recorded voyages of the world, commonly called, *The Great Book of Discoveries.* It was first published in 1589 and later revised in 1600. Hakluyt's work insured that the accounts of navigators such as Frobisher, Cabot and Verrazzano would be forever useful to future historians. For this reason, alone, Hakluyt was one of the most important men in the English expansion of America, a supersalesman for colonization.

Gookin pointed out that through members of the family, Bartholomew was led into Hakluyt's orbit. After all, they were practically neighbors, living fifteen miles or so from each other. Gookin also reasoned that internal evidence behind Gosnold's voyage to Cape Cod showed that Hakluyt was responsible in

19. W. Bryant and S. Gay, *A Popular History of the United States* (New York: Scribner, Armstrong and Co., 1876) Vol. I, pp. 275-276.

editing the accounts of the expedition. He even stated that a Robert Salterne and a John Angel, Hakluyt followers, were aboard Gosnold's ship *Concord* for the purpose of reporting back to their master concerning the feasibility of future voyages.Gookin further claimed that Gosnold followed Hakluyt's directions in attempting to find the mythical Indian Kingdom of *Norembega.*

Gookin constructed the following chain of events that showed the threads of evidence pointing to a Hakluyt - Gosnold connection.

In 1590, twelve years before Gosnold's voyage to New England, Lady Dorothy Stafford, an intimate friend of Queen Elizabeth and patroness of Richard Hakluyt, secured the services of Anthony Gosnold. Anthony, a lawyer and the father of Bartholomew, was an acquaintance of this important lady of the Queen's court. Anthony assisted Lady Stafford in clearing the title of ownership to Wetheringset Rectory. She had received the manor as a gift from the queen in 1575; and now appointed Richard Hakluyt, who was a minister, as rector of Wetheringset. Hakluyt resided there for many years and it was there that he revised his volumes on the early voyages of discovery. Wetheringset was only a short fifteen mile stage coach ride to Grundisburgh Suffolk, Bartholomew Gosnold's home. This situation suggests that the way was clear for Bartholomew Gosnold to become acquainted with the geographer. Especially so when one considers that the wife of Bartholomew's first cousin, John, was the daughter of Lady Stafford's cousin. John Gosnold, as was previously mentioned, was usher at court for Queen Elizabeth and must have known Lady Stafford.

These inferences pointing to a clear association between the Gosnolds and Lady Stafford, take on added significance when Gookin showed the Hakluyt influence on Captain Gosnold's voyage of 1602.

Gookin was positive that Gosnold's plan included the investigation of a country called *Norembega*. It was supposed to be located along the eastern seaboard of the present-day United States. The maps and charts of those times placed it in the region that is now New England. A great broad river which opened to the sea at 41 degrees and 40 minutes north latitude would lead Gosnold into this kingdom. It was believed that great riches

were to be found there. Gold, copper and other precious and valuable minerals were to be had there for the taking. The climate was supposed to be similar to that of southern Spain, ideal for vineyards and agriculture in general. It would be a perfect location for colonization.

Since 1582, Hakluyt had been trying to convince his countrymen that voyages to America, using the direct route across the Atlantic, with intent on trade and permanent settlement, would not only be profitable but also help to break the hold of the Spanish in the New World. He proposed that *Norembega* be the initial target for such attempts. In 1583, he was associated with Sir Humphrey Gilbert's ill-fated attempt to colonize *Norembega*. Gilbert's fleet of five vessels, loaded with supplies and over 100 prospective colonists, was all but lost in a severe storm off the coast of Nova Scotia. Only one ship, commanded by Captain Edward Hayes, was able to make it safely back to England. Hayes later, wrote a 'treatise' on the great possibilities of American colonization, which he gave to Hakluyt. In 1585, Hakluyt presented to the Queen his own 'Certain Reasons why the English should plant in America'. This document was not published until the middle 1800's. An older cousin, another Richard Hakluyt, had written a paper called 'Certain Inducements to Colonize America', and had given the manuscript to his younger relation. Gookin proved that all of these documents were used by Gosnold in his voyage. ; and that they only could have been available to him through Hakluyt.

Gosnold, with Hakluyt as the 'guiding star' performed the following tasks successfully in his voyage, thus carrying out the geographer's wishes. He crossed the Atlantic Ocean in a more or less direct route via the Azores. He investigated the Cape Cod and Islands area for its resources and found the presence of copper plus the possibility of gold. He named an island, Martha's Vineyard, suggesting the abundance of grapes for wine-making. He, definitely, found great fishing grounds, much better than the ones then being used off Newfoundland. He entered "one of the stateliest sounds that ever I was in" and his company called it Gosnold's Hope. This bay, now called Buzzards Bay, led into the region of 41 degrees 40 minutes north latitude where the Indian kingdom of *Norembega* was supposed to be located. Gosnold

effected friendly relations with the natives, something that has also been overlooked by historians. He was host to fifty Indians and their chief at a feast. The natives offered roasted crabs and other seafood delicacies while the English contributed some dried meat and mustard. They all washed everything down with English beer. This must have been the first recorded clambake (or was it Thanksgiving?) on the shores of New England.

In general, Gosnold reported that the area was fully suited for colonization and he even brought back to England valuable products such as sassafras to help cover the cost of the trip.

Two short months after the return of the Gosnold expedition, an account of the journey was published by George Bishop, Hakluyt's printer. It included the *John Brereton Relation* of the voyage and, curiously enough, the two papers written by Captain Hayes and Richard Hakluyt the elder. Gookin, through careful analysis, showed that Hakluyt edited the Brereton story and included both his cousin's and Captain Hayes's work in the publication to make the book a persuasive inducement to other pioneers to invest in similar enterprises.

Gookin had this to say pertaining to Hakluyt's role behind the Gosnold voyage:: "The sum of the matter is that if the unnamed editor of Brereton's Relation was not Richard Hakluyt, then Richard Hakluyt must have found or developed an alter ego indistinguishable from himself in learning, interests, or authoritative utterance. Hakluyt might have educated his disciple, Bartholomew Gosnold, to the point where Bartholomew could think, quote and write like his master. In other words, Gosnold might himself have edited the *Brereton Relation*. But there is no hint elsewhere that Gosnold ever functioned as a profound student of the *Voyages*. There seems only the conviction, therefore, that Hakluyt, himself, edited and published the little book that is known as *Brereton's Relation*.[20]

Gookin did a remarkable bit of detective work in proposing a Gosnold-Hakluyt alliance, especially without the benefit of any direct evidence such as a letter between the two men.

Gookin's Gosnold was a far cry from what the so-called experts had pictured him previously. He was a man unselfishly staying in the backgrounds, pulling all the correct strings to make his

20. W. Gookin and P. Harbour, *Gosnold*, p. 183.

colonization schemes bear fruit. A man with outstanding ability as a navigator with great knowledge of long ocean voyages. With these qualifications, why shouldn't Gookin have been disturbed that Gosnold had gone virtually unnoticed for so many years? With his fresh information lifting 'mystery man' Gosnold out of the shadows, Gookin figured that historians would take his lead and put Captain Gosnold in his proper place in history. But, for the most part, that has not been done.

Gookin would have had more success in promoting his hero by passing out "Gosnold for founder of our Country" buttons, for he was struggling against the tide of tradition. Many others have faced the same problem.

A striking example is the picture of Captain John Smith as a swashbuckling braggart and liar whose only popular note of fame comes from the fact that his life was saved by the pretty Indian princess, Pocahontas. It was not until 1964 that Philip L. Barbour brought forward a more realistic indication of Captain Smith's true role in history.[21]

Barbour's comprehensive book showed that, in fact, the success of the Jamestown Colony was largely due to the exploits of Smith. In the early days of the colony, Smith, was elected president of the plantation and proceeded to guide the struggling settlers through famine, internal corruption and Indian raids. Smith's many published works describing activities in New England and Virginia show that he was a leading pioneer in English colonization.

Gookin was right more times than he was wrong with his Gosnold research. He probably had a sixty percent average of being correct which is a respectable showing considering his lack of background in historical writing and his poor physical health. His main fault which probably stemmed from his persistent nature, was his adamant conclusions. Once he made a decision, he closed his eyes to any related circumstances that might alter his reasoning.

However, the essential ingredient for successful researchers is natural curiosity sprinkled with some courage and patience. Gookin possessed these important elements and to the very best of

21. P. Barbour, *The Three Worlds of Captain John Smith* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1964).

his ability produced scholarly work.

In April of 1949, Warner Foote Gookin, a real historical detective in every sense, composed a letter to his friend, Mr. Francis A. Foster, who was then very influential in the Dukes County Historical Society. Gookin was there in the midst of his research, and reviewed for Mr. Foster his recent progress. The conclusion of the letter reveals a side of Mr. Gookin that, perhaps, few of those who knew him understood.

Therefore, it is as a tribute to the late Vineyard historian that I conclude this article with the following passage:

"May I point out with due humility that I am endeavoring to the best of my ability to establish the facts in certain limited phases of the Island's history according to the standards recognized by the scholars with whom I keep in touch.

"It seems very difficult for the average layman to understand that some sort of professional training is needed to qualify a writer for proper documentary interpretation and to recognize the differences between amateurish efforts at history writing and work with documentary authority behind it. Unfortunately, a man without that training, no matter how industrious a chronicler of annals he may be, venturing into the field of general history, is bound to make egregious blunders in presenting and evaluating evidence...

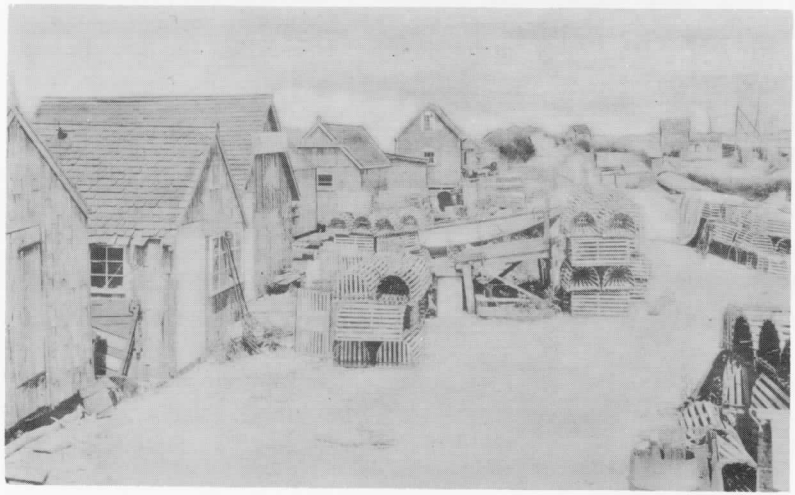
"It is a matter of great gratification to me that the Society has found it possible to finance in some measure the research that makes the writing of accurate history possible. My greatest desire now is to contribute to the Society's collections as much essential source material as can be found, for the use of such trained historians of the future as may be enlisted to carry on the study of the Island's history." [22]

22. Correspondence from Warner F. Gookin to Francis A. Foster, 14 April 1949, Gookin Archives, Dukes County Historical Society, Edgartown.

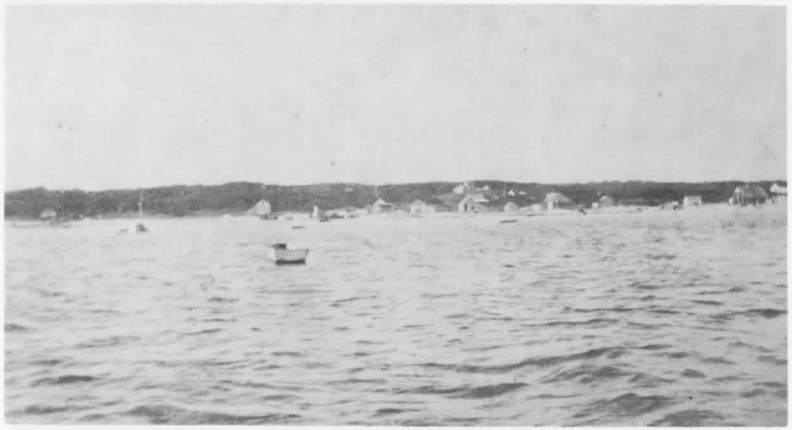
Lobstering and Swordfishing – Photographs

These photographs are from the collection of Captain and Mrs. Donald LeMar Poole of Chilmark.

The Basin at Menemsha Creek before the 1938 hurricane.



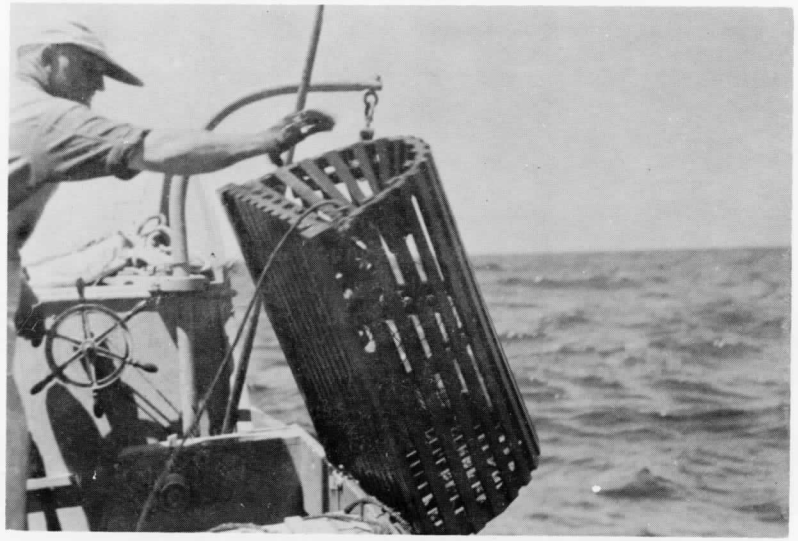
Lobster pots and fish houses along Menemsha Creek also before the 1938 hurricane.



A picture of the beach at Lobsterville about 1918. It was still a fishing village then but was rapidly losing out to Menemsha Creek.

A small fleet of swordfishermen in Menemsha Basin. Pre 1938.

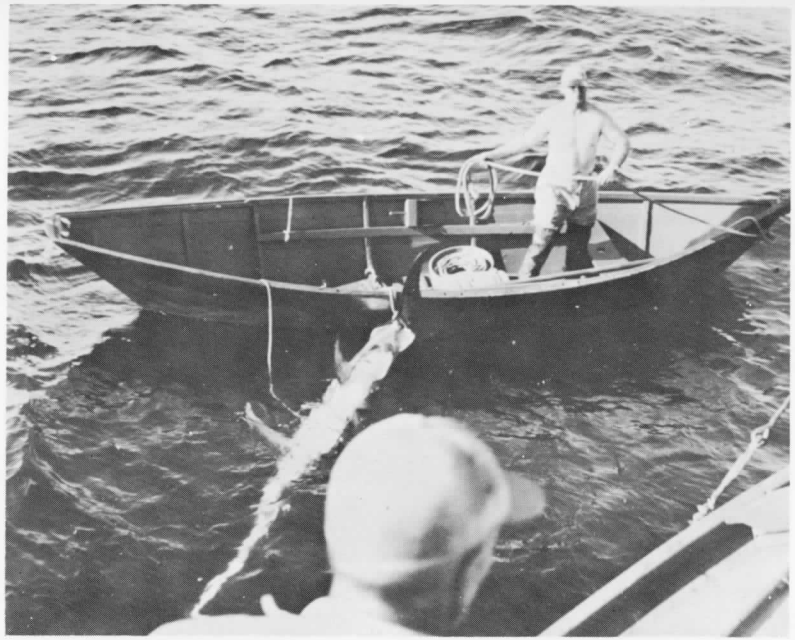
Taking the lobsterpot buoy with the gaff.



Bringing the pot aboard.

Filling the bait bags.

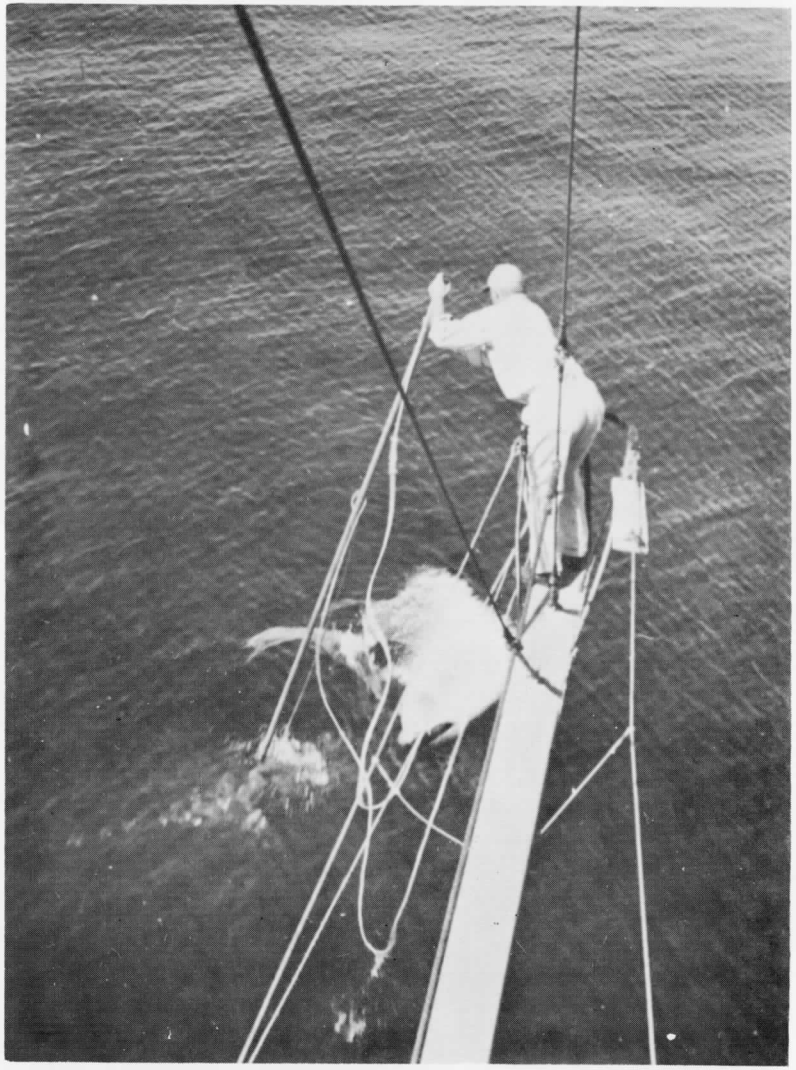
Holding up the tail of a big one. *The Dorotky and Everett.*



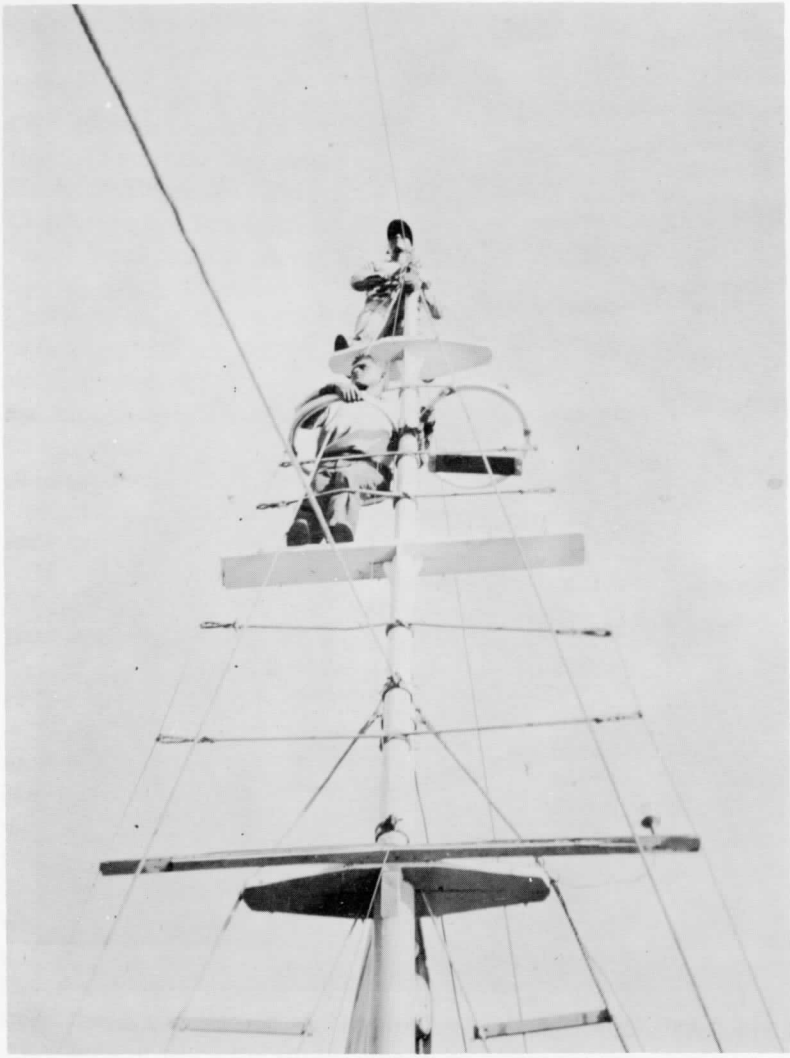
A good fish and the dory from which it was tended.

Making the fish secure

Waiting for a chance to strike. The man in the pulpit is Norman Smalley.



Captain Poole striking.



Looking for swordfish from aloft. The vessel is Captain Poole's *Dorothy C.*

A good day and bound home. The vessel is the *Dorothy and Everett.*

DCHS News

The sad news in this issue of the *Intelligencer* is that Margaret Chatterton, our curator for the past three years, has left us. Rev. Read Chatterton has accepted the position of Chaplain of the Masonic Home in Decoto, California, and of course, Mrs. Chatterton has accompanied her husband west. There she will do social work in the Home on a voluntary basis. Not only our Society, but Edgartown and the whole Island will miss the Chattertons. And now the Society must look for a new curator.

In the meantime Thomas Norton is working for us as archivist, unfortunately only on a temporary basis while he waits for a teaching position in a university or college. But we are fortunate to have him on any basis. He holds an M. A. from the University of Massachusetts, and a P. H. D. in colonial history from the University of Tennessee. Dr. Norton is married to the former Jacqueline Loney of Brockton.

Mrs. Caroline O. Reynolds is also working for the Society helping Mrs. D. Osborn Bettencourt in the Library. Mrs. Bettencourt and Mrs. Reynolds are sisters, daughters of the late Walter S. and Marion H. Osborn and thus are descended from one of the very old Edgartown whaling families.

There will be no list of accessions in this issue. That must wait until our Registrar, Mrs. Marian R. Halperin, returns to the Island. However a gift from the Seacoast Defence Chapter of the D. A. R. must be mentioned. It is the mystery gravestone from Gay Head that was illustrated in Henry Franklin Norton's *Martha's Vineyard, The Story Of Its Towns,* with no accompanying story. The book was published in 1923. After that there is no record of the stone until it was rediscovered in the D. A. R. Museum in Vineyard Haven this past summer by Mrs. Daniel Hull. She recognized it from the illustration in Mr. Norton's book. But no one seems to know how or when the stone came to be where she found it.

The stone is remarkable because the name on it does not sound Indian at all but rather Norse. The inscription, as well as it can be made out, reads Haiki Cagneheind J U. Or perhaps the second word of the name is Cagnesheid. The stone shows weathering and is evidently old. We on the Vineyard have always believed that our

Island was once part of the Norsemen's Vinland. Could this stone possibly give strength to that belief? But that is speculation.

There is no speculation, however, about this. The Seaman's Bethel in Vineyard Haven is in danger of being destroyed or converted into a ticket office for the Steamship Authority. That must not be. And if necessary our Society should fight to prevent it from happening. The Seaman's Bethel and what it stands for in Vineyard history are too important. If the building must be moved let it be. But let it not be destroyed.

The schooner *Alice S. Wentworth,* Captain Zeb Tilton's famous little coaster is also in danger of destruction - not by man - but by the passing years. She is, we believe, the oldest documented vessel in the United States that is still afloat. She is well over a hundred years old. Polly Burroughs the author of *Zeb, A Celebrated Schooner Life* is leading a fight to save the *Wentworth,* to rescue her from her humiliating berth at Pier 4 in Boston, and to have her restored. Perhaps our Society can help in that effort, too.

The Acting Editor

Some Publications

OF THE DUKES COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ON SALE AT ISLAND BOOK STORES AND IN THE SOCIETY'S LIBRARY.

The Mammals of Martha's Vineyard by Allan R. Keith. Illustrated, paper. 50¢.

Whaling Wives by Emma Mayhew Whiting and Henry Beetle Hough. A new edition. Illustrated. Cloth $4.50.

Capawack Alias Martha's Vineyard by Warner F. Gookin. Cloth $1.00.

Martha's Vineyard A Short History and Guide. Eleanor Ransom Mayhew, Editor. New edition with added index. Maps and illustrations. Paper $2.50.

Our Enchanted Island by Marshall Shepard. An attempt to prove that Martha's Vineyard is the Island of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Paper, 50¢.

The Heath Hen's Journey to Extinction by Henry Beetle Hough. Illustrations. Paper 50¢.

The Fishes of Martha's Vineyard by Joseph B. Elvin. With 36 illustrations of fishes by Will Huntington. Paper, 50¢.

The History of Martha's Vineyard by Charles Edward Banks. A new edition. Indices, illustrations, three volumes. Cloth, $30.00.

Tales and Trails of Martha's Vineyard by Joseph C. Allen. Illustrated. $3.95. When ordering by mail please add 25¢ to cover postage and handling.

"Cap'n George Fred" Himself. The autobiography of Captain George Fred Tilton of Chilmark. A new edition. Cloth. $6.50.

Wild Flowers of Martha's Vineyard by Nelson Coon. Illustrated. Paper $3.95.

An Introduction To Martha's Vineyard by Gale Huntington. Paper $3.50.

Indian Legends Of Martha's Vineyard by Dorothy R. Scoville. Paper $2.50.

Come - Tour With Me by Deidamia Osborn Bettencourt. A description of the Dukes County Historical Society's Cooke House, museum and grounds. Illustrated, paper. 50¢.

Shipwrecks On Martha's Vineyard by Dorothy R. Scoville. Illustrated, paper. $3.00.