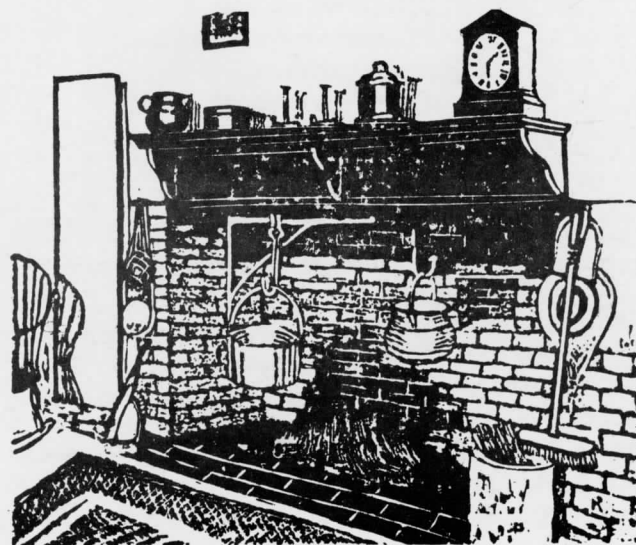


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Tom's Neck Farm

BY GLADYS PEASE REID

The Moshop Tale

BY RICHARD SCAGLION

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Edgartown, Massachusetts

Tom's Neck Farm

BY GLADYS PEASE REID

Editorial note.

This paper by Gladys Reid was published in the *Vineyard Gazette* in the issue of May 3, 1968. It is not the policy of the *Intelligencer* to use published material. However, we have made exceptions to that rule in a number of instances, as with Edward S. Burgess's "The Old South Road of Gay Head," and James Freeman's "Dukes County in 1807," both of which are surely Vineyard classics. And just so Gladys Reid's "Tom's Neck Farm" is included here because it too is a classic.

Mrs. Reid is a past president of the Dukes County Historical Society. She was chairman of the house and grounds committee for many years. She first planted our herb garden and tended and cared for it. Also over the years she has made many gifts to the society. Gifts of whalemens' logbooks, account books and innumerable other items.

The family at Tom's Neck Farm in the last decade of the 19th century included my paternal grandmother, whose husband had died when my father was ten. There were nine children, a grandmother and one aunt in permanent residence. Grandmother owned and managed a large acreage. She boarded the "Poor of the Town" - the men working in the fields, the women in the house - care of the aged and ill, the babies - these were just common chores, beside which were the special projects, preserving of fruit and vegetables, making of butter and cheese, smoking of meat and fish for winter. In winter, wool was carded, spun, and woven into blankets and made into clothing. Leisure was no problem in those

days – there was none. The folk took turns reading and none lacked the common 3R education. The fourth was geography. There were maps all over the house. Even when I can first remember, the West Bedroom was papered with charts, not just Vineyard, Nantucket, Block Island area, but the China Sea and the North West coast of Africa. No wonder Chappaquiddick has never seemed small to me. From it, I went around the world in my dreams and woke in the morning with charts to prove it!

There is no record that anyone in the family fought in the Civil War though many ancestors were in the Revolutionary War and that of 1812. The old guns decorated the mantel or stood shining in a corner of the kitchen. They did not rust: our folk have never been rust gatherers. The guns were submitted to the same weekly cleaning that kept the moths and mice in an unsettled state for the quarter century of my grandmother's reign.

Of her large family three did not marry, four married, but had no children, and of the two sons who did have wives only three small girls were born. Our father was bitterly disappointed at having no son and did his best to teach us boys' ways and to be good companions for him. We went to the farm only summers for visits with the one uncle who remained to manage there. The older generations had died and my aunts and uncles had gone their various ways all over the face of the sea, for those were still whaling days.

Uncle Charlie, our favorite uncle, was tall, blond and handsome, an excellent husbandman looking well to the needs of his land, the buildings, the animals, hired help and his two small nieces who visited him each summer. In just that order.

At the ages of four and five, we roamed Chappaquiddick at will. Only five summer homes had been established at North Neck -- none at Cape Pogue - five along the Katama shore. Five or six native white families lived in the centre of the island, about ten Indian homes were scattered along parts of Cape Pogue Pond shore, south west. We were on speaking terms with all of the people. We were entertained at a famous fireworks party each summer at the Marshall's, had tea with Grandmother Child who was a second Queen Victoria. Riding on the ice cart behind a pair of oxen was one of our greatest delights. The elderly Indian who owned the ice pond, the oxen and the cart was a fountain of

wisdom with a philosophy of living that cheers me to this day. He had pride, not false pride, but real. He believed in building better than those who had lived before him. He loved his land, his home, his oxen and the two little white girls he taught the mysteries of gee and haw along the sandy road to Katama and back through Clark's woods. There we always found time to pick a wild flower and chase a butterfly. He told us the names, English and Latin. It was easy to catch up for the oxen were slow. When I see people driving from Edgartown to Gay Head I wonder what they are learning at 80 miles an hour except, perhaps, how to evade the law.

Ethel, the daughter of Professor Weslehoft, who spent her first 16 summers at their home on the Katama side of Chappa is still my dearest friend. The farm was a busy place in those days. All of Wasqua was pasture for 100 sheep. Cape Pogue pastured another hundred except that those were brought home in winter to the lower barn field where a large shelter and feeding rack made comfort for them and a play house for us in summer.

In those days our uncle ate breakfast in the kitchen with the hired men, a half dozen Portuguese of assorted ages. Lunch was a quick thing of small interest, eaten wherever the work was going on for the day. Only last week I saw hops growing wild and the thought came to me suddenly that they had been grown years before as "makings" for the very mild beer that was served mid-morning and mid-afternoon right in the fields. I still own the two gallon brown pitcher in which it was carried. Dinner was different. Sister and I arrived at the back door in our blue denim bloomer suits, or sometimes without, if the tide had come up higher than our expectation, but always bearing a peace offering for Sara Martin, the housekeeper, widow of the first colored Captain to take a whaleship out of Edgartown. Blueberries, blackberries, fish, even an occasional lobster – for by the time we were seven and eight we were setting lobster pots not too far out in Cape Pogue Pond. Although we could have walked out to them we preferred to row – a dory of all things – one oar each. Not until years later did we learn that neither of us could really row alone with two oars. We just went around in circles.

I wish every little girl could have the kind of happy summers that were ours. The world seemed a peaceful place to us. The only

harsh part of our day was when Sara, after having accepted our gifts, turned on us the familiar look which meant "Baths." Having soaked all day in salt water, we were what she called "renched" in hot fresh water in the tin tubs which sat on a long bench on the East Porch. This took two people -- one hired man to bring the wooden buckets of water while walking backward, for modesty's sake, from the stove to hand to Sara who splashed us from head to toe while admonishing us to rub ourselves with the bars of yellow soap. "Use plenty -- it's cheap -- I make it myself from lamb fat and wood ashes. Believe me, you folk aren't breaking out with poison ivy while Sara takes care of you!" If I burst out laughing at a joke all my own when I pass by a drug store decked out with every cosmetic item forced on a gullible, long suffering public, it is because the whispered voice of my little sister says from long ago, "Just like a hog scalding, and in public, too!"

The drying off was better. Sara draped each of us in lovely great bath towels, fragrant with sunshine, growing grapes and fresh cut hay with a hint of bayberry. The hired man and the hated buckets disappeared. We were whisked into the guest room. Dried each other and then were dusted by Sara with rice powder, orris scented. Then we dressed for dinner in starched gingham frocks, short white cotton socks and Mary Janes, not patent leather. We had never seen any here on the island -- just plain kid skin, but shiny from buffing.

Our uncle seated us as though we were grown ladies, turn and turn about at the foot of the table. The first course was Roses lime juice poured into little glasses from a decorated green bottle. It is sold to this day. I wonder who drinks it? Or does it just add flavor to something else? No need to tell you about the rest of the meal. Island people ate well in those days; only tea, coffee, flour, chocolate and spices came from away.

After Sara had served the last luscious item and the youngest hired hand had washed the last dish, we all went out to the Shop Porch to watch the sun set and to sing it over the edge into Edgartown. Then everybody went to bed -- except my uncle who made one last trip to the barns to assure himself that all was well. If it was a nice warm night, I could go with him with Sara's grey "kitchen shawl" wrapped around me. It was then I became friendly with "Old Fred" the carriage horse. I gave him a handful

of rock candy out of the big ginger jar that was kept in the tack room. The family of barn owls liked me too. Not so the hoot owls that measured off the meadow yard by yard back and forth in the moonlight hunting their uneasy prey. It was all right with me; I did not like them either, swooping down on innocent little creatures and being so ruthless. Uncle patted my head when I cried and gave me the newest baby lamb, just born that day, a very late one, sort of accidental. I took it home on the steamboat, the Monnohanset, when our visit was over. The stewardess gave me a blue ribbon for its neck. No, my name is not Mary and it did not follow me, I chased it. That is another story and has little to do with the farm.

The year we were twelve and thirteen that kind, gentle, good man died by his own hand. The others, brothers and sisters, had gone to far places, faced grave dangers and had come home unharmed, while he had remained at home, cared for their property, earned for them good interest on their inheritance. I cannot talk about it. I loved him so much. If you are interested, it is in the old newspapers. A rare part of our lives had ended. The year was 1904.

For the next ten years, the farm suffered from the doldrums. A sailor son came home, bitter over the death of his brother. The stock was sold, all except Old Fred, kept to make the necessary trips to town for provisions. Uncle fished and hunted or sat in the sun spinning yarns about his seafaring days. Unlike many boys of his day he had not run away to sea, but had shipped out of Edgartown on the whaler of a neighbor who later became his brother-in-law. The two sailed together for more than forty years. My aunt accompanied them during the pleasant months, but remained on one of the islands in the Pacific during the hard seasons, though she really made her home in New Zealand. Another aunt, Mary, married to Captain Benjamin Worth, lived on shipboard longer periods of time, using the long hours as school teacher preparing many of the younger members of the crew for their college examinations. In those days, seafaring was not only a way of life -- it was often a chance to earn money for an education or to save a bit toward a start in business. Going to sea in those days no more made each boy a whaling captain than coming to do summer work in Edgartown nowadays makes every college boy an

hotel manager. Aunt Mary liked winters in Chile, and from there sent beautiful furs, rugs and blankets. More interesting to my sister and me were the gifts which arrived from China; silk fans, small dolls with Chinese faces and clothes, collapsing drinking cups, eggs of a dozen colors all held in one outside, real sized egg. For our mother, there were lovely cups and a silken shawl.

Aunt Mary visited China only when the ship went up river from the China Sea to a famous shipyard for overhaul. Auntie shopped in Shanghai, nearby. Those far places were more familiar to us than New Bedford or Boston, for until I was fifteen I had not visited Boston, and only New Bedford for a round trip on the steamer, going up the street to Bates for an ice cream soda while the freight was being loaded.

In 1904 we moved to Edgartown and made more frequent visits to the farm, taking over baskets of cakes, cookies and pies, for there was no longer a housekeeper. Uncle was good with "boil and fry", but poor at baking saying he never did have the right hat for it. Whoever went over carried the mail, the *Saturday Evening Post* and a copy of the Sunday Times. Uncle could catch up that way with what was going on in the world. His idea of the daily news was that it was no different and far less entertaining than what he had already lived through. He had scant interest in the efforts of "Christian Endeavor," even less in "W.C.T.U." A waterfront brawl or a drunk on the Four Corners, though utterly terrifying to us, were less than nothing to him. On the other hand, if the nestful of horse shoe crabs was about to take to water at Pasenges Pond we were led down ever so quietly to watch the amazing march to the sea. We were taught to watch the gulls – in order to tell which fish were running. He knew "yarbs" as well as any doctor and owned a complete medicine kit that he had used at sea. We might look, but never touch – many of the contents were poison, the rest very sharp, for cutting off legs! At about which time we decided our day had been long enough.

Old Fred was hitched to the buggy and we drove to town, though I know now we did not drive – Fred took us. Once at the Point, he could be trusted to wait until the ferryman rowed over and got us aboard the sharpie, whereupon he promptly turned around and jogged the three miles back. I used to think he unharnessed himself, Houdini style.

By that time Uncle had bought out the rest of the family. There was no income and they were all glad to sell. My father and the two remaining brothers turned to trap fishing which was a good money maker for the next four years. We lived at the farm spring and fall, driving Old Fred to the Point, going through the routine of turning him about and heading him for home. He made great pretense of haste for the short part of the road where we might see him, but once around the bend at Caleb's Pond just meandered along grazing his way home, arriving just in time for his noon ration of oats and a long drink of water from the wooden tub filled at the long handled greenpump. No one ever curbed Fred's thirst as was done for the work horses. Father maintained that the old horse knew more of the chemistry of his own anatomy than the rest of us put together. So he ate and drank at will. Just before four in the afternoons, he was in harness again to fetch us home from school. Winters we lived in town, summers at Cape Pogue. Since the trap fishing is really a different story all of itself, I shall leave it out of the Tom's Neck Farm history. No matter where we two sisters were, we were never lonely.

I have told you that our father was disappointed that we were girls and did his best to make up for it. We learned the ways of winds and tides, of birds and all small creatures. The ancient art of "heave and haul" for bluefish at East Beach became as familiar to us as hanging May Baskets was to most girls of our day, which was more than sixty years ago. My small sister refused to learn to shoot. She was afraid of guns. Perhaps she was right. There are four ounces of shot embedded in the stair wall of the farmhouse to prove that in careless hands a gun is a dangerous toy. Since some of the skin of my Aunt Nell's shins went into the wall along with the lead, there is even to this day a firm rule that all guns are to be unloaded outside the home grounds.

However, I learned to use guns. First, a lovely little pearl handled revolver which had been treasured by the family for years. After that, a Winchester rifle worked very well for me since it had a slight distortion to the left and I suffered an astigmatism which threw my vision toward the right. Together we were a good shot -- if the target were still. I never could hit any moving thing. The next was a pair of handsome dueling pistols Father had purchased for \$5.00 at an estate sale in Oak Bluffs, silver and ivory mounted

and housed in blue crushed velvet. The height of elegance and a glory to use -- a glory all too short lived. Father was offered \$100.00 for the pistols and since he was building our house and way buying shingles for the roof, they went. Often as I open the door and walk into Summer Street House, I am amused at the thought of the trade -- a roof over my head for a lifetime for a pair of dueling pistols.

Came the big day, Father started me on a new venture -- to use his double barreled shotgun. We went through the whole routine -- how to stand, to sight, to keep the gun balanced properly -- all but the small important item of relaxing, not bracing against the recoil. I will argue the point with any man from the commander-in-chief of the army down to the most casual of rabbit hunters. I still do not understand the actual muscular workings -- they are the same as good sailors use in rough weather, stiffen one leg, slacken the other and nobody falls. Well, there was I -- both shoulders taut, and with the first blast I was flat on my back, the precious weapon on the ground before me. Father, without even holding out a hand to help me, picked up his twelve gauge, saying, "By thunder, you are a girl," and walked off. Carefully I rolled over, got to my feet, brushed myself and muttered toward his retreating back, "Yes, Sir Benjamin, I am a girl, from right now" and became completely feminine. Three years later I was married and in the next four years had two children. At the moment when I laid my infant son in my father's arms, he said, "He will make it all up to me and I shall have you, too!" Very satisfying -- he and my son spent many happy hours together. But I never could be persuaded to let him teach my young daughter to shoot.

Our home in Edgartown was finished -- though not quite, for the upstairs baseboards were not on -- but we moved in anyway on my birthday of May 1908. I was taking fourth year Latin -- Virgil -- and French irregular verbs. My sister lay on her stomach on the floor in her room, I in mine, while she held the dictionaries and hissed at me the words I missed. Father used to say at breakfast, "I don't know what marks you girls are getting in school, but I am failing in common orientation. When I wake I am never sure whether I am in Ancient Rome, Modern Paris or right here in the new house. Guess it is time I put those baseboards on."

The whaling uncle had bought a smaller house for himself on Chappa with less land than the farm, but the advantage of a pleasant pond and a running stream at the back. We called it Tisdale Farm.

Sister and I still made trips to the old farm house. We brushed away the spiders, frightened the mice and while I oiled the guns Sister polished the furniture -- pieces ranging in age from 1640 - 1900. A woman once said to us when she stopped by for a drink of water, "I have just had my whole house redecorated." If she had hoped to impress us she failed, for with an extra hard rub on the top of the rosewood Victorian sofa, a glance at the two hundred year old grandfather clock, and a swift kick at the bayonet of the Revolutionary War gun, my sister said, "How wonderful; we have not even finished furnishing this one yet." Then somewhere from an evil as old as Eve herself, Sister asked me in a mild housewifely voice, "Were you planning to put out the furs from Chile to air?," and from the same source I replied, "No, it is sort of dampish out, I think I'll wash the Canton China." The woman knew she had met her match, not in money, but in possessions and the love of them. And that Eve is everywhere.

One Saturday in September we made a memorable visit to Tom's Neck Farm. We picked tall swamp blueberries, beach plums and grapes, then dug a bucket of clams; too much for us to carry and Old Fred was too frail to be used any more. A neighbor offered to fetch the stuff to town the next day. Just before starting home we made a trip to the vine covered little house out back where a white lattice shaded three sides. Old Fred followed, standing between the door and the lattice. No amount of clucking, admonishing to back up or go away, had any effect. Even a trial to duck under his belly only brought that belly farther down until it was I who backed into the wee house. My sister tried, only to have him flatten himself farther toward the ground beneath him. It grew dark. My sister began to cry. I had pains which I feared were starvation, but proved to be too many blueberries. Just as I began to consider the humiliation of being found dead in the little house, which fact would of course be in all the newspapers, the voice of our father thundered, "Where are you?" Irate or not, he had never been so welcome. A yowl from Sis and a howl from me assured him we were in no danger. By that time, Fred had backed out meekly

and had begun to nibble at the lush grass that grew in the immediate vicinity, acting as though it had all been a normal day in his life. As we tearfully explained what had happened, Father remarked completely without pity, "One good clip on the nose would have backed that horse out two hours ago and saved me a round trip to the Farm." Fred was lonely and had not wanted us to leave. We walked to the point in silence, went to bed without supper, sustained by the blueberries which in my sister backed up before morning and in me backed out. We knew little about the "birds and the bees" but digestive processes were no secret to either of us.

Old Fred died mysteriously that next week. We mourned him sadly – perhaps not just Fred, but that another happy part of our lives had come to an end.

The next part of this is a bit difficult for me to tell. Not that it hurts me now – it is part of island folklore – but at the time I suffered far beyond reason. The whaling uncle had decided to sell the Farm, but not to any of his brothers or sisters. He wanted it to go to the next generation. Since I was the eldest, it was offered first to me for \$1,500.00 -- almost 1,000 acres on Chappaquiddick, complete with house, work shop, two barns, two sheep sheds, orchards and gardens. I had no money of my own and when I asked my in-laws, they were of the opinion that no one would ever want to live on Chappaquiddick and they were not about to invest any money there. So the property was offered to my sister whose husband, being a wise and long visioned man, borrowed the money, bought the Farm and gave it to her. My father was made manager, he and mother moving into the farmhouse for the long, busy seasons – though they still lived at Summer Street House winters.

The type of hired help had changed. The Portuguese people had established themselves as artisans – carpenters, plumbers, electricians – seldom available for any other work, but a few brief months in summer when they combined quahauging, which paid well, with running boats for summer people paying even better, and built up their status by the wearing of captain's caps. Edgartown broke out with a veritable rash of gold braid and buttons. This left the Edgartown farmer dependent on hired hands from Northern Europe – men very young who came to escape the

required two years of military duty. You older people will remember that America did not have such at the time.

The Farm again became a busy place. Asparagus was the cash crop. It grew wonderfully well on its sandy soil. Mother owned a flock of a hundred sheep, that being all which, without Waqua that my grandmother had sold before her death, the farmlands would support. The sheep money was hers, also the care of them except that Father "dipped and docked." One Sunday each June two men who were expert at shearing came over for the day to help. It is my recollection that they were shepherds who worked for the Forbes family. Their day off was like the postman's holiday – but they seemed to have a happy time. Old friends came from far and near to exchange news and jokes while passing the unshorn sheep to the shepherds and pushing the shorn ones out through the proper gate to the tree lined lane which took them to summer pasture. No good shepherd in those days ever allowed anyone to throw his sheep for shearing. He did it himself – one quick flip, the left hand holding the sheep down while it laid back the fleece which the right hand had cut. These men could turn over to the carrier a roll of wool inside out that was as neat as the absorbant cotton you buy in a blue box at the drug store, and almost as white, for the sheep were Hampshire downs, white with black nose, ears and feet. Any black one that showed up was a delicious dinner for someone before his voice changed. Hampshire downs do well in New England, fat and small boned, while other kinds do better in the West where longer drives from pasture to pasture are necessary.

There was nearly always a baby lamb or two in a box back of the black iron stove in the kitchen. Mother was always glad of a helping hand at feeding time and the children loved to hold the bottles while the little motherless ones guzzled with unbelievable speed. I have a picture of my mother feeding four lambs at a time, two cream bottles in each hand.

A large herd of milch cattle was purchased, Guernseys, with an expensive pedigreed male. The milk was plentiful and good, supplying the ever increasing number of summer residents. The young stock, pastured close to the swamps, gradually grazed deeper and deeper which, in turn, widened the arable fields. The Farm again went through the normal routine of graze, plant,

plough under and plant again, until every inch of it was fine land. Sheep were still summered at Cape Pogue and if one or two were slaughtered there, with the hides left to clutter up the landscape, Father just remarked, "Fellow must have been hungrier than we are." I recall one autumn afternoon when the young Scandinavian hired boy and I drove to the lighthouse, had a cup of coffee with the keeper who was happy to have company. We were half way back up the cape when the old chaise we were driving gave way just like the one in the poem, not piece by piece, but all at once, and we had still three miles to go. I had been teaching the boy English, with the help of the little book given immigrants by the United States government. With a deep bow he said, "By your leave, Madam". I gave the stilted "It is permitted." Faster than I can say it, I was lifted up on the horse and Oscar was holding what seemed like a half mile of harness in front of me. He was frugal and not about to waste good leather. It took a long time to get home. For some reason, the sheep had not the same respect for a ridden horse as a driven one, so at frequent intervals Oscar or I, sometimes both, got off to chase the straying sheep out through the cedars on to the road again. Since my father had brought the flock up from Cape pasture many times himself, he knew just how onerous a chore it could be, so he was waiting to let us in to the home pasture, turned the horse over to the Polish boy who was extra hand that summer, and walked to the house with us where Mother had a hot supper waiting in the kitchen.

I tried to have Oscar tell his story in English, but Father and the Polish boy who understood English better than he could speak it, were so anxious that the story had to be mine after all.

The fact that my sister owned the Farm failed to make any real difference. My children and I were in and out as freely as though it were mine. There were times when her children spent weeks at my house and my little folk were always welcome at Tom's Neck. It was a happy time for everyone.

Then once again the world changed. Europe was at war and since war seems to be an epidemic thing, soon America was at war, too. Not that it mattered to the old guns which were prime ornaments in the dining room at Tom's Neck Farm. Their greatest turmoil was still the weekly cleaning. The husband of my sister was already a famous man -- graduate of Exeter, Harvard, Harvard

Law. A scholar, a teacher, a lawyer, a noted mathematician -- he was sent for by the War Department to be put in an important position in Washington. He was to be part of the "great brain." He went to Washington, enjoyed a pleasant lunch, came out top man in a heated argument, and went home to Concord, Mass. to volunteer in his country's service. He believed that in a democracy no man should be given preferment -- that each should earn his place in the sun. So Roger Sherman Hoar went into the Coast Artillery -- a private. One of his first assignments was to carry cases of live ammunition from an unannounced source to a ship in Boston Harbor. During that day which was for Roger just another exciting day, for all of Roger's days were full of vigor and the joy of living, one of his group came down with scarlet fever! The whole party of ammunition carriers was quarantined on a small island in the harbor -- three weeks -- during which time the Pentagon was hunting for Roger. As he told it, he played some croquet, taught some math, played "horseshoes." learned a bit more of Spanish and acquired prickly heat. In all, a rather pleasant, slow going interlude in a fast paced life. Washington caught up with him and having run out of arguments, he compromised and went to Aberdeen Proving Ground, an officer, to study and teach ballistics. There, on the results of his work, he wrote a textbook which for the next thirty years was used at both Annapolis and West Point. But Roger Hoar's story is a long and glorious one, far beyond my power to write. Let it be said that the family at Tom's Neck Farm is proud of him, and each morning his flag there is raised and each sunset sees it lowered carefully, folded and put away on his desk for the night. If you have the right sort of heart for listening, there comes a faint sound of music that dances over the meadows and dies out with the changing tide at East Beach. Some people hear only the slap of the halyards against the tall white flagpole.

The war took three of the hired men who were replaced for the duration by an elderly, crippled cook who was left in Edgartown by a coastwise schooner because of an injury he had suffered. After one look at him, Mother decided she would do her own cooking and the man was put to work in the fields. There, he alternately worked and rested -- when my father was looking and when he was not. Yet we were fond of Cap in spite of two

irritating habits. He grew an horrible beard, red, each winter -- said it kept away bronchitis. Worse than that, he loved to shout at me just at mail time -- on the Four Corners -- that he could beat me any time at High-LowJack. That year, my children and I went often to the Farm for weekends. Two brothers of my mother, beyond age of military service, replaced the other two hired men. We played cards evenings while Mother popped corn or made World War I cookies -- barley flour, molasses and raisins. Any of you remember? Too, do you remember how we in Edgartown all went to the Captain Worth House then owned by the Wilson Crosby's -- to make bandages and surgical dressings? The house was open day and night and nearly everyone in town put in whatever hours he or she could spare. There were a few supervisors who taught or tore apart according to the quality of the work.

There was so much work to be done at the Farm that my parents remained all winter of 1917-18. It seemed that America not only was fighting the War to End All War -- fighting for Democracy -- but feeding the world at the same time. The Farm kitchen was a vast factory for canning vegetables and fruit -- with a very new style, very dangerous pressure cooker known as "the thing."

Almost everyone worked hard, sustained by the sense of emergency, drawing on unguessed strengths. The plague of Spanish Influenza struck the island, just as it did the rest of the world. Strange how each war in the history of mankind has its own particular illness to record. The island had only three doctors and two nurses during World War I, and no hospital. The little family at Tom's Neck Farm was fortunate in that the "flu" did not strike it in spite of Mother's going out each day to help neighbors who were afflicted. On those errands of mercy, she brought a baby or two -- without any doctor.

Then suddenly the war was over, with as little cause for its end as there had been for its beginning. My brother-in-law moved his family to Wisconsin where he built a beautiful house which might well have been moved from North Main Street in Edgartown or from Concord, his own home. He and my sister were determined to give their children as much of New England and its traditions as possible. The daughter was educated at Radcliffe, the first son at Exeter and Harvard. They spent all of their summers at the Farm

and the short holidays there, too, for it was left open for them until after Thanksgiving. They brought classmates. Together with my family, they made a terrible shattering group. Somehow the old rafters stood firm, only the guns quivered and rattled and needed a bit more oiling. Father would look at them and remark, "The Peace seems a touch uneasy." As, of course, it was.

But, at the Farm, things went well. The hired men returned. More were added. My sister came home each summer. Life went on comfortably for all of us. We worked hard, but in those days that was the mainspring of living. The children loved the Farm, were glad to help wherever needed so long as there was time out for swimming and "sundown fishing."

When the "Depression" came, Father and his men cut enough wood to pay the taxes, kept enough milch cows to be able to sell the milk in summer, though winters he gave it away to parents of large families. He used to say his immortality would be as long as friends remembered him; and it has been long indeed.

The uneasy Peace became World War II. Sherman, my sister's elder son, had worked each of his college summers at Bucyrus, from foundry to accounting, being trained to take a position there close to his parents' home. Instead, when war came he went into the Air Corps Engineers, to build airstrips ahead of the time they were needed. North Africa seemed to be the place where he was most needed, but all around the Mediterranean there are strips he planned and supervised. The old house shivered at the very thought of it. When he went into the C. I. A. to help keep the Peace which had been so dearly won, the guns rattled once more and murmured among themselves, "If it must be done, why not from right here where freedom from oppression started?" I have often wondered if Sherman, when things were difficult, thought back to the comfort of Tom's Neck Farm and drew strength and courage from its serenity. Ben, the younger, went too, the gentlest young man I ever saw, who would walk around a worm in order not to hurt it. He was tail gunner in a bomber over the Pacific, island after island, even Japan. He, like his brother, never speaks about it, and I never ask. The daughter's husband, a lawyer, joined the Judge Advocate Department. They all came home safely except for the emotional scars that every soldier carries.

And so one generation joins the others that have gone before it. Although the family has been here on Martha's Vineyard since 1638 the members do not think of it as their Island, but rather of themselves as belonging to that three cornered plot of land off the Atlantic Coast.

As I pass by the grey split cedar post fence that encloses my grandmother's garden, faint sound of music comes to me as it dances away over the meadow toward East Beach. That which the heart remembers can neither be given nor taken away, and by the time I am home the voices of all those I have loved and have loved me will have followed me up the harbour to the winter house on Summer Street, for the tide will have changed once more at East Beach. To a stranger it would be just the slap of the halyards against the tall white flagpole, lost by the time he had reached the gate.

The Moshop Tale: A Chronological Analysis Of A Wampanoag Indian Myth ⁽¹⁾

BY RICHARD SCAGLION

Editorial note. Richard Scaglion is connected with the Department of Anthropology of the University of Pittsburgh.

While the analysis of changes in oral traditions through time is an important part of the study of folklore, it is quite rare, in the study of North American Indian folklore, that a time depth of several hundred years exists for the examination of myths and tales. Many American Indian groups were not exposed to significant white contact until the nineteenth century. Their folklore was usually not recorded for some time after contact, leaving a scant one hundred years between the date of the first written versions of tales and the present. Unfortunately, the folklore of most earlier contacted tribes is chronologically no richer.

1. Most of the material for this article was gathered during the summer of 1972 when the writer was researching Wampanoag Indian culture, supported by an N. D. E. A. title IV predoctoral grant. The writer would like to thank Dr. James B. Richardson, III, of the University of Pittsburgh, for suggesting this research. The study would not have been possible without the assistance of Mr. and Mrs. J. Bushnell Richardson, Jr. and Dr. and Mrs. Leslie T. Webster who graciously hosted the writer during this time. The writer would also like to thank those Gay Headers who discussed his findings with him.

The Algonquin Indians of the northeastern part of the United States, for example, were among the first American Indians to have close white contact. While a number of their tales were recorded in the early eighteenth century, most groups were decimated by disease and through warfare with white settlers and ceased to exist as functioning units in less than one hundred fifty years. Recent versions of many Algonquin tales can therefore no longer be collected, leaving the student of folklore with the same problem: a lack of time depth for the study of changes in oral traditions.

An exception to the above pattern is the Aquinnah Indians of Gay Head, Massachusetts, a subgroup of the Wampanoag Indians, whose descendants presently live in the same location as did their ancestors, on the western tip of Martha's Vineyard. One particular popular series of Aquinnah tales concerns Moshop², the giant of Gay Head, whose mythological exploits account for many of the natural phenomena of Martha's Vineyard, including the multicolored Gay Head cliffs. Fortunately for the student of folklore, this tale was first published in an early contact form as early as 1792. Historical continuity of written versions exists between this time and the recent past (Bassett 1792, Baylies 1793, Jones 1829, Jones 1830, Schoolcraft 1846, Jacobs 1853, Anonymous Manuscript n.d., Skinner 1896, Vanderhoop 1904, Banks 1911, Knight 1925, Speck 1928, Vanderhoop 1955, Travers 1960, Attaquin 1970, Scoville 1970).

The Moshop tale as recorded by Scoville (1970) is very different from the "original" (or precontact) version recorded in the eighteenth century. The student of folklore, reading the previously cited versions of the myth from earliest to most recent, can readily discern trends and changes in the tale, offering an unusual and excellent opportunity for analyzing chronological changes in the oral traditions of a North American Indian group. The purpose of this paper is actually twofold: first, to bring the well-buried

2. The spelling of "Moshop" is not standardized. It has appeared, among other forms, as "Maushope", "Mashap", "Moiship", and "Moshup". One theory holds that Moshop is a local version of Michabo, the great white hare of Algonquin folklore, which would indicate that Maushope (three syllables) should be the preferred spelling. "Moshop" has been used in recent versions, however, and is used here for consistency with current literature.

precontact version of the Moshop myth to the attention of *Intelligencer* readers, and second, to analyze the changes in the myth and the importance of these changes.

The earliest versions of the tale (Bassett 1792, Baylies 1793, Jones 1829 and Jones 1830) are all somewhat similar, and seem to represent the state of the myth in precontact form. There are no obviously intrusive elements. Each author heard the tale from an elderly Gay Header: Benjamin Bassett of Chilmark heard the tale from Thomas Cooper, a half-blooded Gay Head Aquinnah, when Cooper was about sixty years of age. Cooper had heard the tale from his grandmother who was a "stout girl" when the English came to the island. James Athearn Jones was told the story by his childhood nurse, a Gay Head Indian.³ She was "very old" at Jones' birth, and was employed by his grandfather. The following tale is a combination of these early versions:

Once a Pockenoket Indian was caught with his dog on a cake of ice, carried out from the mainland, and, in spite of his efforts, driven to the Island of Noepe. The Pockenoket Indians knew of the existence of this island, but had never visited it before, since they believed it to be inhabited by Hobbomok, a feared evil spirit.

When the lost man began to explore the island, he found it inhabited by a monstrous giant who lived in the Den at the end of the island. He was very tall and fierce-looking. He had black skin, grey hair, and a long grey beard. His eyes were white, and he had only two teeth, green in color, which stuck out of his mouth like tusks. This was Moshop, the giant of Noepe.

Moshop told the stranger that he had once lived on the mainland, but had waded to the island in pursuit of a huge bird which had been carrying away the children of his tribe. He found the bones of all the children under a great tree, and, a little further on, found the nest of the bird with seven of its young. After a long battle, Moshop succeeded in killing these monstrous birds.

He was so fatigued by this battle that he lay down to rest. During his fitful sleep, he had a dream that he must not leave

3. Actually Jones' nurse was a member of the Deep Bottom band, a small Indian group living on the shores of Tisbury Great Pond. However not much later all Vineyard Indians began to be called Gay Headers.

the island. When he awoke, he had a strong urge to smoke, but had no tobacco. He looked around, and found some small green leaves on a vine on the ground. He filled his pipe with this poke which our people sometimes use today in place of tobacco. Moshop then seated himself on the hills of Wabishkau and began to smoke. The smoke spread over the surface of the sea and it became misty; the beginning of the fog which even today obscures Noepe at times.

The lost Indian found that Moshop was rather friendly and cheerful, when he was well-fed. Hunger made a monster of him. He would wade into the sea after whales and porpoises which he would throw up on the shore. He plucked up trees to make a fire to roast his catch. It is said that the coals of the fires and the bones of the whales (fossils of the Gay Head cliffs) may be seen today.

The Pockenoket discovered that Moshop had a wife as large as he was. He also had five children: four sons and a daughter whom he loved exceedingly.

The lost Indian took the first opportunity to return home, carrying with him tales of the abundance to be found on the island. Before long, Pockenokets began to visit the island, which was quite abundant with fish, game, and all manner of wild food. They stayed, increased rapidly, and soon spread over the whole island.

For some reason, the increase of the Indians made Moshop unhappy. No one understood why, since the things he enjoyed were as plentiful as ever. Yet he soon became restless, and often journeyed to Noman's Land and to Nantuckett. He never harmed the Indians, however, but instead showed his discontent to his family, whom he beat and often threw out of his cave.

One day he told his children to play ball on the beach which joined Gay Head to Noman's Land. After watching for awhile, Moshop made two marks at each end of the beach with his great toe. The marks were so deep that the water flowed into them and cut away the beach so that his children were about to drown. One of Moshop's sons took his little sister and held her up out of the water. Moshop told them all to act as if they were killing whales and then, on a whim, changed them all into whale killers (a type of fish). He turned the girl into a brightly striped variety and charged the brothers always to look after her.

Moshop's wife was so grieved for her children that she did nothing but wail for them night and day. This provoked

Moshop so much that he seized her in anger and threw her away toward the land of the Naragansetts. She landed at Seconnet, near the rocks, where she began to exact tribute from the Indians, and became exceedingly cross and cruel. Finally the Great Spirit changed her into a rock. (The entire shape was said to exist for many years, but, after the English came, they broke off her arms and head.)

Moshop did not stay long on the island after he threw away his wife. For a time he sat on the cliffs, smoking and watching the whale killers, his children. Finally he went away, no one knows where. Some said they could see him at times, walking on the shore or smoking his pipe on the high hills. Others thought he had gone to join his master, the Evil Spirit Hobbomak.

The above tale portrays Moshop as a rather disagreeable character. Jones (1830 v. III:321) even calls him "The Devil of Cape Higgin." He was not as evil as he might have been, however, since most of his crankiness was directed towards his family rather than towards the Indians, to whom he was rather kind, or, at least, tolerant. He did kill the great birds for the benefit of his tribe and did allow the Indians to settle on his island. He can best be described as a moody individual; certainly a mixture of good and bad.

Changes in the story soon become evident in the more recent versions of the tale. First, Moshop is credited with causing or creating several more of the natural phenomena of the Island. At first, these are still in keeping with his rather unpleasant disposition:

Finally Maushope projected a bridge by which to cross over to Cuttyhunk and the mainland, and laid the foundation with rocks brought from the opposite shore. The first load of earth – which he carried in his shoe – was filled in when an inquiring crab bit his toe as he was working barefooted in the water, and he left the work in a terrible rage, and the remains of it exist as a sunken reef to this day. (Anon. Manuscript)

Later, the creations of natural phenomena are added to the story in a matter-of-fact way. The ashes from Moshop's pipe, for example, blew out to sea and formed the island of Nantuckett.

Thus the Moshop tale is being expanded and elaborated upon by the addition of incidents (story elements), but the structure of

the tale remains unchanged.

In still later versions, subtle changes in Moshop's character become evident. Moshop evidently is becoming the central figure of Aquinnah folklore. As elements are added to his story, Moshop's disagreeable nature is gradually stripped away. He is no longer linked with Hobbomak, the Evil Spirit, nor is his imposing physical appearance described. The story elements are told matter-of-factly. Moshop's wrath is no longer given as the rationalization for his actions.

This trend is apparently carried to its logical conclusion around the turn of the century: Moshop becomes two separate individuals. In the version of the tale told by Charles William Ryan of Gay Head to Mabel Frances Knight, Ryan relates that,

Long ago two giants lived on Cape Cod, and one was good and one was bad. The bad one made himself so unpleasant that the good one, Moshop, took his wife Squant and his twelve beautiful daughters and fled with them to Martha's Vineyard (Knight 1925:134).

Once this step was reached, Moshop's actions were quickly reinterpreted as resulting from his "good" nature rather than from his disagreeable temperament. For example, he changed his children into whale killers to "save" them from drowning (Knight 1925:135).

In the most recent versions of the tale, Moshop is the Culture Hero of the Aquinnah Indians, personifying all that is good and noble. His evil half is apparently assumed by the mythological character Cheepi, for whom, not surprisingly, no origin tale exists. "Just how Cheepi, the Evil One, came to Capawack, no one has explained..." (Scoville 1970:6). The "new" Moshop is almost the antithesis of the cranky old green-toothed giant:

Moshop was a man of peace who first lived on the elbow of Cape Cod. He loved to contemplate the beauty about him and would sit long hours tranquilly smoking his big peudelee or pipe while he watched the clouds and stared out at the ever changing sea. He was known as a just arbiter and kindly philosopher whose wisdom was unquestioned. He excelled in feats of strength and bravery, which the envious attributed to magic...(Scoville 1970:4)

The writer collected several versions of the tale in the summer of 1972. A few of these still seemed to reflect the dual nature of

Moshop, but most portrayed him as the above described culture hero of the Aquinnah, a role in which he now seems firmly entrenched.

Some conclusions which can be drawn from the above include the following:

1. The story elements or action elements are the most enduring parts of this myth. Interpretation of these elements and rationalization for them seem to be more subject to change.
2. It is often incorrectly assumed that oral traditions change very slowly through time. This study demonstrates that, especially under conditions of acculturation, radical changes can occur in the structure of a myth in a relatively short time.
3. Culture heroes are often thought of as actual persons whose exploits are elaborated and exaggerated, and whose shortcomings are ignored (e.g. George Washington). Moshop is a culture hero originating not from a real person but from a mythological character who, strangely enough, was an exceedingly ugly and rather disagreeable giant.

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DCHS News

We are now in the midst of the summer season, and our visitors seem to be enjoying the society as much as we enjoy having them. Every visitor gets off on the right foot when they are greeted by Manuel Bettencourt at the gatehouse. Then they are given tours of the Thomas Cooke House by our guides-Hilda Gilluly, Peter Cannon, Susan Drogin, Helen Groden, and Frances Phelan. As usual Mrs. Bettencourt is in the library to help with a wide variety of tasks. In the constant effort to keep our collection in good condition, I am being assisted this summer by Mark Blair. Although Doug Ewing is not with us on a regular basis this summer, he can be found operating the lighthouse on Sunday evenings at nine o'clock.

In addition to our regular staff, we have been receiving some invaluable assistance from a wide variety of volunteers. For the entire month of May, Cindy Crowley, a high school student from New Jersey, helped with several projects including spring cleaning. Snowden Taylor, a summer resident, fixed the tall clock in the Cooke House, and a few weeks later he returned with his son David. Together they spent an entire day cleaning the machinery in the lighthouse so that the light now revolves without a series of starts and stops. This talented father-son team also fixed our music box so that it will now play all twelve tunes. Our herb garden is once again bringing many compliments as a result of the fine work done by Betsy McFadden.

Another important volunteer job was recently completed by Rachael Williams, one of our life members. She is in the process of reshingling the back of the carriage shed and replacing a number of boards that have rotted out. Without her help, we might not have been able to afford this necessary repair work.

Several of our Council members have been involved in a wide variety of services to the society. The most notable project, being directed by Stan Murphy, is a study of the art works in our possession, especially those paintings that are badly in need of restoration. We will use part of the Preservation Fund for

restoration work, but much more money will be needed if we are to preserve these irreplaceable links to the past. The first painting to be restored will be a painting of the whaling captain William Beetle, who made his home in Eastville between Vineyard Haven and present-day Oak Bluffs.

Thomas Norton
Curator

ERRATA AND ADDENDA

Due to an unfortunate series of events a number of entries which should have been included in the Bibliography published in the last issue of the *Intelligencer* were omitted. Also there were several confusing mistakes, as, on page 133 it is Frank Schumbach who is now with the Arkansas archaeological survey, and James Tuck who is the chairman of the department of anthropology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. And the dates for William Dall on page 131 should be 1845-1927.

The fact that the acting editor of the *Intelligencer* was in the hospital in Boston when he should have been reading proof on the May issue undoubtedly had much to do with these regrettable lapses. The omitted items follow.

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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.

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.

"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.

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

An Introduction To Martha's Vineyard by Gale Huntington. Illustrated, paper. A new edition. \$3.95.

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