

Out Of The Past

SPANIARD'S BAY, July 2 — June 18, 1884, must have been a busy day for most of the residents of Spaniard's Bay for that was the day when most of the "Labrador Fleet" sailed. The next day the balance of the fleet, with the exception of four schooners, left. These four skippers left on Monday, June 19, and they were: Charles Bull, James Hutchings, Herbert Bartlett and Richard Baggis. Shortly after they sailed the said intelligence of the loss of the schooner, Rose, Henry Gosse, master, was received. This was the sixteenth of July when the schooner arrived here to Grand Harbour and six days later, on Wednesday, July 22, there is an entry which reads: "The Rev. Levi Curtis, Methodist Minister, leaves here for Grand Harbour on her way to St. John's." Whether Mr. Dunn can tell us we do not know, but if he did not stay long. Records show that a Rev. Milley (or Willey) was stationed here in September of the following year. He was a married man and had children who attended school.

It was during Mr. Willey's term of office that the present Methodist (now United) Church was built on the corner stone was laid on April 12, 1884, at 12.30. The officiating clergy were the Reverends Messrs. Storey, and Willey.

Two weeks later on Wednesday, June 27, the "S.S. Virginian Lake" arrived here at six o'clock in the evening with the wrecker crew of the "Iose." Of the thirteen who drowned, twelve were men and the other was a young woman, Helen Greeley, from Tilton. The number of survivors is not stated. If one is inclined to be superstitious he would say that thirteen schooners left on the thirteen and thirteen lost their lives.

November 25, 1957

An Account of a Trip to Labrador and the Loss of the Adamant by Joseph Gosse 1868.

Very few cod seines were in existence at that time and no traps at all, and if we saw a motor boat coming around at that time, we would think it some demon of the sea, coming to destroy us all. Nothing of any importance occurred during the fishing season save that a fairly good catch was secured and I was anxiously looking forward to the time when we would be getting aboard the old brig again for home.

The time soon arrived and boy, like I was not sorry for it. As near as I can guess, it was the middle of October when the flag was hoisted, which meant we were all aboard for Newfoundland. In a short time everything was ready, a fine breeze prevailed and the Captain ordered everything to be done as quickly as possible as a mark of respect for a fisherman who had died sometime previous.

The order was carried out and the anchor weighed without the usual song and fore and mainsails were set and soon the Brig Adamant was gliding towards the open sea. The wind kept increasing and veering to the E.N.E., but the good old ship was ploughing her way along fine, and I was delighted to hear that she was running at the rate of eight knots. There was a heavy sea running, but she proudly kept on her course sometimes plunging heavily and throwing great foams of spray from her bows. It soon became too rough for me and I had to go below. As I got into my bunk, I began to feel a bit nervous. Then a thought struck my mind of a little poem I once read of a sailor boy's mother and what she would say when a storm was on.

"There's a sweet little cherub who sits up aloft To watch o'er the life of poor Jack."

Very little more I knew of the voyage until I was called to dress myself and I instantly sensed trouble. I poked my head up the scuttle and what a sight met my eye—a blinding hurricane was raging with mountainous seas which frequently boarded the ship and washed over the decks. The captain inquired if anyone knew the land that was visible and each declared that he did not. The ship was now under very small canvas and it seemed as if death was threatening us on every side. Fortunately one young man who had been in the rigging came down and told his brother that he knew to get him to tell the captain, but he shortly after died. He gave the land as being Sat Harbour, Northern Island, and being asked by the captain if he could pilot the ship there he answered that he

(To Be Continued)

Out Of The Past

(Continued from last week)

SPANIARD'S BAY, Feb. 18 — On September, 5, 1904, news was received at Coley's Point of a drowning accident at Holton, Labrador. In the early morning of August 26, 1904, Skipper Edmund Mercer and his fishing crew, consisting of his son William, Abram Russell, and Ralph Kearley, set out in their boat to haul their trap. Another crew member, Edward French, stayed ashore that day. It was presumed that they had hauled their trap and were returning to Holton under sail. While beating into Holton Harbour the wind which was southerly increased to gale force. As they approached the "flats" to Holton Point, the boat capsized and the crew was lost. After the gale was over the fishermen at Holton went out to search for bodies but found only those of Skipper Edmund and his son William which were later brought home to Coley's Point for burial. The bodies of the other two men were never found, but it was reported that two men were seen clinging to the bottom of the boat and drifting out to sea.

THE MARITIME TRAGEDY 1912

In the summer of 1912 Captain William Dave was fishing at In decadence, Labrador, from their schooner "Marilime." His crew had then left on the vessel sail the wreckage and at once notified Captain James Dave. Immediately they organized a search party of several crews from the harbour and rowed out to Mark's Point to investigate. There they picked up the boat's oars but found no trace of the missing men. About a week later the bodies of James Holmes, Edward Holmes, and Richard Jackson were recovered and brought home for interment. The bodies of Captain William Dave and William Spencer were never recovered.

General Hospital and we join her friends in wishing her a quick recovery.

November 15, 1957

Looking Backward

An account of a trip to the Labrador and the loss of the Adamant in 1868 by Joseph Gosse of Spaniard's Bay.

(Continued)

HARBOUR GRACE — The ship must have presented a pretty picture to the people on land as we sail very near the shore. Everyone appeared to be in high spirits, but myself being just a boy not used to the sea and amongst strangers. However, I soon became acquainted with the boys of Harbour Grace, and then I felt a bit more settled in mind.

An immense caboose or in other words, a galley, was set and lashed to the deck, and had an open fireplace, and there each crew cooked for themselves. Now and again, a little fight would ensue among the boys who were engaged cooking, but the men soon put an end to that.

I remember one day, it was a bit rough, yet my hot chums were enjoying themselves immensely watching the sea gulls as they flew around the ship, looking at huge teeborgs some of them representing large buildings with rounded arches and spires, and sometimes a white sided porpoise coming close to the side of the ship. The scene was very attractive, but I could not enjoy it much owing to seasickness. Houses on the deck, giving the appearance of a village I stayed in my bunk till the water became smoother. The rough weather did not last long and I was soon up on deck again, nothing the worse for my illness. Nothing of importance occurred during the passage to Seal Islands. I cannot give the date of our arrival, but we arrived there all well.

(The writer of this article, many years ago, here interjects a poem, a verse of which we take as it evidently refers to a boyhood teacher of his.)

"When out thoughts fly back o'er the time worn track To the years of long ago when which pure light looms up in sight When you one's heart in glow When we grasp bright rays of boyhood days

And the quaint old church and school Where Master Earle to boy and girl Taught many a golden rule."

Joseph Gosse continued: "It was early in the month of June when the anchor was dropped at Ambleton Tickle, a very isolated spot at first sight as the hills here and there were dusted with bits of snow, and the margin at high water mark in several places was a solid mass of ice which old timers called bolocadas. There was no time lost in discharging the vessel, and each crew with loaded punts pulled away with their spruce propellers to the nearby islands where their fishing rooms were located. As soon as we landed, a fire was kindled in the open air so that the women could prepare a meal while the men tackled the job of chopping and digging the ice out of the little shack. I was a bit frightened at first, but as the other boys did not seem to care, I did not mind as long as I was ashore. Some queer remarks were made by the men as they repaired the little house which was chiefly built of sods and chunds. I did what I could in the way of helping, but nothing of any importance attracted my attention until I saw them looking around for some old flour barrels and so it was:

A flour barrel chimney and a flour barrel chair And a third one for a baby cot, to you I do declare

Crossed bars and poterooks, open fire is what I wish to show To the modern generation, which they might like to know.

(To Be Continued)

Historical Records Of Harbour Grace

HARBOUR GRACE—A short while ago, we received an enquiry about records of Spandard's Bay, which place must have some old and interesting history, if one knew where to find it.

The following will likely have some interest for relatives of one Joseph Gosse who wrote an account of A TRIP TO LABRADOR AND THE LOSS OF THE ADAMANT IN 1868.

This article is taken from an old Harbour Grace Standard and we propose to copy it exactly as it was written.

"Time flies rapidly"—was the thought that vividly occurred to me as I walked down Water Street in the town of Harbour Grace during a visit there recently, and going down to the Point of Beach, where once stood the premises of the big firm of Ridley & Son. It flashed to my mind; that there it was that I received my first shipping papers to serve as fisher boy and general servant for the period of five months at the Labrador.

If my memory serves me right, it was in the year 1868, when the firms of Riddleys, Munns and Donnellys were in full swing, hives of industry and prosperity. My shipper (as they were termed) was certainly a rough old guy, as most of the leading old timers were, and as soon as I received my agreement, he said, "Now my boy, you must be in collar early tomorrow morning." I was scared up a bit, but answered, "Alright Sir."

I trudged home to Spaniard's Bay, a six mile walk, to tell my fond old widowed mother of my first adventure. The tears flowed from her eyes and I believed I knew the cause. My father had died two years previous to that and she had kept me at school as long as circumstances permitted, and now I had to be withdrawn and seek a living with a very meagre education. I asked her to call me early in the morning as I was ordered to be in collar. Accordingly, the next day I was there. The skipper spoke very roughly as I was a bit late, but he soon cooled down and said "look here now, my son, we must

have everything in Harbour Grace in a day or two to put aboard the Adamant, so like a good boy, get along a little earlier tomorrow morning. "It's let up did me so much good that I fuff off my coat and got busy in a short while. I remember that there were two men that I soon found out were sharemen and they were busy packing rhinds etc. . . . I noticed the skipper himself very busy building two of three little houses. I was afraid to enquire what they were for, but I found out later that one was for the pigs, another for the goats and the smallest one for the hens. The dog and cat were also to go aboard, but they were allowed their freedom. The was no railroad in those days and time soon arrived to move. There all requisited had to be conveyed by horse and cart. The famous Brig. ADAMANT with her white painted ports lay at a wharf up town. We arrived in due time and found all intending passengers actively stowing their belongings. The next day, everything was excitement as upwards of two hundred were aboard, and all being in readiness, the Captain gave the orders to hoist in the remaining boat, loose the top sails and leave in the anchor. I was then a boy of fourteen and could do nothing but drink in the scene. A group of stalwart fishermen manned the windlass. It was the custom in those days to heave up the anchor with a song. That one remains in my memory today. "Sally Brown, you are my sweet heart

Hence ho, roll and go Sally, I will be your escort Spend my money with Sally Brown"

I admired the strong voices of the men, but the rattling of the heavy panplugs and clanking of the chain, together with the queer sound of the goats and tangled dogfight all made an amusing scene to me.

The anchor was soon fished up, all sails were set, and with a fair breeze of West South West, the old Brig, proud of her release from bondage was soon bathing herself in the waters of Conception Bay."

(To Be Continued)