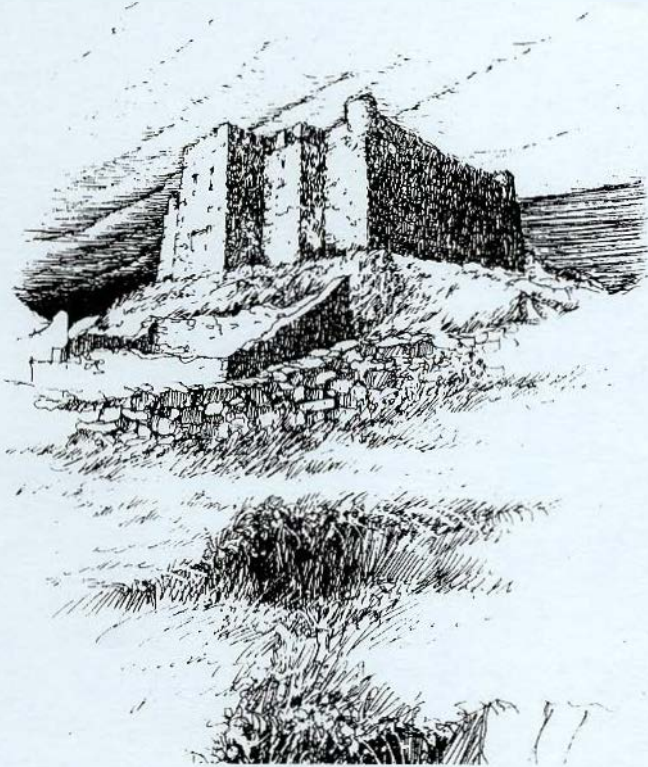


Lundy Field Society Newsletter

No 32



Spring 2002

CONTENTS

		Page
Report of LFS AGM 2/3/2002	Ann Westcott	1
The Chairman's address to members	Roger Chapple	2
Editorial	Ann Westcott	2
HM Queen's Silver Jubilee visit	Myrtle Ternstrom	6
Letters to the Editor & Incunabula	Various	8
The Palm Saturday Crossing	Our Nautical Correspondent	20
Marisco - A Tale of Lundy	William Crossing	23
Listen to the Country	SPB Mais	36
A Dreamful of Dragons	Charlie Phillips	43

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Ann Westcott

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FOR SALE

Richard Perry: *Lundy, Isle of Puffins*

Second edition 1946

Hardback. Cloth cover. Very good condition, with map (but one or two black ink marks on cover)

£8.50 plus £1 p&p.

Eric Delderfield: *North Devon Story*

1952, revised 1962. Raleigh Press. Exmouth.

One chapter on Lundy.

Paperback, good condition.

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Apply to: Myrtle Ternstrom

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LUNDY AGM 2/3/2002

As usual this was a wonderful meeting for us all, before & at the AGM itself & afterwards at the Rougemont. A special point of interest arose out of the committee meeting & the Rougemont gathering (see page 2)

In the Chair, Jenny George began the meeting. Last year's AGM minutes were read, confirmed & signed. Mention was made of an article on the Lundy Cabbage in 'British Wildlife' by Roger Key (see page 11 of this newsletter). The meeting's attention was also drawn to photographs on the LFS website taken by the first LFS warden, Roland Barker (now in America).

Alan Rowland is (we hope temporarily) off the committee to do archival LFS work, & Liz Davey is standing down because her work on the Scillies makes her full engagement with the LFS nearly impossible! Peter Rothwell remains on the committee, & new members are Kate Cole & Francis Stuart. As Jenny George is standing down as Chairman, Roger Chapple, who is taking over, offered a "This is Your Life" for Jenny - 1974 investigating marine fauna on Lundy - 1978 investigating freshwater fauna in Pondsbyr & assorted Lundy ponds - 1981 LFS committee member - 1986 investigating fresh water habitats (Marine Nature Reserve established) - 1988 LFS Chairman - 1996 celebration of 50 years of the LFS with "Island Studies" - 2001 Provost of Cavendish College at Westminster University; & we hope to see her scaling even dizzier heights.

Liza Cole (heavily disguised in a woolly hat & dark glasses, as she is no longer Warden, but is on Dorset CC's staff as a Conservation Officer) gave Paul Roberts' report for him, as he was unable to be present. She mentioned with gratitude Ian Reach's third year as Assistant Warden.

Liza then reported that seals were doing well on the island, two 'resident' on the beach & at Hell's Gates, & even mating alongside 'snorkellers'. We heard the story of Allie the seal from Gweek. The Gweek sanctuary asked if Lundy would have him (subject to health checks), so he arrived, & two weeks later was back in St Ives.

Basking sharks were late, & fewer than last year's: 30 to 40 as against 100. But they did come in right to the jetty. Lots of cetaceans were seen from the Oldenburg, including bottle-nosed dolphins. There was also a sensational school of common dolphins breaching & riding on the bow wave of the Datchet.

The maximum count of puffins was 26 - they were active at St Philips Stone & Gannets Bay too. The English Nature/RSPB count of manx shearwaters was very encouraging. Every single burrow had 'breeding' calls played into it, & from the 150 responses, it was judged that there were probably 150 breeding pairs. There are 4, possibly 5, breeding pairs of peregrines.

1388 Cabbage plants were reported in flower, which is a downward fluctuation for unknown reasons. (See page 11 for more on the cabbage.)

Rabbit numbers were very high, so the rabbiters knocked out large numbers. Soays & sika were also culled, thus 3 lots of pressure on grazing were reduced.

Sargasso weed has spread in the Landing Bay, but nowhere else as yet: a watching brief is being held. There's harpoon weed in the MNR too.

Waste management in MNR - the problem remains 'what the heck do you do with it?' Advice from Landfill Tax Chap: 'you can mend your roads using crushed glass'.

The beach buildings were open in May - very popular - & on opening day there was the happy coincidence of a basking shark at the jetty. There was an MNR video, in which everything performed. The Dive Guide contains useful information about diving, & essential information from the conservation point of view, that divers need to have. Liza had to leave the education pack she was preparing. Jan Symons & Myrtle Ternstrom are finishing it. English Nature is funding information boards for both shore offices, & on the Oldenburg, & on the Lundy beach building. The old lifeboat shed at Ilfracombe will have an aquarium, with 3 tanks dedicated to marine

life on Lundy. English Nature is going to help with the funding for this too, with an Interpretation Centre.

Habitat management has been materially helped by the Lundy Fund. A lot has been made possible by the Lundy Fund this year, especially the funding of Rod Dymond as an estate worker. More accommodation for volunteers has been paid for: there were 170 volunteers, which means 716 volunteer days of work. Habitat management has included bracken bashing, (Derek has taken this beyond Three Quarter Wall) & 'Rhodle' bashing on the East side. Rod & volunteers (plus trusty chainsaw) are winning. Granite 'crushings' have been put on the main track. [Yr. Ed. reports that this is torture to the feet, however useful for vehicular traffic.] The Lower East Side path has been dealt with too, as far as Gannets Combe. A stewardship agreement with DEFRA means that DEFRA covers 50% of the cost, & further monies are hoped for in 2002 from DEFRA for more such projects.

A fishing policy of NO TAKE off the East Side has been agreed with local fisherman: from the North West End to the Sugar Loaf there's ABSOLUTELY NO TAKE. Local fishermen are very keen. Hen lobsters are kept at Padstow where the young are reared & then returned to re-stock fishing areas.

At the end of her presentation, Liza added information, some in answer to questions. Old Light West which has been in a state of dilapidation for some time, has been done up for Rod Dymond, & the Assistant Warden; with money from the Lundy Fund. It's had the windows & the roof done, & been dry-lined.

There's been a feasibility study (by the National Trust/English Nature/Landmark Trust/RSPB) on ridding the island of rats. (The last study was in 1981.) Both black & brown rats are all over the island. There's evidence of some predation on sea-birds. Kittiwakes are still breeding, but not in Kittiwake Gully. Numbers are declining. (John Morgan spoke of the helicopter disturbing kittiwakes in the early 1990s.)

The Rocket Shed is being prepared as a museum (courtesy of the Lottery Fund) complete with archaeological information boards. There is archaeological information on disc (GIS) on the island, (see newsletter Autumn 2001).

After Liza's report, Maggie Shaw asked the meeting about 'lost' members' addresses, these members' notices have been returned to Maggie as Sender.

Richard & Frances Cassel presented the Bird report for 2001, month by month, comparing with 2000 where relevant. There was more activity in Spring 2000 than in Spring 2001, but Autumn 2001 provided a lot of late entries in the record book, more than for Autumn 2000.

After tea, Diana Keast presented two videos of the 1930s (black & white) on Lundy (re-monitored by TSW Archive.) Although it wasn't on the video, mention was made of John Earl's record of climbing with Rear Admiral Lauder in the 1960s. [Yr. Ed. would dearly have liked a pause-button facility, so that endless questions on who was this, & who was that, could have interrupted these fascinating records.]

The end of the meeting was full of discussion about recruiting new members & publicising the LFS. [Your Ed. has this brilliant idea about having a Young Person's Lundy Day with ponies/diving/climbing/shore rambles/even an historical pageant.] Your Chairman Roger Chapple would very much like it if the newsletter was used by members as a forum - for ideas about new members; mini-advertisements (MT kicks off on the inside front cover); book swops/sales; anything you like. Another idea mooted was an essay prize; yet another was a painting prize. **(See RC's comments in 'Letters & Incunabula')**

EXTRACTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS TO MEMBERS

"I thank you for your vote of confidence in appointing me as your Chairman

..... my first duty is a pleasing one – to thank on your behalf. Professor Jenny George for her many years of service, thus far to the Lundy Field Society

..... what of our Society?

First, may I say I will resist any proposals which erode its standing & standards.

We must not change for change's sake, but I feel it is important regularly to review our activities &, where possible, to improve & expand, building on the respected foundations achieved over 50 years.

We enjoy good relations with Paul Roberts, the Lundy General Manager, who is conscious of the contribution the Society's name can make in publicising the island, & by the Annual Report & Newsletter providing authoritative & interesting island-related material.

Your committee has noted a fall in application for our modest grants, in respect of island related projects, & likewise the reduction in the number attending working parties.

We hope this decline can be reversed to enable the Society to make a significant & appreciated contribution to the island & in so doing, to our future.

We have a great asset in our reputation, but this will be of little use if we fade through declining interest & membership.

I ask for your co-operation in an endeavour to recruit new members, particularly the young

..... I myself intend to be of service to achieve this aim & to justify the confidence you have placed in me this afternoon." (Ed.'s Note. **Membership Application Forms included in this newsletter: application for Conservation Working Parties also: description of CWP's on inside back cover.**)

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EDITORIAL

Abbreviations: pic = picture/photograph/image NDJ = North Devon Journal
WMN = Western Morning News Yr Ed = Your Editor

It is with sadness that Yr. Ed. records the deaths (since the last Newsletter) of four people who had close links with Lundy. Anita (Baron) Argyle was a seasonal worker on the island in the mid '80s (when she & Liza Cole were students). After her marriage she lived & worked in the USA. Bob Britton was an LFS member since 1948, & his son David & daughter Rosle were on the island's seasonal workforce. Yr. Ed. remembers going on wonderful shearwatering expeditions with BB. (There will be an obituary in the forthcoming report.) Martin Harman Jones (son of Ruth [née Harman] & Peter Harman Jones, & Marlon Evans' brother) died after a long illness. His ashes & a memorial stone are now on Lundy with others' of his family. John Nunn of Westward Ho! was a member of the LFS for many years, & he & large numbers of his family regularly visited the island at Easter-time. Yr. Ed. remembers their happiness as a family group & their pleasure in being together on Lundy. I know that LFS members would wish to extend our deepest sympathy to all their families.

Helen (Cole) & Pat Hayes have had a son, Peter Lachlan (b. 12/1/2002), a brother for Ishbel. Patrick & Rachel Penny now have two sons, Nicholas & Joseph. Their father Douglas Penny is a member of the LFS & Patrick founded the Ancient & Necropolistic Golf Club in 1980. Patrick & Rachel only didn't attend the quinquennial golf match in August 2001 (see newsletter Autumn 2001) because of the imminent arrival of Joseph.

Members who are in new posts are Prof. Jenny George (see the report on the AGM); Liza Cole (Warden until this year) & Ian Reach (Assistant Warden). Liza is now Project Development Countryside Ranger for Weymouth & Portland. Her function is to help develop sustainable tourism initiatives to go with Dorset's marine environment, & thus to help build up & diversify the local economy. Her current project is a "sustainable fish directory". Ian Reach is 'Top Man' for English Nature at Peterborough, as a Marine Ecologist advising on Marine SAC sites.

Nicholas Metcalfe was presented with his Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award by the D of E at St James' Palace in March. NM has done several stints as seasonal worker, as well as being a regular Lundy visitor, since his christening at St Helena's church by Andy Edwards (see also Newspaper Trawl). He is now at the University of Wales in Cardiff reading Product Design & Mechanical Engineering. Rebecca Metcalfe (also christened at St Helena's by AE, & also a regular visitor) is studying for her RGN with the University of Plymouth's Nursing School at the Royal Devon & Exeter. Good luck attend them all.

I know that LFS members who have visited Lundy during the last 9-ish years will want to bid fare-you-well to Nick Jeffery & Annie Eden, who have contributed so much to visitors' comfort over these years. Reg Tuffin & Tracey Down will be carrying on the good work in the shop. Here's to them. We have a very special pic of RT on p39.

Newspaper (& publications) Trawl: This year's trawl includes some 'filed-away-tidily' pieces that have re-surfaced. Some time ago the Saturday Telegraph magazine (18/4/99) ran a piece about a gorgeous villa in Sicily, the Casa Cuseni, owned by a Daphne Phelps (now aged 91) who said, "the Landmark Trust has expressed an interest ... so its future is secure." The WMN (24/7/00) had a wonderful aerial pic. of the South End. (see page 15) Colin Eastman, who brings diving parties to Lundy, has, while diving (though not off Lundy) re-discovered the railway engines of the Bideford, Westward Ho! & Appledore railway, which sunk on their way to the '14-'18 Front Line (NDJ 25/10/00). On November 29th 2001, the NDJ featured Jonathan Edwards visiting West Buckland (his old school) before switching on Ilfracombe's Christmas lights.

The Gazette (12/12/01) reported a night rescue of marines by the Chivenor helicopter & Appledore all-weather lifeboat - the marines were returning from diving off Lundy when their boats were swamped by waves. The Daily Telegraph (8/12/01) had an article on the Overall Winner of the DT Home Building & Renovating Awards for 2001 - 'O'Sullivan House', the site preparation for which was done by engineer John Grimes who engineered Lundy's new jetty. The WMN (12/12/01) featured a superb pic. of a stormy sunset over Lundy. On January 18th 2002, the WMN reported that St Andrews marine archaeologists had recovered Armada treasure off the NW coast of Scotland. StA marine archaeologists dive off Lundy to monitor wrecks there too.

The WMN (3/1/02) mentioned that Sir Ranulph Fiennes, arctic explorer, is now writing his second novel - Yr. Ed. cherishes the eruptions of the on-going Fiennes genes, still going strong: one Richard Fiennes received the submission of Lundy to the parliamentary forces at the end of the Civil War. Currently (Sunday Times "Culture" 12/5/02) one William Fiennes' "The Snow Geese" (Picador) is described as a "lyrical account of migrating birds."

The WMN (3/1/02) carried a pic. of Sir Hugh & Lady Stucley, kinsfolk of Sir Thomas Stucley (pic p5). TS is the "hero" of John Izon's study of "Sir TS (c. 1525-1578) - Traitor Extraordinary" [pub 1956 &rew Melaose, Rogues Gallery Number 4]. Rumour had it that his father was Henry VIII, so he was half-brother to Queen Elizabeth. He was also cousin to Richard Grenville (later of the "Revenge") whose family were lords of Lundy from the 16th century. (Wm de Marisco - 12th century - was also a Royal Bastard, Henry I was his father.) JI's study of TS shows clearly that



Alleged portrait of Thomas Stucley, artist unknown, from John Izon's biography

(as today) the difference between traitor/pirate & freedom fighter is small (anyone remember Archbishop Makarios – and how about Nelson Mandela?) TS was a 'pirate' in Lundy waters (but so was Drake in American waters, &, perhaps, the Queen). "He hath been reached at to be caught, but it will not be yet." (p50 JI).

The "Horse Supplement" of the WMN (1/3/02) had a pic. of Jan Symons, with the headline "Lundy Ponies at risk unless new home is found." – this refers to the Braetor herd.

The NDJ (28/2/02) quoted Denver Scoynes (sometime skipper of the "Polar Bear" & now Bideford's Harbour Master) "I can remember being taken on board the Kathieen & May in the early fifties, as a boy, when she was trading between North Devon & Ireland." At the moment the shipping activity in Bideford is reduced because of work on the flood prevention scheme. "When the quay is fully operative there are about 60 clay boats which go as far afield as Portugal & Finland, & eight boats that carry fertiliser. There are approximately six fishing vessels & then, of course, the Oldenburg which makes regular trips to Lundy."

Both the WMN (28/2/02) & the NDJ (7/3/02) reported on Barnstaple-born Tim Wonnacott's programme on Carlton TC, "Buried Treasure" (possible antiques in

your attic). TW's father Ray Wonnacott, was one of a group who regularly visited Lundy in the 50s & 60s. TW today looks exactly as Yr. Ed. remembers RW did then.

James Leonard (see "Lundy Prints" in Nov 2001 newsletter) has called Yr. Ed's attention to another splendidly eccentric family who owned Lundy (John Cleveland 1781-1803 & Augustus Christie 1917-25, both of Tapely). There was an article in the "Spectator" (23/3/02), sparked off by Hector Christie's release from imprisonment for thwarting government Foot & Mouth policy. "One of the three officers who survived the Charge of the Light Brigade was 21-years old Archibald Cleveland. He reached the Russian guns unscathed, but on the way back was set upon by three Cossacks, two of whom managed to stick their lances into him. One lance penetrated Archibald's silver pouch box but went no further; the other caught him in the ribs, but the top broke off & only bruised him. His luck ran out ten days later, though, when he was felled by a stray bullet at the Battle of Inkerman.



Tim Wonnacott

A huge granite monument topped by a 50ft obelisk was erected to his memory by his grieving family in the grounds of Tapely Park in North Devon. It was a familiar North Devon landmark until 1931, when it was smashed to smithereens by a thunderbolt. Tapely's head gardener at the time witnessed it. Lumps of granite flew 100ft in the air, he told a reporter from the *North Devon Journal*; & later, when set to the task of collecting up the shattered pieces of granite, he found some of them lying 300 yards away in a wood.

This winter, Archibald Cleveland's descendant & the present owner of Tapely Park, Hector Christie, has constructed a labyrinth at the foot of the monument from these broken lumps of granite. After walking the labyrinth together, Mr Christie & I scrambled up on to the monument's plinth, from where the labyrinth's design could be more fully appreciated. It's a fabulous spot, the view panoramic. From the windswept plinth we looked down across rolling sheep-cropped pastures running down to the river Torridge. On the far bank, the ancient port of Appledore. Beyond Appledore, the sand dunes at the mouth of the tidal estuary, & beyond these, standing fast in a sea of white horses, Lundy Island."

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Ed.'s Note. To celebrate HMQ's 50 Glorious Years, we have Myrtle Ternstrom's record of HM's Silver Jubilee visit to Lundy 1977

Jottings from my diary (edited slightly MT)

Sat 6 August

There was a great air of excitement about the 'secret' visit of the Queen tomorrow. The whole island has been TIDIED plus plus; the Polar Bear has been painted & the crew fitted out with uniforms, including named t-shirts. At 9 p.m. everyone was asked to go to the church for a meeting about the arrangements for tomorrow. John Smith made a good speech. The island must be full, as the church was.

Sunday 7 August

Woke early, no sign of the Britannia...our friends came to Hammers for coffee, then we all went up to the castle to watch the ship & her escort come round the S.E. corner, very far out indeed. So far out that we thought it might be going straight up to Milford Haven, but it eventually anchored a little way out in the Roads. A barge went from it up to Brazen Ward, then came down to the landing stage. We wondered what was happening - plan A or plan B...

Went to the Tavern where Britannia personnel were in occupation, very pleasant lads. Went down to the beach at the time we had been told & saw John & Joan Dyke, who had come for the day on the Polar Bear, also Smith-Cox & Barry Chinchin.

About 4.15 HMQ came down & we were presented but she said nought, only looked me up & down...Prince Philip tense - we learnt afterwards that there had been an upset up top over photographs. Prince Andrew full of it plus. Jenny went round the royal yacht in Pancho's boat...

We went back up to the Tavern as the yacht crew had challenged us to a 'Boat Race' = beer-drinking race. Britannia v the Loons, which they won.

Wednesday 10 August

Water supply in Millcombe gave out because the feed pipes had been tidied away for the Queen's visit...All notices have been removed, & the wooden door between the Greensward & Marisco Cottage; also the water tank outside the Tavern (this held some special aquatic species).

Notes later:

The Queen was accompanied by the Princes Philip, Andrew & Edward, & members of the household. She landed at Brazen Ward, where paths had been specially cleared.

but did not have a picnic & came ashore after lunch. She was met & escorted by John Hinshelwood: the party crossed to the west Side & I believe the young princes went down to the Battery. She came south via the Lighthouse Field where Angela 'happened' to be with the ponies. & was heard to remark to Angela that there would be no Duns from that Bay station! John & Penny Ogilvie were presented en route to a visit to see the barn with Gwenda Morrow. The story is that when the Queen asked where the kitchen was, she was shown the arrangements; there was a pause, & then "If you say so." Mr Gade was presented & she had trouble getting away from him - he & John O were the only islanders who had been here for the Queen Mother's visit in 1958. Grainger had commissioned Phil Wiley to take photographs, but as it was a private visit Prince Phillip objected. The Queen was invited into Millcombe, but did not accept, & she was accompanied to the beach by John Smith, who made some introductions there - including Tony as representative of the Field Society.

John Hinshelwood said that the visit had been very pleasant, & later he gave me a tape recalling the event.



*The visit of the Queen in 1977
(from the Metcalfe Collection)*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR & INCUNABULA

from our Chairman Roger Chapple to all Fellow Society Members, April 2002

There have been delays with the publication of the Annual Report.

These have now been identified & appropriate action taken.

The 2000 & 2001 Annual Reports are to be merged & the combined volume published in November 2002, which will allow the Society thereafter to restore normal publication dates. [Ed.'s Note. This was done with the 1966/67 Reports.]

I apologize for this situation occurring, which resulted from a combination of unfortunate factors.

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From: Roger Chapple

Those of you who were present at the AGM at Exeter will recall that, after the main meeting, there followed an exchange of views which, although of short duration, produced several ideas for the future.

Subsequently, I am pleased to report I have received many letters of encouragement together with additional valuable suggestions.

I look forward to discussing these with your committee & will report in due course.

As stated at the AGM I would be delighted to receive correspondence from members.

For our future Newsletters we intend to commence a 'classified advertisement' facility & a correspondence section.

I am confident you could support & make this an added dimension to the Newsletter, & that you will all be of far too pleasant a disposition to include complaints which should be, or already have been, addressed to the appropriate officer of the Society, or to myself!

On the inside back cover of the newsletter you will find material relating to the Society Conservation parties to the island, which I would ask you to pass on to those you consider suitable & who may wish to attend.

I also have arranged an insertion of a membership application form & would urge you to seek out those who you feel able to recommend for Society membership.

Finally, you will be pleased to learn that I was able to present suitable congratulations on behalf of all members to Reg Lo-Vel & Wendy Puddy on the occasion of their recent marriage at Northam in North Devon.

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The Hubbastone Project (from Terry Bailey)

Vikings, Saxons & Alfred the Great, all part of Appledore's past.

This enterprise came about from a personal need to find & explore a Millennium Project for the village. Most people I have visited locally all have their own millennium stone; so with this in mind together with my own interest in local history I would like to retell the tale of Hubbastone & subsequently erect a fitting monument as a visual & hands-on reminder to this piece of Appledore's ancient history.

We have locally, place names such as: *Odun Road & Terrace*, *Bloody Corner*, *Bonehill*, *Boathyde*, *Kerwith Castle*, *King Alfred's Cave & Chair* & Hubbastone itself; all names whose origins are slowly being forgotten.

It started in the summer of 2000, after studying the history of Lundy Island & realising that the Vikings had used it for a base. As the whereabouts of the Hubbastone is unknown, it is quite a feasible idea that it could have been a slab of

Lundy granite: either brought to Appledore's shoreline or Hubba could have been taken to Lundy & buried there. After all the Vikings are said to have lost two thirds of their men after the Battle of Odun (Odda). If they had been retreating, it would have made sense for them to regroup at Lundy to plan their next course of action; & also to give an appropriate & possibly secret burial to their leader.

It is said the name Lundy itself has Danish origins.

In 1863, the Lundy Granite Company was formed & there are preserved quarries still on the Island, where granite was once cut & shipped to various parts of the country. Bideford's Old Bridge & various churches & towers in Devon & Cornwall have been constructed from such granite.

I feel it would be beneficial to the community to have a stone displayed in the village on a permanent site, as a reminder of these two timelines. I have in mind a slab big enough to cover a man, probably weighing about two tons. I have been to Lundy & have been granted permission by the Landmark Trust agent Mr Paul Roberts to remove a stone from the island providing I find an agreeable piece. My aim is to get the stone down to the landing beach by tractor & trailer ready for transportation back to Appledore.

When I was on the Island in May of last year, I watched a landing craft from Instow camp come in & lower its boarding ramp onto the beach to offload some equipment. I know these have been used in the past to transport animals & large pieces of machinery on & off the island; this would of course be the perfect solution to the transportation of the stone as the first stage towards the completion of the project.

End Product

I feel that a suitable location for the stone would be the seating area opposite Hillcliff Terrace in Irsha Street. Here you could sit & look out over the Bar conjuring up images of Viking ships as they sailed up river & take in the spectacular views of Northam Burrows & beyond that, Lundy Island itself (weather permitting). The area in question to my knowledge has had no improvements made to it in recent years, not since the 1940s I believe & so would find the erection of such a monument hugely beneficial in enhancing its surroundings.

Conclusion

I do not wish to claim to have found The Hubbastone, but just to simply tell the story. For I feel to go forward one must be in touch with one's past. The whereabouts of The Hubbastone will, I think, always be a mystery.

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Dancing on Lundy (from Edward Harris, March 2002)

With two hours before the ferry departed & three pounds of pasta & stilton bake digesting in my stomach I left the Marisco Tavern & headed for North Point. During my 5 day stay I had one unsuccessful attempt to reach the other end of Lundy. Having walked for some time in heavy fog complemented by rain hard enough to force the island's woolly champions to seek walled shelter, I was sure I had reached North Point when the sight of MS Oldenburg shattered my goal. I had at least learnt when animals shelter it is wise to do so as well.

My second attempt had a double edge. I still wanted the honour of walking from one end of Lundy to the other & I also thought it a good opportunity to ponder on what to write for this piece whilst still under Lundy's influence. It would have been easy to write about the adventure & romance which is so abundant in Lundy. The wonderful buildings, friendly natives, meeting part of Lundy's history in the remarkable Diana, or any one of one hundred other details would have provided ample material, but to an extent that ground has been covered before. No. I wanted to write something else.

I had not given myself enough time to complete my physical mission & after a

sweaty half march half run which had only been halted to take a handful of photographs I turned just past the 3/4 wall, to return along the west coast of the Island. Very sensible I'm informed as the last quarter is the longest. By the time I was in sight of Old Light Cottage, I realised what the Lundy experience had given to me.

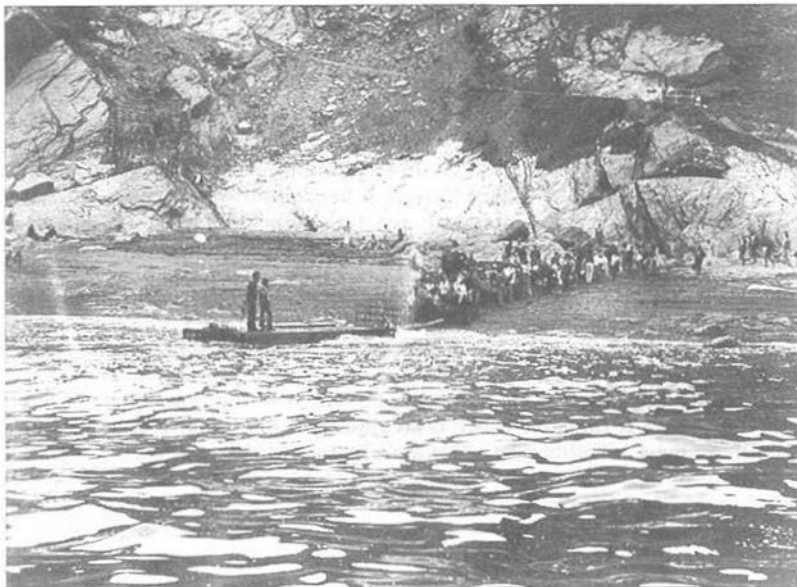
I have been to many small islands, several of which make the claim to have been Robinson Crusoe's paradisiacal home. I have lived in cities which offer 24 hour service whatever your tastes & I grew up in green countryside. Yet, not in any of these locations, each of which was stimulating & thoroughly enjoyable, did I feel there was nothing more to life than the experience I was having right there, right at that time. You could say that I didn't know what it was like to be at the centre of the dance of life. Instead I stood against the wall waiting for the song to change, or just looked for the perfect dance partner & then regretted not having asked at least one person that evening. Many of us occupy that same marginal position. Of course it is obvious that we cannot live in any other time than the present, but many of us do live in the past (look at how many wars & family feuds are not based on current events) & many of us spend considerable time preparing & planning for what may never happen. Is life ever as we expect or is it always just the way it is?

On Lundy I was reminded not to anticipate or try to see into a foggy future, not to put reins of expectation or ambition on life as if it is a horse. Out of character I was not unhappy at my unsuccessful second attempt - it was just the way it was. I suspect one of the main reasons why Lundy has visitors who come time & time again is because they bathe in things being just the way they are.

Whether walking, enjoying a view, rock climbing or sipping a pint of ale, on Lundy the experience is about 'being', a state where there is nothing else to do, other than what you are doing. If you release the reins, Lundy's magic, energy & essence will take you to the centre of life's dance & before you know it the evening is over & it is time to go home. In my book this is the true moment of living where for a period of time you forgot about yesterday or what you need to do tomorrow.

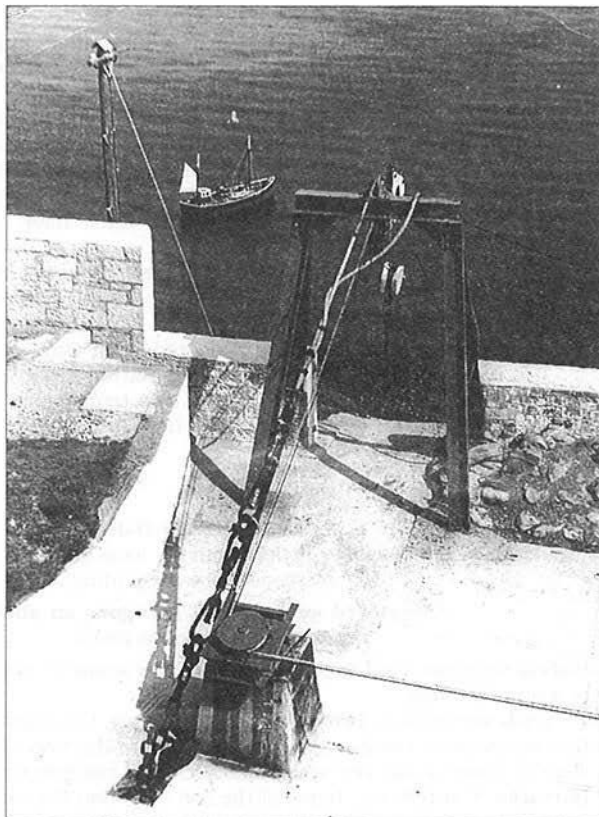
When I return perhaps I'll walk to the North Point, whatever happens I will be content with what is.

§



The Landing Stage needing to be hauled up (from the WJ Westcott Collection)

*The winch that Dave Davey used,
to haul up the Landing Stage
(from the WJ Westcott Collection)*



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Lundy Census 1901 (from Myrtle Ternstrom)

The total population was: 12 males over 16yrs, 14 females over 16yrs, 1 girl, 2 boys, in 9 houses. 2 Lightkeepers at South Light, 3 at Lundy North. (Population total of 34. The enumerator gives 35 - I have not yet had an opportunity to check my details, evidently 1 of the keepers was absent from the South Light.)

At this time, the lessee was Mr Taylor, who was never resident on the island. The enumerator was William Pullman, his bailiff, who lived in the farmhouse with his wife & one woman servant.

At the Villa were the Revd. Hudson Heaven, aged 75, his sister, Amelia, aged 67, & their cousin, Anne Mary, aged 70. They were looked after by a cook, a parlour maid, a laundrymaid, & a housemaid.

The gardener/groom, Christopher Ward, & his wife, Luisa, lived at the Bungalow (Brambles), aged respectively 65 & 64.

George Thomas was a fisherman on his own account, helped by his 16 year old son, William & they lived with Mrs Susan Thomas in an unspecified cottage of 4 rooms (now Hammers).

Nearby was the Allday family living at the Signal Cottages: Frederick Allday, Lloyds signalman & sub-postmaster, his wife, Hannah, & daughter, Mildred, then aged 10

yrs. Mrs Allday is entered as sub-postmistress.

The storekeeper, William Pennington, lived alone in the storeman's cottage of two rooms (later Marisco Cottage, & now the extended Tavern). Only two of the Barton Cottages were inhabited - one by John Heffrey, aged 20, horse man on the farm, with his wife & a boarder, William Tallin, aged 68, who was a farm labourer. The second was inhabited by Nicholas Williams, aged 49, his wife, & son, aged 12. Their daughter was the laundrymaid at the Villa, & Mr & Mrs Williams were caretakers for the tenant of the Old Light, Mr Napier. Mr Williams is also described as a gardener. Each habitation is stated to have 4 rooms, so must have consisted of two units of the original 8 cottages.

One Quarter Wall cottage was occupied by James Slater, gardener, aged 46, his wife, & two sons aged 21 & 10 yrs. No 2 cottage is described as uninhabited, & No 3 not mentioned.

Finally, there were 3 vessels anchored in the Bay, a collier, a coaster, & a steamer.

The residents of the farmhouse, the Barton cottages & the stores cottage would have been employees of Mr Taylor, & it is remarkable how few of them there were. This would confirm a comment in the Heaven papers that he was letting things go.

§

From Jeff Jenkins

Enclosed is a newspaper article from my local giveaway newspaper, *The Canterbury Adscene*, for week ending 23/11/01/

Restored anti-aircraft gun goes on show at barracks

(by Ian Read)

Burma veterans Tom Jackson & Reg Carter know all about being on the receiving end of a gun like this.

Both served with Britain's Forgotten Army, the name given to the men who fought the Japanese in the jungles of Burma during the Second World War. The old soldiers were on hand as the restored Japanese anti-tank gun was given pride of place at Leros Barracks, Canterbury, home of the 3rd Battalion Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

The gun was captured by men of the 4th Battalion Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment during the final advance on Rangoon in 1945.

Tom, 82, was with them at the time. He served with the unit at El Alamein & then in the vicious battle of Kohima where his unit was surrounded by a full Japanese Division but held out for three weeks.

Opposing soldiers were so close they were able to lob grenades at each other across a tennis court. They were relentlessly shelled & sniped at. Out of 77 men in his company, only 20 walked out.

He said: "I saw a platoon reduced to one man who just kept on fighting, you couldn't do anything else. It was kill or be killed."

Tom remembers Lance Crpl Jack Harman who won the Victoria Cross posthumously after single-handedly destroying Japanese machine gun bunkers at Kohima.

He said: "He was very cheerful & always full of fun. He was killed on his way back after knocking out the guns."

Former Troop Sgt Reg Carter, 77, won the Military Medal as a tank commander in Burma & found himself leading three Lee tanks along a track.

He had swapped tanks with another crew & watched with horror as the tank he had just left was hit by the shell of a gun like the one that has been restored. "We managed to destroy the guns facing us & gained the position. I found out later in India I had won the Military Medal."

The gun was unveiled by the Lady Mayoress of Canterbury, Ann Seller, after

Adjutant Captain Leon Thompson told how the gun was captured during an action that left many Japanese dead.

Staff Sgt John Chapman led the restoration team.

Miss Sellar said: "The soldiers in Burma were described as the Forgotten Army. But I don't believe they are forgotten. This gun will be a reminder of people who went through such terrible years but achieved so much."

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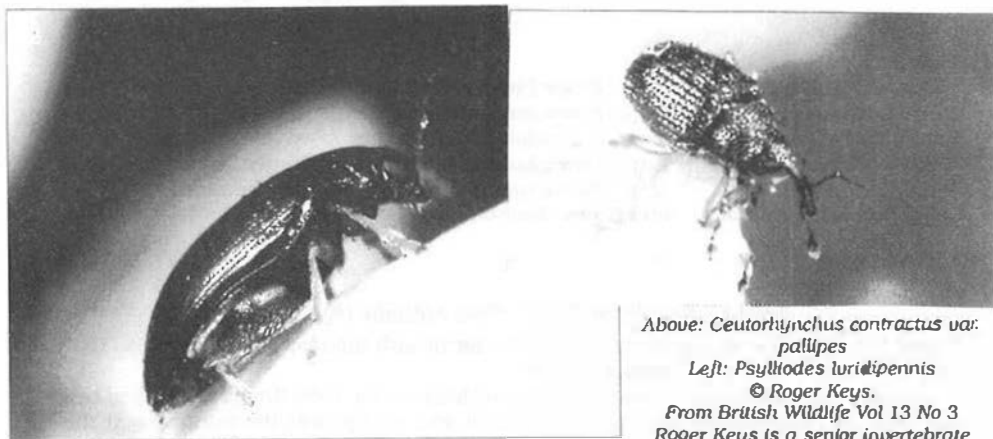
English Nature – BAPS Species Overview – Lundy Cabbage

Range: less than 5 sites

Distribution: Endemic to England. In England: Lundy Island

Overview:

The Lundy Cabbage is a tall & impressive plant, especially when it covers its cliff side habitat in yellow flowers from May to July. When not in flower it resembles a large radish ... with leaves in a rosette in winter & early spring. It currently occurs only on Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel, although the plant may well have occurred elsewhere prior to the last Ice age, & relatives of the Lundy cabbage are found in Spain & North Africa. Lundy Island provides a microcosm of evolution, having been isolated from the mainland of England for some 9,000 years since the end of the last ice age. Not only is the Lundy cabbage unique, but it also supports two insects, the Lundy cabbage flea beetle (*Psyllodes luridipennis*) & the Lundy cabbage weevil (*Ceutorhynchus contractus* currently var. *pallipes*) that, like the plant, occur nowhere else. The main threat faced by the Lundy cabbage is the rhododendron, which was introduced to the island as an ornamental plant in the 19th century & now covers much of the cliff top formerly occupied by the cabbage. The threat posed by the rhododendron puts not only the Lundy cabbage at risk but also the two insects that depend on it for their survival. Though rhododendron invasion is a problem in many UK sites Lundy is the only location where it threatens the total loss of a whole species. Implementation of the species action plan has made considerable progress in beginning the removal of rhododendron & in improving our understanding of the management needs of the species & in recent years the population has thrived. Some of the recent recovery, however, seems to be due to increases in flowering & seed production following good weather conditions, & loss of habitat still possesses a serious threat to its long-term survival.



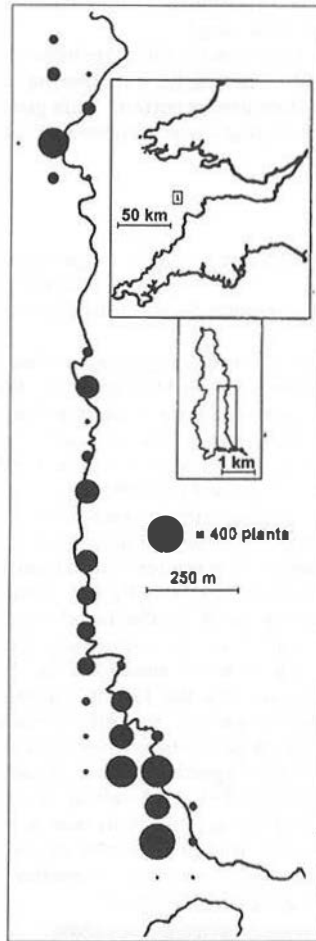
Above: *Ceutorhynchus contractus* var. *pallipes*

Left: *Psyllodes luridipennis*

© Roger Keys.

From *British Wildlife* Vol 13 No 3
Roger Keys is a senior invertebrate
officer with English Nature at
Peterborough

Cabbage distribution 1997
from British Wildlife Vol 13 No 3



Links:

University of Leeds:

<http://www.biology.leeds.ac.uk>

English Nature:

<http://www.englishnature.gov.uk>

Lundy:

www.lundyisland.co.uk & <http://www.lundy.org.uk>

Landmark Trust:

<http://www.landmarktrust.co.uk/lundy.html>

National Trust:

<http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/environment/>

Lundy Cabbage Action Plan:

<http://www.ukbap.org.uk/plans/species/NBNSYS0000002806.htm>

§

Re: LFS Newsletter No 31 (from Anthony Hutchings)

I read Roger Allen's article (early application form) with interest & memories, as that year (1954) was the year I applied to join.

What is not mentioned is that the camping fee was, for 1955 (the year I stayed two weeks in mid April), just 2/6 a week. My tent was set up near the bungalow at the Old Light & our washing water came from the very large rusty rainwater butt - after the removal of a dead rat!

Being a 21 year old architectural student at the time, accompanied by an engineering student, we carried out a meticulous survey of the Light House, which I have (sadly) misplaced. One of the pen & ink sketches of the Island I did at that time does, however, exist & when I can lay my hands on it I will forward on for your records.

The newsletters make for very interesting reading & I look forward to receiving many more.

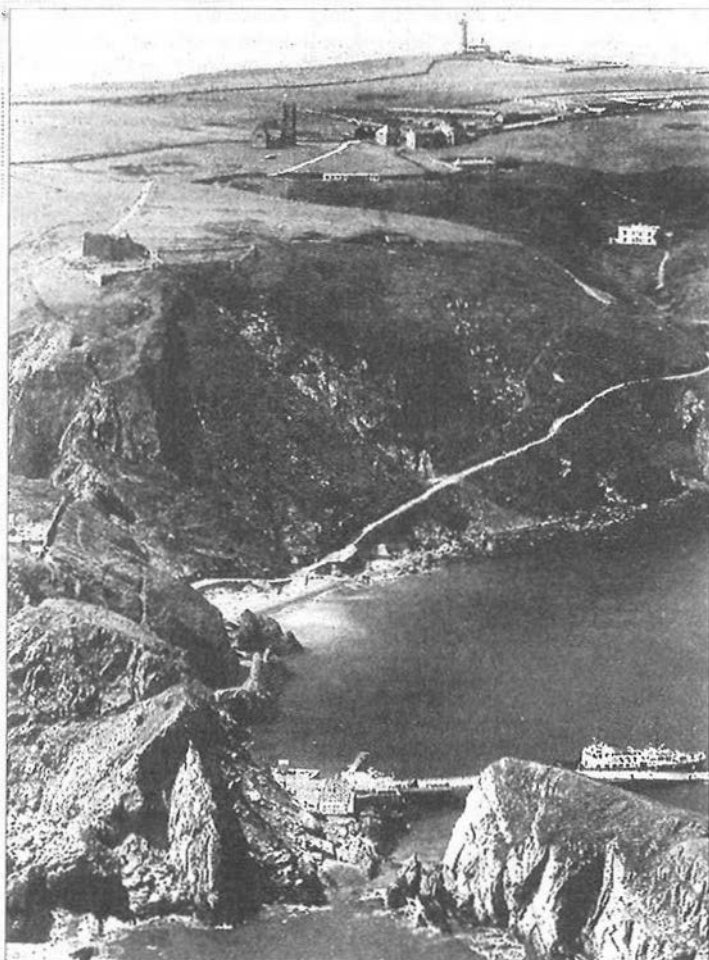
§

Rescue Archaeology 1-8 April 2000 (from Tony Cutler's geology notes)

It was observed during the archaeological excavation that the edges of the two areas of granite blocks & also the wall revealed at the southern end of the trench all run in parallel direction diagonally across the trench, & that this direction is also approximately the same as the direction of the prominent field lynchet which is observed in the adjacent field on the west side of Pigs' Paradise. This direction points directly towards Beacon Hill. It is of further interest that a line drawn from the upper end of the remaining section of the old track [Goat track Ed.'s note] (now used only as a footpath) from the Landing Beach up onto the island, across to Beacon Hill, crosses through Pigs' Paradise & that the direction of this line is approximately parallel to the direction of the features observed during the excavation. An early track which may have run from the Landing Beach to Beacon Hill may not have followed this direct line precisely, but the direction of such a track could have provided a basis for the alignment of subsequent constructions.

§

View of the South End with the Goat Path and Beacon Hill both visible. see comment in Tony Cutler's paragraph



From Jenny Clarke June 2001

"Lundy?! Where's Lundy?"

"It's a tiny island off the Devon coast."

"How brave of you," they said.

Who me? Were they really calling ME brave? Me – unadventurous, settled, secure (ish!) on the mainland (or the ML as I call it now!). Perhaps I was going through a mid-life crisis (whenever mid-life is).

I had a full-time job, a newly acquired rented cottage, two grown-up children who came & went at frequent intervals.

And then ... someone mentioned Lundy & offered me a job. No! This is me – I don't do brave, I don't do spontaneous! But I am a great believer in fate so I gave up my job, cottage, most of my belongings (mainland trappings) & visits by my children (more trappings!) & was helicoptered over to Lundy. What was I doing?!

The "village" in which I now live & work must rate amongst the most unusual in England. It has no indigenous people, fifteen permanent staff who live here all year round & a fluctuating transient population from March to December. In January & February the village community consists only of the few staff. Being able to get on with people is a virtue with which, fortunately, I have been blessed!

You will generally find me in the Marisco Tavern, or you should if I'm fulfilling my job description as Bar Manager. The one pub here can, surprisingly for a small island, be incredibly busy, especially in the season. On a "boat day" we could have as many as 400 people on the island & potentially (please don't let it rain!!) in the Tavern! BUT, in this village, I can walk out of the Tavern & find peace & solitude almost immediately, however many people are here.

My interest in the island is an holistic one. To see sika deer, seals, wild rabbits & goats, ponies, myriad birds, basking sharks, the unique Lundy cabbage, & let's not forget puffins, is a bonus for me as I explore the island.

The west side is wild & rocky, the granite cliffs plunging into the Atlantic Ocean. Gentler, but still spectacular, are the slopes on the East Side, in the spring clad with purple rhododendrons that weave a carpet down to the Bristol Channel. The South has its beach & landing bay, home to visiting yachts in the summer & the North, in a completely different way possesses its own very special beauty.

Where else but Lundy would you find deckchairs at the top of a lighthouse? Sitting in one of these at the top of the 'Old Light' I can survey almost all the island in comfort, or I can walk down to the Battery & while away an hour or two sunbathing on the side of a cliff whilst watching the seabirds which proliferate in the area. A good place also for watching the superb sunsets.

The night sky reveals much more of its mystery over here: we have no light pollution – no street lamps, no car headlights: I have actually seen a "blanket of stars". A ghostly beam of light may occasionally be seen in the form of a torch, attached to a person wending wearily home after a convivial night in the Tavern! A torch is a necessity here – the electricity goes off after midnight.

We have **weather** here. Real weather! Mediterranean sunshine, force 9 gales, pea-soup mist – sometimes all in the same day!

A quick trip to the mainland is periodically called for – the half yearly MOT! Doctor, dentist & hairdresser. However, I have discovered tonsorial skills I never knew I had.

Here is life in microcosm. Within the space of three miles by half a mile, I am privileged to have all that I want or need &, more to the point, not have the things I don't want – traffic (there are no cars on Lundy), noise & pollution of any kind.

I work, sometimes long hours, but the diverse & interesting people I meet, my little cottage in Millcombe – a lovely wooded valley, the friendship of those with whom I work & most of all a whole island that is my home are compensation enough.

It is an island of contrast. It is an island of moods & for all moods, It is an island of inspiration – for art, writing & in my case, photography & calligraphy. The hand of fate has treated me well.

Do I miss anything?

No – cows maybe.

Oh, & my children!

§

Lundy's Starring Rôle (from André Coutanche)

Every visitor to Lundy has some interest in the natural world. For some people, it's the marine life, with or without a wetsuit & air tank. For others it may be the plants. Many visitors bring with them – or acquire on the island – an interest in the bird life. But there is one aspect of the natural world which Lundy can offer the visitor which is often overlooked. It may not be unique to Lundy, but few places in crowded, developed Britain offer better conditions in which to observe the night sky.

Many people have a latent interest in astronomy, but it's not always easy to find the time or the conditions to look at the stars. Lundy's relaxed atmosphere offers the time: more importantly, the absence of street lights provides ideal conditions to renew your acquaintance with the constellations & the planets or to start to get your celestial bearings.

For the LFS Week on Lundy in June 2000 I rashly volunteered to do an introduction to the night sky as part of the 'entertainment'. As the week wore on, it became a standing joke that night after night was overcast & when the clouds finally broke at the end of the week, the full moon made conditions about as difficult as they could be for star-gazing. We ended up standing in the 'moon shadow' of the church tower finding the Plough, the Pole Star & Cassiopeia.

So what can you expect to see if you stop & look up as you leave the Marisco at 11 o'clock? For a start, you should move away from the lights of the tavern windows & give your eyes five minutes or so to adjust to the dark (people staying at Tibbetts have an obvious advantage here). Unless the moon is particularly bright, you should be aware of more & apparently more brilliant stars than we are used to seeing from most places on the mainland. You will also have a splendid view of the Milky Way arcing across the sky.

Everyone has heard of the Milky Way but fewer people know what it is. What appears as a ragged band of light is actually millions of very distant – & thus very faint – stars. A practical experiment *before* leaving the Tavern may be helpful: take a beer mat & stick a matchstick through a point about three-quarters of the way out from its centre. The beer mat is our galaxy – it's round & it's (relatively) flat. The galaxy consists of one hundred thousand million stars, & it's about 100,000 light-years in diameter (a light-year is nearly six million, million miles). Our sun is one of these stars, & it's an absolutely average one – there are bigger ones & smaller ones: hotter ones & cooler ones; red ones & blue ones. Our middling size, middling temperature, middling colour (and middle-aged) sun suits us just nicely.

Where you have stuck the matchstick is where our sun is in the galaxy. When we on our planet orbiting the sun look out from our matchstick, most of the time we are looking *out* of the plane of the beer mat. There are certainly other stars to be seen in all directions – our beer mat galaxy isn't as thin as all that – but when we look from our matchstick towards the centre of the beer mat, or directly away from the centre, or in any other direction *through* the plane of the beer mat, there are stars after stars. Although most of them are too distant to be discerned individually, the light from them adds up to create a brighter band in the sky – the Milky Way.

Although the distances involved are literally incomprehensible, it's important not to get too fazed, but to keep an idea of *relative* distances. Our average sun has some planets going around it. We are familiar with their names, if only through the unspeakable horoscope columns. So far as we know, our solar system consists of the sun & nine planets (if there are any more they must be small & remote from the sun or they would have been detected by now; there are also some bits & pieces like asteroids & comets). Ancient peoples observed the planets as far out as Saturn; it took telescopes to detect Uranus, Neptune & Pluto, & even on Lundy they are invisible to the naked eye. Pluto, the most distant, in 'only' 3.7 thousand million miles away from the sun (forty times the distance of the Earth) – but the nearest star to our solar system is four & a bit light-years away, that's to say about 7,000 times the distance from the sun to Pluto. And the distance from our sun (matchstick) to the centre of the galaxy (beer mat) is about 35,000 light-years. Space, as the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy rightly noted, is *big*. So when we look at the planets – Venus, Mars, Jupiter or Saturn – we are looking at our immediate neighbours, with distances measured in millions of miles (only our own moon is closer at a trivial quarter of a million miles). When we look at the stars, we are seeing across distances of many millions of millions of miles. (Since I learned my astronomy some time ago, I learned it in miles rather than kilometres; the important point here is the relativities).

In fact, there is one object in the sky which can be seen with the naked eye which is outside our galaxy itself. It is another galaxy, about the same size & shape as our own, & it lies in the same direction as the constellation we call Andromeda. It is 2.2 million light-years away, ie 13 million, million, million miles (think of it as a beer mat on the next table). Lundy's dark skies make it a great place to leave our galaxy from.

So how do we find Andromeda? Conventionally, introductions to the constellations start with the Plough, which most people are vaguely familiar with, & use it to find the Pole Star. That gives us North. As Liza said at the LFS Week star-gazing, so far as she was concerned, it gave her 'Up', which was a fair point. The missing assumption, which it is important to make explicit, is that you draw a line from the Pole Star straight down to the horizon, & *that* is the direction of North. However, on Lundy we have a pretty fair idea which way the North End is, so we can reverse the process. Facing the North End, look up just over 45 degrees ($51\frac{1}{4}$ actually, the latitude of Lundy) & you will see a pretty average star. The only reason it's not too difficult to find is that the other stars round about are even more boring. That's the Pole Star. The Plough, with its distinctive saucepan shape, won't be far away. Exactly in which direction & which way up will depend on the time of year & the time of night, but in July/August between 11.00pm & midnight, it will be more or less the right way up (as a saucepan) to the left of & below the Pole Star.

Now draw an imaginary line from the handle of the plough/saucepan across to the Pole Star & out the same distance the other side. You come to Cassiopeia, a W-shaped constellation (though the W may be on its side or even upside down as an M, depending on when you're looking). The Milky Way runs through Cassiopeia. From the middle star, draw another line through the bottom-right star of the W & you will come to a big square of stars – Pegasus (though why a square looks like a flying horse is something you'll have to ask an ancient Greek). It's difficult on paper to convey the scale of the constellations in the sky. The square of Pegasus is bigger than the width of Cassiopeia & nearly the length of the Plough.

The line from Cassiopeia to Pegasus passed through Andromeda, a thoroughly nondescript constellation. Half-way between the top-left of the Pegasus square & the bottom-right star of Cassiopeia is a faint misty patch. With the naked eye, you might think it just a hazy star, but ordinary (bird-watching) binoculars will show that it really is a fuzzy patch of light & not a star-like point. This is the Andromeda Galaxy, which you are seeing as it was when the light left it over two million years ago.

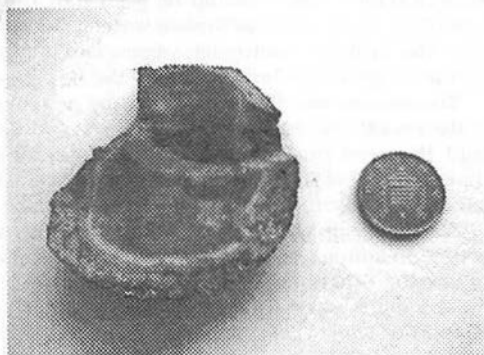
During the LFS Week we had far too much moon but there were no planets visible

in the night sky in June 2000. Often there will be one or more to see, & you could do a little homework before leaving for the island by checking the monthly sky-charts published in some newspapers or looking on the internet at sites such as www.jb.man.ac.uk/public/nightsky.html or www.e-scl.com/NonCatSect/Observing/ObsGeneral.html which will tell you where the planets are & what the phase of the moon will be when you're visiting Lundy. You could also visit www.cybersky.com & download a program which turns your PC into planetarium.

Astronomically speaking, the best time to be on Lundy is in winter: you will still be able to see the Plough, Cassiopeia & the Andromeda Galaxy, but you will also have Orion & some of the other 'winter' constellations which are below the horizon during summer nights.

The stars of a constellation aren't actually close to each other: they just happen to be in the same general direction as seen from Earth. Ancient people thought some apparent groups of stars made shapes which reminded them of things. Other cultures saw different things & have different constellations. There's no reason why Lundy visitors shouldn't see in the stars shapes which have significance for them. So next time you're leaving the Marisco, try to find the Seal, the Cabbage & the Great & Little Puffin.

S



*Arrowhead, flints and pot from the Rescue Dig
by Shirley Blaylock
© Taty Cutler*

THE PALM SATURDAY CROSSING

by Our Nautical Correspondent

The Island had been closed since the outbreak of Foot & Mouth. The Oldenburg had been in dry dock in Appledore from early January until late February & no sailings with supplies had taken place since then. No other boats had sailed with supplies, & helicopter flights had been suspended. A disinfected Warden had managed to get back in early March, but in a small vessel incapable of carrying much cargo. The Islanders were getting bored & hungry.

The decision was made by The National Trust, The Landmark Trust & English Nature to reopen the Island for Easter with a sailing planned on Saturday April 7th. The sailing that day had originally been intended from Clovelly, due to the works at Stone Bench in Ilfracombe not being expected to be finished! A coach at 9:00 a.m. would have taken passengers from the Shore Office in Bideford to Clovelly, to sail at 10:30 a.m. Because of the need to to disinfect all footwear taken to the Island, the sailing was changed to Bideford. All parties were circulated with an instruction to report to the Shore Office in Bideford, with any footwear carried separately & not packed in the luggage to be stowed in the hold.

Passengers were asked to report at 3:00 p.m. to give lime for all footwear to be sprayed before embarkation. It must have been thought that this would take some time, but so well did the passengers comply with this request, & so efficient were the Oldenburg's crew, that the ceremony of the "Spraying of the Boots" was over quite quickly & all were aboard by 3:30 p.m. The Oldenburg had not lifted off the mud.

South-westerly winds had prevailed for the previous few days & a strong swell from the south-west had built up. The wind was in the north & was quite brisk, but the forecast was that it would back north-west by late afternoon, making a landing on Lundy feasible. The Captain of the Oldenburg, when approached by a wide-eyed volunteer, asking about the crossing, replied, with a disarming smile, "Vile!". The Captain had just returned from inspecting the sea from Westward Ho!

It was not until about 4:10 p.m. that the Oldenburg lifted off the mud & slid down the Torridge, under the new bridge, past the shipyards in Appledore. The north wind was producing a slight ripple on the river. Through Appledore pool the ship was sheltered by the sandhills by Grey Sands, as it followed the channel to the Outer Pulleys buoy. Here it could be seen that the bar, almost unmarked by waves on a calm day, was a chaos of broken water. The spray flying back from the bows was more than the bridge's windscreen wipers could cope with, & the first officer had to be out on the wings of the bridge, calling the bearings of the Fairway buoy.

The sea was not that rough, but the motion of the ship was unpredictable, because of the conflict between the swell from the south west & the north wind. This certainly kept the crew busy providing the necessary aid to those disturbed by the motion, though many of the children going over for Easter coped very well. Some of them even fell asleep later in the lower after-cabin saloon.

After a while the Captain found that the ship's motion was eased by steering a course heading 4 or 5 miles north of the Island; at the same time he did not attempt to use the Oldenburg's full 13 knots but moderated it to about 9.

Two hours later, this course brought the Oldenburg to within about 5 miles of the Island but somewhat north of it: rather than head straight for the Landing Bay, again to moderate the ship's motion, he elected to steer south towards Hartland with the wind astern. This enabled him after about half an hour to resume a course parallel to his original course towards the Landing Bay.

At this point it was clear that the wind had not done what the weatherman had told it to. The wind persisted from the north, it had not backed north west. It was soon obvious that the sea was too rough in the Landing Bay to allow an immediate approach to the jetty.

The decision was made to anchor at about 7:30 p.m. The islanders, waiting on the jetty, returned to the top. The Oldenburg dropped anchor some 250 yards north of the jetty. Two shackles (180 feet) of chain were lowered & an anchor watch set. After about an hour the anchor started to drag. The engines were restarted, the chain hauled up & the Oldenburg went another 200 yards further north. This time 3 shackles of chain were dropped.

The wind was still in the north, blowing straight down the Island, sufficiently briskly to produce white tops to the waves. This caused the ship to lie in a north south line, but produced a side to side rolling effect. This built up to over ten degrees each side of the vertical & then stopped fairly abruptly as the anchor chain snagged, only to start again, the cycle repeating itself every 3 or 4 minutes.

Many of the passengers were by now tired, & some were cold, as the children, most of them now asleep, seemed to have cornered the Oldenburg's supply of blankets. The crew, who, by midnight, had been at full pelt for over 8 hours, were magnificent, looking after those who felt ill, & explaining what was going on to those who were perplexed by their predicament. It was difficult for them to convince people that anchored just off the Ugly they were better off than anywhere else! The Rattles or Jenny's Cove would have been worse because of the south west swell. Clovelly offers no shelter in a north wind, & the approach to Ilfracombe would not have been much fun, & apart from that, however they felt, everybody wanted to be ashore on Lundy. The tide was getting very low by midnight & it would not have been possible to recross the bar to Bideford for another 5 hours or so. The worst place to have been was hanging around the Fairway buoy waiting for the tide.

The rocking motion, described above, persisted throughout the last hours of Saturday & into Palm Sunday, but at last, in the early hours of the morning the wind began to ease, though it did not back north west as the weatherman had told it to. At about 1:30 a.m. the Captain decided that a landing was possible. The islanders were alerted & the crew started to weigh anchor. As the last few fathoms of chain were wound up, the lights of the tractor & Land Rovers could be seen descending to the jetty.

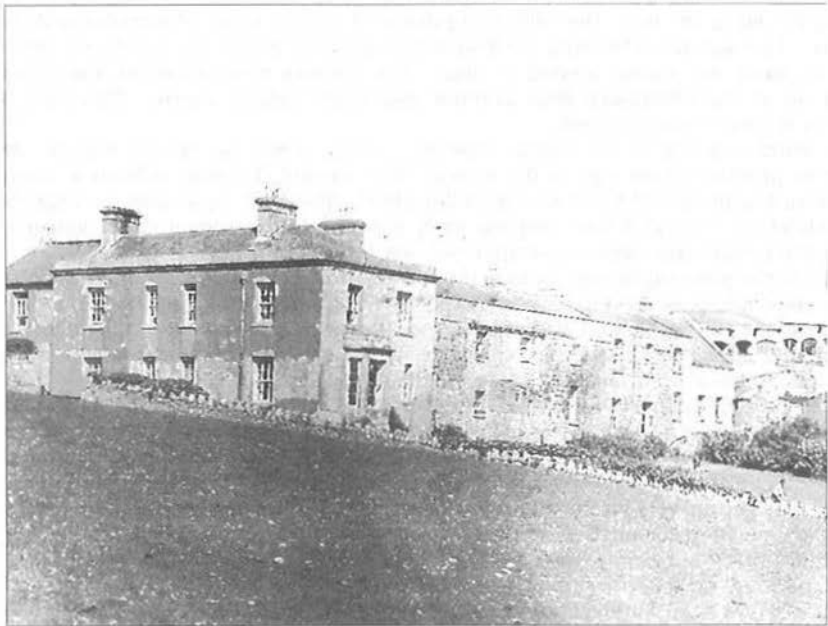
The tide was very low by then, so it was necessary to moor alongside the outermost part of the jetty. The Oldenburg's lights lit up the whole scene as it edged closer to the western side of the jetty. Ropes were cast ashore & fastened to bollards, the slack was taken up & the ship worked close in. The gang plank was got ashore & then lowered back onto the ship with its lower end on the seats just aft the bridge. The angle up was over thirty degrees. The ship was by no means still, & the clamber up the gangplank had to be timed & taken carefully. So it was not until half an hour later that the passengers were all mustered by the new diving hut, ready to be escorted up to the top by islanders with torches. However, the weather produced its one kindly act of the night. The clouds cleared & an almost full moon lit up the whole Island & the roadway, much more efficiently than the islanders' torches.

The procession, a bit strung out by now, rounded the bend below Millcombe losing sight of the Oldenburg. However, work on board & on the jetty went on apace, unloading the luggage & much needed stores. Even then the night was not over for the crew, cargo ashore, the ropes, some of which had parted under the strain, were cast off & the Oldenburg set sail for Bideford.

At the top of the Island, surprise, surprise! Both the Shop & the Tavern were open. The latter was serving drinks (and free hot meals) & brisk trade was done. All memory of the hours at sea & at anchor seemed to fade in the warmth & comfort of the Tavern.

When people dispersed to their properties there were no problems as brilliant moonlight persisted. Another surprise was in store, at each property the luggage & a complimentary packet of food had been delivered.

The islanders had done a magnificent job as had the crew of the Oldenburg; between them they made it all seem like an adventure.



*Above & Below: The Maror Farm Hotel (The Old Hotel) & High Street
(late 60s/early 70s when hotel was still in use) Archive from the WJ Westcott Collection*



MARISCO: A TALE OF LUNDY From Dolge's c.1909 Western Counties Illustrated

Annual

Willam Crossing

I - A Daughter of the sea

A narrow pathway runs from a heathery down across a grassy slope, & is lost amid confused masses of granite that thrust themselves out into the waters where the Atlantic meets the Severn Sea. Around this bold promontory numerous rocks of fantastic form rise like the outworks of a fortress, & offer a stern front to the foe that has never ceased to assail them. Now the surges roll lazily in, for the great ocean is in his gentler mood, & afar off shows a smooth & peaceful bosom. It is only where the unyielding cliff stands up to bar his progress that he betrays anger, & his heaving surface becomes covered with foam. The sun is dropping to the golden rim where water & sky seem to meet, & a radiant line traced upon the deep points towards the shore, & loses itself in a great expanse of opal. Nearer, the opal melts in to a green, & then the jagged rocks start up & the green is flecked with white. The glories of the sunset impart a beauty to the hoary crags of a kind they seldom exhibit, but this cannot hide their rude forms. Though bathed in light the scene is one of a savage grandeur.

Standing on a small plateau of turf to which the heather & the bracken creep, a young girl idly watches the sea-birds that circle about the tiny islands of rock, ready to swoop down & seize their prey. For a time they absorb her attention; then she turns suddenly & looks out over the waters to the dazzling streak that marks the point where the sun will go down, & an exclamation escapes her as she notices how near he has drawn to it. Again she turns, but now her eyes roam over the promontory as though she were in search of some object, & at length they light upon the figure of a boy. He is clinging to the face of a crag, which seen from where she stands appears to offer no foothold. Far down below in a wilderness of splintered granite sinks precipitously into the sea, above are rocky pinnacles that threaten to topple over & add to the ruin beneath. But had he been one of the sea-birds she could not have betrayed less concern, & when she sees him begin to ascend she withdraws her gaze, & her eyes fall once more upon the setting sun.

There is a rustling of the heather behind her, the sound of a footstep, & a man, whose bearing proclaims him to be of superior station, comes down the narrow path.

"You are well met," he exclaims; "I have been seeking you these two hours past. They told me at the castle that you had gone to the cliffs near the Gannet Rock, but it seems that I have been wasting my time."

"It was nevertheless true; but as I could not find what I desired there, I came hither in the hope of being more fortunate," replies the girl.

"I trust that hope has been realised."

"I think so," she says. "But I cannot be sure till Lambert returns."

"And where is Lambert now?"

"He is where I think I may say Stephen Jayvalt would not care to venture. Look."

She points to the crag jutting from the wild promontory below them. The boy has nearly reached the edge of the precipice, but his situation is yet as perilous as before. Jayvalt looks in the direction indicated, but instinctively recoils as his eyes fall upon the figure hanging over the terrible abyss.

"Do not mistake me," continues the girl; "I cast no doubts upon your courage. But it needs one accustomed to the scaling of cliffs to undertake such a task as Lambert is engaged in now."

"It is a dangerous one," replies Jayvalt, "and I fear I should show but little skill in it. But I would not hesitate to attempt the task for such a reward as I could name."

"Lambert is gone in quest of birds' eggs," she remarks.

"Lambert obeys his mistress, & if Maude de Marisco commands me I will obey her too. But I should hope that birds' eggs would not be my only recompense."

A slight flush overspreads the girl's cheeks.

"I shall give you no orders to embark upon any such dangerous work," she says. "You are no cragsman, & I am much afraid you would be far more likely to reach the bottom of the cliff than regain its summit, if you should venture to descend the rocks as Lambert has done now. It would be positively cruel to send you on such an errand."

"You have a poor opinion of me, I fear. But you do not deem the work perilous, for I have seen you engaged in it."

"Ah, that is a different thing. You forget that my home is on Lundy, that is when I am not on the sea, & that the rocks are with me always, while you have only been here two short weeks; & you know nothing of the sea or the coast, for you told me that your voyage to Ireland, from which place you & your companion in misfortune, the sailor Leyman Bryder, were returning when your ship went down near the island, was the first you had ever undertaken."

"Two short weeks," he says, speaking rather to himself than to her. "And to-morrow --"

"To-morrow you leave us. It is satisfactory to know that your injured foot is sufficiently well to permit you to do so. You have passed a dull fortnight I fear."

"Why do you think so?"

"Because you are always speaking of other scenes, & seem as though you regretted being absent from them."

"It is true I did feel dull at first."

"Ah, you cannot deceive me. You are fretting now to reach the mainland. I have never been there, nor have I any wish to go. I feel that I should pine & die if I were compelled to leave the island."

"But is there no fear of that?"

"How should there be?"

"Your father has enemies. You know that the Templars seek to wrest the island from him."

"I know that many years ago, when Sir Jordan de Marisco was its lord, the second King Henry declared the island forfeit, & gave it to the Templars. But I also know that they have never been able to set foot upon it. The Mariscos have held their own in spite of all the attempts that have been made to dispossess them. Other kings have sat upon the throne of England since the time it was first sought to seize our island home, but they have never been able to extend their sway to Lundy."

"You look upon King Henry as your enemy?"

"And is he not our enemy? Has he not long sought my father's life? Were it in his power would he not take from us this rock over which the Mariscos have as good a right to rule as he had to be sovereign of England? Aye, there is enmity between us. It has been war since the days of his grandsire."

"You do not then consider that you owe him allegiance?"

"I owe allegiance only to my father. Henry Plantagenet is your king; William de Marisco is mine."

"A just ruler, I will admit," says Jayvalt.

"Yes, & a kind one. Always resolute, he commands respect, & has no need to enforce obedience, for there is not one of his few subjects who does not willingly serve him. Can you say this of your king? If report speaks truly, discontent stalks through your land, & Henry, without talent or energy, cannot prevent its spread. While England is turbulent, Lundy is peaceful."

"But you are ever waging war. No vessel that comes within sight of this island is safe from your attacks."

"Ah," she says, passing her hand wearily across her brow, "we live by the sword. We are at enmity with all, but there is no dissension within our little kingdom."

"You are proud of your island."

"I love it," she exclaims, her face brightening as she looks round upon the heather & the rocks & the crimsoned sea; "It is my world, my paradise. Here is all that is dear to me. Those I have known from my childhood; my old nurse, my early playmates, my father, & my mother."

"But you have no mother," says Jayvalt.

"You are mistaken," she cries. "My mother is there."

She points to the wide waste of waters into which the sun is now sinking, amid the glories of rosy clouds that rise like mountains in a far-off fairy-land.

"The sea is my mother," she cries. "My eyes first opened on its bosom; it rocked my cradle; has been ever present with me, & ever my protector. With the deep to guard us who can hope to take from us our realm of Lundy? Long years ago a hidage was levied on Western Britain for the siege of the island, but no foe has yet been able to land upon it. The sea is our security; its billows keep our enemies at bay, & by the spoils of our victories upon it we live."

"And you regard your victories ---"

"As King Henry would regard his -- with pride. But he has had less reason to be proud than we, for his wars have been mostly unfortunate, while our conquests have generally yielded a rich reward."

"But your father is not truly a king."

"You mean, that men do not speak of him as such, they call him a pirate, & say that he breaks the law in attacking vessels on the sea, but they forget that we make our own laws on Lundy. But see; Lambert is coming up the path. I am glad of it, for it grows late, & we have a full hour's walk to the castle."

"A walk that will take us from one end of the island to the other," remarks Jayvalt. "Your territory is not large."

"That is true," replies Maude de Marisco, with a smile; "and its size may partly account for its good government. Its king knows all his subjects, is acquainted with their desires, sees what will conduce to their happiness, & is mindful of them. Thus there is no discontent, no murmuring, no uprising to fear. All men here are true; it is impossible to imagine a traitor on Lundy."

Jayvalt quickly averts his gaze, & looks away over the waters towards a long blue line, dimly seen like a low bank of cloud on the southern horizon.

"Ah, you are thinking of to-morrow, when you will land on the Devon coast, as my father has promised you," says Maude. "You are anxious to be there, if I mistake not, for I have observed that you often look towards it, but Wales you hardly seem to notice, though it is plainly seen when the weather is clear."

Jayvalt is about to reply when Lambert comes up the path leading to the promontory. He is carrying some birds' eggs in his cap, & on seeing his mistress waiting for him hastens forward.

"You have been successful I see," says Maude; "for though you were too far off for me to discern whether you took anything from the nest to which you climbed down, I am nevertheless sure you have brought what I desired. You would not look so pleased were it otherwise."

The boy laughs.

"Am I not always pleased when I am doing your bidding, mistress?" he asks.

"You have had a difficult task," remarks Jayvalt.

"In bringing the eggs safely, yes," returns Lambert; "the climbing was nothing."

"These are the eggs of a rare sea-bird," explains Maude, who has been examining them, " & I was anxious to obtain them as specimens. Those of the gull & the guillemot are plentiful enough, as you see, & it is not trouble to collect hundreds of them in a day, but these are seldom found here. Put them safely by, Lambert, & let us with all speed to the castle."

They ascend the path to the heather, in which it is lost, & make their way rapidly over the down. The daylight still lingers, though the sun has disappeared, & it is only

in the hollows that the purple flowers are darkening. On either side they look upon the sea; here losing itself in the cold, grey depths of the east, there extending to the waning radiance of the western wave. Before them is the down, where broad, grassy patches intermingle with the heather, & on which graze the few cattle & sheep kept by the islanders. In the midst of this rises a lofty round tower, built at some early period by an unknown people, & for a purpose equally unknown. A doorway placed at some distance from the ground gives admittance to it, & this is the sole opening to the outer air, except at the summit, there being no windows or arrow-slits. The walls, which are of great thickness, incline inward, so that its form is that of a cone. It is one of several, the others being in ruins, that the Mariscos found here when they made the island their home. It is occasionally used by them as a watch-tower, although there is little need for this, as not only can vessels at a considerable distance from the island be seen from any part of it, but there is only one point at which it is possible for strangers to land. This is a little bay, not far from the castle. & here a watch had always been kept.

As they approach the tower, Lambert suddenly stops & shading his eyes with his hand, scrutinises it narrowly.

"What do you see, Lambert?" asks Maude.

"Some rare bird I suppose," remarks Jayvalt, impatiently. "Come boy, give up your nesting. It grows late, & if we do not hasten darkness will overtake us before we can reach the castle."

"It is no bird that I am looking at," answers the boy. "Come hither, mistress. Do you not see something on the tower? It is resting on the edge of the wall."

"You have good eyes, Lambert. I do not think I should have noticed it had you not called my attention to it. What can it be?"

"It is nothing," says Jayvalt. "A tuft of grass perhaps that the wind has displaced; I have seen such growing on the walls. Follow us, boy, we are impatient to reach the castle."

Lambert hesitates.

"Would not my good lord & master expect me to find out what it is?" he asks, turning towards Maude.

"Bah!" cries Jayvalt. "William de Marisco would not concern himself with such trifles. Onward, you foolish boy; we must waste no more time here."

"Nay, Lambert is right," says Maude; "and since my father is not here to order him to ascend the tower, I bid him do so."

The boy is about to obey her command when Jayvalt detains him.

"If you really are anxious to know what yonder object it," he says to Maude. "I will myself find out for you," & before he can be prevented he is on his way to the tower.

The doorway is reached by means of a rope ladder, & this Jayvalt ascends. He is lost to sight for a few minutes, & then his head appears at the top of the structure, where the wall forms a parapet to a narrow ledge carried round its interior. A winding stairway, formed in the thick masonry, leads to this, the centre of the huge cone being hollow. This stairway was once dimly lighted in places by windows that looked into this cylindrical shaft, & here the walls had fallen, & the steps with it. The summit of the tower could consequently not be reached without difficulty, & it is therefore with some surprise that Lambert notices how quickly their visitor has ascended. Jayvalt shouts to them, & detaching something from the wall, throws it over. Lambert runs forward, anxious to learn what it is, but finds it to be only a large tuft of moss, among the roots of which are entangled other plants, such as he has seen growing from decaying masonry. In a few minutes Jayvalt is by his side.

"You silly boy," he says, "you have given me trouble for nothing. Did you expect I should find a wounded albatross on the tower, or what else was it your fancy created?"

"I did not know what you might find," answers Lambert; "and as for giving you trouble, you must remember that I was ready to go myself & see what was there, but you would not let me. But I cannot believe that it has been a trouble to you, for you have climbed the stairway as quickly as I could have done, though I have been to the top of the tower many times, & know nearly every stone in it. If you are no cragsman, for certes you are well able to climb walls."

Jayvalt bites his lip.

"Come along, boy," he says, "we have wasted time enough here."

Then followed by the lad, he strikes out over the down, Maude having walked slowly on.

"It is just as I expected," he remarks, on overtaking her: "some moss & weeds, torn by the wind from the crumbling wall, had lodged upon its edge."

The light is now dying out of the sky, & by the time they reach the castle it is nearly dark,



*The Manor Farm Hotel
(Old Hotel) garden &
monastery gate
Archive from the
WJ Westcott Collection*



*The Old Hotel
dining room*

II - The Watcher

Having delivered the sea birds' eggs to old Rachel, the wife of the house steward, who comes to the door of the hall to meet her mistress, Lambert disappears in the direction of the servants's quarters, but instead of proceeding thither returns unseen to the gate, & quits the castle. In a few minutes he reaches a little hollow in which some sycamores flourish, & as though in return for the shelter they receive, afford protection to several cottages. At the door of one of these he knocks, & presently a man appears.

"I cannot see who my visitor is," he says; "but come in, whoever you are."

"It is Lambert," says the boy, entering; "I have a word to say to you, Barnard Gamley."

"I pray you be quick then. I am in no mood for bandying words with a young scapegrace."

"There will be no need for much talk," returns the boy, "though there may be something to do."

"I don't know that I have any mind towards that either," says Barnard. "I have done my work for the day, & if I do not go up to the castle to drink a cup of wine in honour of the stranger who is leaving to-morrow, I shall quickly be in bed."

"Before you do either I want you to go with me to the Round Tower."

"To the Round Tower! Mercy on us, what possesses the boy. No, no; I have no fancy to go there in the darkness to gratify the whim of a mad-cap such as you."

"It is not to gratify any whim of mine; I come from my mistress, & it is her you will please by doing what I now ask you, though I do not deny that I shall be pleased too, & you know what that will mean, Barnard."

"Whatever is the boy talking about. It will mean, you say --?"

"That I will speak a good word for you to my sister Sibella," says the boy, lowering his voice nearly to a whisper. "She sets great store upon what I say, believe me."

"Well, if by going with you to the Round Tower I should be obeying the wishes of our mistress, I cannot of course refuse to do so," remarks Barnard.

"I should not be here to ask you if it were not so, & if I were not also sure that Sibella would be vexed enough if she thought you were not ready to do for our good mistress whatever you might be asked."

"And when we get to the Round Tower what have we to do?" asks Barnard.

"Only to climb to the top of it."

"Well, that is not a difficult task. the darkness will render a lantern necessary, that is all. but you do not say what we have to do when we reach the top."

"My mistress Maude saw something on the tower this evening from the down, & she was curious about it. I have to discover what it was."

"And for such a trifle you would take me over the down at this hour. you are crazy, boy. What do you expect to find there?"

"How can I tell what it was that my mistress saw? if I knew that what need would there be for me to go to the tower?"

"I do not see that there is any need," returns Barnard Gamley. "But all the same I am ready to accompany you on your errand, & so satisfy our mistress. But I must first borrow a lantern. for mine I cannot find."

"Cannot find it," cries Lambert; "why I saw you carrying it last night when you left the castle."

"That is very true, but I think I must have extinguished it & set it down outside, & one of my neighbours has probably got it safe enough. The sailor Leyman Bryder accompanied me home, & as he is about to leave us, I asked him to drink a cup with me, which he did. & a rare hand at it, too, I promise you. But wait awhile, I will find my lantern, or bring another."

"Nay," says the boy, "we shall not need it. You know well enough that the stair passage is dark even in broad daylight & we never take a lantern with us then."

"I would not give much for a man's life were he to fall from the broken stairs into the shaft," answers Barnard. "We should be safer with a light."

"We shall be safe without one," returns the boy; "come, I do not think we should waste any more time."

"You were always a wilful lad, & would have your way. Well, let it be so: I am ready."

They leave the cottage, & passing on to the down rapidly make their way through the darkness. A few stars glitter in the black sky, but the light they afford is insufficient to render objects even dimly visible, & it is not until they are close to the great tower that it can be seen, & then only faintly is its form defined against the sombre curtain of the night.

Lambert presses his companion's arm to enjoin silence, & they pass round to the side where they know the doorway to be situated. For a few moments they grope about in the darkness, & then a stifled exclamation escapes from Barnard's lips. The rope ladder is gone.

"Boy," hoarsely whispers the islander, gripping Lambert by the shoulder, "you know more than you have told me. What does this mean?"

"I can tell you nothing till I enter the tower, for I know no more than yourself."

"But you suspect something, & you shall tell me that it is. Is there foul play afoot? Tell me, or I will shake the life out of you."

Lambert thinks this is no idle threat, for Barnard Gamley holds him so tightly that he cannot move. The man is evidently concerned at the discovery he has made, & is thinking more of what it may mean than of any injury he may inflict upon the boy.

"You will kill me, Barnard; let me go," cries Lambert.

"Be silent, you young fox," hisses the man. "Why did you not tell me of this at the cottage?"

"I knew it not. What I said to you was true."

"Well, & what now?" demands Barnard, releasing his hold upon him.

"I must go to the top of the tower," answers the boy. "Do you let me mount upon your shoulders, & I think I can reach the doorway."

Barnard grumbles. He is doubtful about the wisdom of allowing the boy to enter the tower alone, & it is only when Lambert assures him that he will not proceed with the adventure unless he can find means to aid him to gain the doorway also, that he agrees to do what he wishes. These means are speedily forthcoming, for no sooner has the boy clambered into the tower than he finds the rope ladder lying on the stone landing place, & this he at once lets down to Barnard. In another minute the man is at his side.

Cautiously they ascend the crumbling steps, Lambert leading the way, & in a little while reach the first of the gaps in the spiral flight. Here it was that a small square opening was once formed in the interior wall, one of those that admitted a feeble light to the stairway, but the aperture was now considerably enlarged, so that in passing it was possible to look into the depths of the dreary shaft. What this was designed for is not apparent, for not only are there no signs of its having been divided into floors, but no doorway opens upon it from the stairs. But it possible that the mysterious people who erected these round towers in different parts of Britain & Ireland, used the great circular shaft in their interior as a store-place for victuals & missiles, & had some means of descending into them from the top. That the towers themselves were intended as refuges during such times as a tribe might be threatened by an enemy, rather than as places of constant abode, seems not unlikely, though their full purpose cannot be determined. Ages have passed since they were built, & their secret has perished.

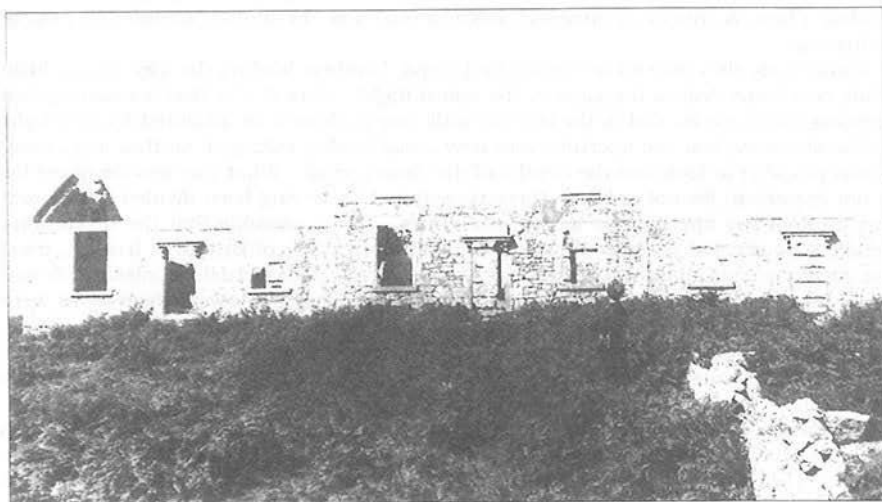
Lambert goes down upon his knees, & putting his head through the opening, leans over the shaft & listens. The bottom of it, being on a level with the outside doorway, is not far below him, & stones & rubbish having fallen into it, the boy knows that this



Above: From left to right, the Coastguard Cottages and Signals

Below: Bellevue/Quarry Cottages (late 60s early 70s)

(Both Archive from the WJ Westcott Collection)



is easily reached. But no sound comes from the pit. All is quiet; even the wind that ever plays across the face of Lundy is unheard within those massive walls. Then he looks upward, but only a solitary star meets his gaze; the mouth of the huge cylinder that frames the patch of inky sky in which it shines is undiscernible. He draws back, & bidding Barnard in a whisper keep close to him, crawls up the stairs past the unseen breach.

Slowly they ascend, the boy carefully feeling his way, & at length, having mounted to a considerable height, reach another wide opening in the wall. To pass this is a task fraught with danger, for though Lambert has often accomplished it by day, even the feeble light then admitted being sufficient to reveal the projections that offer a foothold, in total darkness greater difficulties have to be encountered. Yet he has no fears for himself, but he determines that Barnard shall not risk the passage. Telling him in a whisper to await his return, he boldly confronts the peril. Passing his hand over the face of the wall in order to find the stones to which he must cling, he encounters an object which, being prepared to make some discovery, causes him no surprise. It is a rope carried along the wall in such a manner as to enable a man by clinging to it to cross the breach in safety. Now he understands how Jayvalt gained the summit of the tower so speedily.

He tries the rope & finds that it is securely fastened. Then taking Barnard's hand he guides it to it.

"Ah" ejaculates the islander under his breath: "treachery. But who had done this? If the wretch is in the tower he shall not leave it alive. Forward boy, let us cross."

With the aid of the rope this work is soon accomplished, & again they pass silently up the broken stone steps. But they do not proceed far before they reach another great gap in the wall, which Lambert knows presents even more difficulties, in ordinary circumstances, than the last, but the passage of which the rope will now render easy. He has noticed with joy that this still hangs by the wall, & surmises that it is carried to the top of the stairway.

Suddenly a sound is heard overhead, & the eyes of the boy & his companion are turned upward through the ragged orifice to the mouth of the shaft. The sound, which is that of one object being struck sharply against another, continues for a minute or two, & then a faint glimmer is seen. This gradually grows brighter, & at length reveals the figure of a man holding a lantern, which he has evidently just lighted.

Barnard whispers to the boy.

"I have found something by coming to the tower," he says; "there is my lost lantern, & though I cannot yet see his face, I can guess who the man is that stole it. Yes, see; the light falls full upon him now. It is Layman Bryder. Look, boy, he has heaped faggots & brushwood upon the wall; he would light a beacon fire. What Devil's plot is this? Stand aside, & let me get to him, that I may hurl him from the tower ere he can send his cursed message over the sea."

"Have a care, Barnard," answers the boy. "A struggle on the narrow ledge would mean certain death to you both, for nothing could prevent your falling into the shaft."

"I will risk it: I must go," & Barnard, forgetful of the possible consequences, raises his voice to shout. "Stand from my path, boy," he cries. Then, seizing the rope, he attempts the perilous passage.

The light from above is turned full upon them, but only for an instant. Layman Bryder, seeing that he is discovered, sets down the lantern, & springing to the head of the stairway, draws his knife & cuts the rope.

But the end at the lower part of the steps is well secured, & the islander's grasp upon it is firm, & though he falls back into the black abyss, it is not jerked from his hands. For a moment he remains swinging over the unseen depth, & then commences to climb up to the passage, but when he again stands by the side of Lambert it is below the breach, & there are now no means of his crossing it.

"You are my prisoner, Bryder," he shouts. "Descend & yield yourself, or no mercy shall be shown you."

"It is you who will have to ask for mercy, friend Gamley," replies Bryder: "and since you have been so good as to afford me your hospitality, & the loan of a lantern into the bargain, you shall not ask in vain when the time comes."

"You mocking devil," cries Barnard: "you shall smart for this. I will find a way to reach you yet, & pitch you headlong from the tower."

"You will never reach me here, Barnard Gamley, & will therefore be able to do nothing so unneighbourlike. Look."

A few feet below the head of the stairway is another breach, & the wall between this & the platform on which Leyman Bryder stands is leaning inward in such a manner that it seems as though about to topple over & carry with it the whole of the upper steps, & thus render communication with the top of the tower impossible. Bryder advances towards this, & inserting a stout staff with which he is provided into a deep crack in the masonry, uses it as a lever, & exerts his whole strength. At first the great mass appears to be immovable, but presently it is seen to sway. For an instant it hangs over the gloomy shaft, into which the rays of the lantern penetrate to a gaping hollow, discovering two faces in its intense blackness, & then falls with a deafening crash into the depths below.

"Tell me now that I am your prisoner," cries Bryder. "Pretty gaoler, truly, that cannot reach his captive."

"You shall never leave the tower alive," exclaims Barnard. "Lambert, hasten to the castle, & give the alarm; I will keep watch here. Tell them to send lights & ropes, & a couple of our best bowmen."

"Aye, they will need to be good marksmen," shouts Bryder defiantly.

"And harkye, boy," Barnard continues, dropping his voice to a whisper, "tell Geoffrey to see that the men bring a barrel of pitch with them, & good ball of thread. Away with you; lose not an instant."

Securing the rope above it, they cross the lower breach, & Lambert, descending the remaining steps, leaves the tower & sets out at a rapid pace over the down.

Barnard calls up the shaft.

"We shall meet again soon, Leyman Bryder, & then I think your tongue will not wag so saucily."

"I am quite ready to meet you now," replies Bryder, shouting down the shaft, "but you will not come to me."

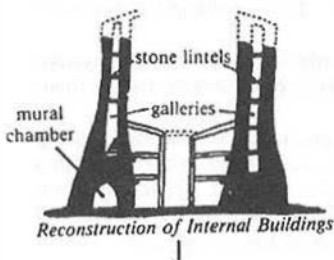
"It is not necessary," returns the islander, "for you will come to us ere long."

"Never; you will have to be content with looking at me, & though the night is dark I shall be seen plainly enough when I light the beacon fire."

"You shall never light it."

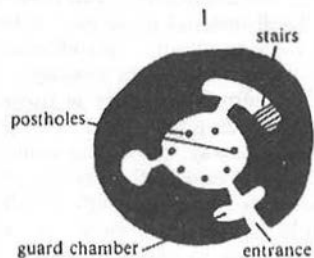
"Ah, ah, ahl You know not what you say. Have a little patience, & you will see it blaze."

"And if it does," cries Barnard, "you shall perish in the flames."

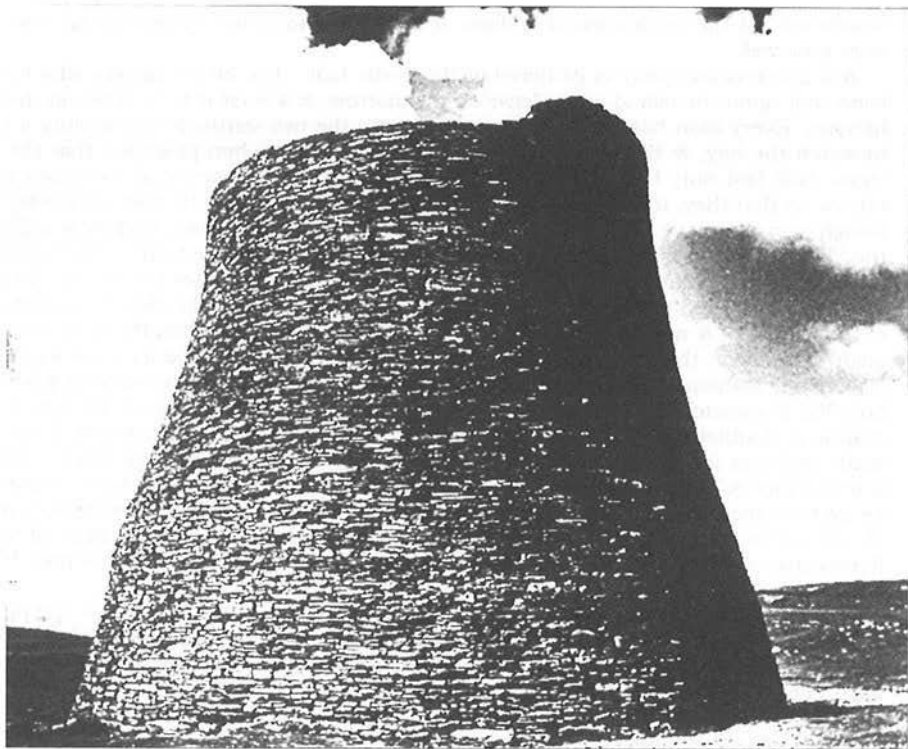


*Round Tower
taken from The
Handbook of British
Archaeology
(Papermac)
by Lesley & Roy
Adkins (p75)*

*J R Chanter's
Monograph on Lundy
(1878) mentions
Round Towers*



Section and Plan of a Broch



The Brock of Mousa

taken from Shire Archaeology "Prehistoric Houses in Britain" by Malcolm L Reid

III - The Lord of the Island

Standing on the brow of a lofty cliff, & protected by massive walls carried in places along its verge, the Castle of Marisco rose proudly above its wild surroundings of rock & sea. To-day the square keep, with a turret at each angle, alone remains, but vestiges of the outer ramparts are here & there discoverable, & speak of the strength of this ancient fortress. At the time when the sling & the arrow formed the principal weapons, except when the combatants came to close quarters, those who sought shelter within its walls were in little danger from the besieger. To carry it by assault would have proved a task of the greatest difficulty, for it was only on the side of the down, where the gate was situated, that an enemy could approach it, & there the wall was protected by outworks. But while considerable care had been bestowed in rendering the castle well-nigh impregnable, it was in the jagged rocks & restless sea that the Mariscos placed their chief trust. No enemy had ever yet been able to land his forces upon the island; there was only one place - a small bay formed by a peninsula & some detached rocks - where this was possible, & here a guard was always kept. After Lundy had been declared forfeit by Henry II, the Knights Templars, to whom he had given it, had made attempts to obtain possession, but Sir Jordan de Marisco had resisted them all, & his island remained in the hands of his successors. Outlawed, the Mariscos became a turbulent race, living by piracy, & owing no allegiance to the king. Endeavours to subdue them became less frequent as the years went on, but in 1238 an attempt having been made on the life of Henry III at

Woodstock, at the instigation of William de Marisco, efforts to capture the islanders were renewed.

A numerous company is gathered in the castle hall. The two strangers who had been cast upon the island are to leave on the morrow, & a feast is to be given in their honour. Every man has been bidden to it, & even the two sentinels whose duty it is to watch the bay, & the warder stationed at the gate, have been promised that their vigils shall last only half as long as is usual, & that their places shall be taken by others, so that they, too, may participate in the revelry. A strange throng fills the hall. Rough men who have passed their days in warring upon their fellows, & against whom the hands of all are lifted, form the guests who will sit at the festive board. They stand about in knots, talking loudly, & often peals of uproarious laughter burst from them as some coarse jest is uttered, or some merry story told. A few, the closer associates of the chieftain, & men of a better class, are gathered apart, but even they put a very slight curb upon their tongues. The scene is a curious one, for the men are garbed in a motley fashion, their clothes being part of the spoils taken from vessels they have boarded & ransacked. Here is one decked out in the suit of a courtier, though the mantle & doublet are now sadly the worse for wear; another is in garments of grey, made perhaps for some merchant or citizen, yonder is a tall brawny fellow, with bronzed face & black beard, in a woodman's suit, though he has never been under a forest tree; men in velvet cloaks rub shoulders with those in leather jerkins, & coats of mail are in company with gaberdines of rough homespun. Seen by the glare of the flambeaux, stuck in iron sconces fixed to the walls, the picture is a weird & impressive one.

Presently the voice of Peter Lanyon, the old house steward, is heard above the din, & the noise abates, & when William de Marisco is seen entering the hall from the stone passage leading from the inner apartments, ceases entirely. On one side of the island chieftain is Maude; on the other walks Stephen Jayvalt.

"I am glad to welcome you, my brave companions," says Marisco. "We have together faced the dangers of the deep & the onslaughts of our enemies, & it is fitting that we should sometimes together hold high revelry. I pray you all be seated."

The forms placed at the long tables set out in readiness are quickly filled, & Peter Lanyon having given the signal, a number of attendants enter bearing the various dishes that have been prepared. The feast proceeds, & very soon the hall is again filled with the sounds of loud voices & laughter, though the guests are restrained from being too uproarious by the presence of Marisco & his daughter. The wine cup circulates freely, for there is good store in the cellars of the stronghold of Lundy, & of rare vintages. Many a ship from France & Spain had contributed to the store, & each man hopes as he drinks that he will often take his share in attacking others that will enable them to replenish it.

"I pledge you, Stephen Jayvalt," says Marisco, raising his goblet. "To-morrow it is likely that we part for ever – your way does not lie where mine shall take me – but I trust you will bear with you no unkindly thoughts of the man against whom the King of England makes war."

"I shall not forget you," says Jayvalt, lifting his goblet also. "But will not the fair Maude pledge me too?"

She hesitates for a moment, & then seeing her father is waiting for her, raises her cup, & bowing to Jayvalt, places it to her lips.

"Nor shall I forget that pledge," he says, "and I would that you also remembered me. Lest it should be otherwise pray accept this ring; it will serve to bring my brief sojourn here to your memory."

He puts his hand into the pouch that hangs by his side, but only to withdraw it with a disappointed look.

"I crave your pardon," he says. "I find I have not the ring with me; I must have left it in my chamber."

"Do you wish me to send for it?" asks Marisco.

"Nay, I will go myself if you will permit me."

And without giving his host time to reply, Jayvalt rises & leaves the hall.

"Let your good wishes go with our guests," says Marisco, addressing the company; "I should desire that they bore with them pleasing remembrances of Lundy. Though on the side of our enemies, fate constrained them to seek our hospitality, & while they are with us we must regard them as friends. Fill your cups, & presently we will drink to Stephen Jayvalt & the seaman Leyman Bryder."

"I do not see Bryder here," remarks one of the men.

There is silence for a moment. everybody looks enquiringly round the tables.

"How is this?" asks Marisco. "Surely he has been bidden to the feast."

"I saw him leave the castle some three hours since," says another; "but I knew not that he was still absent. I thought that he was with us in the hall."

"Marked you which way he went?"

"towards the combe where Barnard Gamley dwells," answers the man.

"Has Gamley seen him?"

There is no reply, & it is then discovered that Barnard is also absent from the hall.

The Lord of Lundy looks displeased.

"Let them be," he says. "If they choose their own company rather than ours we will not force them to the feast. Gamley shall be called to account to-morrow; with the stranger we have nothing to do."

There is an awkward silence for a few minutes, but gradually the men find their tongues, & apply themselves again to the wine, not caring whether Barnard & the sailor are present or not.

Suddenly hurried footsteps are heard without, & there is a loud knocking at the door, which opens upon the castle yard, followed by a demand for admittance.

"Who is there?" asks Peter Lanyon.

"Draw the bolt; I would see Marisco on a matter of moment. It is I, Hugo Fleming." Peter throws the door open, & a man rushes in followed by Lambert.

"To arms!" he cries. "A traitor is among us!"

"A traitor!" exclaims Marisco, starting up.

"Aye," is the reply; "a foul plot is afoot."

Every man springs to his feet, & a scene of the wildest confusion ensues. For some time Marisco appeals in vain for silence; the men, excited by the wine they have drunk, become furious at hearing they are betrayed, & crowd round Hugo to hear the nature of the news he brings. At length the Lord of Lundy succeeds in calming them somewhat, & demands of the newcomer whether he knows who the traitor is.

"The boy Lambert brought the news to me," says the man.

"Then speak, Lambert," commands Marisco, "and be speedy. The moments may mean life or death to us. Is the traitor known?"

"There are two," replies Lambert. "One is the sailor, Leyman Bryder; the other should be here."

"You do not see him?"

"I do not," says Lambert, looking round the hall.

"It is Stephen Jayvalt!" cries Marisco.

"Stephen Jayvalt," echoes Maude. "This then is what the voice within me was trying to utter. I understood it not; I only knew that it warned me, but it entered not into my mind to conceive that he could be guilty of such a foul deed as this."

"Let Rachel take you to your chamber, my child," says Marisco gently, "this is no place for you now."

Then he suddenly turns to Lambert,

"Where are the traitors, boy?" he demands.

"The sailor is at the top of the Round Tower, with faggots piled upon the wall ready to light a beacon fire."

Fierce cries resound through the hall, mingled with the rattling of scabbards, as those who have swords instinctively draw them.

"Barnard is watching him so that he cannot escape," continues Lambert: "he sent me to you for help." & he delivers the message with which he has been entrusted.

Marisco quietly turns to one of a little knot of men standing near, & bids him haste on to the Round Tower with the required assistance.

"And Jayvalt, boy; what of him?" he demands of Lambert .

"I only know that he is in the plot, but I cannot tell you where he is now."

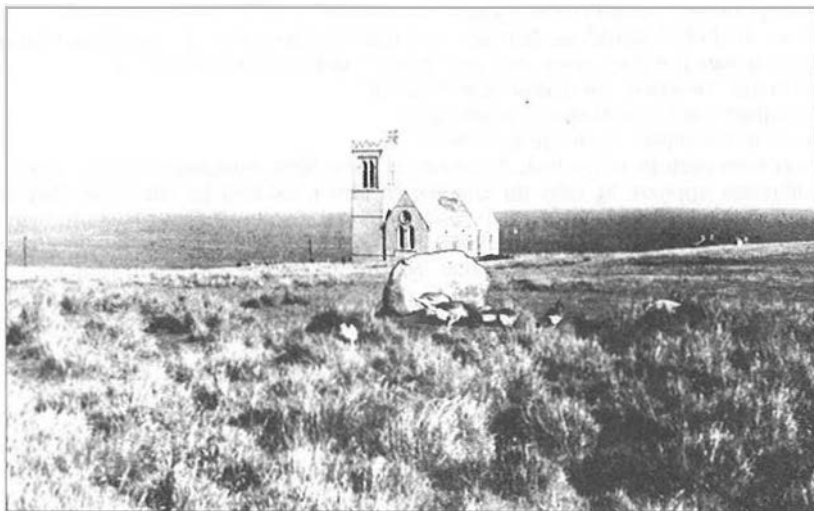
"He is gone to give the signal for the lighting of the beacon," cries Marisco. "Comrades, we have been nursing vipers, & now they turn to sting us. That a landing is contemplated is certain; even at this moment the vessels of the enemy may be approaching the bay. Let a sufficient force remain in the castle to guard it; the rest will follow me to the beach. Should it happen that our foes make good their footing on the island, remember the castle must be our refuge only in the last resort. Follow me."

The Lord of Lundy draws his sword & stalks out into dark night. His men, having armed themselves, follow him to the gate, through which they pass to the down, where a rough track leads to the beach below. At that moment a red glare shoots from out the black veil which shrouds earth, & sea, & sky. Bryder has lighted the beacon fire.

To be concluded in the Spring 2003 Newsletter

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from **LISTEN TO THE COUNTRY** SPB Mais (1930s)



*The once great Standing Stone in Church Field – now recumbent
(photo SPB Mais)*

From my bedroom window in my grandfather's house I used as a child to look out over the bay to the lights of the island some twenty miles away. ...

Long before I knew that the Welsh name for it was "Caer Sidi", the Stonghold of the Fairies, I knew the island to be magic by the way it wandered about in the sea as I walked the mainland cliffs – it was never where I expected it to be – by the way it

disappeared altogether for days at a time, & by the way it turned into a golden rod at sunset.

My grandfather always foretold the weather by it.

If it stood up high & clear it was a sign of coming rain. If it looked low & dim it was a sign of fair weather. ... {Yr. Ed.?

Summer visitors to our coast, recking little of fairies, took the island in their stride, but those who lived on the mainland facing it seldom, if ever, visited it. We knew its every mood from twenty miles away. In a way, we feared it.

I always had a secret longing to explore its mysteries, & drew countless maps of what I imagined it to look like from the deceptive evidence of my grandfather's telescope, & later of my own field glasses.

Curiously enough, my grandfather was always going over to the Island, but he used to go by the *Garnet* sailing-ship from Instow, a hazardous journey which took anything from five to ten hours. ...

In point of fact I should probably never have gone had I not been spurred on – bullied is probably the more accurate term – by my seven-year-old daughter Lalage, who, never having set foot aboard craft of any kind, naturally regarded the island as an adventure of which no decent parent should cheat her. She had, wisely, I think, never been warned about seasickness. ...

But day in day out after that I had to submit to an unceasing fusillade from my seven-year-old daughter.

"Promise," she would say; "promise that we shall go on the first fine day."

She has a pathetic faith in promises.

In the end I had to yield to her importunity.

There was a choice of ways.

We could fly – but fifteen shillings for fifteen minutes struck me as expensive.

We could take the seventy-ton *Lerina*, the mail motorboat, but everyone was vague about her sailings.

The steamer was the cheapest & most obvious route, but even the steamer provided a variety of ways.

If you went for an all-day excursion you called at Clovelly & made a triangular journey of it, whereas if you went for half a day you crossed to the Island direct.

I chose the latter way because it gave the day a chance of showing its hand & settling down to fair or foul before we started.

This particular day was fine enough even for my apprehensive mind. ...

At one o'clock we set off for the bus, I completely equipped for a long sea-voyage with a flask of brandy, a bag of barley-sugar, Leica camera with two refills, field-glasses, Scots rug, deer-stalker, winter underclothes, fisherman's jersey, & sheepskin-lined cowboy's coat. I had, in addition, note-book, maps, guides, & a mechanical toy for Lalage to play with.

I am impervious to the laughter of the lightly clad, but I was fully aware of the contrast that I offered to the girl who stood beside me in the queue on the pier. She had on a pair of sandals, very abbreviated skirts, & a thin shirt. Her clothes may have weighed three ounces. Mine felt in the heat & crush of the queue as if they weighed about three hundredweights. I felt a fool, but I knew just how cold that girl was going to feel once we sailed & for the greater part of the day. I comforted myself with clichés about those who laugh last.

Once aboard we made for the upper deck, "extra charge for single journey, 1s." It was already very full, but by dint of seizing deck-chairs & jamming them between the legs of scowling elders I made room for Lalage & Lalage's mother.

As soon as we cleared the harbour we ran into the wind that had given no indication of its presence ashore. There was motion, but Lalage was too much interested by the novelty to notice it.

After looking at the wide expanse of water in front & at the receding rocks of the

mainland, I settled down to talk to my neighbour, who appeared to know the island well.

"I escape to it," he said. "whenever I can get away. I've been there four times already this year. I live in the old Keep, & spend my time walking & watching the birds. I've been there every year for fourteen years, & I've still heaps of things to find out about it. It seems silly, doesn't it, when you think that the whole island only occupies just over a thousand acres?"

He lent me a little handbook to the island, & I once more refreshed my memory with facts that I had known & turned over & refurbished all my life. ...

When I was a boy the island was owned by a parson called Heaven, & now it belongs to a bird-lover who has made the island a sanctuary for all wild life.

He mints his own coins, two in number, called a puffin & a half-puffin, & prints his own stamps to the number of five, a half-puffin salmon pink, a light blue puffin, a mauve six puffin, a light brown nine puffin, & a light green twelve puffin, each bearing the name of the island, & drawings of as many puffins as the stamp indicates.

There is also a halfpenny Air Mail stamp showing an aeroplane above the island, which looks in the picture less like an oak-leaf than it does in reality.

I was roused from my guide-book by a tap on the sleeve by one of the crew.

"If you want to see anything of the island," he said, "you'd better go down now & join the queue for an early boat, otherwise all you'll see of the island will be from the deck of the ship."

I looked at my watch. We were not due to reach the island for half an hour. I badly wanted to see the rocky cliffs along which we should be passing during that half-hour.

But I obeyed the advice & joined the already hotly pressed queue below, where there was nothing to see beyond the heads of other queuers, & no air except that tainted by the smokers.

A very long half-hour passed, during which I repented a dozen times of my action & glanced apprehensively at Lalage to see how the pressure was reacting on her. She seemed not to notice it. Her attention was riveted on a water-tap just above her head.

At long last the ship's bell rang. We slowed down, we stopped; two motor-boats came alongside. Tickets were collected as we were passed by the officers into the boats. Landing-tickets were collected by a man in fishing-waders as we were beached.

We landed. We were actually on the island. After over fifty years of longing I was standing on this magic beach.

I noticed very little at first except that the water was suddenly deep & very blue, that a wrecked ship bearing the letters *Homona* stuck half out of the water at the end of the rock called Lametry, that the beach was full of boulders, that one horse stood patiently waiting to pull in the landing-stage, & that a rough diagonal track led steeply up the cliff side some four hundred feet to the top of the island.

A white stone marked "TH Landing Place, 1819" stood above a shed that smelt evilly of fish.

"TH" presumably means Trinity House.

I climbed above the sheltered bay where three hundred ships have ridden at anchor at once, to a little combe, where I saw tucked away in a garden with a gay riot of hydrangeas a stucco-covered square house called Millcombe.

It was, to my surprise, embowered among oaks. I had not expected to find trees in my rocky island. There were very few others, one tall pine rising above the beach & some stunted wind-swept oaks in another combe that I encountered later.

Above Millcombe I came to a large, modern, uninspired-looking church. No services are, I believe, held there. As the entire population of the island is only twenty this large parish church looks singularly out of place.

Close by stands the grey island hotel with a tavern attached, where you may drink beer at any hour of the day or night unmolested by licensing laws, buy stamps,



*Keith Gardner's digs '66/'67/'68
Above is the Iron Age Farm south of Half Way
Wall*

*Right: Special pic. at the Bull's Paradise Dig
Reg TV Unit*



*Below: Keith Gardner being interviewed for the
then HTV*

*(All photos archive from the WJ Westcott
Collection)*



coins, picture postcards, & rather surprisingly, at sixpence each, the eggs of birds frequenting the island.

There was a peacock strutting on the wall.

I suspected that the great majority of my fellow passengers would sink into that tavern bar on climbing the hill & see no more of the island than that, or the interior of the ugly corrugated iron tea-house opposite.

I was for the island. I marched over a gorse common towards a deserted lighthouse that stood eighty feet above the top of the island, itself five hundred feet above the sea.

It is no longer used because the summit of the island is liable to fogs that obscured the light altogether. But it can be climbed for twopence.

The two present lighthouses stand very little above sea level.

I ran over to the western edge & lay well content above some rocks that had been harassed by hundreds of thousands of years of Atlantic buffeting.

I took out my tea-basket, & before I had begun to look round the ship's hooter sounded from far below.

"Half an hour," said one of our party.

"But I've not seen anything," I said.

"That's the way of it. You've got to stay the night if you want to see it," said someone else.

"Let's stay," said Lalage twenty times, quickly.

After a score of "we can't's," I compromised.

"We'll come again tomorrow," I said. ...

As soon as we landed, we raced up the steep path, past the hotel, & made a bee-line for the north end of the island three miles away. We had no chance of reaching it, but we hoped at any rate to wrest something of her secret from her.

We first came upon a man "carrying" a six-acre field of oats, the only arable field in the island. It lay just beyond the farm buildings where the labourers live. Our way lay along a high wall built by Benson's convicts. On our left was the rough grass landing-field of the aeroplanes, with two horses on one side of the wall & a very lusty bull on the other.

A gate opened out into a marshy, peaty common where wild ponies cavorted. our way was now indicated by great blocks of granite known as Tebbitt's Stones, planted at intervals of a hundred yards. ... [Yr. Ed.?)

On the western cliffs we could see a line of telegraph posts. on the eastern cliffs ahead we sighted a sort of look-out station, where I saw a girl in pyjamas coming down a ladder & a bare-chested boy in shorts sunbathing in the garden.

Then, quite without warning, I was looking across a great chasm at the most satisfying natural sculpture of a man that I have ever seen.

It was called the Templar Rock, & bore a very striking resemblance to one of those Knights Templars who in the Middle Ages were lords of the island, but never took possession.

Beyond the look-out house I looked northward over an arid waste of moorland, with a duck-pond in the heather & bracken to a much more arid plateau of bare rock with still the line of stones to guide us.

We ran onward, knowing that we had no time to reach the ruins far ahead marked on the map as "John o'Groats", but determined to get some way farther.

Then, suddenly, on the western rocks I saw a herd of wild goats peeping at me. I ran over the heather. They disappeared round a rock, leaving one horned bearded elder to keep watch.

I chased those goats to the Devil's Slide, where they stood precariously on a long stone toboggan-run which ended precipitously in the Atlantic ocean.

I flung down my tea-basket, gulped quickly one cup & had to turn to run to catch the boat. ...

We decided that we would come back & reach the north end of the Island even if it killed us.

It was some days before there was another excursion, & the day when it did come was gloomy, if quiet. The weather report was "Fair & warmer". It was much less fair & much colder, & the boat much less steady. ...

On our first visit the island had been smiling & inviting from the start. on our second trip it was completely invisible until we were almost in the bay.

On our third trip it loomed up black, sinister, solitary & forbidding all the time. it warned us off from the start.

A miscalculation in buses caused us nearly to miss the boat. I felt uncomfortable about the whole business. It was going to be a physically exhausting effort to get Lalage to cover the seven miles of walking the island in the time.

Anyway, we were in the first boat to land, & made ourselves feel sick running up the steep path from the beach. Past the hotel we turned over the flying-ground to the western coast to follow the telegraph wires. This track led us past three lines of walls, known as Quarter Way, Half Way & Three-Quarter Way Walls, past an awe-inspiring cataclysm of great rocks known as the Cheeses, [Yr. Ed.?] past the Devil's Chimney & the Devil's Slide where we had seen the wild goats, & then I lost my map.

As you have gathered, I travel heavily laden.

But taking notes as you walk at high speed, carrying trousers (I was wearing shorts), Jersey, field-glasses, luncheon-basket, camera, novel, & note-book is no easy matter, & the map just slipped down. I ran back for it & found it, blessed the fairies of the Island, but must have used the wrong words, for half an hour later I lost it again, & this time finally.

But I saw a proud gannet. I saw many ridiculous puffins. I saw none of the wild deer, but I did get to the north end lighthouse exactly as the aeroplane zoomed past on its way to turn for the mainland.

At my feet I saw a myriad tiny wild flowers, mainly yellow. I saw granite covered with delicate green lichen & warm golden lichen.

I saw gorse yellower that I have ever seen it anywhere else, & in the end I did achieve my great ambition. I had walked the whole length of the island, & so had my seven-year-old child.

The last mile is over a real Abomination of Desolation.

Only the walls of John o' Groats little stone cottage make a diversion in the rocky plateau.

But the view was as wide as man could wish. I could see all the mountain ranges of South Wales, the moors of Devon & the black cliffs of North Cornwall.

Lalage was angry because she could not see America, but she could see the first signs of the Atlantic depression that was to fall on us in the night.

We looked down the steep steps beyond the lighthouse to the dangerous reef known as the Hen & Chickens. We looked at the taut line that ran down from the cliff top to the rock in the sea. I explained to Lalage the meaning of "breeches-buoy".

"They seem to do nothing but have wrecks here," she said. "Is there any treasure?"

"The caves are crammed with it," I replied. "Ivory & peacocks & pieces of eight ... At least, I always used to think so."

"Can't we go down & see?" she urged.

It was as much as I dare do to peer over the precipitous sides.

"When men were braver they got down somehow, somewhere," I said: "but today the only path I know is down to the Landing Beach. It's what is called an impregnable island."

I looked at my watch.

"Golly!" I said. "If we're to catch the boat we've got to run."

"You promised that I could climb the lighthouse, Daddy," she pleaded.

"Then we've got to run twice as fast."

So twice as fast we ran along the stone-marked track towards the lighthouse.

I was annoyed at missing the Gannet Rock, & peeping over at unnamed coves, & picking some of those exquisite-coloured little flowers that strewn my path.

But Lalage had collected large & heavy chunks of the island granite for each of the maids & her Nanny.

They loaded her down, but she ran valiantly through brambles & gorse-bushes & reached her lighthouse, not, however, before the ship had twice sounded her warning hooter.

The stone steps made me giddy, but the view from the top was tremendous.

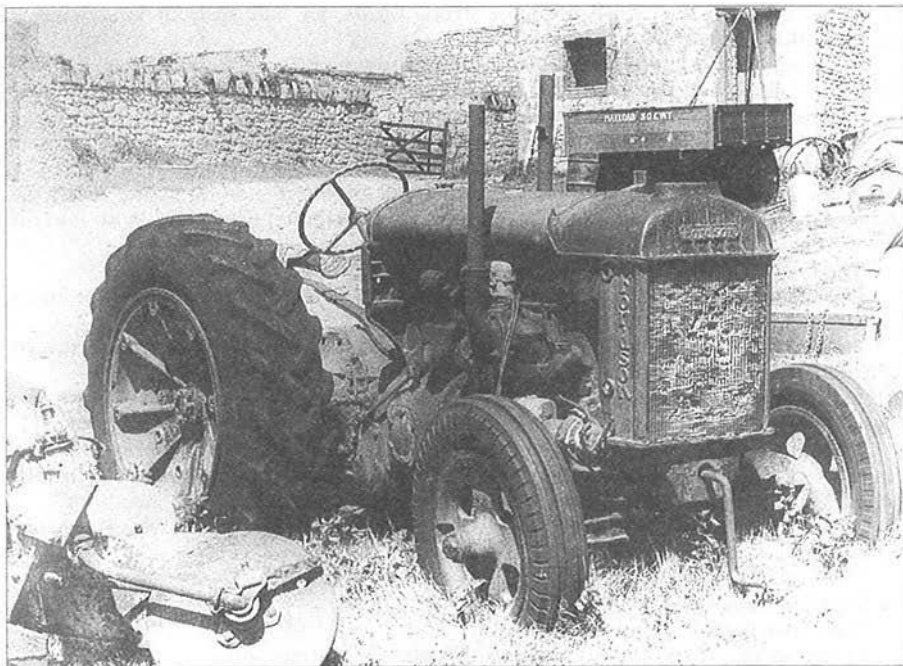
We ran down to the beach & caught what we imagined to be the last boat with a minute to spare.

Quarter of an hour later, when we were looking back at the island from the upper deck wondering why the steamer failed to sail, we heard cries from the top of the cliffs above. A man & a girl hailed us.

The landing-stage had to be put back, a boat hailed, the steamer turned about, & when the peccant couple came aboard they came wreathed in smiles as if they had achieved something heroic.

With that extra quarter of an hour I could have seen all that I had missed.

The island looked blacker & more menacing as we left it, & all the way home it looked moody & morose. Perhaps it hates its conquerors.



*Where is this tractor now?
(Archive from the WJ Westcott Collection)*



*John Ogilvie bringing in the hay, assisted by some of the Austrian workforce & possibly Andrew Moffatt (notice, no Black Barn)
Archive from the WJ Westcott Collection*

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Excerpt from Charlie Phillips's autobiography *A Gathering of Lanterns*, entitled **A DREAMFUL OF DRAGONS**

My grandfather & my father were both lighthouse keepers & so too were my father's brother Jack & half-brother Bill. My uncle Fred was Master of all the Bristol Channel light vessels in his time & my great-uncle Bill was an engineer on the *Galatea*, a splendid paddle steamer with a tall woodbound funnel which tended the seamarks around our coasts. My own service as a mechanic lasted for 23 years before automation made me redundant & ended my family's association with what essentially was a 19th century way of life. At the time I was born in 1937 my father was a keeper on Skokholm Island off the West Wales coast & we were living in a rented house in Pembroke Dock. ...

... I would like to quote to you some of the words my mother wrote in a letter to one of her sisters back in Wales. (Ed.'s Note the family had moved to Start Point.) "But I must tell you of our arrival here. After travelling most of a day & night by train we finished the last eleven miles by taxi to be greeted by a terrific blast on the fog signal for there was a thick fog & the wind. I had no idea of the force of a gale 'til we arrived here. I was hauled out of the taxi gripped by a strong hand & steered blindly across the yard & around corners to the Principal Keeper's House wildly clutching at my hat & scarf. But once indoors fog & wind were soon forgotten & the sight of a cheery fire & a hot cup of tea can work wonders. I had secretly wondered how I would

prepare our first meal & here was a good hot meal all ready for us. No small item in these days of rationing. That horrible mournful fog signal is still going. Will the children ever get to sleep? Our kitchen is our living room spoiled by having four doors in it & an unsightly old-fashioned sink with a pump over it in one corner. We have no gas or electricity but no doubt I shall get used to doing all my cooking on a coal fire."

Some time later, in another letter she wrote "I have lost the technique of queuing for our shopping centre is many miles away. Once a fortnight our grocer comes in his travelling shop. Every Monday the baker brings the bread & the meat & every Friday the butcher calls with the meat & the bread. Each morning the postman comes with the mail & the milk. You ask about the children, well, they have rather a tough time. We board them out in town during the school week & they come home at weekends. It is the first time they have experienced living away from home & as they are here for weekends they cannot go to any place of worship so their religious education may have serious repercussions in later life. No sheet anchor when caught in a worldly drift. In spite of the inconveniences this is home &, when the elements go mad arouns us, a refuge in sharp contrast to the lashing rain & the howling gales outside. This I think is what our children feel. Away all the week among strangers, they come back at weekends to home & sanctuary. "...

As the months became a year & a year became two, my mother became extremely unhappy. She was a very social person & now there was no Mother's Union & no Women's Institute, no social contact other than the other two wives on the lighthouse, so it came as no surprise that each Sunday no matter what the weather, my mother & I would walk the three miles to our nearest place of worship, a tiny Methodist Chapel which seated 15 souls. In the winter it was bitterly cold & wet but as spring gave way to summer we would marvel at the changing colours of the evening sky & compete to be the first to spot the first primrose, or stop for a while & pick blackberries & delight in the dancing merriment of goldfinches on the crowns of thistles. Surely on such occasions there must have been a verse or two of "All things bright & beautiful" somewhere in my heart.

On a Monday morning, my sister & I were up early for our gulls egg on toast breakfast & wrapped up against whatever weather would assail us, we would set off on the long walk up the road & across the cliffs & fields to the entrance gate of the BBC transmitting station where we would try to find shelter from wind & rain behind the pillars of the gate & wait for the staff minibus to take us into school at Kingsbridge. I would arrive at school at 10.00am on Monday, happy in the knowledge that I had missed an arithmetic lesson & counting the hours & the days until I could get home again to my real world of rabbits & cliffs & smugglers' caves. Finding suitable digs for a nine year old boy was rather difficult in those days for I ate my meals in one house & had to trek down the street to another in order to go to bed. From the day of my arrival at Start Point my life had changed for ever for I entered a magical world far removed from the one I had just left & my mother's fear that I should be lonely & miss my chums was greatly misplaced. I had stepped into a paradise of wild & uninhabited cliffs almost remote from the outside world peopled with wild creatures, birds, fish, flowers & the majesty of storms beyond my wildest dreams, & it all belonged to me. I embraced it with all my soul & I became its young master. The next four years of my childhood were to become the happiest & most carefree of my life.

Our water supply was rain caught upon a paved area on the cliff above us & upon which, besides rain, fell seagull droppings, mice, voles, dead rabbits & salt spray. It was the sweetest & coolest water I have ever tasted & it found its way into our kitchen via a wonderfully ornate Victorian cast iron pump & it you filled a glass & placed it in the sunlight, it would sparkle like a crystal. There was no electricity, oil lamps being our only illumination, & it was my job to see that they were filled & polished. it

was a task I relished with enthusiasm. We had no transport. Our only entertainment was a wireless set that ran off re-chargeable accumulators. But as the lighthouse was also a radio beacon station, the signal we transmitted would blot out every programme when it was operating. In the evenings I would play with my meccano set or draw pictures of the animals & birds that inhabited my new world in the warm & golden glow of our lamp. By day, without the imposition of school, I would trap rabbits which we salted for the winter months; fish from the point for pollack & mackerel which we also preserved, & farm the seagulls for their eggs which we placed in waterglass in two large galvanised baths. My sister & I collected eggs with the aid of mother's washing line & linen flour bags which we tied on our belts, three eggs only to a bag. Frequently the line would snap with our weight on it, so that when we put it back on the clothes poles in the yard, mother would notice that it was a little shorter & that yet another inappropriate knot had appeared, & her face would drain of colour for she knew the significance of the knots. With prayer & wisdom she allowed us to roam & adventure freely & without restriction, save for a whistle on a string around our necks, in all directions from the lighthouse. Our lives & our subsequent understanding of everything around us, had been placed in the safekeeping of the great & mysterious power of love & faith, the meaning of which she strove to impart to us as children in a wonderfully gentle & subtle way & which at the end of her life was made manifest to us by an unerring faith & example.

Following the bitter winter of 1947 with its phenomenal amount of snow, came the equally phenomenal heat of the following summer & the never to be forgotten shoals of fish, mainly mackerel & pollack, they stretched across Start Bay in an unbroken boiling mass. They leapt out of the water onto beaches & rocks, frantic in their efforts to find space in which to swim & breathe. We caught them in mid-air in wicker baskets in the little bay beneath the lighthouse. So thick were they that you could walk on them. No one knows why such things happen but I have seen the sun completely obscured by terns on the Farne islands & thousands of dolphins swimming north past the Eddystone Lighthouse at sunset & can't most of us remember the invasion of the pebble Ridge at Westward Hol by countless millions of ladybirds. As quickly as they come they disappear.

Pollution of the coastline in those days was far worse than now I think for there always seemed to be balls of oily tar washed up, perhaps a legacy from the hundreds of the recently sunken ships. I remember the sea red with tomatoes & bright yellow with oranges & grapefruit & now & then a dead horse washed up, perhaps a victim of the trade in horseflesh between Ireland & the continent. In those pre-myxomatosis days one might make a reasonable living being a professional rabbit-catcher & it was old Bill Rogers from Hallsand who taught me how to catch them & his son Billy who taught me the ways of moles. I would peg out the skins to dry in the sun & Dad would rub them with alum to cure them & make them soft & Mum would make us the cosiest of fur coats to keep the winter winds at bay on the way to school or on our six mile walk to church & back each Sunday. My sister hated the wind & the rain which numbed our fingers & our faces, but I loved every single moment & was oblivious to the feelings of others & happily played with my almost pet seal called Samantha & caught small pollack for her off the old boat landing, or poked about in the low tide holes down on the rocks for crabs with my long iron hook & my heart felt fit to burst with pride when I went home with a five pound beauty to boil for supper & had kneeled on the slate floor of the scullery & cracked him open with a hammer in the fading light of a summer evening. But I did not endear myself to mother when I attempted to transport home the entire skeleton of a horse I had found lying in the beaten-down winter bracken about a mile away & began to erect it in our yard tied together with bits of string, not so much because she objected to the bones but because I had consumed the entire contents of the string bag which was a precious commodity. We never threw anything away in my childhood & I can only assume that

it was because of our siege mentality, nurtured during the war years & now bolstered by our isolation.

In the late 1940s we did not suffer from cars & tourists in South Devon, so when the odd holiday-maker was spotted on the cliffs or the beach I felt sincerely that they were trespassing on my private domain & I would observe them from some secret place until they had gone, watchful that they did not interfere with my seagulls or stray too close to my traps. The seagulls had had a colony of about 200 nesting pairs next to the lighthouse for three centuries & were a valuable source of food to us & we coveted them jealously. Each departing family would pass on their knowledge of nesting to the newly arriving keeper & his family. So when we saw the men from Beesands arrive at the top of our mile long road with their baskets, my sister & I would jump over our wall & hide as many eggs as possible until they had gone & then we would put them all back again & all in their proper nests. It was the clutches of three we would first hide as if these were taken the bird would no longer lay that year. The single eggs which were new & fresh we'd leave 'til last as these would be replaced & anyway these were the ones we took for the winter, but we only took three single eggs from any one nest & then left it alone to rear a brood, left to their own devices those men would have robbed every nest of every egg & boiled it down for chicken feed.

I loved all the seasons, especially that time of the year when winter passed gently into spring & my beautiful cliffs changed from brown to green as I ran barefoot over the springy cliffs into the tall green summer bracken chasing baby rabbits, collecting eggs & oiled guillemots & razorbills which I put in mother's wash boiler for safe-keeping, & we'd all sit down in the evening & clean the oil from their wings with butter & lard & set them free again upon the sea. And when it was Dad's duty to put on the light, I'd climb the 100 foot tower & Dad with a great long pole with an upside down hook on it would take down the giant curtains, letting each one fall in a heap on the cast iron floor. Methylated spirit would be lit in a special brass cup to heat up the vapouriser of the lamp whose iron body shone with polished black lead & on top of which sat a delicate mantle the size of a grapefruit & when it was hot enough, I'd climb up the ladder inside the great lens & Dad would turn on the oil & the air & clouds of paraffin smoke would issue forth in a rage of hissing vapour which I would touch with a flaming taper & night would turn into day with a loud plop & a roar. The lens which weighed three tons floated in a circular bath of mercury & was so perfectly balanced that I could turn it with the pressure from my little finger, but the clock that drove it was a fabulous & wondrous beast with wheels of bronze & steel which turned & spun & shone. Its life-force dwelt in the ton of lead that hung beneath in an iron tube the entire length of the tower & had to be wound up to the top every twenty minutes with an enormous handle which when turned would cause the pall to click & jump up & down. With the beautiful clock now primed & eager for another night's running, I would drop the dog-clutch into place & let off the brake & the huge lens would slowly begin to pick up speed until the fast-spinning governor on the clock would engage its cogs & everything would settle down at its proper speed & the wheels of the clock would rattle & ping like a symphony of little magic bells & the lamp would hiss comfortingly & you could feel its heat & smell its oily breath. I'd help my Dad to fold the curtains & drape them over the polished brass handrail & whilst he did his last inspection to make quite sure that everything was as it should be, I would cup a hand each side of my face & press my nose against the cold diamond-shaped glazing & peer out into the night between the sweeps of the beams looking for the lights of ships & dreaming of shipwreck & smugglers & caves & buried treasure in the beach below the house & it would all be mine, for I was the only pirate, & when Dad was finished & I'd hidden my dreams for another day, I would descend the steep lantern stairs to the service room below where reflected light from the lantern above was diverted through a special screen to shine red across the bay to warn of the dangers

of the skerries bank, on down the stairs to the bottom of the echoing tower where before I went to bed I would put my ear against the iron tube just to make certain that far above in the lantern the little bells were still tinkling their magic.

On a warm summer's day, the ladies of the lighthouse would gather on the lawn with its commanding view across the bay & out to sea. Chit-chat & gossip would be bandied back & forth to the faint but constant clicking of knitting needles, but if I was out on the cliffs somewhere & noticed the mist rolling in, I would run back to the lighthouse as fast as I could for a different alchemy was about to occur. This would centre on the engine room which houses the fog signal & the engines that drove it were huge & towered above my head & I loved them, for they were my dragons & they were green like all good dragons should be, but best of all they breathed fire & the voice with which they roared struck fear into the hearts of sailors foolish enough to venture too close. To awaken the dragon it was necessary to light a large blowlamp on the top of each of the six cylinders to make the domes red hot. The red hot domes would vapourise the paraffin as it was injected & away it would go, driving the air compressor. The air was compressed in huge tanks & a chain-driven clock would activate a valve which fed the air to the siren & a primeval howl of enormous magnitude would echo across the sea like a terrified monster & caused our milk jug & cups to vibrate across our table & if you listened with your head half-turned & waited for a second or two, you sometimes heard an answering wail far away in the fog. How could I have possibly known that in the years to come I should be the one to return & destroy the magical clock, dismantle the giant lens & its mercury pedestal & slay my wondrous dragons. ...

Bull Point, like Start, had no running water, this time it was caught on the roof, & no electricity, so that was alright by me because I still had my oil lamps, mole traps & rabbit traps. Besides, my school in Ilfracombe had a headmaster called Mr Chadder, whom I adored, & Mr Smith, my art teacher, who smoked Players' Weights incessantly & had a pale scaley skin as a result, but who liked my work & gave me much encouragement, & an elderly lady with grey hair & a pinched, stern face who had the rare gift of being able to impart her knowledge of English to the most dim-witted & inattentive child, a true teacher indeed.

I left Ilfracombe Secondary Modern when I was just 14 & was apprenticed to Westland Helicopter Factory in Yeovil & like a hammer blow my childhood was suddenly over & I became extremely unhappy working in a factory. This lasted for over six years & I had to live in digs again, so I was parted from my beloved cliffs & the sea & my carefree life. For me the sudden & brutal transition from the 19th to the 20th century was almost unbearable. But I began to love the aircraft for they roared & had a hot breath & they flew & reminded me of my earthbound dragons. It was not until 1962, & living with my parents at Lowestoft Lighthouse in Suffolk where my mother, being my father's assistant was also a lighthousekeeper, that I joined Trinity House as a travelling mechanic & once again, beyond my wildest dreams, I found myself back again at Bull Point & Start Point & every other lighthouse & light vessel around the coasts of England & Wales & the Channel Islands. This time I was getting paid for it & nearly always travelling & working on my own. I was happy again & was to remain so for the next 23 years, working in the places I loved. The cliffs & the sea & all the islands were mine & I embraced them once more as I had embraced them in childhood. Then I had 20 or so miles of coastline to myself, now I had over a 1000 miles of infinite variety & the responsibility of the seamarks that lit it. My life had turned full circle. It was a dream come true.



*Above: Left to right Franz Lederer, Andrew Moffatt, Benno, Fuzzy
(Does any member remember the two latter surnames?)*



*Left: Fridel
Hausburger*

CONSERVATION BREAKS ON LUNDY

Why do conservation work on Lundy?

The Field Society has been offering Conservation Breaks to Lundy since 1984. The work undertaken is vital to the welfare of the island and encouraged by the Landmark Trust who assist in these activities by providing free accommodation to those who go there to do such work. Effective conservation not only safeguards sensitive environments but can also help to enrich them. In addition, visitors to Lundy benefit greatly from the maintenance carried out by these dedicated conservationists.

We are not the only organisation who do this kind of work. Other groups with an interest in conservation on Lundy also co-ordinate such parties. Overall, the combined efforts of these organisations and the Field Society amount to hundred of man-hours of conservation work.

What do we do?

The work undertaken is a mixture of tasks that support Lundy's warden in protecting the ecology and natural beauty of Lundy. The majority of work revolves around the management and control of the island's large rhododendron stands which, although an outstanding feature of Lundy, require constant attention to stop their spread into more ecologically sensitive areas. In particular the Lundy Cabbage (*Coryca wrightii*), a plant found only on Lundy, is under constant threat from the encroachment of these rhododendron stands into some of its established growing areas. Other work includes the more familiar blend of dry stone walling, path maintenance, culvert clearance and a host of diverse conservation projects vital to preserving the distinctive environment that Lundy enjoys.

What should I expect?

You will need to make your own way to the departure port and will be expected to pay for your food, etc whilst on Lundy - usually about £25.00. We recommend that you bring some hardwearing clothes and sturdy boots. Working hours are 8.00am to 4.00pm, starting on the day after your arrival and ending the day before your departure. There will be a day off on Wednesday to allow you time to explore and enjoy Lundy. The tasks are challenging but not without reward - ask anybody who has participated in a previous Conservation Break! **Accommodation is provided free of charge by the Landmark Trust and the Field Society will pay your boat fare.**

How do I get on a Conservation Break?

Each year there is a choice of a number of Conservation Breaks. If you wish to join us please complete and return the form as soon as possible with a £10.00 deposit. This will be sent to your Conservation Break leader to help pay towards your food bill. (Please note that there is an additional charge of £10.00 for those who are not members of the Society).

This year's dates are as follows:

28th Sept - 5th Oct: leaves Bideford 10.00 on 28th, and returns Bideford 18.00 on 5th. **10 places in 9 berths.**

There are two double rooms in Quarters and you are expected to take your bedding. Numbers will be limited by the accommodation available and places will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Regrettably, we are unable to accept children under the age of sixteen on Conservation Breaks. If you wish to reserve a place on one of the Conservation Breaks this year, please complete the tear off slip below and return it with your payment to David Molyneux at Old Woldringford Cottage, Burnt House Lane, Lower Beeding, West Sussex RH13 6NL.

What the Editor forgot to Emphasise

1 Lundy's uniqueness as a habitat for the cabbage and beetles: as Roger Key says, equal to Galapagos.

2 Very rare lichens are also on Lundy: the '95 and '96 reports contain accounts of Lundy lichens by Drs Allen and Hilton, and Peter James. Yr. Ed. will be helped by them to offer a simplification of this fascinating research field in the next newsletter.

3 Lundy is incredibly unusual as an archaeological continuum. In the next newsletter Keth Gardner will discuss his long and fruitful archaeological association with the island. Charlie Phillips' 20th century lighthouse is Lundy's Old Light.

4 All WJW's pics. are 35 plus years old, and make Yr. Ed. wonder what else lies in other people's attics. **Do please write to correct any of Yr. Ed.'s inadvertent errors; to announce the publication of your masterpiece; and to tell about your family and Lundy - PLEASE.**

CARLION 