

## **Pulpit Harbor: The Old Village**

**Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Pulpit Harbor Village was the epicenter of North Haven's population, due largely to thriving fisheries and nearby prosperous farms. Fishing Schooners filled the deep, protected harbor, while homes, boat shops, fish houses, a school, two fish processing plants, four mills, a post office and five stores line the shore. Now most of these building are gone, roads have been diverted, and trees have grown in; the present appearance of the area contrasts drastically with the landscapes shown in old photographs.**

**People owned land around Pulpit Harbor at least as early as 1764 and the community that developed there quickly became prosperous and settles, the commercial, religious and social center of the island.**

**In an 1898 article in the Rockland Courier Gazette, the village was described:**

**There are 25 or 30 houses... scattered around the northern shore... at the foot of the hills which form a picturesque background. A bit inland are the farms, good ones too it is said where butter, milk, fresh eggs, berries and "green stuff" are everyday fare... The view is a fine one extending for miles in every direction... Many of the farms have been in the same family for at least four generations and many of the old names (Beverage, Waterman, Crockett, Alexander, Wooster, etc) are still found there... Many houses are nearly 100 years old and still occupied by the descendants of the builders... Their old fashioned plainness is in strong contrast to the be-filled creations of modern times.**

**How many times in days gone by have merry parties gathered in these rooms for huskings, or paring bees, or rag bees, or kitchen dances... how their rafters must have rung with shouts and laughter as they played blind-mans-bluff or... copenhagen, chase the squirrel or roll-the-cover.**

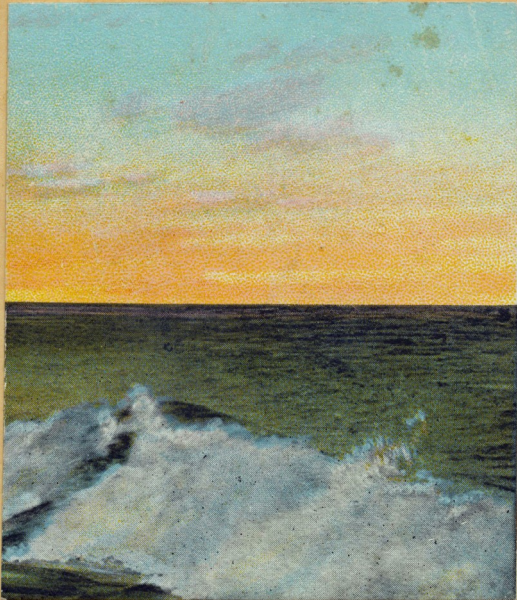
**Around 1900 the population around the Harbor started to decrease with many families either moving to the Thoroughfare or leaving the island. Supplying kiln wood to the lime burning industry on the mainland ceased and the old saw mill and grist mill at the head of the Mill Stream closed.**

**Various explanations for the decline include the decreased quantities of fish nearby and the increased use of steam-powered vessels going through the Thoroughfare. With the advent of steam-power, sailing vessels became less useful and the safety of Pulpit Harbor's deep waters less commercially important. Homes were abandoned, though there were still a number of families there in the early 20th century.**

**The Courier article concludes in what might seem like a bit of a prophetic vision:**

**To me it is the ideal resting place for the world-weary businessman, the over-worked student of professional man, or for anyone who would have his vacation a real rest and go back to his work with renewed bodily energy and nerve force.**

**Once seen, the bewitched reporter concluded, it is never forgotten. "It seems only a stop from the glory of earth into the glory of heaven."**



**SUNRISE AT NORTH HAVEN**

RETREAT THE SHADES AND STARS OF NIGHT  
AS SUNRISE FLOODS THE EARTH WITH LIGHT  
THE SONG OF BIRDS IS IN THE AIR  
THE FIELDS REJOICE WITH FLOWERS FAIR  
WITH SEA OF GLASS, THE SHORES, THE SKIES  
THE ISLAND SEEMS A PARADISE



AN EMERALD IN SEA OF BLUE  
AND ALL ABOUT A LOVELY VIEW  
AN ISLAND IN THE OCEAN'S ARMS  
WHERE NATURE SMILES AND CHEERS AND CHARMS  
NORTH HAVEN

**Poems by Henry Huse, former North Haven Reverend**



**The Pulpit Harbor Village around 1900.  
By This date, the once prosperous village had already begun to decline  
and many long time residents were moving away.**

**“Roscoe Babbidge Store located at the site of the present Town Landing at Pulpit Harbor. Rum was foremost among the produce and products sold there as fishermen transported their dried fish down to the Carribean and brought rum back. Sometimes the vessels would unload their cargo much further north, even in Pennsylvania, as dried fish was very much in demand. The house at the far left is gone as is the white house (Aunt Becky’s) whose cellar hole may still be found on the hill beyond the apple trees just above the Landing. The barn burned at a time when it was used to store hay and a vehicle backed into it setting it afire. The smaller boat shop built by Charlie Brown after his shop on the Mill Stream burned is seen at the right on the shore.”**

**-Notes from Sam Beverage**



**A view of Pulpit Harbor from “Ministers Hill”**



**Pulpit Harbor Village**



**Neighborhood Gathering on a small section of beach near the present day  
Pulpit Harbor public dock.**

**None of the buildings pictured here exist today.**

**Buildings: Foreground Xenophon Leadbetter's fish house.**

**Just behind the fish house, Calderwood Store, in operation from 1872-1890.**

**Background, barns and house of Xenophon and Rebecca Leadbetter, ("Aunt Becky's house")**



**Captain John Wooster Farm**



### **Farms at Pulpit Harbor**

**North Haven, with ample areas of rich soil, has a long history of agriculture. Several farms once surrounded Pulpit Harbor and many more were located along the Middle and North Shore roads. Farmers and their families not only utilized the harbor for shipping their products off island but they also visited the village for supplies, mail, and social outings at school, church, and the Grange.**

**While some island farms were just big enough to sustain a family, others produced enough food to sell to local stores and ship to the mainland and as far as Boston and New York. Since the island sat perfectly poised along the route frequently traveled by ships bound for cities throughout New England, farmers benefited from the ability to export products. The access to shipping, in combination with the island's areas of fertile ground, shaped the island economy, community, and people's way of life.**

**On the south and west side of Pulpit Harbor was the Crockett Farm, belonging to Samuel and Almira Crockett and eventually to their son John. On the 1880 census, with Samuel listed as the farmer, the Crockett farm was 200 acres and had 4 milk cows, 7 other cattle, 55 sheep, 1 pig, and 35 chickens. The diversified farm reported production of butter, wool, and eggs and harvests of hay, Indian corn, wheat, potatoes, apples, and cordwood.**

**Samuel and Almira's other son, Hanson Crockett began farming with his wife Meribah just down the road to the east. Hanson also ran a store on his property across from the Grange Hall and he housed the Pulpit Harbor Post Office beginning in 1903, with Meribah as postmaster until the office closed in 1932. Hanson and Meribah's son Lloyd began pasteurizing milk in the 1930s and the family farm held the claim to fame as the first pasteurizing plant in Knox County.**

**On the northern shore of the harbor at Blue Point was the Alvin and Marion Beverage farm, which became a summer home for the Nortons and then the Chestons. Nearby and overlooking the bay was the John H. and Cora Beverage farm, which became the Lamont family's summer estate known as Sky Farm. During the Lamont's ownership, the property supported large gardens, sheep, and other livestock.**

**Easterly along the Middle Road were several farms, large in acreage and many with homes built in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Atop "Old Barn Hill" overlooking Pulpit Harbor was a Beverage farm with a house built in 1819 and passed down through six generations of the family. When Frank Beverage inherited the farm in 1880, he maintained the family farm but also ran a business buying products from farmers and then shipping them off island. He described himself as a pioneer for shipping meat to mainland markets, a venture he began at a young age – "I bought cattle, calves, and lambs when I was but 15 years old and shipped the fresh meat to Camden by the Packet boat which ran from Pulpit Harbor...One year I raised and sold over 900 bushels of potatoes at 50 cents a bushel. I also bought thousands of pounds of wool from North Haven, Vinalhaven, and the neighboring islands for the Knox Woolen Mill of Camden, Maine."**

**On either side of the Mill Stream were farms also belonging to branches of the Beverage family. Hiram Beverage grew up at his family's farm on the south side of the Mill Stream, where he gained responsibility of the farm at a young age when his father died and left behind a wife and twelve children. Hiram later moved across the Mill Stream to a place he called Sunnyside Farm. There, he kept large gardens and raised poultry and eggs for markets on island and in Boston.**

**To the east were the Sampson and Whitmore Farms, each measuring 100 acres. Farmer Will Sampson was also a butcher, fisherman, and sawmill operator and well known around Pulpit Harbor for his resounding laugh.**

**Today, seasonal residents own most of the areas around Pulpit Harbor that were historically farmland.**



**Building the main road into Pulpit Harbor**



**Avery Dyer, Rural Mail Carrier for the Pulpit Harbor Village**



**Will Sampson and his horses, 1913**



**Hans Crockett Farm, now Our Place Inn**



**John Crockett Shearing his Sheep**



**Crockett Farm**



**Ernie Whitmore and Sheep, 1961**



**Lawrence Grant with lambs at the Lamont Estate, 1959**

# It Is Quite Different Here Today

It is quite different here today  
Than some eighty years ago  
With months of zero weather  
And no end of ice and snow.  
The winters were much more severe  
It seemed they would never end,  
Day in, day out men shovelled snow  
Until their backs refused to bend.  
There were no snow plows or street  
lights,  
No telephones in that day.  
If you got caught in a blizzard  
It was hard to find your way.  
Children obeyed their parents  
And had their chores to do  
Families stayed together  
When the busy day was through.  
It was the simple things in life  
That kept them all content-  
No racing cars or rock and roll  
Or on vandalism bent.  
I remember my father coming home  
At the end of a winter's day.

We could hear the sleigh bells ringing  
As he hurried on his way.  
Soon the horse was taken care of  
And he came rushing in the door  
Looking like a red-faced snowman  
And leaving puddles on the floor.  
First, he would shake down the coal  
stoves  
And when the new coal was burning  
bright  
He would close the drafts and dampers  
To keep it through the night.  
Then light the several oil lamps  
And in their soft and cheery glow,  
The rooms were so warm and cozy  
We could forget the wind and snow.  
I felt so safe and protected  
I wish every child could know  
In these days of modern living  
How it was long long ago.  
P.S.- But wait awhile, I'm not so sure  
Though it would cause some pain,  
We may be back to burning coal  
And those oil lamps again.

Lucy Hopkins, Winter, 1974

## **An unusual Women's Club, and a typical meeting, as reported by the reporter**

**The Get-to-gether Club at Pulpit Harbor is unique. It has no constitution and by-laws, no president or other officers, no dues and no object. The founder Mrs. Ladd insisted there should be only one rule- that only two things should be served for refreshments at any one meeting and that neither of them should be a cake. Apples and home made candy were to be given the preference as being inexpensive and not much trouble. Thursday, January 28th the club met with Isa. After leaving their rubbers in the hall the members were ushered into the bedroom where they removed their coats and hats and scarves and gloves and laid them on the bed; after which they passed to the living room, seated themselves upon chairs and sofas and divans and took out their work. Aunt Myra came in leaning upon her crutch and greeted her guests, then seated herself in a rocking chair by the fire and began kitting a wash cloth.**

**As we looked around we found Carrie embroidering pillow slips for the Sisterhood, Laura crocheting a yoke for a camisole, Nettie making tatting... Julia hemstitching a table runner for the Guild, Merbah knitting mittens, Ruby making French knots, Lucy hemming a dish cloth, Mrs. Foss sewing on an apron for the Grange, Mrs. Mills knitting stockings, Eva making a pillow cover, Ida embroidering a towel, Aunt Eunice making crazy patchwork and everybody making wise remarks. There seemed to be much swapping of radio experiences and many comments on Mellie Dunham and his dance music. Insert between Mellie Dunham + C and The Musical programme.**

**Lottie had started with a bag of turnips which she planned to trade for rolled oats and butter salt + cheese, but owing to rough roads and reckless driving the string came off the bag the car door flew open and the turnips rolled out- whereupon Lucy and Mrs. Foss scrambled out and gathered them up out of the snow.**

**Aunt Eunice also started with some eggs, which she intended to exchange for corned beef and sausages and jazz garters- but when near the Red Barn the car skidded across the road and in the excitement Mrs. Mills stepped into the basket and seriously damaged the contents. These accidents while not alarming furnished topics for conversation.**

**A musical program was given by several of the members who rendered "The Last Rose of Summer", "The Irish Washerwoman", "The Merry Widow" and "The While-Cockade" in a charming manner- the hostess as usual disregarded the "rule" and served seven things for refreshments- including sandwiches, ice cream, cake with chocolate frosting, stuffed dates and cheese, hot-cocoa and iced tea. At 4 o'clock the party broke up and the members found their husbands and sons waiting for them mostly in the Ford cars though Fremont took Lollie and Lucy and Mrs. Foss in his Studebaker and Eva and Ida went with Herman in his Hupmobile. Martin came for Aunt Eunice and Mrs. Mills, Hiram after Ruby, and Laura went with Carrie and Charlie. Julia walked. "A nice time was had by all."**

**We have been able to identify a few of the women mentioned.**

**Hiram who comes to pick up Ruby is Hiram Beverage. Hiram and Ruby were Sam Beverage's parents.**

**Aunt 'Mira is Elmira Carver Beverage, parent of Isa Beverage; they owned the store at the end of Beach Bridge.**

**Aunt Eunice is Eunice Brown from the Bartlett's Harbor Area.**

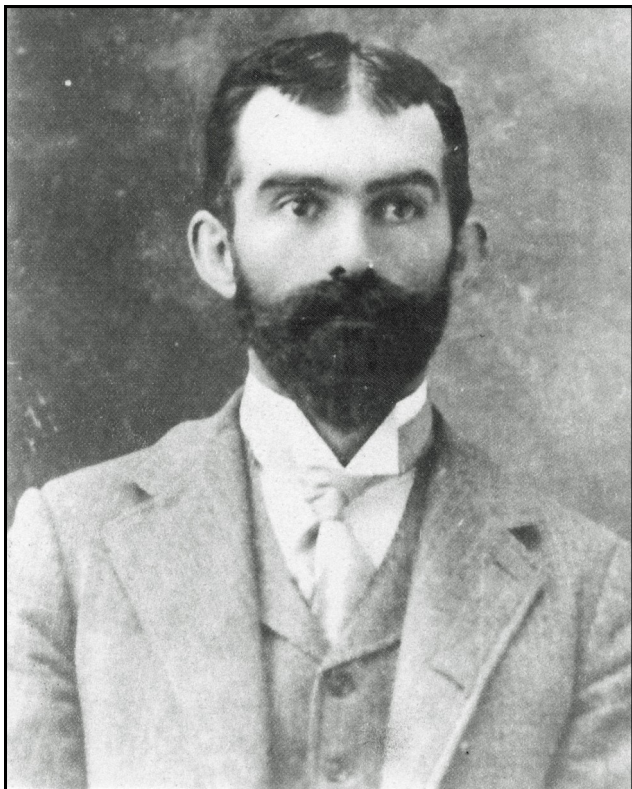
*A conversation with Freda Smith dates this Pulpit Harbor women's group to about 1915 or a few years earlier.*



**Another view of part of the Village. The Schoolhouse is in the foreground.**



**Left to Right: Roscoe Babbidge Store at left, the former Xenophon and Rebecca (Calderwood) Leadbetter home and fishing vessel outfitting complex at center. The building at the far right is the cooper shop, Circa 1906. Many subtle Changes are taking place including Charles Brown's conversion of the fish wharf shed to his second boat shop.**



**Left: Captain John Wooster. In addition to running his farm at Pulpit Harbor, he ran a packet boat between Pulpit Harbor and Camden.**



**View of Pulpit Harbor from Beverage Hill above Fuller Cemetary.**

**“Not only does this photograph show the Pulpit Harbor village, but of particular interest is Piper’s Store on the nearest point of land, one of five stores at Pulpit Harbor at the time. Following along that shoreline one approaches the location of the present Town Landing. Piper’s was a store frequented by most of the fishermen who could purchase most of their supplies there.**

**The house on this side of the Harbor was the home of Captain John Wooster and was later bought by Valentine and then Dr. Pool. Joel Philbrook, who also once lived in that house, took his son Rodney, who was complaining of the cold, to Isa Beverage’s Store to buy some underwear. There were many men in the store when Isa, then a younger woman, asked if she could help Joel and Rodney. “Take down your drawers, Isa, and show Rodney what he can have for fifty cents.”**

**-Notes from Sam Beverage**