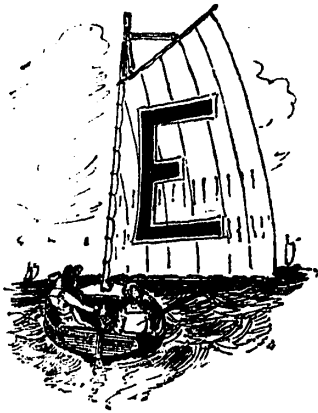


## Point Allerton.

STONY BEACH.—POINT ALLERTON.—THE "KADOSH."—NOBLE VIEWS.—THE SEA-KING'S FATE.

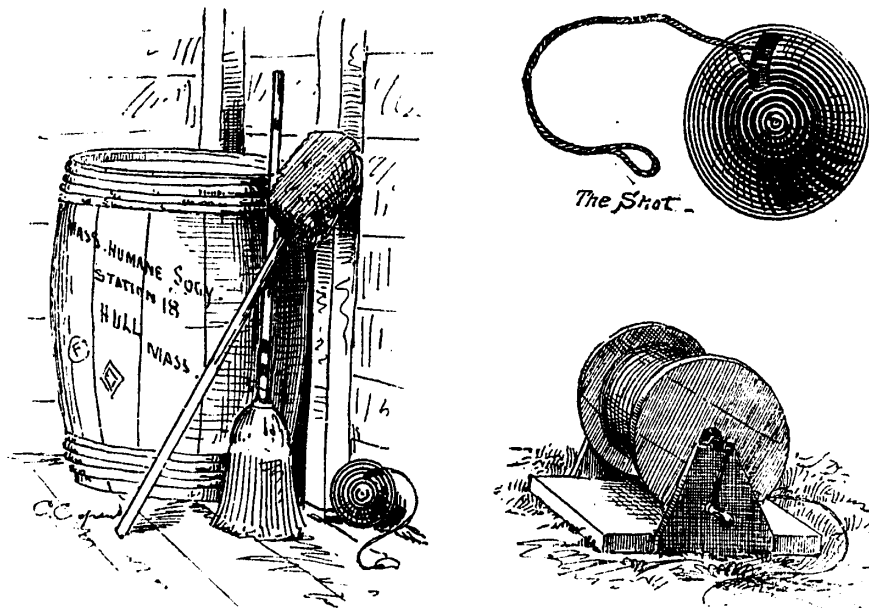


XTENDING from the foot of Telegraph Hill and Vining's pretty cottage, to Point Allerton, is the narrow isthmus of Stony Beach, more than half a mile long, making several graceful curves between the harbor and Nantasket Roads, and giving scant room for the railway and highway between the two strands. Its title is perfectly descriptive; and the weedy rocks on the outer shore exhale the pungent and fascinating odors of the sea, with which they have been for so many centuries saturated. All along these beaches the men of Cohasset make their patrols, after stormy weather, in search of sea-moss. The virtues of kelp were once much extolled hereabouts, and the old hut where Jack Hayden brewed medicines from it is still pointed out. Thoreau says that he found the people of Hull also making potash, by burning the stems of kelp, and boiling the ashes. On the harbor-side is a large wharf, where the United-States engineers landed granite, which was carried thence on a railway, for the construction of the Point-Allerton sea-wall. The wooden house of the Massachusetts Humane Society, on the crest of the beach, contains the large life-boat, the mortar, life-car, and other means to save the crews of vessels which may be wrecked on the adjacent dangerous shores. There are plenty of brave and expert surfmen in the neighboring village, who do not esteem their lives too precious to imperil when vessels are in distress within their reach. The coast of the Bay State is now lined with these life-saving stations, by whose means many lives have been saved from the all-devouring sea.

Little Hog Island, covering about ten acres, and favored by masculine summer-campers, lies just to the south of Hull, — a long, low shape, without even a single tree to mark its low bluffs and winding points. Thoreau said, "As I looked over the water, I saw the isles rapidly wasting away, the sea nibbling voraciously at the continent. . . . On the other hand, these wrecks of isles were being fancifully arranged into new shores, as at Hog Island, inside of Hull, where every thing seemed to be gently lapsing into futurity. This isle had got the very form of a ripple." There is on it little of interest, save the hulls of two old vessels, lying upon their sides on the beach,

and fast decaying, inhabited by myriads of spiders, large and small, who have carefully woven their silken webs across every corner, and seem so alert that one hesitates to intrude upon their domain, and turns instead to the other side of the island, where pass the steamboats to Hingham and Downer, and the little fleet of sailboats just out from Hull. Peace to the worn old timbers of the *Passport* and *Virginia*! They have cruised in many seas, and find here their *ultima thule*.

At the east end of Stony Beach is the peninsula of Point Allerton, about half a mile long, and joined to Hull and to Nantasket Beach by isthmuses. To the north it looks on the Light-house Channel; to the east, on the sea.



Bits from the Life Saving Station.

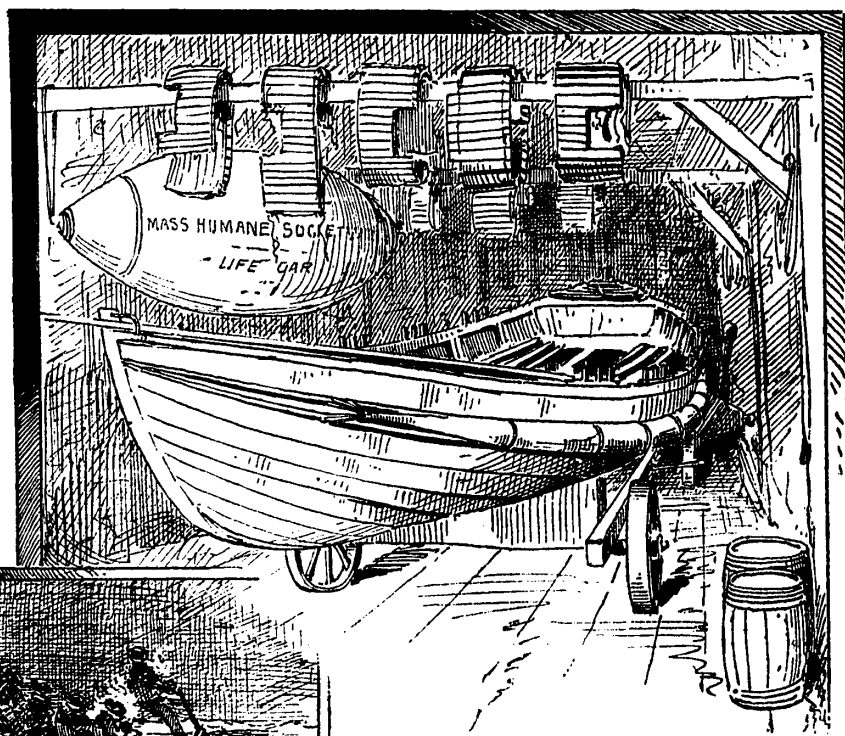
It is a high and picturesque promontory, which once extended far out, to the locality now marked by a singular pyramidal beacon, rising from the waves. A part of the second hill, which then swept over to the beacon, still stands, and shows what Thoreau called the "springing arch of a hill suddenly interrupted, as at Point Allerton,—what botanists might call *premore*,—showing, by its curve against the sky, how much space it must have occupied, where now was water only." The United States has marked bounds to Neptune's voracious nibbling, by building a long and massive sea-wall around what remains of the Point. Near the verge is a little white farm-house, sheltered on two sides by the hills, and whose narrow fields lie full open to the breath of the sea, so that one would think that the vegetables grown there would need no salting.

The upper part of the great rounding hill is a flowery pasture of several

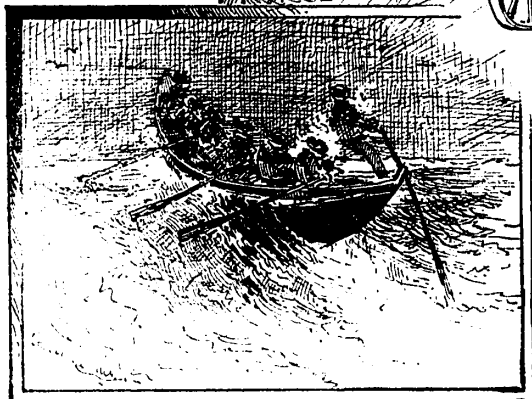
acres, peopled by birds and butterflies, and terminating toward the sea in a sharp and amazing cliff, far below which the waves beat against impassable barriers. Here is a grand view-point, — solitary, far-secluded from the dapper summer-cottages, — where the contemplative man is able

“To musen in his philosophie,  
Sole withouten companie.”

It is an enchanted scene, where the narrow-laned harbor opens to the westward, diversified by islands great and small, gray forts, white light-houses, and bluffs gnawed away by the waves; or where the silvery curve of Nantasket Beach sweeps away to the south, fringed by a snowy line of surf; or where, to the eastward,



The Life-Boat, Stony Beach.



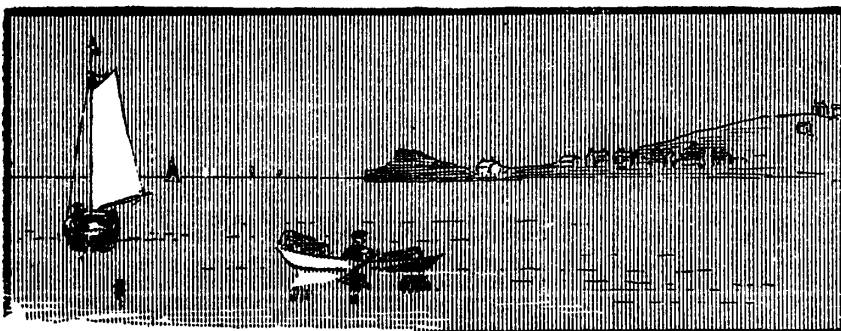
the vast open sea stretches into dim blue leagues, holding here and there in its immensity the slow-moving vessels bound on many distant errands, and flecked with shadows of passing clouds.

From the edge of the cliff one may comprehend Tennyson's phrase, —

“The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls.”

“Like the promontory of Palinurus, Point Allerton is respectfully regarded as the memorial of an ancient worthy; and the appellation, perpetuating the memory of a man of the greatest commercial enterprise in those early times, is most fitly applied. *Gaudet cognomine terra.*” Thus spake one of the famous orators of New England; and he said well, for Isaac Aller-

ton was one of the leaders in the ancient Plymouth colony. When but twenty-five years old, he went to Leyden, and thence sailed in the *Mayflower* twelve years later for America. He went out with Standish's party, exploring Boston Bay, in 1621; and the name of Point Allerton was probably bestowed at that time. In later years he cruised adventurously along the coasts of Maine and Acadie, in his ship *White Angel*. Once he sailed into Port Royal, and ordered La Tour to show his commission; to which the haughty Frenchman made answer, "My sword is sufficient commission;" and the Plymouth sailor could not impeach the validity of such a document. In subsequent years Allerton fell out with the Pilgrims,



Little Hill, Point Allerton.

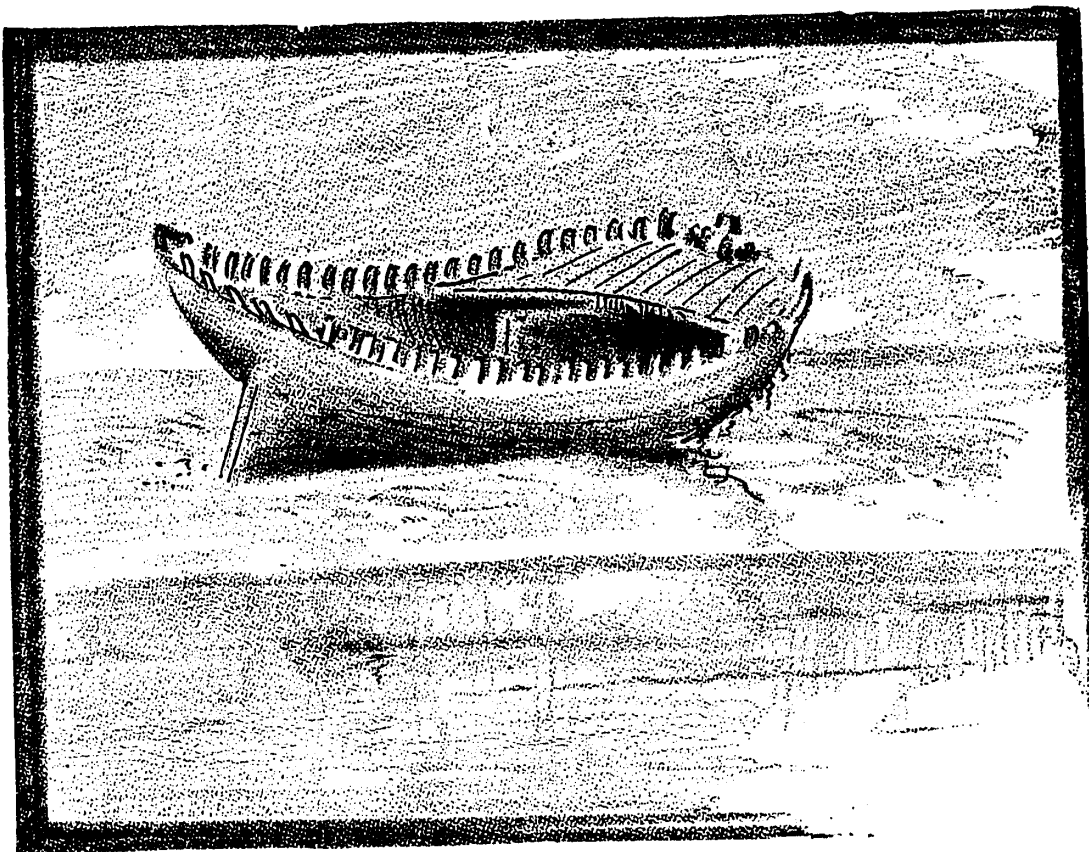
and sailed away to New Amsterdam, where he became a magistrate among the Dutchmen. No small part of the trouble at Plymouth

arose from his earnest friendship for the merry rascal Morton, whom he brought back from England after the saints had banished him. There is a pretty tradition in the Old Colony, that the fair young May Chilton's foot was the first to press the snow-clad Plymouth Rock; and her friend May Allerton, daughter of our hero, was the latest survivor of the Pilgrim band, having lived until twelve out of the thirteen American colonies had been founded.

This locality is designated as *Allerton Poynt* on Wood's map, made in 1634. Some of the ancient charts and deeds speak of it as bounded by the "mayne sea." The history of the Point has been uneventful. It was the site of encampments in 1776, as a remote outer vidette of the insurgent Province. About the year 1880 the locality was discovered by the summer rambles; and already many pretty cottages have been built on its lower slopes, and many scores of building-lots are for sale, since the passage of the railway along the side of the great hill makes the locality so readily accessible.

While this comely summer luxury adorns the inner side of the peninsular Point, the outer side presents a far different scene to the storm-drenched sailor, whose vessel runs into the harbor on a snowy winter night, steering fearfully between rock and shoal. Many a good ship has left her bones here, to be gnawed away by time and tide. It seems as if the great

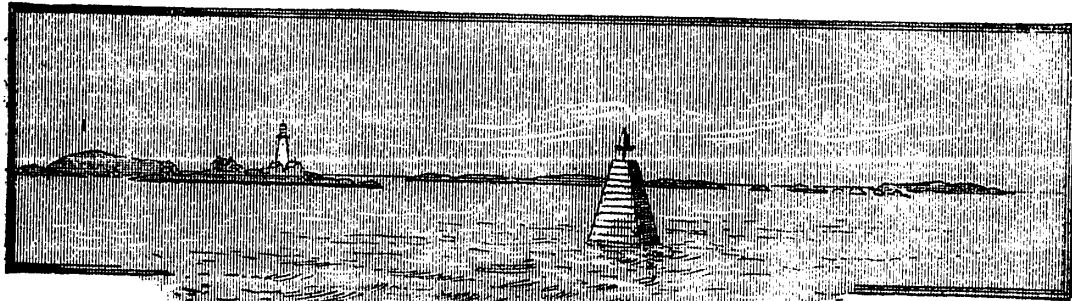
saints in whose honor the Bay was originally named withdrew their protection when the present heathen title was affixed to it; for many serious disasters took place here in the early colonial days. One of the first relief-ships of the Boston colony, the *Charity* of Dartmouth, a vessel of one hundred and twenty tons, well laden with provisions, was driven ashore on Point Allerton; and in 1636 the barque *Warwick*, ten guns, was wrecked here, where her remains were seen as late as 1804. The *Warwick* sailed to New England before Gov. Winthrop's time, having been sent out by Gorges and Mason to make discoveries; and afterwards came within a



Hulk of the Schooner "Passport," Little Hog Island.

span of being wrecked on the Brewsters, while on a voyage from Portsmouth to Boston. During the two and a half centuries which have ensued, the sea has thrown many a costly sacrifice on this altar, sweeping off their rich cargoes and their gallant crews into the deep outer gulfs. There are grim old-time traditions of false lights having been displayed on the Point, with intent to lure vessels to destruction. But the dangers of this rocky elbow, with its long bars projecting like traps, need no human malignity to give them fatal power. From a part of the wrecks of the last decade, the circle of destruction since 1630 may be imagined.

In 1870 an Italian bark was wrecked on the Point; and all but one of the crew perished miserably in the waves, finding hereaway no soft Mediterranean breezes, but the unrelenting terror of the storm-king of the north. This has also been a fatal shore for East Indiamen, several of which have here found the end of their long voyages. • Here the *Massasoit* was lost, with part of her crew, while just entering the home harbor after the weary voyage from Calcutta; and her cargo of indigo and hides was strewn along the beach for miles. It was in 1872 that the barque *Kadosh*, from Manila, came ashore here, in a blinding snowstorm; and her captain and seven sailors were lost. She broke up immediately on the fangs of those terrible rocks; and her cargo of sugar, hemp, and sapan-wood was thrown up along the beaches. It is said that several Cohasset men bought sixteen hundred bales of hemp, floating about in the wreckage. They paid one



hundred and forty dollars for it, and realized ten thousand dollars, — a very pretty profit, indeed, for the South-Shore syndicate.

*Peruvian* had a cargo of East-India goods, valued at one million dollars. A year later the *Helen*, with pine timber from North Carolina, ran on to the Point in a tremendous sea; but its crew was saved by a life-boat from the shore, manned by a volunteer party of the bravest of the brave. It is dangerous to approach this coast in a small boat, even on quiet days, so formidable are the rocks and shoals off-shore; but to make a landing from the reeling and splitting deck of a ship stranded on the bar requires super-human courage, skill, and good luck.

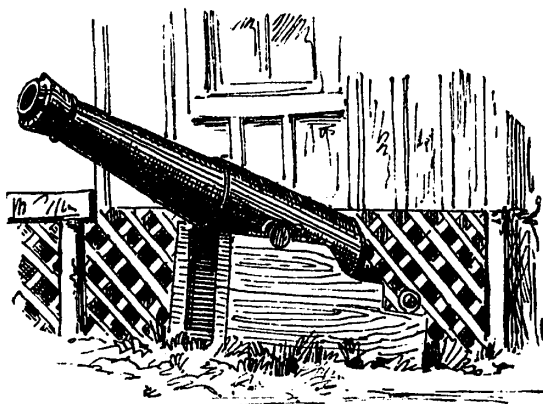
The splendid sea-wall which defends the bluff against north-eastern waves was built by the United States, at a cost of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, and seems calculated to defy the elements for centuries, with its long lines of heavy masonry. Here one may promenade comfortably, and without fear of meeting other passers, save perhaps a sea-gull or a butterfly.

Boston Light and the Brewsters,  
from Point Allerton.

In the same storm the ship *Peruvian* and the barque *Francis*, both bound in from Singapore, were wrecked on the other side of the Bay. The

On one side is the great bluff, rising overhead with inaccessible steepness ; and on the other are the kelp-covered rocks, amongst which the sea swashes back and forth ceaselessly. Here let us consider the legend of this locality, as it was sung in far Norway eight centuries ago.

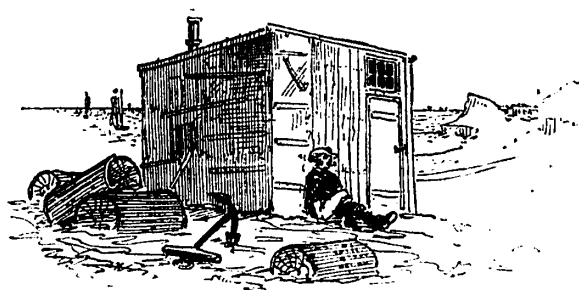
Many famous antiquaries believe (and make great show of argument to prove) that Point Allerton is the locality called "Krossaness" in the Icelandic sagas, where the Viking Thorwald was slain and buried in the year 1004. He was the son of Eric the Red, who sailed from Norway to Iceland, and thence (in 985) to Greenland, where he founded a colony of warriors and heroes. Thence the leaders, in their little galleys, made frequent excursions along the wild and unknown coasts to the south-



Old Gun, from the Barque "Kadosh."

ward, seeking some new Drontheim Fiord on which to found a Norway of the West. Thus Thorwald cruised down the present New-England coast, finding there a race of men small in stature and yellow in color, very much like the Esquimaux. The victorious advance of the powerful red men from the mysterious mountains and prairies of the West had not yet begun. That date takes us well back into history ; for it was before the Norman conquest of England, or the First Crusade, or the Guelphs and Ghibellines had been heard of, or Portugal, Bohemia, Switzerland, or Tur-

key had become nations. The Roman Empire still survived in the East ; and, in the West, King Ethelred was vainly trying to beat off Sweyn's fierce Danes. Centuries were to elapse before Dante wrote, and Giotto painted, and Rienzi spoke, and Richard Cœur de Lion swung his battle-axe.



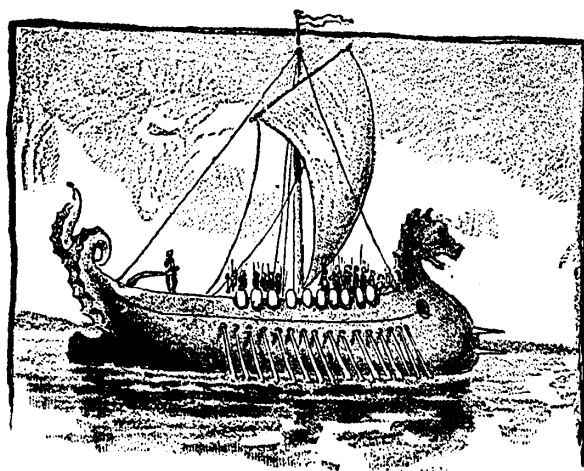
On Stony Beach, Hull.

The Icelandic sagas tell how Thorwald sailed from the point he called *Kialarness* (Cape Cod) toward the mainland, where he came to anchor not far from a hilly promontory overgrown with wood, and was so much pleased with the place that he exclaimed, "Here it is beautiful, and here I should like to fix my abode." He met there nine men of the aborigines, "eight of whom they killed, but the ninth escaped in his canoe." Some time after,

there arrived a countless number of canoes, laden with Skrællings, — as the Scandinavians called the aborigines, as well of Greenland as of Vinland, — and a battle ensued. It was the first bloodshed between Europeans and the indigenous Americans. The Norse battle-shields were arranged along their bulwarks; but the undaunted Skrællings fired flights of arrows at Thorwald and his men for some time, and then quickly retired. After the battle Thorwald asked his sailors whether any of them had been wounded. Upon their denying this, he said, “I am! I have an arrow under my arm, and this will be my death-blow. I now advise you to prepare for your departure as soon as possible. But me you must take to that promontory where I thought to have made my abode. I was a prophet. For now I shall dwell there forever. There you shall bury me, and plant there two crosses, one at my head and one at my feet, and call the place *Krossanes* [the promontory of the crosses] for all time coming.” Thorwald, upon this, died; and his men did as he had ordered them.

The place where they buried him, and erected the crosses, must have been one of the headlands not far south of Cape Ann. It is known that it was near the harbor of Boston; and the only question at issue is, whether it was Point Allerton or the Gurnet (near Plymouth). De Costa, Dr. Kohl, Guillot, and others, favor Allerton. It was surely a worthy burial-place for a Scandinavian viking, — this noble and lonely height, —

“Islanded in the immeasurable air.”



The Norsemen's Galley.