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Scenic Gems of Bath

G. W. Morris, Publisher

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SCENIC GEMS

of Bath,
Boothbay Harbor,
So. Bristol,
Squirrel Island,
Christmas Cove,
Pemaquid,
and other Points of Interest.



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SCENIC GEMS

OF

BATH

G. W. MORRIS,
PUBLISHER,
124 FRANKLIN STREET,
PORTLAND, ME.

INTRODUCTION.

BATH, MAINE, known the world over through her ships which have been carrying the name of the city into all parts of the world for more than a century, is situated on the right bank of the Kennebec River, twelve miles from the sea, at the center of a network of picturesque waterways and indentations which make this a favorite region for those in search of summer pleasures. In front of the city stretches the Long Reach of the Kennebec, a beautiful lake-like expanse of blue water five miles long and nearly a mile wide, backed by rugged hills. From the water's edge the city rises on a succession of ridges and is backed by rows of still higher hills. The location is one of the greatest natural beauty, in the very center of one of the most delightful summer resort sections of the East.

Among its claims to distinction, Bath is the richest community of Maine and one of the richest in the country in proportion to its size, and is one of the few industrial cities of the East which retain their distinctly New English population and characteristics, both of which circumstances are due to the principal industry of the place, which is shipbuilding. From the earliest times the people of Bath have been engaged in the construction, management and sailing of ships, nearly 5,000 of which have been launched from their busy yards since the United States Custom House began to keep a record. These include all sorts of deep water craft, from the trim little fishing schooners which enliven the small ports along the neighboring coasts to the 14,000-ton steel battleship Georgia, the latest and finest American warship, which has just had her acceptance trial. In the palmy days of the American merchant marine, as many as fifty full-rigged ships have been launched from the Bath shipyards in a single year, beside numerous smaller craft. Now the yards, which occupy a large part of the five miles of water frontage, are engaged chiefly upon the construction of great four, five and six-masted schooners for carrying coal and lumber along the coast, except the two steel shipyards, one of which, that of Arthur Sewall & Co., has latterly been building large sailing ships, and the other, the Bath Iron Works, has been chiefly engaged with warship construction, turning out also some of the largest and finest

of the American steam yachts and an occasional merchant steamer. These shipyards are among the chief points of interest for the visitor to Bath and in them it is usually possible to see all types of deep water craft in all stages of construction. The launchings, particularly those of the more notable vessels, are gala events, attracting people from all the surrounding country and often from distant localities. No prettier sight is afforded anywhere than is made by a large ship, fully rigged, her towering masts decked with many colored flags, as she slides gracefully down the ways into the beautiful Kennebec, bowing her acknowledgements to the cheering crowds on shore and the whistling craft afloat as her momentum carries her out upon the sparkling bosom of the harbor.

Bath is a very attractive city. The streets are lined with magnificent trees, mostly elms, which are so large and so numerous that their foliage largely conceals the city from the sight of the summer visitor arriving by steamer. Washington street, where the finest residences are located, is one of the prettiest in all New England, what with its magnificent elms and the broad, nicely kept lawns and gardens which surround the fine old mansions of the descendants of the last generation of shipbuilders, mansions built when Bath ships were paying for themselves on the first voyage and thereafter making huge profits for their owners.

In the center of the city, one square is occupied by a gem of a park, nicely kept and beautifully shaded, in one corner of which sits the Patten Free Library building, the gift of a wealthy resident to the city. Nearby is an old cannon, bearing the royal arms of England, which was taken from a captured British vessel by Bath seamen during the war of 1812. Another corner of the park is ornamented by a little lake and a fountain.

Among the finest public buildings of the city are the United States Custom House and Postoffice, a substantial granite structure occupying, with its grounds, an entire block; the Sagadahoc County Court House, and the Morse High School, one of the modern school buildings of New England, the gift of Charles W. Morse of New York, a native of Bath and graduate of the school, who maintains a home in the Maine city and takes a great interest in its affairs. Other notable public buildings are the Y. M. C. A., the Old Ladies' Home, the Home for Aged Couples and Old Men and the Bath Military and Naval Orphan Asylum. There are thirteen churches and some fine school buildings. On the spacious grounds of the Morse High School, one of the most modern and finest in New England, and contrasting with that structure in a most striking way, stands a little frame schoolhouse, carefully cherished and still in use, which

was built in 1789 and has been in continuous service ever since. Over the door, the builders inscribed the date and the word "Erudition," which is the name by which the little old schoolhouse has always been known.

Reference has already been made to the network of waterways which cuts the region immediately around Bath into islands of all shapes and sizes and curiously formed peninsulas. A few miles above the city the great streams of the Kennebec and Androscoggin Rivers meet in Merrymeeting Bay, really a broad lake, which also receives the waters of several smaller rivers. Opposite Bath, a part of the waters of the Kennebec leave the main stream through a break in the hills and as the Sasanoa River flows southeasterly to join the waters of the back Sheepscot in Hockomock Bay, another picturesque lake, which has four outlets the chief of which furnishes a channel into the main Sheepscot River and through it to Boothbay Harbor and the ocean. Westward from Bath about four miles the New Meadows River, so called, not really a river at all but a long, narrow, navigable bay or fiord, penetrates a dozen miles northward from the sea almost to Merrymeeting Bay with which it was once united by a long disused canal. These various sheets of water and their innumerable arms and tributaries not only make every landscape in the vicinity of Bath picturesque, but they furnish endless beautiful water trips and easy and agreeable transportation facilities between Bath and the numberless summer colonies which surround the city in all directions. Lines of fast and comfortable steamers ply up and down the Kennebec and through the Sasanoa to Boothbay Harbor and eastward points, and a short trolley ride takes one from Bath to the landing of the New Meadows River steamers which connect with other steamer lines which thread Casco Bay as far west as Portland. As for the scenic attractions of these sails, the Kennebec is held by a great many people to have greater charms than the Hudson, and the steamer trip down the Sasanoa rivals that through the Thousand Isles of the St. Lawrence in the estimation of hundreds of those who enjoy the Maine scenery every summer. The sail up the Kennebec to the head of navigation at Augusta, the State capital, forty miles above Bath, occupies about half a day, a full twelve hours for the round trip and a little time for sightseeing at the capital, but the time could be spent no more delightfully by the lover of beautiful landscapes.

One of the chief points of interest in the vicinity of Bath is Popham Beach at the mouth of the Kennebec, where, in 1607, George Popham and two shiploads of followers built the first English settlement on the American continent and where in the following year the first ship built in America was launched to take the discouraged colonists back to Old England, many of their number, including Popham, having succumbed to the inclemency of that first winter

passed by Englishmen on the New England shore. Six hundred years before that the Norsemen had trod the Popham sands, leaving, however, no more trace than the magnificent beach betrays today of the footprints of the bathers of yesterday. Popham is rich in relics of the Indians and contains a fine granite fort of the Civil War period which occupies the site of an older fortification which protected the towns of the Kennebec valley during the early wars of the United States. The Government is at the present time constructing on a high hill back of the old fort a modern fortification. Popham of today contains two fine hotels, one of which commands a magnificent sea view and the other a charming river prospect, and a large number of summer cottages which line the beach on both the river and the ocean sides. A U. S. life saving station is located there and the drills of the life-savers are one of the interesting features for the summer tourists. Popham's principal attraction, however, is its unrivalled beach which stretches westward, crescent shaped, from the mouth of the Kennebec eight miles to Cape Small.

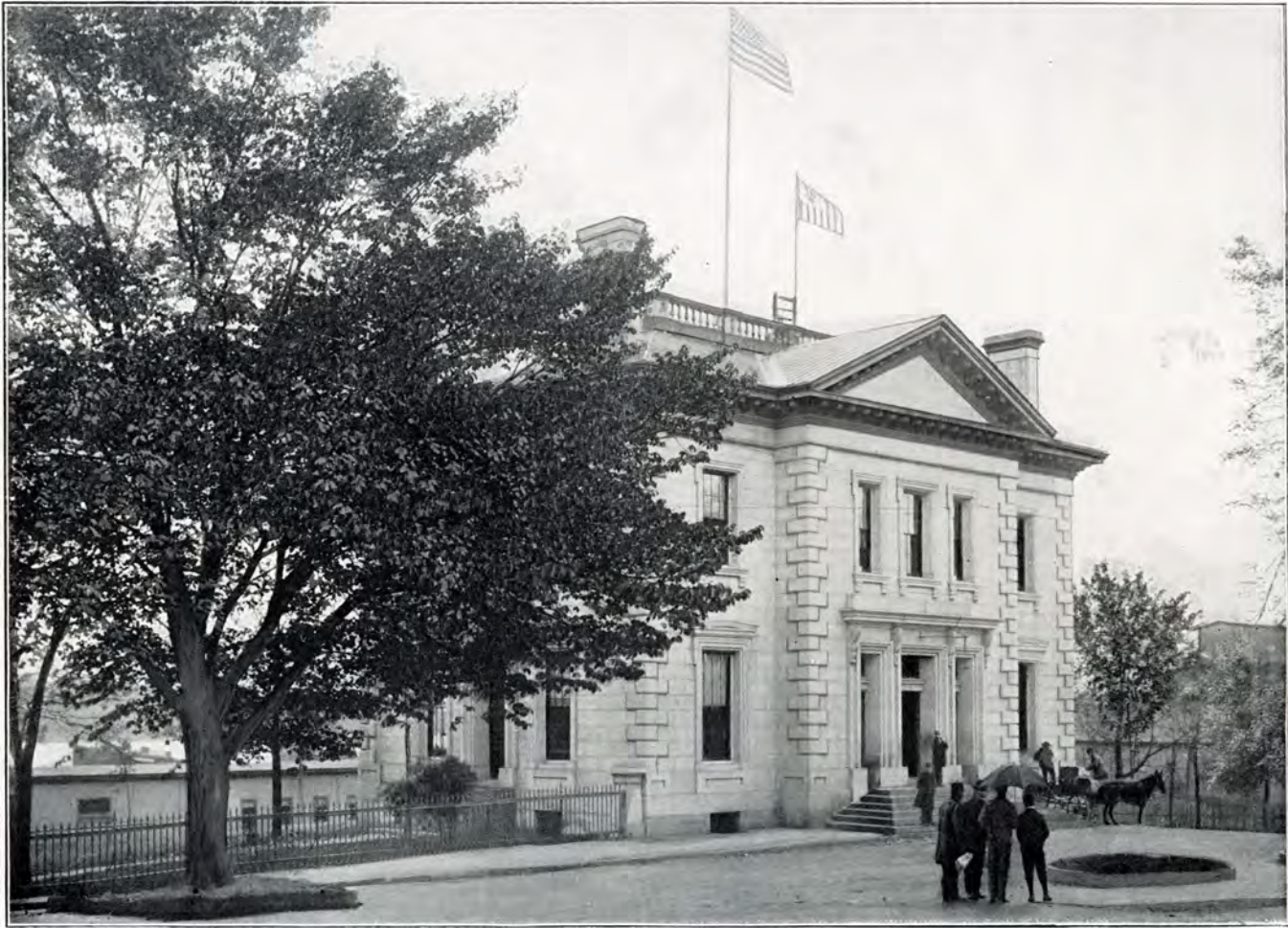
Cape Small itself is one of the most beautiful spots on the coast of Maine, the furthest projection of that coast into the Atlantic. Its towering, perpendicular cliffs command the entire eight miles of beach between it and Popham to the eastward, and Portland thirty miles away, is visible from the western side of the promontory. The breadth of world-famed Casco Bay undulates between. Cape Small is the location of a very aristocratic and exclusive summer colony which has discouraged all schemes for making it more accessible, and it is to be reached only by a fifteen mile drive from Bath through picturesque woods commanding an endless succession of the most delightful vistas.

Boothbay Harbor, two hours by steamer from Bath, is a charming village situated on one of the finest and most beautiful anchorages on the entire Atlantic seaboard. The port is the rendezvous of all the yachts and naval vessels cruising along the Maine coast in summer and the headquarters of a large fishing fleet which makes it one of the liveliest places on the shore from May until October. The headlands which jut into it and the islands which stud its sparkling bosom are the sites of a large number of summer colonies, chief among which is that of Squirrel Island which has a summer population of over 1,000 and whose sole occupants during the winter months are the caretaker and his family. Squirrel, politically, is quite unique among American communities, a village corporation whose voters are with one exception non-resident and subject to a property qualification requirement. It manages its own affairs, taxes itself and is in all respects a model community. It boasts a fine hotel, postal and telegraph facilities, a church, a casino, an athletic field and golf links, and its picturesque South Shore washed by the spray of the open ocean is an endless delight.

Pemaquid, which is the terminus of the steamer line from Bath, from which it is reached in about half a day's sail, is a point of great historic and scenic interest, containing a very ancient fort and the remains of a prehistoric earthwork and numerous other relics of one of the earliest English settlements on the American seaboard. The old fort and its surroundings have recently been made a public reservation by the State and placed in charge of a special commission. There is there also a fine beach and all the attractions of an ideal summer resort. Seven miles out at sea off Cape Pemaquid lies Monhegan Island, a favorite resort of a large colony of artists who delight in the picturesque quaintness of its fishing village and its unrivalled marine views.

It is impossible within the scope of this article to take up in detail all of the summer resorts and picturesque features of the neighborhood of the mouths of the Kennebec, Sheepscot and Damariscotta Rivers and of Boothbay Harbor, and only a few of the chief points of interest have been mentioned. It is possible only to sum them up by saying that there is no taste which cannot be gratified in the vicinity. There are the populous and gay resorts for him who enjoys that sort of life and there are numberless secluded spots, lovely but lonely, where the lover of nature may commune with her alone. There are fresh water lakes and ponds with thickly wooded shores for those who like such a location better than the shore of the resounding sea, and there is every sort of facility for the enjoyment of those pleasures which are to be had at the salt water. Absolutely nothing lacks in this lovely region to enhance the pleasure of the devotee of life out of doors.

Bath itself is an ideal summer headquarters with its innumerable delightful drives, trolley rides and water trips. A person could spend a summer there and take a different trip every day without exhausting them all and each has its peculiar charms. The city is easily accessible, on the line of the Maine Central and having in summer a daily steamer service from Boston. There are good hotels and board is to be had in private families at reasonable rates. Its stores are among the best in the State, and nothing is lacking to serve the convenience and comfort of the visitor. The people are of old New England stock, conservative but prevented by their constant contact with the whole maritime world from being narrow or bigoted; they are very hospitable and proud of their city whose educational, moral and civic tone is unusually high. What with its picturesque location and surroundings and its unique and interesting industry, Bath should not be omitted from the itinerary of the tourist through Maine.



U. S. POST OFFICE and CUSTOM HOUSE.



FRONT STREET, BATH, LOOKING NORTH.



CENTER STREET, BATH, LOOKING WEST.—City Hall, with Belfry, on the Right.



POST OFFICE SQUARE, BATH,
Looking toward Front Street. First Nat'l Bank in Center, Elks' Home to the Right of Bank



FRONT STREET, BATH.

Looking South from Park. Y. M. C. A. and Columbia Theatre on the Right.



THE BATH Y. M. C. A — Columbia Theatre at the Left.



BATH CITY PARK.
Showing Historic Cannon and Patten Free Library.



PATTEN FREE LIBRARY, BATH.



SAGADAHOC COUNTY COURT HOUSE, BATH.



MORSE HIGH SCHOOL, BATH, ME



BATH MILITARY AND NAVAL ORPHAN ASYLUM.



WASHINGTON STREET, BATH, LOOKING NORTH.
Summer Home of Charles W. Morse, of New York, on the Left.



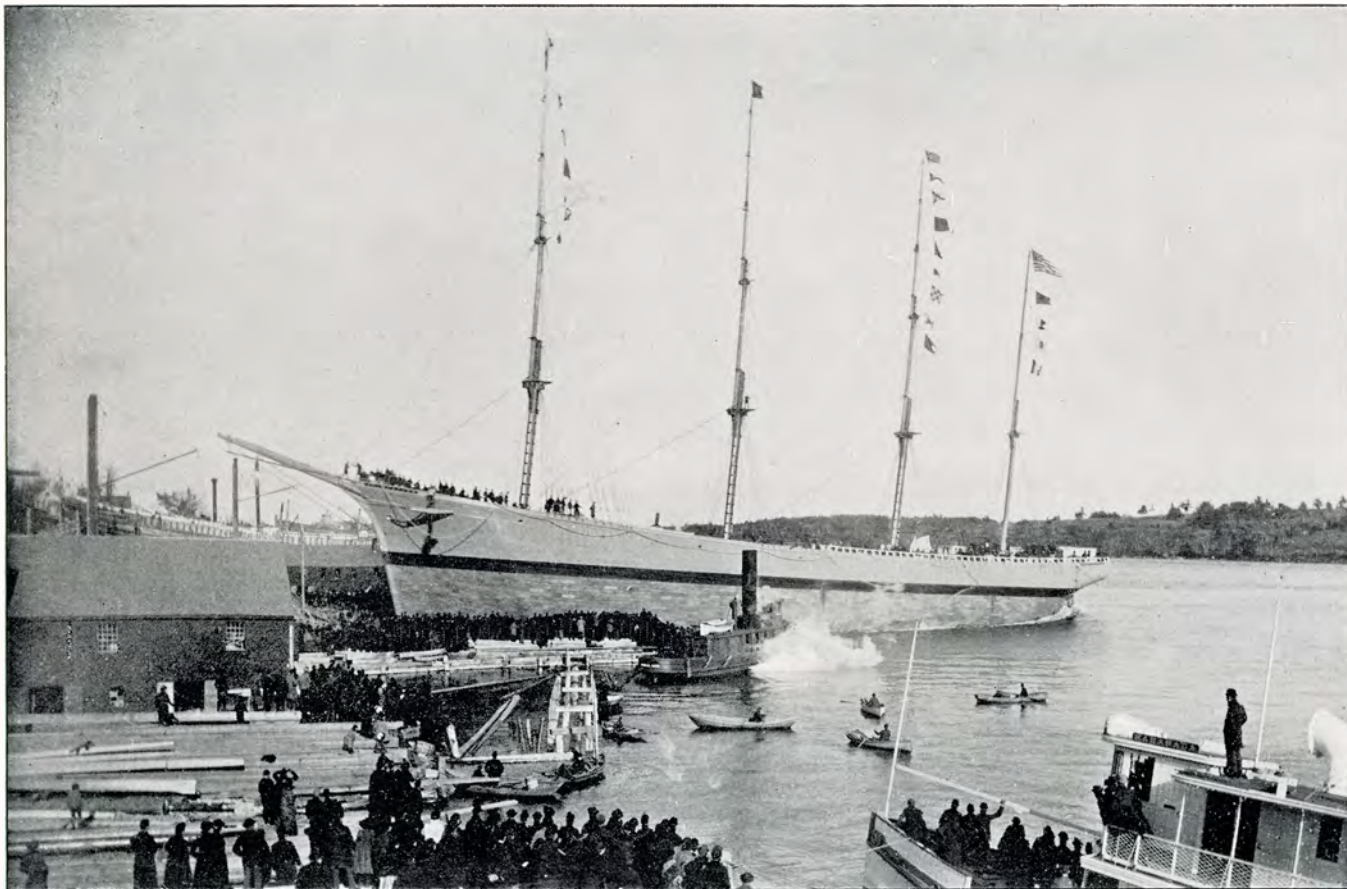
A WATER FRONT VIEW OF BATH.



U. S. BATTLESHIP GEORGIA,
Lying at the Bath Iron Works Dock.



PEOPLE'S CHURCH, BATH, ME.



SHIP LAUNCHING, BATH, ME.

A Steel Sailing Ship Sliding from the Ways of Arthur Sewall & Co.



POND ISLAND LIGHT.—At the Mouth of the Kennebec River.



FIRST ORDER LIGHT ON SEGUIN ISLAND.
Off the Mouth of the Kennebec River



BOOTHBAY HARBOR, ME.



EAST BOOTHBAY AND LAKE.



BURNT ISLAND LIGHT.



SURF, SQUIRREL ISLAND, ME.



BOAT LANDING. SQUIRREL ISLAND, MAINE.



PUBLIC LANDING, SQUIRREL ISLAND, ME.



STEAMER LANDING, SQUIRREL ISLAND, ME.



DEVIL'S OVEN, SQUIRREL ISLAND, MAINE.



SOUTH BRISTOL STEAMBOAT LANDING.



ON THE ROCKS, SO. BRISTOL, ME.



CHRISTMAS COVE, ME.



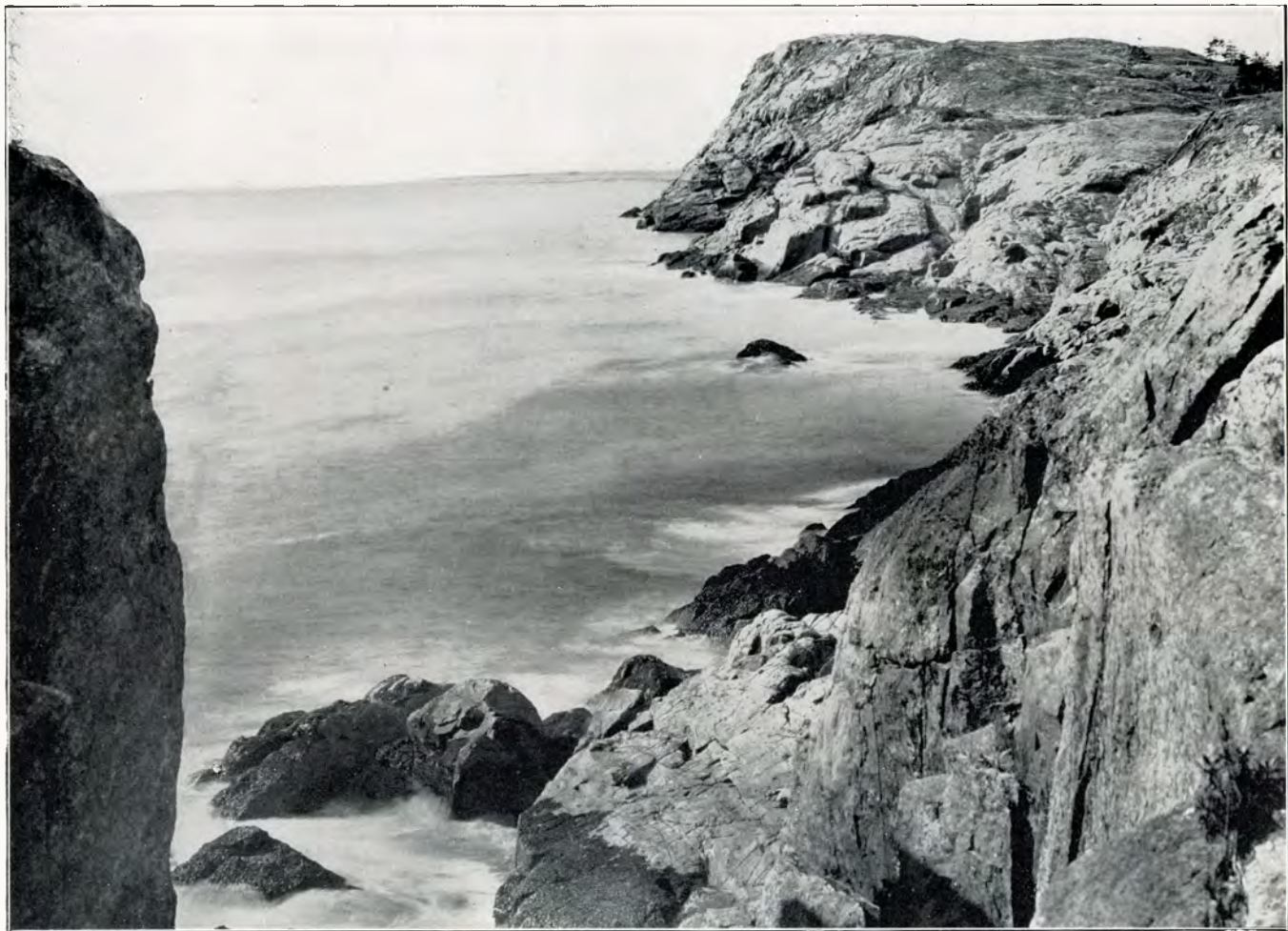
ANCIENT SHELL HEAPS, DAMARISCOTTA.



OLD FORT BUILT IN PREHISTORIC TIMES.



BATHING AT PEMAQUID BEACH, ME.



ROCK BOUND SHORE OF MONHEGAN, ME.



WHITE HEAD, MONHEGAN ISLAND, ME.

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