

TILLAMOOK LIGHTHOUSE.

Brief History of the Gray Speck in a Turbulent Waste of Waters which Warns Mariners of Danger.

Eighteen miles south of the mouth of the Columbia river, on the rugged Oregon coast, is Tillamook Head, and one mile from the Head, out where the waves are rarely peaceful, is the Rock of Tillamook, a gray speck in a turbulent waste of waters, which at one time was part of the mainland. The light is 136 feet above the sea level, flashing white every five seconds.

It was on the Head that Congress first calculated to construct a lighthouse, and for this its first appropriation of \$50,000 was made on June 20, 1878. That wild coast needed a signal for storm-harassed mariners; this was clear. It would be placed on the Head, so the Solons decided.

But "man proposed and God disposes"; so it happened that the proposal of the lawmakers was brushed to one side by the facts on which nature insists. In the first place, it was found that it would be impossible to reach Tillamook Head except by building twenty miles of road through a rough and desolate country; and in the second place, it was discovered that were the road constructed and the lighthouse erected the lantern would be in the fog line, and so it frequently would be valueless to mariners.

Then came the thought that that bit of rock which lifted itself from the boiling sea out yonder might be utilized. The thought first came to Major G. L. Gillespie, Corps of Engineers, U. S. A., and he asked to be permitted "to make the attempt" to build the lighthouse on the rock.

The request was granted, but it still remained to demonstrate that to make the attempt and to succeed in it were not two entirely different things. Even to land on the rock for a brief investigation was a hazardous undertaking, for the waters are seldom quiet. Major Gillespie tried to land and failed; tried again, and succeeded; but he was not the least convinced that the plan was feasible.

In June, 1879, H. S. Wheeler, superintendent of construction, succeeded for the first time in landing two men on the rock, but they could not hold their position and were at once compelled to retreat. Later, however, Mr. Wheeler succeeded in landing and taking some tape-line measurements.

It was still necessary that the rock should be surveyed by some competent person, and John R. Trewaves was sent out to do the work. He went but he never returned. In landing he slipped, fell back into the foaming waters, was seized by the undertow, and his body was never seen again.

As Major D. P. Heap naively says in his work on "Ancient and Modern Lighthouses," "This unfortunate accident prejudiced the public against the work, and it became necessary to act with vigor before the public mind became so saturated with the idea of danger that it would be impossible to obtain labor."

Deferring to this prejudice, future action was indeed vigorous. Within five weeks nine men were landed on the rock, there to reside until the lighthouse was completed; and work of construction had passed the anticipatory stages and was in actual progress.

On that lone rock in the angry Pacific these nine men lived nearly a year and a third, or until the structure was completed in February, 1881. There they were isolated, with no companions except an occasional sea lion which returned to assert its right to its old camping ground. What hardships they endured can hardly be appreciated by those who sit in comfort at their own fireside. They were wet by storms and washed by great waves which swept over even the highest portions of their lone rock. Part of their supplies were seized and borne away by the mad waters, and more than once they despaired that their lives might be saved to them.

In January, 1880, a tornado broke upon them from the great deep. Day after day, and even week after week, they lived in dread expectation that any hour might be their last on earth, and for more than three weeks not a vessel of any sort was able to go to them.

On the night of January 9th, when the tempest was in its height, those self-exiled men heard voices coming up from the ocean. They were the voices of officers giving last commands to their men, and so near was the vessel that bore the seamen that the creaking of her cordage was distinctly audible. Soon the voices died away and nothing but the ceaseless boom of the waves were heard. The men on the rock did not know then that it was the English bark *Lupata* which had been borne to her destruction, but they learned it afterwards, and they learned also that they had heard the last words of those whom death awaited.

But through hardships and discouragement, protected by a shelter they had made for themselves, the men pushed the work to its completion. They blasted and quarried until fifteen feet of the extreme top of the rock, which had reached about 120 feet above the water, was removed and the place for the lighthouse had been leveled. When the men wished to go to or leave the rock they were slid up or down a cable connected by a vessel by means of a breeches buoy, and supplies for them and their work were handled by means of derricks.

By June they were ready to begin work on the lighthouse and its accompanying dwelling, and on February 11, 1881, their great hazardous work was completed.

Some idea of the tremendous fury of the storms to which these courageous workmen were exposed—the awful force which the lighthouse still must occasionally withstand—is given in a report made by J. M. Flynn, the acting first assistant keeper, on December 6, 1887. It told of the effects of a tempest which began on December 3rd and lasted two or three days.

The height of the light above the sea level is 136 feet. Yet the waves beat in two of the light panes, and when these are replaced by storm panes backed by sheet iron the latter soon were torn from their fastenings. Says Mr. Flynn:

"The three upper and three middle panes next south of the broken ones are started and leak. The lens cover is badly cut and about thirty of the lenses are chipped by glass thrown against them. At midnight the three tanks at the west end were wedged together against the northwest corner of the fence."

And this at a point 136 feet above the sea level!

One of the strangest features of this lighthouse is the heavy wire netting which completely inclose the great light. This had to be done because of the great number of wild fowl which on dark and stormy nights fly heahlong and heedless against the glass inclosing the huge arc, with such force as to break the glass and shake the whole structure, even more than did the wind or waves. As it is, they dash themselves against the net, and of every flock there is always a large number left dead or stunned on the rocks below.

Through such hardships and danger Tillamook lighthouse was wrested from the grasp of old ocean, to serve as a beacon and a harbinger of safety to those who "go down to the sea in ships."

Cape Meares Lighthouse.

Is on the extreme westerly end of Cape Meares in Tillamook County, and about 4¼ miles to the southward of the entrance to Tillamook Bay. The light is white, varied by a red flash every minute, which is in height 223 feet above sea level.

Romantic Side of Tillamook.

(From "Caleb West, Master Diver," a recent novel by F. Hopkinson Smith.)

"And yet, after all, Kate, I realize that my work is merely child's play. Just see what other men have had to face. At Minot's Ledge, you know—the light of Boston—they had to chisel down a submerged rock into steps to get a footing for the tower. But three or four men could work at a time, and then at dead-low water they got only one hundred and thirty hours' work the first year. The whole Atlantic rolled in on top of them, and there was no shelter from the wind. Until they got the bottom courses of the tower bolted to the steps they had cut in the rock they had no footing at all, and had to do their work from a small boat. Our artificial island helps us immensely; we have something to stand on. And it was even worse at Tillamook Rock, on the Pacific Coast. There the men were landed on a precipitous crag sticking up out of the sea from breeches buoys slung to the mast head of the vessel. For weeks at a time the sea was so rough that no one could reach them. They were given up for dead once. All that time they were lying in canvas tents, lashed down to the sides of the crag to keep them from being blown into rags. All they had to eat and drink for days was raw salt pork and the rain-water they caught from the tent-covers. And yet those fellows stuck to it day and night until they had blasted off a place large enough to put a shanty on. Every bit of the material for that lighthouse, excepting in the stillest weather, was landed from a vessel that brought it by a line rigged from the masthead to the top of the crag; and all this time, Kate, she was thrashing around under steam, keeping as close to the edge as she dared. Oh, I tell you, there is something stunning to me in such a battle with the elements!"

Tillamook Newspapers.

TILLAMOOK COUNTY'S leading newspaper is the TILLAMOOK HEADLIGHT. It was the first established newspaper in the county, and through fortuitous circumstances has always been controlled by conscientious, earnest proprietors. The HEADLIGHT is, in fact, the Oregonian of Tillamook, being bright, enterprising, newsy, and devoted to the industrial and agricultural progress—as this edition will prove—of the county. The present proprietor, Mr. Fred C. Baker, was formerly proprietor of the Troutdale Champion. Since his acquisition of the HEADLIGHT no pains nor personal labor have been spared, and the HEADLIGHT would be a credit to any county in the state.

The TILLAMOOK HERALD is printed also in Tillamook City, and is owned and edited by Mr. R. M. Watson, formerly editor and proprietor of the Nehalem Republican. This paper, while not possessing the resources of the Headlight, is yet a bright, lively paper.

The OCEAN WAVE is owned and published by Mr. J. F. Weatherly, and is issued at Woods. Although but a small local sheet, the OCEAN WAVE is vigorous and patriotically enthusiastic as to the interests of the county.

Is Your Darling in Danger?

Is there one flower you love above all else that is withering in spite of all your care and skill? Is there one child of your flock that you would give anything, everything, to rescue from the dark shadow of the valley of death? Is there one little girl whom the doctor don't want to talk about. One child whose trouble is constitutional? If there is, if you love the young one—as you know you do—try Tillamook a while. We never lose our children. Tillamook County is a great hearted comforting mother to the little ones. From her generous breasts they suck life and health, and on her hospitable lap they grow into strength. We have none of the serious epidemics ordinarily so fatal to children. During one season the writer left the Willamette when an epidemic was raging and probably not one parent in the valley but was torn with fear and anxiety. Little children were dying everywhere. Here he found the same disease but not a child died. Their mothers dosed them with herbs and looked after them a couple of days; that was all. No doctor, no fear, none of that pain that takes hold of your heart strings and twists them till you can feel them crack. What is such a sense of security worth to you? Professional man or laborer—rich man or poor? What will you take in dollars and cents per hour and bear the torturing dread of anxiety? Tillamook County can surely offer you what your money, your work can't buy elsewhere, a home where your loved ones are safe from disease and death.

More complete or specific information regarding the county can easily be obtained, or a good plan is to subscribe for the TILLAMOOK HEADLIGHT, which is always alive to the interest of the County.