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CAPE COD
LYARS'
HANDBOOK

OR
THE SNOW JOB

By
GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW
of Shankpainter Pond, Provincetown, Cape Cod, Mass.

*A collection of very tall tales
written by a native Cape Codder*

CAPE COD LYARS' HANDBOOK

OR

THE SNOW JOB

BY GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW

Native of Provincetown, Cape Cod, Mass., teller of tall tales extraordinaire, volunteer fireman, "human being", and self-proclaimed author, lecturer, aeronaut, tiger trainer, fisherman, farmer, hunter, world traveler and musician.

with preface by

HARRY KEMP

Provincetown's Poet Of The Dunes

long-time friend of the author

First Edition

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DEDICATION

This little volume of "tall tales" is lovingly dedicated to the one who through the years has been my severest critic and most faithful companion,—my loving and devoted wife, Hannah.

—George Washington Snow

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PREFACE

I Swear By George Washington Snow's Veracity

"An evening dragon came—"

Milton-Samson Agonistes

I swear by George Washington Snow's veracity,—
For, years ago, when I lived on the outside beach
In a shack that has since gone over into the sea,
I used to hear, in the morning, a clatter of pails,
That sounded like milk-pails, making me think of cows.
George Washington Snow has since told me they WERE milk pails:
And that it was himself and a helper going by
To milk the rich-uddered whales off Peaked Hill Bars . . .

This crook of the Cape like a great, golden arm bent, has long taken into its
embrace

The rich legends on which poets and artists feed;
From which they draw the mind's nourishment and strength.
Those adventurers and voyagers who lived their poetry
Found this also true for themselves when they came here . . .
It was Captain John Smith, I believe, who saw a mermaid
Wantoning upward at him, under the prow of his ship . . .
I would not be surprised if, any fine morning,
I witnessed a flight of Archaeoptery Macrura
Clumsily sloping across the dawn-flecked sky—
Those prehistoric birds just evolved from the serpent!
Perhaps the grating cries of the gull still keep
Something of those early shrill notes of the dawn-birds.
George Washington Snow tells me the cries of the gulls
Are really melodious songs

That you have to develop an ear for, as you have to, for Modern Music.—
That, in their appropriate milieu of wind, sand, wave,
Such songs equal that of the nightingale for sweetness.
Certainly I know there is nothing more gay and enheartening
On a day of fine, sparkling waves
Than the cries of the veering, wind-riding gulls.

George Washington Snow says that when wind-storms
Set the pillared sand-forms dancing high over the dunes,
You can then glimpse the great forms of giants:
Those demi-gods that once almost defeated the gods:
That the Titans, as they were called, move again across the dunes in storms,
And come dancing and marching with the ghostly Northern Lights . . .

And I am sure a sea-serpent has been washed ashore here
At one time or other; or many times, despite the sceptics;
Who will always deny, with the bladder of apathy for a heart,
Saying to Imagination, "You are a liar".
George Washington Snow tells me he has seen more than one sea-serpent.
And I hereby attest to his veracity,
Giving him a place among the great fabulists,
From Bilpay and Aesop and Phaedrus, down to Baron Munchausen and
Gulliver.

This Cape-End is truly enchanted ground, and George Washington Snow has
become its Interpreter!

Harry Kemp

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Wonderful Diamond Ring

Every once in a while my friends become very insistent that I relate to them a good fish story! Of course this presents no great difficulty for me, as I spent so many of my years at sea, sailing upon the wide, blue waters of the five oceans, numerous bays, inlets, sounds, and channels.

It has been my lot to fish for electric eels in the tropics, for man-eating sharks in the Gulf of Mexico, for the giant octopus in the Mediterranean Sea, and for all manner of strange and unusual forms of sea life in various sectors of the World.

I have even donned a special diving suit of my own invention and manufacture and descended to hitherto unfathomable depths in the Pacific to spear the mysterious koochi-koochi fish off the coast of Japan. And once I led an expedition through the jungles of Africa to the very heart of the Dark Continent in search of the fabulous caterpillar fish, which has green fins, yellow eyes and a striped purple tail, and which is found only in the murky waters of Lake Jugibuggi.

But when all is said and done, I am happy and proud to be able to say that my greatest success at fishing was right here at home on the shores of dear old Cape Cod. I, George Washington Snow, author, explorer, lecturer, world traveler, and founder and first president of the Shankpainter Society Of Master Sportfishermen, claim, without hesitation or fear of successful contradiction to hold the World's record for bass fishing without rod and reel, net, or other paraphernalia.

On July 4th, 1932, between 4:30 p. m. in the afternoon and 10:45 p. m. that night I caught 878 sea bass,—slightly more than ten tons of fish,—at a point on the beach about two miles this side of Highland Light! My great bass fishing trip all came about quite accidentally, too. I was, at the time, enjoying a well-earned vacation, following a strenuous four months' engagement with one of Europe's famous circuses as lion and tiger trainer!

I had started out early in the morning from my pleasant little cabin on the shores of beautiful Shankpainter Pond on what I had thought would be a pleasant all-day hike over the sand dunes to Race Point, Highland Light, Peaked Hill Bars and

return. In my lunch box I had prudently carried along half a dozen or so chicken and sardine sandwiches, several cold flippers, and a quart of coffee.

At about 2 o'clock in the afternoon I had seated myself on a nice box which had conveniently washed ashore near Peaked Hill, and I had eaten my lunch. Then I fell asleep and dreamed happily of the good old days when I was head keeper of the Imperial Zoo in Whackistan, and of my great friendship with the emperor who gave me as a farewell gift the gorgeous 64-carat diamond ring which I wore on the third finger of my left hand.

I cannot truthfully state just what caused me to awaken, but something did, and as I opened my eyes I discovered that it was 4:30 p. m. Sitting up, I saw that the tide had risen and that the water was almost lapping my feet. I stretched myself, extending my arms to either side of my body as far as I could, preparatory to rising from my sandy mattress.

Well sir, when my left hand stuck out, the sun glinted on that marvelous glowing diamond and lo and behold,—before you could have said "George Washington Snow always tells the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as he is accustomed to telling it", a huge 45-pound bass leaped out of the water and tried to snap that glittering jewel off of my finger!

Always noted as much for my quick thinking and ability to act rapidly in emergencies as for my fine qualities of honesty, bravery and truthfulness, I seized a handy piece of driftwood and clubbed Mr. Fish to his sudden, untimely death. Then I stood up and surveyed my remarkable catch. But as I did so, the sun again glinted on the diamond, and another giant sea bass flashed out of the water, through the air, and directly at my left hand, snapping heartily at the diamond as I neatly side-stepped.

"Aha," said I to myself, "Here is a curious thing! Another misguided denizen of the deep seeks to attack George Washington Snow, internationally famous fisherman and human being. This bass is endeavoring to grab my diamond and make off with it! Such rude tactics are deserving of swift retaliation!"

So I biffed this second would-be diamond thief, and made preparations to head for home. But once more the sun's rays glinted on that amazing stone. Need I tell you, dear readers and gentle friends, what bloody and gruesome action then followed?

I now entered right into the true spirit of the late afternoon and proceeded to do a bit of serious fishing. As fast as each of those sassy bass hopped out of the water and tried to nip that diamond ring off my finger I would give them a healthy kerplap with my driftwood club. Within an hour I had over a hundred fine, fat bass on the beach, but still the finny multitudes attempted to do battle with an inspired and aroused G. Snow!

When darkness finally fell like a mantle over the dunes and lapping wavelets there on the beach the attack continued by the light of the moon. There is no telling how long this awful battle of Snow versus the bass might have lasted had not a dark cloud finally blotted out the moon shortly after 10:45 p. m. My right arm was numb and weary. The third finger on my left hand was severely bruised where one particularly nasty fish had thrashed into it,—but I was victorious, and there on the beach beside me, piled high, were the 878 sea bass which had had the unmitigated temerity to attempt to steal my diamond ring.

I hastened into town, hired several trucks equipped with beach tires, and then returned rapidly to the scene of my triumph. With the help of a dozen awe-struck assistants I loaded the fish into the conveyances and trucked it at once to the city where I received almost five thousand dollars for my fine catch!

Well, sir, that was the greatest day's fishing I ever experienced, anywhere in the whole world, and I'll bet nobody else ever had such an outing on the Fourth of July or any other day, for that matter!

I have only one regret,—I took the five thousand dollars and unwisely invested it in an ostrich egg incubator factory in Florida. Unfortunately, the ostrich egg shortage of 1932-1933 put the kibosh on the whole business! But I didn't really mind. With me it has always been easy come, easy go. Shortly after Labor Day I set out for Arizona where I subsequently managed to recoup my fortune in the Indian herb root remedy business, but that is another story!

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Thirty Ton Quahaug

Although my thoughts these past few weeks have been mostly about my newest invention,—a collapsible bean pole which will be a boon and an aid to farmers who pick beans,—I have still had plenty of opportunity to get down to the waterfront and pass the time of day with numbers of old friends with whom I have been on good terms for years.

Not so very long ago I decided to go clamming up near the Breakwater one afternoon. Which I did. There were several of us out on the flats when the tide went out. In short order I managed to fill my bucket with some real nice quahaugs. Then I sat down on a nearby rock to watch the others doing their digging, and to give helpful suggestions when I thought they were necessary and would be appreciated.

All of a sudden one of the diggers let out a yell which very likely was heard clear over to Truro Center. Of course all of us went running to see what he'd dug up. At first I thought he might have stumbled on Captain Kidd's treasure, which is buried somewhere near here. But, no such luck!

To my disgust, the commotion was over a mere quahaug. To be sure, it was about nine inches across, was about four inches thick, and weighed a bit over seven pounds. But it wasn't, in my opinion, anything to get very excited about, and I said so.

A number of my acquaintances said it was the biggest quahaug ever seen in these parts, and even suggested that it be sent to a museum . . . But I must disagree.

If the real truth is to be published, even at this late date, let it be known that I, George Washington Snow, of Cape Cod, noted for my brilliant seamanship, scrupulous honesty, and fine qualities of truthfulness, personally had a hand in the capture of the largest quahaug ever taken in these or any other waters.

Some years back one sunny morning as my crew and I were dragging about two miles off Race Point, our drag became fastened on some object, and it was only our sterling ability and my quick thinking which kept our craft from being drawn under the waves to a watery end.

For several hours, try as we would we could neither free our

drag, nor bring the object to the surface of the water for examination. At the time, it was my belief that we had gotten hold of a submerged wreck.

Finally, even I despaired of saving our equipment, and was just about ready to order it cut loose, when over the horizon a large battleship came into view, thick black smoke streaming from its smokestacks.

Now we Snows have always held steady and fast to the old belief that "where there is life there is hope," so I decided to wait a few more minutes, and I had one of my men go aloft and run up a distress signal.

Pretty soon the battleship came alongside, and the captain, an old friend of mine, looked over the rail and said, "What's the matter, George?"

"Well, sir," I said, "We've got our drag hung up on something down there and would be mighty obliged if you would help us out."

"Why, certainly, George," said the Captain, "Anything for an old friend. Mr. Mate, take charge here, and help Captain Snow get his drag up, and while you are at it, see if you can't get us a look at whatever it is he's hooked onto down there."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the Mate. "Ahoy there, Mr. Second Mate, the Captain wants us to help Captain Snow over yonder get up his drag and the bally thing he's hooked onto. Take charge, and let's get at matters."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the Second Mate. "Ahoy there, Mr. Officer of the Deck, the skipper wants us to help Captain Snow get his drag up and the confounded thing he's hooked onto. Take over, and get things moving."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the Officer of the Deck, "Ahoy there, Mr. Junior Officer of the Deck, the Old Man says to help Captain Snow get his drag up, and also to bring to the surface the dadblamed dingus he's hooked onto, whatever it is. Assume charge and proceed."

"Aye, aye, sir," said the Junior Officer of the Deck, looking around for someone to pass the order on to. "Ahoy there, Ensign Smith, the C. O. wants us to help Captain Snow get up his drag, and also the beastly object which he has hooked onto, so go to it, Ensign Smith. Carry on."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Ensign Smith. "Ahoy there, Chief Jones, the B.T.O. on the Bridge wants us to aid and assist Captain

Snow get his drag up, and whatever blighted thingamajig he's hooked onto. Your assignment, Chief Jones."

"Aye, aye, sir," said Chief Jones. And, he in turn notified Boatswain's Mate Second Class Kelly, who turned the matter over to Coxswain Bonehead, who secured the assistance of Seaman, First Class Swenson, who in turn, discovered Seaman Second Class Doe standing around with nothing special to do.

So, almost before one could say George Washington Snow thirteen hundred times, they rigged up a special power winch, and dropped a big grappling hook over the side at the end of a two inch steel cable. And a few minutes later they were starting to raise my drag and the submerged object.

As the operation proceeded, the battleship definitely listed to starboard. It was then that everyone realized that something very heavy was tangled up with the drag. But few expected to see the strange sight which greeted our eyes a moment later, when we caught a view of things at the surface.

For lo and behold, along with our drag there was a monster quahaug. At first everyone thought it was a rock, until it opened and closed its shell once or twice and made a noise like a clap of thunder in a July lightning storm. Then all hands realized that instead of a huge rock covered with sea weed and moss, twenty feet long, seven and one half feet wide, and about six feet thick, we had the largest shellfish ever seen, a gigantic 30-ton deep sea quahaug.

The Captain of the battleship took charge of matters personally, at once, and had the creature hoisted on deck where two seamen were promptly stationed to water it constantly. And I was immediately invited aboard to help decide what to do with our catch.

After brief discussion we decided to take it to the New York fish market, so I had my crew take my dragger back to Provincetown Harbor, while I accompanied the battleship to New York.

We arrived there bright and early the next morning and were greeted by the Mayor, the Chief of Police, the Official Greeter, six admirals, two generals, three aldermen, and hundreds of dignitaries. The monster quahaug was loaded onto a large flat car mounted on rubber tires, and with a 77-piece brass band marching in front of us, we paraded up Broadway all the way to 57th Street.

Then later in the day we gathered at the Fish Pier and sold our huge shellfish at auction for \$36,000.

The dealer who purchased it got a great bargain. He sold over 24,000 pounds of choice quahaug steaks the very first day at a price of a dollar a pound, and within three days had sold another 20,000 pounds of quahaugburger at 79 cents a pound. He sold the two shells to a button factory in New Jersey for \$2,000 apiece. I have been told that, in turn, the button manufacturer made enough buttons out of his purchase to realize a profit of nearly \$6,000.

The only part of the creature which could not be sold was the tough, leather-like muscular hinge. The dealer kindly allowed me to have this free of charge. I promptly took it to a friend of mine in the shoe business, and had it cured. For a good many years I wore only shoes made from this special quahaug leather. The only trouble with them was that when they got a trifle wet, a faint fishy odor was discernable.

What did I do with the \$36,000? Well, sir, I sold the dragger for another few thousands, then took the whole amount and made a down payment on a second hand battleship, with which I hoped to go deep-sea quahauging the following summer.

However, I was never destined to fulfill my intentions. Just as I was about ready to start operations the war came on, and the Government asked if I would be willing to lend them my battleship for a little while, which I very gladly and patriotically did.

Unfortunately they were a bit careless with it, and it got sunk somewhere by a stray submarine or something. And at present there don't seem to be any spare battleships available for me to replace the one they lost, and besides I have been getting a lot of nasty letters from the finance companies about getting behind on my payments on the original battleship. I have tried to explain that I don't have it any more,—that it was loaned to the Navy,—but all they do is send letters about a contract, paragraph 203, and about pages 63 and 64 of my agreement with them.

I fear that I may have to hire a good lawyer . . .

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Polite Whales

One fine summer afternoon some years ago while sailing in my yacht on Cape Cod Bay I had a most remarkable experience.

About three o'clock in the afternoon I decided to try my hand at some fishing. So I broke out a heavy hand line, baited it with a nice piece of steak, and heaved it overboard. I didn't have long to wait. Almost right away there was a tremendous tug at the line. If it hadn't been a good stout one, and if I hadn't grabbed a hold on the rail, overboard I would have gone.

It took all my strength to keep from being yanked off my boat, so I called for help from my assistant. Together we slowly but surely hauled in the line. And when we got it pulled in quite a way, imagine my amazement to find I had hooked a baby whale.

Quite suddenly, without any warning, there was a great swirling of water as two giant, eighty foot whales surfaced and began swimming wildly in circles around my yacht. Closer and closer they swam, until I thought they would surely upset us.

Then a happy thought struck me. Seizing an axe which was luckily at hand, I chopped through the hand line which we had secured to the railing, and at once the baby whale swam away, followed by the two large whales. Then it was I realized that these two were none other than the mama whale and the papa whale who had come to effect the rescue of their only child!

Now, I thought, the episode had ended; but it hadn't. In the excitement I had carelessly allowed my wonderful boat to drift dangerously close to Long Point, and the next thing I knew, there we were stuck on the bars. For 15 minutes I tried every trick I knew to get her off, but nothing I did seemed to help at all.

By chance I happened to gaze out across the bay. I was greatly surprised to see the three whales swimming back and forth in the water just beyond the bars. When I called the attention of my assistant to this odd scene the wretch promptly jumped overboard and swam ashore, leaving me as he supposed, to my fate,—for he later told another party that he thought the whales were angry and were coming back to attack me.

As I watched the great creatures, however, it became appar-

ent to me that they were not there for any destructive purpose. So, always noted as much for my quick thinking as I am for my sterling quality of truthfulness, I decided upon an experiment.

I whistled quite loudly. To my great satisfaction all three whales ceased their manoeuvres to and fro and faced me, much as though they now expected me to make another move.

This I quickly did. Tying one end of a very strong rope securely to the bow of my yacht I then heaved the line as far as I could toward the waiting whales. I was keenly disappointed when it landed somewhat short of the mark, but I had reckoned without the littlest whale. He swam cautiously in a bit closer, picked up the end of the rope in his mouth and took it back to his parents.

Before I knew what was happening there came a great wrench and my yacht was pulled off the bar. With the papa whale pulling, and with the other two escorting me, I was soon safely around the Point and in the Harbor.

Now I had supposed that as soon as I was off the bar they would drop the line and swim off. But these whales were definitely a very superior, high quality, super-intelligent sort. They pulled me rapidly all the way across the harbor to within a hundred yards or so of Railroad Wharf. They then circled my yacht, each making a bow in the water as they passed me, and finally swam off in formation towards Wellfleet, as I docked.

I have told this story once or twice before to various people who have scoffed at parts of it. However, I have been only too happy to relate this remarkable adventure once again for it is a true story, just as surely as my name is George Washington Snow.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Musical Mermaids

Back in the winter of 1912-1913 I underwent an adventure which, I dare say, few others in this part of the World have ever experienced. For many years I have wanted to tell this story, but heretofore have always hesitated, because I feared that few would believe it.

However, since my reputation for honesty, truthfulness and accuracy is well established, and in no danger of being soiled or tarnished by the rude hoots and catcalls of some people I know who have never been further away than Truro in their lives, I will relate what I consider to be a very interesting narrative.

In the Fall of 1912 I found myself unemployed, but with the characteristic vim and vigor of George Washington Snow, I at once refused to sit idly by the fire bemoaning my ill fortune.

Fortunately, I had several kind friends who advanced me the necessary capital with which to start a new enterprise. I purchased a horse and wagon, and the next thing the community knew I was doing a thriving business in beachcombing.

By Christmastime I had made over a hundred dollars, had paid off my indebtedness and had money in the bank,—all this entirely as the result of my tireless energy in working day and night to salvage from the beach between Race Point and the Highland a carload of chairs, 30 cases of Oriental prunes, lumber, 22 casks of olive oil, and sundry other valuable items.

So successful was my beachcombing business that I began to lay plans for another organization which I decided to start at an early date,—the George W. Snow Brass Band and Light Opera Company.

Because of my desire to earn money rapidly, I rarely paid heed to the time, or to the elements.

So, on the morning of December 30 when I started off with my horse and cart for a place on the beach about a mile from Peaked Hill Bars, the heavy gray clouds in the sky in that direction meant nothing to me. The only thing that interested me that morning was a case of meat grinders which had been washed ashore several days before, and which I had carefully hidden in a thicket.

Well, sir, I had scarcely gotten half way to my destination

when it began to snow. My horse, Old John, got very nervous and seemed to want to turn back and go home. But in those days I was young and stubborn, so we kept right on going where I wanted to go. And when we got there, shortly after noon there was already two feet of snow on the ground. I had an awful time finding the case of meat grinders, but I finally did, and loaded them on the wagon.

By this time, however, the storm was worse than ever and the snow had started to drift. In some places it was all of 30 feet deep! I saw, with that peculiar insight which we Snows possess, that I would be unable to get home in that terrible blizzard.

Realizing that I was now faced with a battle for my very life, I made twelve dozen snowballs and then rolled them in the snow on the ground until each one was about the size of the wheels on my cart. Placing these huge snowballs together I soon had a nice circular wall built. Then I put more of the big snowballs on top of these and within half an hour I had a nice sized igloo constructed,—built right around my horse and cart and myself. There we were, protected from the raging snow-storm by the very element of nature itself!

I used a horse blanket for the door of the igloo. When I had a chance I broke up the crate which the meat grinders were packed in, made a fireplace in the center of the snow hut, and very soon was quite comfortable. Thus we passed the night.

When morning came again, though, the blizzard was still howling away, unabated. I ventured out for a few seconds about noon, discovering to my amazement that there was 12 feet of snow on the level, and that drifts of over 80 feet in height were commonplace. I quickly ducked back into the igloo and took stock.

There was a bag of oats, the rest of a loaf of bread which I had brought for lunch the day before, a couple of skullyjoes,—and Old John, my horse.

I had noticed, with growing alarm, for several hours that he had been eyeing me speculatively. Now I realized what was going through his mind!

I have always been a great lover of animals, and have had many pets in my life, but in this particular case, with lightning-like speed, I reached the decision that it was "better him than me!"

It continued to snow for another whole week, and it took all

my spare time just to keep the entrance to the igloo cleared. I used up all the oats. The bread was gone. My diet, by this time, consisted mostly of horsemeat stew for breakfast, fried horsemeat steak for lunch, and horseburgers for supper. It was very monotonous.

At long last, one morning the blizzard ended. I have since learned that this phenomenal snowfall was limited to the immediate vicinity of Peaked Hill Bars, and that back in town they only had a few inches of snow. But out where I was, by this time some drifts stretched up so high into the clouds that I couldn't see the tops of them!

To occupy my time I dug a tunnel to the beach, which was only a hundred yards or so away. There I stood by the water's edge for hours at a time, hoping that some passing ship might see my fearful predicament and rescue me. For several days nothing happened.

One morning as I sat dejectedly on a barrel which had washed ashore, smoking the last of my tobacco, I heard voices. I gazed all around, but saw nobody. I was so uplifted to hear human sounds, however, that I immediately burst into song, and my fine baritone voice floated melifluously over the waves. I believe I was singing "My Wild Irish Rose" at the moment.

Then, as I looked up, lo and behold, there were six of the loveliest mermaids I had ever seen in my entire life, right in the water a few feet offshore, arranged in a semicircle, listening to me.

When I finished they cheered and clapped and said, "Sing to us some more, Mr. Snow!"

So I did, giving my efforts the very best that I had in the rendition of "Old County Down," "Sweet Rosy O'Grady," "The Wearin' O' The Green", and finally, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

With tears in their eyes, the pretty mermaids all chorused at once, "Oh, Mr. Snow, you sing so divinely! Please teach us how to sing, too!"

So it was that I spent the rest of the Winter out near Peaked Hill Bars, waiting for the giant snows to melt, living on horsemeat, fish with which my new-found friends kept me supplied daily, occasional wild animals which I trapped, and whales' milk, which one very pretty little mermaid named Dottie brought every few days. She used to tell me she got it from

her family's herd of whales. It seems they had an underwater farm somewhere off Chatham . . .

Every morning, rain or shine, I would stand there on the beach, conducting a singing class for those ladies from the deep. Every day they brought new members to the class. After the first three weeks there were so many pupils that I had to hold two sessions,—one in the morning for beginners, and one in the afternoon for advanced students.

Finally, on March 21, 1913, I broke the sad news to my pupils. The snow was pretty nearly all gone, and even my igloo had started to drip to pieces.

"I am going to go home tomorrow, ladies," I told them, "and I hope you won't miss me too much. I sincerely trust that you will always remember your singing lessons."

Then one of the younger mermaids made a little speech and we held graduation exercises. I am proud to say that every one of my pupils passed the course with high honors. They were all very grateful when I awarded them their diplomas made of horsehide.

We closed the program with the entire group singing "In The Good Old Summertime". Then they all swam off, and I started my own journey home over the dunes to the shores of beautiful Shankpainter Pond.

Being unable to get another horse right away I gave up the beachcombing business, drew my money out of the bank to finance the George W. Snow Brass Band and Light Opera Company which I formed, and which was scheduled to go on tour very shortly through South America and Vermont.

In the years which have rolled by I have occasionally been out to Peaked Hill Bars again. Once or twice I have seen mermaids swimming offshore there. I have waved to them, wondering, of course, if they were, by any chance, the daughters of some of my pupils of the old George W. Snow Singing Academy For Mermaids, conducted by me way back in 1913.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Patriotic Mosquitoes

Most folks hereabouts don't care very much for mosquitoes. As a matter of fact, the taxpayers have gone to quite a bit of expense to get rid of these truly useful insects. For the past several years they've been paying a considerable number of grown-up, able-bodied men lots of money just to go thrashing around through the woods "controlling" mosquitoes.

To me this has seemed not quite "cricket", for mosquitoes, particularly the large, double-barrelled Truro mosquitoes, have played a fine, patriotic role in the history of the Nation. And no one knows this to be a fact better than your honest, courteous, observant, truthful correspondent, George Washington Snow, of Cape Cod.

It is more than 29 years ago that I first related the story I am about to tell again. At the time I was ridiculed, laughed at, and finally even threatened with incarceration in the rest home run by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts up to Taunton.

But now that my reputation for truthfulness has taken on added lustre I shall venture to repeat this amazing record of how, with the aid of thousands of mosquitoes, I assisted in rapidly terminating the First World War.

It seems like only yesterday that it was the month of June in the year of 1918. Our great Nation was at war with the German Empire. Enemy submarines kept bobbing up all around the waters off our own Cape Cod. This was very annoying to the Government, and it made many citizens around these parts quite nervous.

On the morning of June 11, 1918, as I was walking along the shores of beautiful Shankpainter Pond, lo and behold, I was amazed to see a U-boat surface within 15 feet of me.

Before you could have said "George Washington Snow is always a stickler for the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as he is accustomed to telling it," the hatch opened and the captain stepped out.

"Hello, George," he said.

Well sir, I guess I must have showed how surprised I was, for all I could say was "Hello, Captain."

"George," he said, "We have decided to build a big, secret

Naval Station here, and we shall require your help. Go and get us six dozen eggs for breakfast at once, or we shall open fire on your hen house over there, in which case, I fear, you may suffer severe damage to your property!"

"Yes, sir," I said, very pleasantly, but all the while rage and anger filled my very gizzard. Even as I headed for my hen house to procure the six dozen eggs which had been demanded of me, I was planning to surprise this enemy and to drive him from our shores.

I delivered the eggs and when I did the Captain of the submarine said, "George, we need fresh water. I want you to see to it that we get it."

"Yes, sir," I said, "I will go get a hose and run it from the spigot at the side of my house right onto your boat. But first I will have to go downtown and get a long hose."

"All right," said the Captain, "But be sure you are back by sunset, because if you are not we might accidentally start shooting up this place."

"Yes, sir," I said again, and went off.

I headed straight down to the Bank and got five dollars' worth of coppers. Then I went to Jimmy Eddy's store and bought 200 jars and a funnel.

Next, I passed the word for all children who might be wanting to earn some extra money to meet me at 2 p. m. in Town Hall. And when two o'clock finally rolled around, there were 26 children gathered awaiting me. I gave each one a jar and said, "Boys and girls, your old friend, George Washington Snow, is going to pay you 2 cents for each jarful of mosquitoes you bring him before six o'clock."

Well, sir, by that time I had 179 jars of the finest kind of Truro-bred, Provincetown-fed mosquitoes you ever saw,—all buzzing away happily in their jars, little suspecting the wonderful, practical, patriotic mission on which I was about to send them.

Shortly after nine o'clock I ran the hose from the spigot in my large back yard down to Shankpainter and on board the submarine. Everybody was asleep except one sailor. So, when he wasn't looking, I turned off the water, took the hose out of the water tank, and put it in the air vent.

Next, using the funnel, I piped the 179 jars of mosquitoes through the hose and into the submarine using a blacksmith's bellows to assure a good job. Within ten minutes I had com-

pleted this fiendish mission, had removed my hose from the air vent, placed it back in the water tank, and had resumed piping water into the enemy vessel.

I stood by and waited. I had figured it wouldn't be too long before some results were obtained, and I was absolutely correct. Within ten minutes the submarine captain was up on deck.

"Ach, Himmel, George," he said, "How much longer will you be getting our water on board?"

"Well, sir," I said, "Just by chance I happen to be finished, and I am about to remove my hose."

"I am very happy to hear it, Mr. Snow," said the Captain as he slapped a stray mosquito on top of his head. "By the way, George, is there, er, much wild life in this section?"

"Oh yes, sir," I said, pretending to slap seven or eight mosquitoes at once, "In another week or so the place will be simply swarming with mosquitoes. Of course, right now, there are none to speak of, but next week they'll be so thick you could cut them with a knife."

Then I pretended to slap at sixteen or seventeen more mosquitoes. And the captain, standing in the hatch slapped at two or three real ones, and looked very unhappy.

"That will be all for tonight, George," he said, "Come back first thing in the morning. If you don't, I will order some target practice at your chimney!"

"Yes, sir," I said and went home.

All night long as I lay in bed I could hear very plainly what was going on in the submarine, just a few yards away on Shankpainter. There was a good deal of swearing, lots of slapping, and finally, a loud argument.

I don't care what the Kaiser said," I could hear someone saying, "We are from this place leaving out already yet, now!"

Pretty soon there wasn't any more noise. In the morning, bright and early when I went down to Shankpainter Pond there was no submarine in sight, and although I thought the dastardly enemy might return, they never did. Those brave, patriotic mosquitoes had saved us from an invasion. While I reported the whole matter to the Government, including the Town Clerk, nobody seemed very much interested.

One irresponsible person even wanted to know how the submarine got into Shankpainter Pond. Of course, if one stops to consider, the explanation is simple enough,—through the subterranean river, from which Shankpainter's beautiful, placid

waters flow to the ocean! I have made the journey on foot several times in the George W. Snow Special Diving Suit which I invented in 1926.

I have told this story to impress upon all thinking citizens the importance of our mosquitoes, and their value to the community. I might add that they are not only veterans and descendents of veterans of that famous engagement at Shank-painter Pond, but that they are very helpful in other respects. They help to keep out nervous systems toned up. They aid in purifying the air, as the motion of their wings tends to break down the impurities in the oxygen.

Also, mosquitoes are musically inclined. There is nothing more harmonious than a duet of these gifted creatures in one's bedroom late at night. Lastly, they are considerate. Unlike the destructive and horrid moth, the mosquito does not destroy clothing. It seems to me a great shame that so much time and money has to be spent to "control" mosquitoes.

For this reason I am thinking of writing a strong letter of protest to the President in Washington next week, and possibly to the General Assembly of the United Nations, as well, where I am sure the matter will be properly debated at length.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Intelligent Polecat

For quite a great many years I have been a great admirer of certain animals,—on friendly terms with others,—and the fast friend and companion of still others.

And it has been a great source of satisfaction to me to tell the true stories of my experiences with my many pets to my readers.

I have received scores of letters from friends, and also from people I have never met. Just the other day a young lady way down in Maryland wrote and asked if I had ever had a pet skunk . . .

Now that struck me as real astonishing, because long ago I had fully intended to tell everyone about Brutus, a pet polecat I adopted nearly forty years ago.

Brutus and I first met face to face one sunny Spring afternoon down by Shankpainter Pond. I was so surprised to see him that I dove right into the water with all my clothes on and swam for dear life to the other side of the pond.

But Brutus must have been scared, too, for he had the same idea and also jumped into the water, and swam for all he was worth toward the other side of the pond.

It was only after I had pulled myself out of the mud and reeds and onto the bank that I noticed Brutus doing the same thing. By that time I was too tired to swim back again, and I guess he was, too.

For a few minutes we just looked at each other.

Finally I broke the silence.

"Mr. Skunk," I said, "There isn't much point in us fighting or running away from each other, as I can easily see neither one of us means the other any harm,—I hope! So, we may as well be friends."

Then I stuck out my hand, and he stuck out his paw and we shook on the bargain.

After that we used to meet quite often and stroll around the edge of the pond and through the woods together.

Well sir, at the time I owned a small dory that I kept tied up by the wharf in the back of Small's Bakery, as I was doing a little fishing in the harbor to try to earn a few dollars to keep body and soul together. But things weren't going so good.

One day when I was very discouraged I was sitting all alone by the pond. I guess I was talking to myself, telling myself how poor the fishing was, when all of a sudden I happened to turn around. There was my pal, Brutus, listening very seriously.

The next morning when I started out from my house to go down to the harbor to get my boat, Brutus was waiting for me, and he walked right along with me all the way down to Small's Bakery.

It was really very funny to see how respectfully everyone treated me all along the road. It was "Good morning, Mr. Snow!" and "How do you do, Mr. Snow!" and "Ah, Mr. Snow" all the way downtown, and nobody shoved me off the sidewalk either.

As I was about to launch my dory on the beach I noticed that Brutus had dived into the water and was swimming straight out into the harbor. I yelled and waved my arms for him to come back, but all he did was wave his big bushy black and white tail at me. Soon Brutus began to swim in a wide circle,—and then he dived! For a couple of seconds I didn't see him and I commenced to worry.

But then he appeared again, only to suddenly dive again on another submarine excursion. Pretty soon he showed up again,—and this time nearer the shore. I couldn't, for several minutes, make out what he was doing.

All of a sudden there was a tremendous thrashing and frothing in the little wavelets lapping the beach. Then hundreds of crabs, horseshoe crabs, snails, bloodworms and even starfish scuttled out of the surf and beat it like sixty for the spaces under the wharf. One crab was holding his front claws over his mouth as he ran.

Then thousands of fish leaped out of the water onto the beach. All I had to do was pick them up with my hands and toss them into my dory. Within five minutes I had more fish than I could take to sell at the wharf.

Brutus, my pet skunk, one of the most intelligent animals I have ever known, was directly responsible for my wonderful good fortune. He had, singlehanded, launched the first salt water underwater gas attack in Provincetown's history.

Every day after that he used to go fishing with me, and sometimes we would venture quite a ways out into the bay and then he would jump overboard and drive quite large fish onto the

nearest beaches with his diving gas attacks. I guess we would have kept on fishing for a long while except for one thing.

A man from the Government came down and pleaded with us to stop and give up this type of fishing. He said that it was not only not sportsmanlike for us to gas the fish onto the beaches this way, but that at the rate we were going we would have all the fish in Cape Cod Bay by the end of the season, and that this might cause a severe shortage of fish later on.

So we retired.

Brutus finally settled down and raised a large family out in the woods near Shankpainter Pond, while I took the twelve thousand dollars I had made and took a long trip to India where, as my friends may know, I was for several years chief tiger trainer for the Rajah of Balapore.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Winter Of 1904-05

In these, the twilight years of my long, useful and eventful life I find myself thinking occasionally of my early youth, and especially of the winter of 1904 and 1905.

It seems like only yesterday that I was tramping through the snow in the woods out near Shankpainter Pond,—happy, care-free, and full of the same pep I have even today, only more so!

That winter started off pretty disastrously for the Snow Family. For one thing, fishing had been mighty poor, and for another thing it was one of those winters when money was pretty scarce. Then too, along about the last of October someone got into our hen coop one night and made off with all but two of our prize layers.

When New Year's Day came along we were just about scraping the bottom of the big old flour barrel that was in the corner of the kitchen.

But in spite of our troubles I was always cheerful and never gave up hope that things would go better after a while.

Somehow, though, things didn't seem to break just right, and by the fifth of January we were truly up against the hardest times I can ever remember. We had eaten the last two chickens in a stew with some parsnips, the sugar was all gone, there was about three pounds of flour left, we only had a very little dried salt fish left,—about enough perhaps for a week,—and there were only enough spuds left for one more meal.

It was with all this in mind just 46 years ago that I started out through the woods with my trusty shotgun, bent on bringing home something for the Snow Family larder.

Well sir, I hadn't been out for half an hour before I came on large tracks in the snow. Employing my great skill and knowledge of woodcraft I stalked the animal very cautiously. Finally, out near where Henry Helmer's place is today, I got sight of him . . .

Believe me, I pretty near died of fright at first, for not one hundred feet away was the biggest bear I have even seen in all my life!

Now I have always been noted as much for my quick thinking

in times of emergency, as I am renowned for my sterling qualities of truthfulness.

Realizing that it would be absolutely impossible to kill Mr. Bear with a mere shotgun I gave the matter my most careful consideration. Then, suddenly, as always, there dawned on me a brilliant plan which I proceeded to carry out at once.

Having read of the snake charmers of the Orient, and of the famous dancing bears in Mr. P. T. Barnum's circus, I knew that all wild animals enjoy fine music. So, without a moment's hesitation, I reached into my pocket, took out my harmonica, and commenced playing "The Stars and Stripes Forever" in the key of C.

Right off Mr. Bear looked up from what he was doing, and ambled over to hear the concert. When he got about ten feet away he sat down very respectfully to listen. When I finished the number he looked quite unpleasant. So in order not to displease him, I quickly commenced another selection.

After playing two or three more tunes I started to walk casually in the direction of Shankpainter Pond, playing "Hull's Victory", "The Old Irish Washerwoman", "Haste To The Wedding", and other great old-time favorites. And Mr. Bear came dancing right along behind me.

By the time we reached the edge of Shankpainter Pond which was, of course, covered with ice, not only was Mr. Bear still there, but so were two dozen rabbits, a wild boar, a fox, and four wild turkeys which had joined the parade.

Right straight out onto the ice I marched, heading for the one spot I knew to be thinnest. Believe me I sure held my breath as I tiptoed over it playing a beautiful waltz. But once safely past the thin spot I broke into a very lively Irish jig in the Key of G.

Sure enough, Mr. Bear began to dance, and just as I almost got to the bank there was a sharp report like a bomb going off, followed by a tremendous splash. I continued to play for a couple of seconds more, and then I stopped and looked around. I saw, to my satisfaction, that just what I had thought would happen had occurred.

Mr. Bear, dancing up and down on the thin ice had gone through and drowned himself, and while I had continued to play my harmonica the rabbits, the wild boar, the fox, and the wild turkeys, all hypnotized by my beautiful music had followed suit and walked right into the hole. And almost before

you could say "George Washington Snow" the ice had frozen over again!

I ran home, got the necessary tools and returned at once to the scene of my hunting grounds. After sawing a hole in the ice, I fished out the turkeys, the rabbits, the boar, and finally, using a team of horses which I had borrowed for the afternoon, the bear.

Next I skinned and cleaned the rabbits, dressed the turkeys, carved up the boar and the bear and lugged the meat home with the horse and team. We had bear steaks for supper that very night, and what we didn't use at once we hung up out in the woodshed. It kept fine until Spring, too, for that night the weather turned very cold and kept everything frozen up better than one of those new-fangled deep-freeze units.

When I got time I made a fine rug out of the bearskin, and sold it along with the rabbit skins and the boar's skin for enough money to buy another barrel of flour and another few bushels of potatoes.

Thanks to my ingenuity and skill all the members of the Snow Family enjoyed three square meals a day for the rest of the Winter.

When times got better the following Spring, and we started to make a little money ahead here and there and fishing, my mother and father gave me a nice present for my birthday, in appreciation for saving everyone from starving during the winter.

I was very touched, for what I received was a little volume of poems and proverbs, and the very first one that caught my eye read:

"One word of truth is better than ten thousand lies,
For falsehoods honest men do all despise . . ."

And to this very day, the one thing I have always disliked is a blamed liar.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

A Trip To The Moon

As I sit here comfortably before my fireplace in the late evening hours, with the shadows dancing on the wall, my thoughts drift back to the year of 1899, in the month of October, when as a boy I startled the community, drew the attention of my elders to the possibilities of travel by air, and furnished the inspiration which later sent the Wright Brothers aloft for a flight which newspapers and historians have since erroneously referred to as "the first" in history.

Being a modest man, I never indulge in parading in the time-light, but I think it time that I told everyone the truth,—that it was really I who made the first flight,—not in some remote part of the World, but right from Provincetown back in 1899.

October is the month down here on Cape Cod when we get some of those nice northwest winds which are just right for kite-flying. And this is a sport I have always enjoyed.

Even as a boy, however, I was never contented to do things unless I did them in a big way. I started building a kite during the summer of 1899, and by the middle of October I had it completed. It was probably the biggest kite ever made on Cape Cod, and it was certainly the biggest ever seen in Provincetown.

It was about the size of Matheson's Cold Storage, but very lightly made of the finest imported Chinese paper and good stout strips of cedar which a kind-hearted lumber schooner captain from Maine brought down specially for me from Kennebunkport.

For cord I had pretty nearly a quarter of a mile of stout line, and the kite was trimmed all around the edges with over ten thousand pigeon and sea gull feathers, while the tail consisted of one hundred feet of beautiful red, white and blue tassel, to which I attached two dozen cowbells.

Everyone said I was crazy to build such a fine, big kite, as I couldn't possibly fly it, but even in those early days nothing daunted George Washington Snow.

When everything was in readiness for a test flight I went down to call on old John Carnes and got permission from him to exercise his old gray mare every afternoon. For several days I

took her out trotting all over town and out in the dunes. Finally she got used to me, trusting me like a brother.

Then, one fine, crisp afternoon, when there was a nice stiff breeze I took her down to what we called Pasture Pond Meadow. There I tied the kite-cord firmly to her tail, climbed up on her back, let out about twenty-five feet of cord and started the mare off at a brisk gallop, intending to play out more line as we progressed.

But almost before I realized what had happened, Mr. Carnes' mare and I were yanked off the ground in one tremendous jerk, and there we were sailing aloft with the kite. With great presence of mind I promptly used some of the rest of the cord to tie us firmly so we wouldn't drop off, securing us to one of the ribs of the kite. After that we went soaring along more comfortably, instead of upside down.

I was pretty scared at first, but when I saw that my kite was really the first practical aircraft ever constructed and that it was in no danger of suddenly crashing to earth I began to enjoy my ascent into the sky. But I don't think Mr. Carnes' mare did. The cowbells jangled most of the time which seemed to bother her, and several times she caught my eye and looked very reproachfully at me.

We sailed right up over Provincetown, and only one person looked up and saw us, and the last glimpse I caught of him he was jumping off a wharf with all his clothes on!

It was only a matter of a few minutes before we were soaring over Wellfleet and Eastham, going higher and higher, and still higher all the time. Then I really got frightened for we shot out over the ocean and the breeze was even fresher than before, and we still kept rising and rising.

Once, way down below us, I saw a little tiny speck on the water, and almost fainted as I realized it was a big ocean liner just heading in to Boston or New York from somewhere in Europe. Then it got dark and the sun sank in the west.

It was a serious situation, and called for my most careful consideration.

Just when I was deepest in thought over my predicament, and wondering if I would ever see dear old Pleasant Street or any of my school chums again, a voice very close by said, "Hello, George".

I looked up and there was the moon right spang in front of

me, and a little old man was sticking his neck out of a window looking at me.

"Good evening, sir," said I, "Could you tell me which way is Provincetown?"

"Sure, George," said the Man in the Moon, "P'town's about a hundred miles from here. Toss me a line and make fast to my craft, and I'll tow you there. We're due over Provincetown at 12:14 you know! Come on aboard and have supper!"

So I heaved him a line and in a jiffy my kite and Mr. Carnes' mare were hitched up beside a door, and I climbed aboard the moon.

Well sir, the old Man in the Moon and I sat down and ate supper,—at least, he called it supper. All we had was green cheese and crackers.

Then we talked awhile about this and that. He wanted to know all about my kite, and I told him. Then he told me he was bothered considerably with mice up there in the moon, and that they kept getting into his supply of cheese and eating it up.

When I asked him why he didn't get a cat to keep the mice down he just looked at me and finally said, "But the cat might eat the mice, and then I would have to get rid of the cat for there wouldn't be any mice left, and then there would be no animals left, and I wouldn't have anything to complain about except having too much cheese."

"Oh," I said.

"That is a very profound statement," said the old man, as he walked over and looked out the window on the starboard side of the Moon.

He peered out into the darkness for maybe a couple of minutes and then said, "Step lively, George,—board your own craft. I'll cut you adrift in just about three minutes. Not much breeze stirring now. With any sort o' luck you ought to float down and land somewhere near Shankpainter Pond!"

He opened the door just as we were over Commercial Street. I got the mare and the kite ready to shove off and he cut me adrift. As he went sailing off he hollered, "Nice to have seen you, George. Come up again some night, son,—and say, when you do, bring some limburger with you. I get awful tired of this green cheese you know!"

I didn't get a chance to answer back because we were dropping down pretty fast, and almost before I knew it we had landed not near, but right ker-splash in the middle of Shank-

painter Pond. I cut the mare loose from the wreckage, and we both swam ashore.

First I took Mr. Carnes' property back to his stable. Then I went home and sneaked in the house and got to bed without anyone hearing me.

Next day, though, I had a lot of questions to answer. When I told my father the truth about where I had been, he got mad and was going to lick me, until he heard that some fisherman from Gloucester had seen someone on horseback flying over town the afternoon before, with a big kite overhead, and that the poor chap had been so frightened he had dived overboard, thinking at the time that it was an invasion from Mars.

Then some reporters came, asking me all about how the kite flew. They went out to Shankpainter Pond and viewed the remains of my great invention. Finally a man came down from Boston, and gave me a dollar to draw him a set of plans for another kite just like it. Later I found out he was an inventor and was working on airplanes; but he never seemed to meet with the success I encountered.

About a week after my trip Mr. Carnes lent his mare to somebody to drive downtown in a buggy. Everything went fine until a man went past the buggy on a bicycle ringing his bell. The mare ran away, the buggy got smashed, and two people just escaped getting hurt. Mr. Carnes said he couldn't understand why the mare was so skittish. He said she'd never been that way before, but that lately he had noticed all kinds of bells seemed to make her very nervous.

I never did get to pay another visit to the moon, but if I have time next summer and if I can find a couple of young boys who'd like to help me build another kite, maybe I'll tackle it and get it finished by October.

I want to go back up there and ask the Man in the Moon how in the World (or how in the Moon) he knew my name was George.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Mighty Potato

It was back in the Fall of 1923 that an adventure befell me, the like of which few men have ever experienced. The credulity of my many dear friends and patient readers may be strained to the utmost as I disclose the weird adventures I encountered at that time, but I hasten to assure each and all that the narrative I am about to relate is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, as I am accustomed to telling it:

Well, sir, for several years following my arduous wartime chores at a place called Happy Acres Farm in Eastham, I scarcely ever so much as looked at another vegetable. As a matter of fact, I avoided working in gardens, and ceased eating altogether a whole variety of plants and herbs, including turnips, spinach, carrots, string beans, tomatoes, okra, kale, beets and other reminders of my dreary years in the boondocks.

I spent most of my spare time in those days hunting and fishing in the beautiful woodlands and ponds of Cape Cod. Of course my favorite stamping ground was the territory adjacent to the shores of stately Shankpainter Pond.

Little did I dream as I was walking along one Spring evening, kerosene lamp in hand, that I was about to embark upon the strangest experience of my long and notable career. I was thinking pleasant thoughts of my early days when I trained tigers in India as I rambled along in the moonlight. All of a sudden I stumbled and fell, ker-bump, right on my face.

Startled and completely surprised, I immediately commenced an investigation to determine the cause of my downfall. Poking about in the underbrush, I presently discovered a yawning aperture in the earth fully seven feet long, and about three feet wide. Holding up my lantern, the better to examine what I thought at the moment to be a cleverly concealed bear trap, I discovered to my amazement that the huge hole was, in reality, a yawning cavity in the biggest potato I had ever seen in my whole life.

You can imagine my tremendous excitement,—my urge to further examine this monster potato,—my overwhelming desire to explore its yawning interior. For, as you may be aware,

George Washington Snow has ever been noted as much for his scientific turn of mind as for his bravery, courtesy, honesty and fine qualities of truthfulness.

Therefore, without further hesitation, I climbed down into the potato, and holding my lantern ahead of me, proceeded along what appeared to be a passageway leading to the very heart of this giant tuber.

To this day I cannot tell positively or with any degree of certainty just what peculiar properties within that colossal vegetable caused the passageways therein to shine luminously, making it totally unnecessary for me to keep my lantern lit. The further I proceeded along that passageway, down into the heart of the potato, the lighter it seemed to get. I have sometimes thought that the celebrated qualities of the water in these regions may have contributed to its luminosity.

After walking along the corridor I was following for several minutes I came to a large cavern fully thirty yards in width and at least fifty yards long, and into which more than a score of tunnels seemed to lead.

For a minute I was staggered by the size of this wholly unexpected chamber. But a second later, I was ever more startled and I must admit, terrified, when I heard a rhythmic chomping sound to my rear! I turned around to ascertain the cause of this disturbance, and lo and behold, before my very eyes was an ugly, gray-faced, hungry-looking potato worm fully the size of a boa constrictor.

Quicker than you or anyone else can say "G. W. Snow is the fastest man on two feet in this World or any other" I was on my way. And that ferocious worm, apparently considering chasing me to be a rare jest, was right behind. Just what happened next is not quite clear to this day, but halfway across the slippery floor of the cavern I stepped in quite a pile of mashed potato, and skidded to the opposite wall.

"Well, sir," said I to myself, "You and I and George Washington Snow are goners now, and that's for sure!"

I closed my eyes and awaited death calmly, but nothing happened for several minutes. Finally, I ventured to open my left optic. There, in the center of the cave, was Mr. Potato Worm, engaged in fearful mortal combat with a potato bug fully the size of a good-sized wash tub. Despite my great interest in entomology I suddenly remembered a previous engagement

elsewhere and decided to vacate the immediate premises. Edging all the way around the wall as the gladiators spread gore in the center of the arena, I ducked into what I believed was the passageway through which I had lately entered the cavern.

Running along this corridor for some yards I came upon a fork in the passage. Then it was that the awful Truth hit me. It was as plain as the nose on my face that I had blundered into the wrong tunnel. As I turned about to retract my footsteps, I heard that frightful chomping sound off in the distance toward the cave.

I listened for about three seconds, and when I determined that it was getting louder and closer I again did an about-face and scuttled up the right hand opening. This was a grave error on my part. I had taken only a few paces when the flooring seemed to give way under me, and I went shooting down, down, down into the very bowels of the botanical outrage in which I now knew myself to be hopelessly lost.

I finally landed with a mighty plop, smack dab in the middle of another one of those confounded puddles of mashed potatoes.

"Well, George," said I, "Here's another nice mess you've gotten yourself into!"

Not having anywhere in particular to go, I decided to stroll off in what I believed to be a northeasterly direction. The passageway I chose to follow was by far the roughest I had as yet encountered. It was up hill and down dale. And it seemed to wind around all through the potato. It reminded me a good deal of the Tunnel of Love in the old amusement park I once owned and operated, except for the fact that there was no water and that there were no boats, and no girls.

At long last I came to another large opening, with a dome-like ceiling. But I soon decided this was no place for me, for hundreds of potato bats streaked out of the gloomy holes up near the top of the potato and flew around me like so many humming birds.

Utterly exhausted, I crawled into another passageway, lay down and dropped off into a fitful sleep, in which I dreamed I was a Roman slave being tossed to a stadium full of wild unicorns.

I haven't the remotest idea how long I slept, but when I finally woke up, I was hungrier than I had ever been before in

all my life. Although the very thought of eating raw potato for breakfast almost took my appetite away, I finally cut myself a slab of the cussed thing and devoured it. Then I resumed my travels, this time striking out in an Easterly direction.

When I got tired I would sleep and when I got hungry I ate potato. Sometimes I had to run for my life to avoid the fearsome potato worms and other loathsome creatures which stalked through the tunnels of that disgusting tuber. But let it be said, here and now, that George Washington Snow never gave up hope.

After what seemed like a year, as I was exploring a new passageway I observed a strange flickering a long way off. I walked rapidly in this direction, and at 7:30 a. m. on the morning of November 9, 1923, after nine days of awful wandering I emerged from the depths of the largest potato ever heard of in this country.

And just as truly as my name is George Washington Snow, I solemnly declare that I found myself blinking at the sunlight on the shores of Gull Pond over to Wellfleet, a full 14 miles from Shankpainter Pond.

Well, sir, I knew my dear family would be quite worried so I hurried right home, not even so much as stopping at a farmhouse along the way to have a bite to eat, for I was certain that the fare at Snow's Towers would be quite adequate to appease a man's hunger.

Although I cannot truthfully say that there were any brass bands out to meet me as I entered my abode, I was informed that supper would be ready in a jiffy.

Eagerly I watched as a large tureen was brought in. Then, when I saw the potato soup, I fainted.

To this day I cannot look a potato in the eye. The sight of potato soup nauseates me. Mashed potatoes depress me. Boiled potatoes bring tears of sorrow to my eyes. Baked potatoes, especially cold baked potatoes, send nasty little chills up and down my spine. And all other kinds of potatoes, including sweet potatoes irritate and upset me no end.

I have even thought of having this epitaph inscribed on my tombstone:

Here lie the remains of one George Snow
Who liked his beefsteak but hated potato.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW,

The Rajah's Chamberlain

It had been my intention for some time to write about my wonderful trained flea circus which many years ago entertained the crowned heads of Europe. But recently I saw what is, to me, the most beautiful sight in the World, the first firefly of the season. So, instead, I will tell of a truly amazing experience which befell me back in 1903 when I was known far and wide as George Washington Snow, Adventurer, Explorer, Pioneer and World Traveler.

During the course of one of my many expeditions to the great subcontinent of India to capture live tigers for zoos in England, I was captured by soldiers of the Maharajah of Junkistan.

Quite naturally, my indignation knew no bounds, and I protested the outrage vociferously. But all my threats, promises of certain retribution, and angry demands for an immediate release went totally unheeded.

For 26 long, dreary weeks I was incarcerated in a tiny cell, high up in an ivory tower of the Maharajah's palace. From the one small window in this miserable prison I was, happily, able to view a portion of the courtyard below. It often amused me to watch all 700 of the Maharajah's wives out there in the mornings doing calisthenics, which I later learned, was a prescribed part of the daily routine in the establishment.

Just as I was about to give up hope, fearing that I had been completely forgotten and was doomed to spend the rest of my life in my cell,—I was summoned into the Maharajah's presence.

After 17 preliminary bows, I was permitted to approach his throne.

At the time he was eating a roast quail. His fingers apparently were very greasy, and I could tell that he wasn't in the best of humor because he said, "Hello, George, I have decided to have you boiled in oil. Then, I think I will have your head chopped off and mounted for my collection. The Sultan of Claptrap will be extremely jealous when he sees a nose like that among my little mementos. Confound this quail. Chamberlain, have the cook executed at once."

"But, your excellency," the Chamberlain said, "He will be the tenth one this month. Really, your excellency, we are running out of cooks."

"Never mind statistics, Chamberlain," said the Maharajah, "Get me a napkin. This quail is greasy. Why can't somebody around here cook quails that aren't greasy?"

And before I knew what I was saying I had said, "Why don't you have it served in sandwiches, instead?"

The Maharajah popped a monocle in his eye and stared at me for fully a minute. So did the Chamberlain. And so did the Assistant Chamberlain. And for all I know, perhaps his Assistant did, too. Nobody said anything at all for quite a spell.

Then the Chamberlain said, "Grab him, men, to the execution hall with him. You heard the Maharajah! Boil him in oil!"

But before the wicked Chamberlain's orders could be carried out the Maharajah himself shouted, "Halt! I have changed my mind. Release my friend, Mr. Snow, immediately. He shall be my guest and trusted confidant. As a matter of fact I hereby order that he shall hereafter be courteously and properly addressed as Chamberlain. Seize that miserable wretch over there who has been witless enough to allow me to eat greasy quails for the last ten years without thinking of sandwiches."

So the soldiers grabbed the ex-Chamberlain and carried him off screaming and thrashing about. I later learned that, in the confusion resulting from lack of definite orders as to how to dispose of him, he craftily contrived to escape, and eventually made his way safely out of the country, carrying with him several trainloads of gold from the State treasury.

But the ex-Chamberlain's antics were of no concern to me. I now studiously applied myself with might and main to learn all I could about the Chamberlain business, and if I may be so brash as to say so, in a short while I had completely mastered the situation, and had that palace running like a factory. Everybody was very happy, too. No more cooks were executed. The Maharajah always got quail sandwiches, the soldiers got more days off and I substituted the George Washington Snow Course of Esthetic Rhumba and Ballroom Dancing for the ladies' calisthenics period.

Everything went along nice and smooth for pretty near six months until one morning the Maharajah called me into his

private throne room, where he spent a lot of time sitting on the throne.

"George," he said, "I have just received this letter."

He handed me a piece of paper and I read these treacherous words thereon:

"Dere Maharaj:

"Yore new chamberlin thinks hes smart but he ain't no great braine. If he wuz so gud hed hav modernized yore pile of junk you cawl a paliss by putting in eletrick lites.

Sined, a friend."

Right away I recognized this as the work of that rascally ex-Chamberlain and was quick to say so. But, to my astonishment, the Maharajah put his monocle in his eye and glared at me. I could see his ulcers were on another rampage.

"Mr. Snow," he said in his iciest tone, "I shall give you exactly one week to have electric lighting installed throughout the palace. I very much fear, George, that your failure to accomplish this relatively small favor for me may foretell some very unpleasant event for you, like getting stepped on by the royal elephants or something."

That ended the interview. I spent the next 24 hours being depressed. I was even more depressed the following day when His Excellency asked pleasantly how the work was progressing.

"Very slowly," I said.

"That is too bad," he said, and the next thing I knew he had ordered the fires lit up under the pot of oil in the execution chambers.

Two more days slipped by and I made my will. As the fifth day trickled past I lost my appetite.

On the sixth, the next to the last day, the old Snow urge to do or die rekindled the fires of inventive genius in me. As I sat on my private veranda overlooking the valley I suddenly sat upright as I noticed the millions of lightning bugs which were flitting about in the twilight.

With that characteristic energy, for which I am noted, as well as for my courtesy, bravery and fine qualities of truthfulness,— I called out the palace guard, and when all the soldiers and servants were assembled before me I spoke my piece.

"Men," I said, "And also all others. It has become necessary to immediately secure five bushels of fireflies, or lightning bugs.

That means that every one of you must sally forth at once, so that by tomorrow morning this quota will be filled."

Then, very cleverly, I added, "Those who don't bring back large quantities of fireflies will absolutely not receive ice cream for dinner this Sunday!" And, I didn't add that if they failed, I wouldn't be around to see that they didn't.

By 6 a. m. the next morning I had nearly 700,000 lightning bugs or just a few short of five bushels. Now it was a race against time. All hands were turned to tying lightning bugs' wings up, so that they lightened continuously instead of just part-time. Shortly before five in the afternoon this gigantic task was finished. Then thousands of fireflies were placed in empty jelly glasses, which I cleverly suspended from the ceiling.

When the Maharajah came down into the main hall of the palace for supper at quarter of seven the last light was hung up in place.

As he sat down to a fine meal of hot quail sandwiches I ventured to call his attention to the new "electric lights." He glanced up at them and said, "Oh, yes, by the way, George, I saw a picture in a book this afternoon. It was a picture of a locomotive. Build me one, and have it ready by next Thursday when the Sultan of Claptrap comes to call."

"Yes, sir," I said, and although I haven't the slightest doubt but that I could have performed even this prodigious feat, I sat down that night and wrote out my resignation as Chamberlain of Junkistan. Enough is enough, and too much is more than enough. And besides, the fire under the oil pot in the execution hall was still lit off.

And, in the wee, small hours of the morning, I, George Washington Snow,—Adventurer, Explorer, Pioneer and World Traveler, also lit off for the border. And, as my predecessor in office had managed to do, I, too, traveled in state, having cashed a draft on the Maharajah's treasury for 300,000 rupees, which I charged against a new department of the government which I had just started, the Electric Light Commission.

My trip back home was uneventful, except for a few encounters with man-eating tigers, cobras and bandits. And two months later I was enjoying a life of ease and comfort in my own home on the beautiful shores of Shankpainter Pond right here on dear old Cape Cod.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Marvelous Horse Car Railway

The other day I was surprised to hear someone remark that there had never been any street cars on Cape Cod!

Right away I recalled that many years ago I was the sole owner, president, construction superintendent, passenger agent, motorman and conductor of Snow's Horse Car Railway, a scenic line which ran over the dunes from a point near Shankpainter Pond, almost out to the beach at Race Point.

Probably only a very few of the old timers will recall this business venture of mine, and my faithful horse, Tony. But to me it seems like only yesterday that we were doing a brisk business out there.

People in the old days used to come from miles around to ride on my horse car railway, and inspectors from some of the big street car lines in Boston, New York and other places said my railway was one of the most efficient they had ever seen.

Well sir, when I had first decided to go into the street car business, folks had jeered and laughed at me, and the banks had all refused to lend me any money to help get me started.

But little things like that have never stopped George Washington Snow, who has always been noted for his determination, business ability and fine qualities of truthfulness!

First, I built the car. It was twenty-seven feet long, eight feet wide, nine feet high, and had ten red, white and blue wheels. It seated twenty people and was so modern it even had a cook stove at one end so that picnic parties could cook their lunches while we were on our trips to the beach.

Next, I laid the track. Having no money to buy steel rails, or to hire help, I had to make my own special wooden rails. It took quite a while to do it, but when I got done even my bitterest critics readily admitted that Snow's famous patented, felt-lined wooden rails provided "the smoothest ride in the World", as advertised.

Finally, I had to print my own tickets and make my own uniform to wear on the car. When that was done I was ready to start doing business.

The Opening Day of Snow's Horse Car Railway was a tremen-

dous success, with a brass band down from Brockton to provide music.

One of the proudest moments of my life came after the Selectmen had dedicated the waiting room at the Shankpainter Pond Station. With twenty passengers aboard my horse car, I said, "Get up!" and while hundreds of onlookers cheered, Tony, my faithful horse, began pulling us on our first trip over the scenic railway.

The trip was made in very rapid time. Through an extremely clever bit of foresight I had laid out the tracks so that the trip to the beach was practically all downhill. So, most of the time, Tony didn't even have to pull the car, but rode on the front platform with me, enjoying the beautiful scenery as the rolling dunes flashed by!

The return trip was equally rapid and enjoyable, and by a slightly different route. However, due entirely to my skill in laying out the track, the major portion of this run was also downhill. And when the car coasted to a halt at the Shankpainter end of the line, with Tony and me on the platform, everyone cheered and clapped, while the band played "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

The story of my success in the street railway business spread like wildfire. Bankers and people with all sorts of money begged me, on bended knee, for the chance to invest in my scenic Horse Car Railway. But I turned a deaf ear to all these entreaties, and soon was so wealthy that I bought several street car companies, mostly in Turkey, Montana, Greenland and Tibet. I also opened a factory in Peru which manufactured my now famous noiseless, felt-lined wooden track.

The efficiency of Snow's Horse Car Railway became an international byword. At the height of our fame I had Tony so well trained that all I had to do was stay in the waiting room at Shankpainter Pond Station and sell tickets, while he made the trips to the Beach and back with the passengers.

However, all good things come to an end sooner or later. Snow's Horse Car Railway was no exception. The coming of the automobile put quite a crimp in our business. But dirty work,—plain low-down dirty work, did the rest.

One afternoon late in the Fall when Tony failed to return from the Beach on time I became quite worried. Finally I walked out on the tracks to see what had become of our car. About half a mile from the Shankpainter Pond Station I found

the awful evidences of a terrible catastrophe. There, at the bottom of Dune Hill, splintered and smashed was our beautiful car. And Tony, the faithful horse, had perished in the wreck, having remained at his post on the platform to the very end.

Grief stricken though I was, I immediately telegraphed to New York, London and Paris. Within a week the most famous detectives in the World were working on the case. A short while later one of the Scotland Yard men had solved the dreadful mystery.

It had been a villainous bit of spite work. A jealous banker whom I had refused to allow to invest in the concern had secretly purchased several thousand woodpeckers from an ornithologist in Idaho, and had let them loose in the woods near Shankpainter Pond.

The woodpeckers, not knowing any better, had then proceeded to drill holes in my wooden tracks. So, it had only been a question of time before a dreadful accident such as had occurred would take place.

When the rascal realized that I was about to have him arrested he fled to South Africa, and has not been heard of since.

For a while I thought of repairing the rails and continuing the operation of Snow's Horse Car Railway, but a combination of events took place at about this time which shelved the plan.

First, we had a severe gale and a good bit of the track got covered over by several feet of sand. Next, I had an opportunity to become a harp salesman for a reliable music concern. And having been a great lover of music since early childhood, especially harp music, I decided to take the job.

Of course, having once been a horse car driver and conductor, I occasionally get the desire to again take the reins and to say, "Step lively please, plenty of room in the rear of the car,—Giddap, Tony!" When this urge begins to creep over me, I generally find that the best way to overcome it is to eat a plate of favas and go to bed.

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Awful, Destructive Moles

The other day an old lady said to me, "Mr. Snow, I enjoy reading your stories so much! And what I like best about you, Mr. Snow, is how you love all the animals so much. I think that is another fine trait you have, Mr. Snow. In addition to being honest, courteous, fearless and truthful, you are a lover of all the dumb animals!"

Now, although such compliments come my way nearly every day, naturally they please me. But this one troubled me. I thought it all over for several days, and I feel I must tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth,—as I am accustomed to telling it. Even at the risk of losing favor with this fine old soul, I must keep the record straight. I am an ardent lover of dogs, cats, horses, pigs, canaries, sparrows, chickens, ducks, cattle, sheep, and about one hundred and seventeen other animals which I have listed at home.

But, though it may seem an awful confession to make, I detest moles. As a matter of fact, for the past twenty-six years I have been engaged in a life and death feud with a particularly blood-thirsty and malicious family of moles. Upon several occasions they have endeavored to break my legs, undermine my dwelling and steal my chickens. Therefore, I must confess that I do not care for them and that I have taken strong precautionary measures from time to time to ward off their devilish attacks.

The trouble all began back in 1924 one Saturday morning in early Spring. I got up early, as is my custom, and went out to hoe a few rows in my garden before breakfast. But upon arrival in the potato patch I discovered that a mole or several moles had so burrowed hither and yon, here and there, and around and about, and that entire section of my garden was ruined.

For several minutes my violent rage was very likely a terrible sight to behold.

But pretty soon I calmed down and studied the situation. Then, being of a charitable, tolerant and kindly disposition I said to myself, "Oh, well,—they are put poor dumb creatures who know no better. I shall bear them no ill will. Their depredations have probably been wholly unpremeditated and unintentional. I shall live and let live!"

The moles mistook my charitable attitude, however, as a sign of weakness, and the next morning when I went out to the garden, the tomato section and the pea department were completely in ruins. It was almost more than human endurance could stand. But I gritted my teeth and told myself to turn the other cheek, to forgive and forget, and to hope sincerely that no more harm would befall my beautiful garden.

I might as well have wished that the ocean waves would stop breaking on the beach. When I went out the following morning to do my garden chores, there was no point in continuing with them. The garden was completely destroyed. This in itself was bad enough, but what lighted the cold fires of anger which have continued to burn within me for twenty-six years was one huge mole track which rambled all over the yard. At first, it was so big I didn't quite comprehend its meaning.

But later in the day, as several people passed by my gate and stopped to look at it, and laughed, and laughed and laughed I became curious and reexamined it closely. It was then that my cup of bitter unhappiness slopped completely over. I actually broke down and wept, for that huge mole track spelled out in crudely formed letters, joined together, "George Snow is a silly old fellow!"

It was then that I declared war on the wicked, garden-wrecking moles who had not only invaded the precious precincts of the Snow Estate but who had twitted me for being kindly and forebearing.

For the next several months I employed every scientific means at my disposal to rid myself of the mole menace,—arsenic, bear traps, smudge pots, and even poison gas. But very little headway could be made.

Of course I have strong suspicions that it was no mole which hurled a rock through my kitchen window. But if my theory is correct, the wicked, malicious moles were indirectly responsible, at least, for one of my bear traps caught a stray tramp one morning. He was very indignant, and calmed down only after I had released him and let him go. At first he had threatened to sue me, but when I had in turn threatened to have him arrested for trespassing, he departed. It is my belief that he returned later and was responsible for the rock incident.

The moles, well aware of my deadly intentions, for a while steered clear of me and I thought all was well once more.

However, in the early morning hours of June 3, 1932 I was

rudely awakened by what I thought was a slight earthquake. I lay in bed for a long while and nothing further happened. Then I dozed off again, only to be even more rudely awakened possibly half an hour later when a second and more severe shock occurred. I rushed out of the house and gazed at my dwelling. It was all lopsided and the northeast corner seemed to have settled badly.

When, after making discreet inquiries, I learned that none of my neighbors had felt any earthquake, a terrible suspicion flashed through my mind. Employing several dozen laborers I commenced excavating, and before nightfall,—lo and behold, I found what I had feared I would discover. The ground underneath my house was honeycombed with mole tunnels. It had been a deliberate attempt to collapse the structure. The foundations were, by this time, so unsteady that I was forced to move the house nearly thirty feet from its old location. Before doing so I poured a concrete base for the structure, to a depth of twenty feet. It was expensive, but throughout the years has proved to be the best kind of mole insurance.

Next I took to burning smudge pots, especially near the hen houses. But even this didn't prevent damage there one night, and the kidnapping of several of my prize layers.

In retaliation I ran a hose line from Shankpainter Pond to a large mole burrow and for two days pumped water into it. For a while nothing further happened.

But in August, 1944, an attack was launched in force one night as the moles burrowed all through my victory garden. I counterattacked by blowing goldenrod pollen into several of the burrows with an air gun attached to a tank of compressed air. It was with great satisfaction that I distinctly heard a whole series of subterranean sneezes.

And so the battle between Snow and the moles goes on, year after year, relentlessly, ruthlessly, with no quarter asked and none given. I have related this brief narrative to my readers merely that I may keep the record straight. While I am very fond of most animals I believe it only proper to correct any wrong impressions that may have gotten around that I am a great lover of all animals. This is false. It is an untruth. It is erroneous. I abhor moles.

As a grim reminder that I am constantly at war with these miserable creatures, I have a large sign hanging in my wood shed up on Race Road. It reads: "Remember the Ala-moles."

GEORGE WASHINGTON SNOW and

The Trained Sea Gull

One morning a number of years back while I was standing down at the end of Town Pier observing the beauties of Provincetown Harbor I noticed a sea gull in distress some two hundred feet from the end of the wharf. All my best instincts caused me to immediately spring into action.

Without a moment's hesitation I put out in my punga and within a matter of seconds came alongside the exhausted bird. Only then did I discover the difficulty. A large goosefish was holding the gull by its left leg and attempting to pull him under to a watery grave. The moment I reached out to rescue the bird, the evil fish bit off the leg and swam away before I could kill him.

I took the injured gull ashore and to my home where I bandaged his injured leg and in the weeks that followed I fed him several times a day on filleted haddock.

Tommy, as I named him, had a splendid recovery, became a wonderful pet, and seemed to comprehend everything I told him. He was very intelligent, and took to following me around everywhere I went, hopping along on his good leg. Everyone used to admire him. He loved ice cream, too, and every day I used to make certain that he had at least one or two chocolate cones.

We were great pals and I thought a whole lot of him. He used to put out burning cigarette butts that he found on the pier. And I even taught him music. Many an evening as we sat at home together he would whistle "Mother Machree" or "Sweet Adeline" whilst I played the accompaniment for him on my cornet.

One day, however, I missed Tommy and inquiring for him at home learned that he had flown off in the direction of the Town Pier, evidently looking for me. I hurried down to the wharf at once, but when I got there all I could see was a large crowd of people laughing very hard.

When I looked up in the sky I was surprised to see Tommy headed towards Wood End Light with a large red balloon tied to his tail.

Well sir, when I saw this, tears came to my eyes, for I knew

I was standing there saying good-bye to Tommy, the best friend I ever had. This dastardly deed had been the work of some naughty boys who thought they were doing a smart thing.

The next day I read in the paper that a dying gull had been picked up in Times Square in New York by an early morning pedestrian, and that this gull just before finally expiring had appeared to be trying to whistle a tune which witnesses said sounded like "Mother Machree".

The only conclusion I have ever been able to come to is that my Tommy, carried along by that devilish balloon tied to his tail feathers finally crashed into the Times Building and then plunged to earth, and in his dying moments thought of me and tried nobly to whistle one of the songs I had taught him.

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