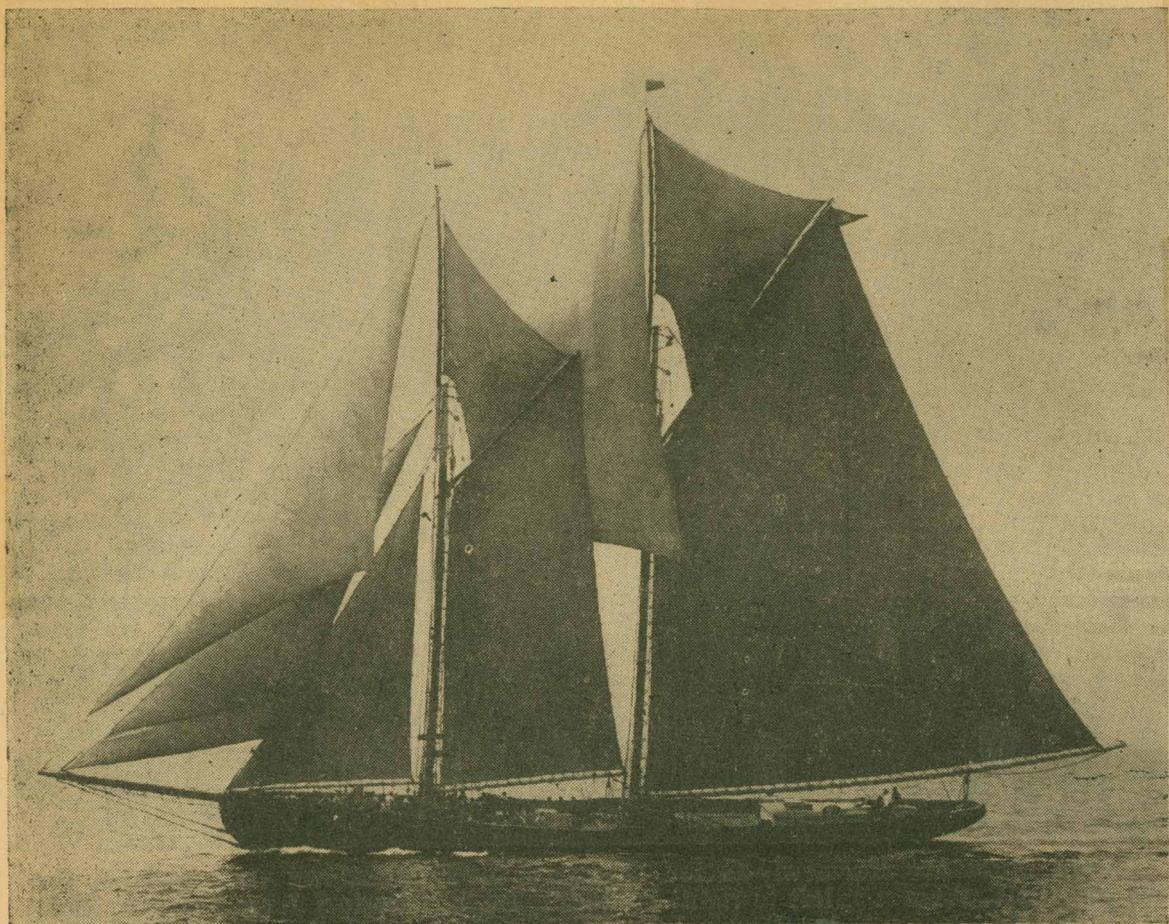


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## Rose Dorothea Had Broom At Her Mast In August 1907



by Grace DesChamps

Fifty-nine years ago — the date was August 1, 1907 — Provincetown was making merry and with good reason. A Provincetown fishing schooner had just come gallivanting into the harbor with a broom tied to her mainmast — proclaiming she had swept all before her and was coming home with the hottest trophy a schooner could hope to snatch.

The two-masted schooner, Rose Dorothea, commanded by Captain Marion (Bertie) Perry — a local skipper with a local crew — had beaten the best that Gloucester had to offer and had come home in permanent possession of the Lipton Cup. It was that coveted trophy that went only to the fastest schooner in a race of her peers.

Waiting on the old railroad pier that preceded MacMillan Wharf was a brass band warming up and a load of new brooms, one for each member of the winning crew to carry over his shoulder.

Captain "Bertie" rode in a carriage and the crew marched behind him through town, brooms over their shoulders, as the crowd cheered and the brass band filled the streets with joyful din.

It was "great day" for Prov-

incetown and one man who won't forget it is Manuel (Cowboy) Marshall, the only surviving member of that illustrious crew. He was 83 on August 5, and daily he watches the crowds of 1966 from a bench outside Town Hall, musing on the difference in the present scene from that of nearly 60 years ago.

Fate chose Cowboy (every fisherman in Provincetown has a nickname) for something of a role in the race. Cowboy 24, was standing at the masthead of the Rose Dorothea shifting her topsail in the heat of the race, when a loud crack sounded aloft and the topmast broke.

### A Near Miss

"It's a miracle," Cowboy will tell you, "that I wasn't thrown off or hit by a falling spar or

sail, which must have weighed a ton. My dory mate, Willie (Flame) Jason was on deck just below.

"He sprang up the rigging and together we tied and made fast the broken spar and torn canvas. It was all done in a matter of minutes. The vessel hadn't listed or luffed or even budged a speck from her course — just kept sailing along as though nothing had ever happened. And she won the Lipton Cup!"

They say Captain Perry was so mad at the spar letting go that he raced the more furiously now not so much to win the cup as in his anger to get back to Boston "and let the spar-makers know what he thought of them."

The vessels were returning from Eastern Point to Boston Light, on the return course of the race, when the mast let go. It was the second bad spar Captain Perry's spar-makers had supplied the Rose Dorothea. The first had snapped when the vessel had been new and on a trial run three years before. But broken topmast and all the

Rose Dorothea had nothing to fear from a Gloucester schooner — her only real competitor, the James W. Parker, now far behind. The runner-up was no less than another Provincetown schooner, the Jessie Costa.

The Jessie Costa gave the Rose Dorothea race enough but just before the finish line she had had to make a tack and had sagged off. The Rose Dorothea swept past the finish line a dozen lengths ahead of her.

After the race both schooners left Boston for Provincetown at the same time but it was the Rose Dorothea that came skimming first around Long Point, pushing a bow wave in front of her, as the Jessie Costa came on five miles behind.

The Provincetown Advocate of August 8, 1907 reported that the Lipton Trophy and \$1100 in cash prizes "for vessels of first-class have come our way — \$650 to the Rose Dorothea and \$450 to the Jessie Costa." It was clean-up day for Provincetown and the brooms were out.

### Made 14 Knots

The Rose Dorothea could make 14 knots or more in a fair wind and it was nothing for her, says Cowboy Marshall, to leave her haul of fish on T Wharf in Boston in the afternoon "and be home in Provincetown in time for supper." (And Provincetown fishermen eat an early supper).

The cup won by the Rose Dorothea is in the Provincetown Historical Museum and a plaque commemorating the race stands outside Town Hall. The 30-inch cup, called "a masterpiece of silver-gilt and enamel," stands on an ebony pedestal, with a silver shield on which is inscribed: "Presented by Sir Thomas Lipton, Bart, K.C.V.O., Boston Old Home Week, 1907."

A shield on the other side of the pedestal reads: "The Fishermen's Cup, Massachusetts Bay, 1907. Won by the Schooner Rose Dorothea, Provincetown, Captain Marion Perry, August 1, 1907." The big race was a highlight of Boston's Old Home Week with the great Lipton Cup the prize.

The Rose Dorothea was three years old at the time. Captain Perry, one of the most successful deep-water fisherman on the Atlantic coast, had had her built in Gloucester and had named her for his wife.

The captain took his wife with him when he went to see his newly completed ship on the stays at Gloucester. His professional eye

took in approvingly the slim lines that made for speed and the sturdiness he knew made her seaworthy but he balked at the "fanciness" he had allowed himself to be roped into sanctioning below decks.

### A Handsome Cabin

A Boston newspaper reported: "The cabin is a roomy apartment with polished panels and gilded mouldings and walls of handsomely grained woods." Opening off it, one found "a snug stateroom, with toilet and other essentials, lighted of course with bulls' eyes of thick glass, and provided with a lockert bunk and ample stores of good bedclothing."

The forecabin was the talk of fishing captains — "as unlike the quarters provided an old-time fishing crew as could be imagined." Instead of the "greasy, gloomy black hole" of the older schooners, it was "a commodious cuddy, flooded with light, and bright with brass rolls and flowered curtains that serve as screens between rows of sleeping bunks." As for the galley, it was a wonder — "filled with all the convenience of a modern hotel kitchen."

### Skipper Called It Nonsense

If Captain Perry was suspicious of all this nonsense and ready to have it all taken out, his wife,

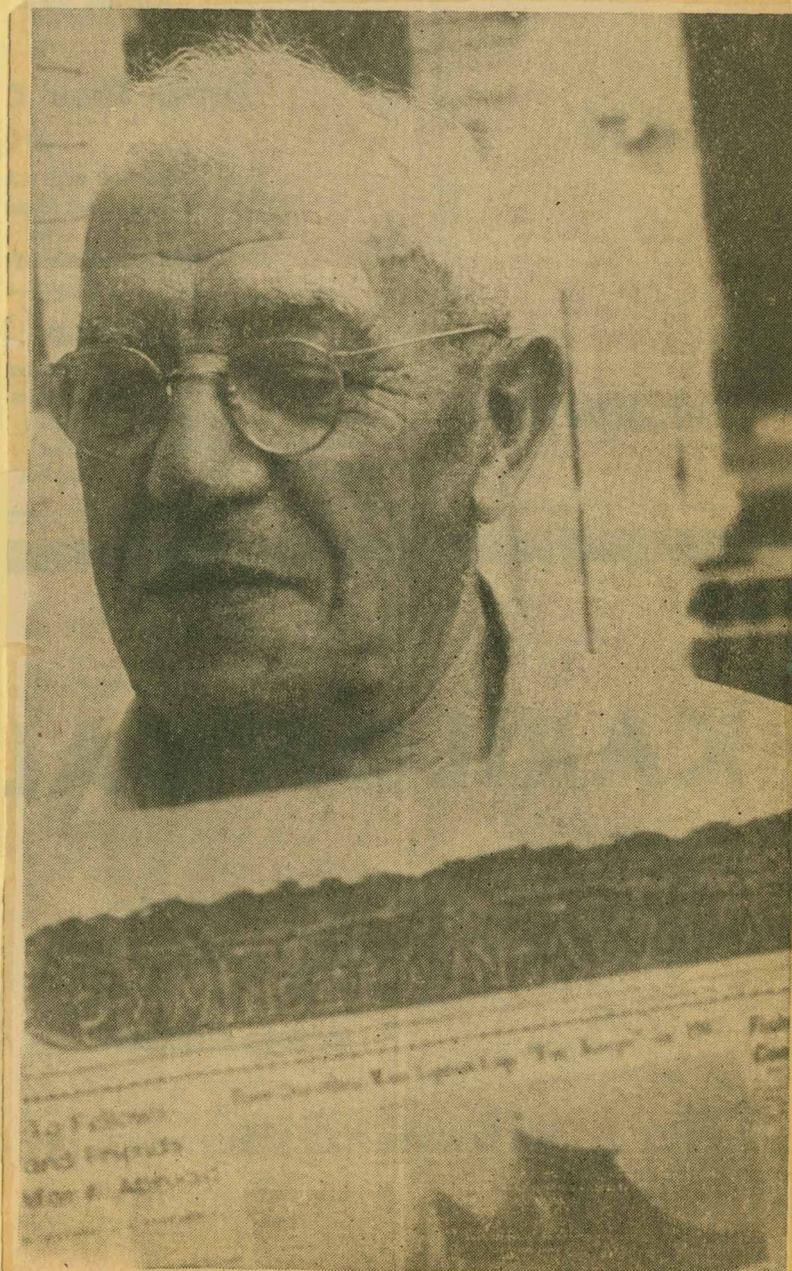


photo by Paul Koch  
Cowboy Marshall was crew member of the Rose Dorothea when she won the Lipton Cup in 1907.