

## From the Archivists

*Jennifer Stone Gaines, Curator*

Woods Hole Historical Collection and Museum

### Indexing *Spritsail*

As we have passed the ten year mark in our publication of *Spritsail*, two people have undertaken the arduous job of indexing all the volumes. The story of this pair and their work on the index transcends the simple word "job."

It began with a phone call to the museum from the reference librarian at Falmouth Public Library, telling us of two people looking for a volunteer job. One of those people was Carly Dandridge, a personable, bright woman in her forties who substitutes at the Falmouth Library. The other was her father-in-law, Ned Dandridge, a retired English professor, specializing in technical writing, now in his eighties and living at the Royal Megansett Nursing and Retirement Home. We had previously met another member of the family, David Dandridge, Carly's brother-in-law, who lives on the Vineyard, is a captain on the Steamship Authority vessels and had loaned to us a beautiful map of Penzance Point before it had been developed. Since then he has written a marvelous review of our new book *New England Views* for the *Vineyard Gazette*.

Carly and Ned began working on the indexing project in the Fall of 1997. There have been the inevitable delays due to illness and bad weather, but almost every week Carly picks Ned up at Megansett, stops to pick up coffee and a muffin for each of them, and continues on down to Woods Hole. With the aid of his walker, Ned and Carly move into the downstairs room of the Woods Hole Public Library, our

parent organization, where they set up shop. Carly turns on her laptop computer, Ned opens *Spritsail*, and they are off on an intense hour and a half session. Sometimes Ned will use our lighted magnifying glass, other times the day is bright enough without. Ned will dictate; Carly will enter the information into the computer. Ned is dedicated to the task, wanting to use the time intensely with no distractions. Carly, equally dedicated, facilitates the process. They work together very well as a team focused on their goal. They are now working on Volume 10. Often Carly has driven Ned out to sites that are mentioned in the articles so that the material will be more familiar to him.

To us, Carly stands as the ideal of a good person working at a worthy task. Not only is she facilitating this index which will be a great benefit to us, but also she is validating her father-in-law's role as a useful person with a sharp mind, uniquely talented for this task. We can only all hope that there is someone like Carly in our lives when we are in our eighties.

We thank both these Dandridges for the work they are doing for us and for the example they are setting. We eagerly await the completion of this great and useful project they have undertaken.

### Weathervane Notes

As hoped, our weathervane article in the Winter 1999 issue of *Spritsail* has brought more information to light. A phone call from Ron McLane tells us that he and his father were working as carpenters for Dr. Redfield at the time that Dr. von Arx finished his swordfish weathervane. At Dr. Redfield's

request they took on the job of mounting the weathervane atop the old Methodist Church.

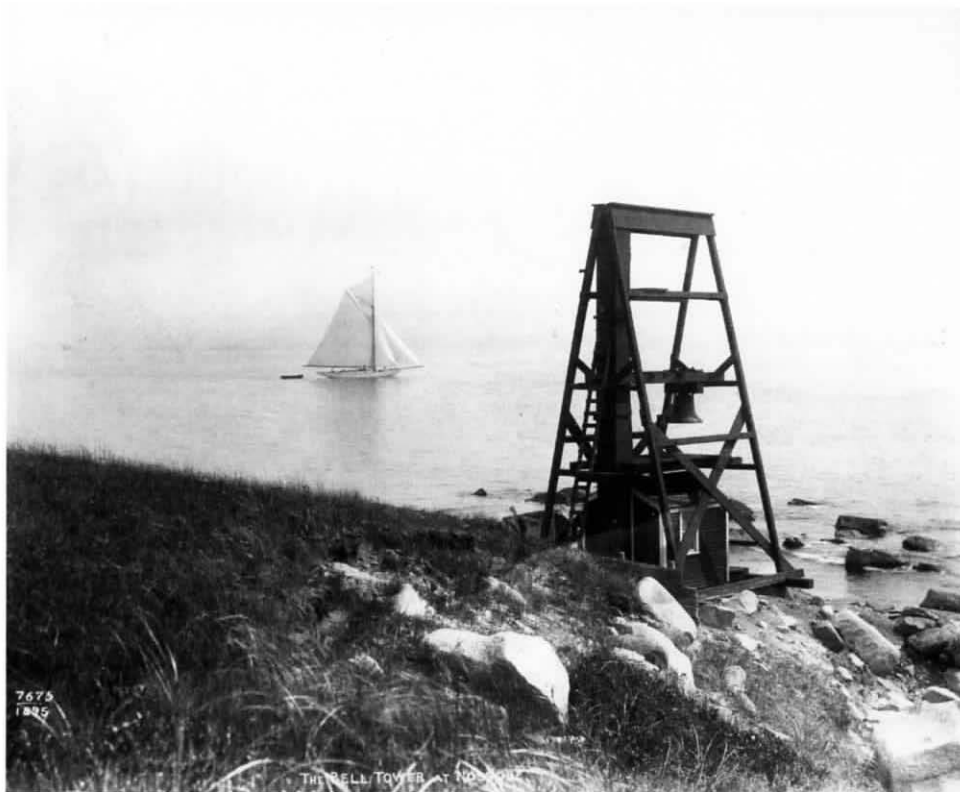
Mr. McLane remembers with great clarity the staging they built around the base of the cupola and the ladder that went from there up at a steep angle on the roof of the cupola to the height that seemed to make the installation of the vane and pole just barely feasible. The first time he climbed up there, and lifted and balanced the pole up over the cupola, it teetered and slipped, almost, but not quite fitting into place. The second attempt found him again lifting the whole unwieldy top-heavy apparatus over his head, matching its foot to the mounting at the tip of the

cupola, and bingo! it slipped into place. One can still hear the gasp of relief over the decades.

Many thanks to Mr. McLane for this addition to our weathervane documentation.

### Baldwin Coolidge News

Sales of our prize-winning publication, *New England Views, The Photography of Baldwin Coolidge (1845 – 1928)* have been wonderful, and our exhibit in Gallery 1 featuring Baldwin Coolidge was such a success last year that we have held it over as a grand reprise. Are you looking for a special gift? We have an ample supply of books in our gift shop.



A graceful gaff-rig topsail cutter slips past the Nobsque Bell Tower. The bell was struck twice in quick succession every 30 seconds in fog. From *New England Views, The Photography of Baldwin Coolidge (1845 – 1928)*, p. 13. Courtesy WHHC.