

ST. ANN'S STAITH, WHITBY, ON THE YORKSHIRE COAST.

THE YORKSHIRE COAST.

A Holiday Walk Across the Moors to Whitby.

Whitby, August 20.

The Yorkshire coast has the wild, breezy, silent moors behind it and glorious views of the sea eastward. From the low sand dunes of Lincolnshire it rises beyond the Humber to the glittering white cliffs of Flamborough Head. At Piley there is a broad ribbon of sand where a long reef of rock cuts its way into the sea, and at Scarborough there is a ruined castle high above the sweep of curving beach and the maze of holiday shops and luxurious hotels. With alternating streaks of gray and red the cliffs mount higher from Hayburn Wyke to the Peak, and beyond that noble headland is the tranquil reach of Robin Hood's Bay, with a road steep as a ladder slanting up from the beach into a topsy-turvydom of gray houses and red tiled roofs. Perhaps this oldtime smuggler's village is less quaint and picturesque than it was before it was modernized for the convenience of tourists; certainly it is less like Dutch Volendam than Staithes, with its tumble-down hovels, its short-skirted fishwives and its precipitous rock faces, where a draper's boy heard the waves calling to him and ran away to sea to make a name as Captain Cook. Between Staithes and Robin Hood's town there is a range of lofty cliffs, and among them, with a ruined abbey and a stone church high on the inner wall, is ancient Whitby, with the Esk losing its way westward in a tangle of wind-swept moorland. Happy is the old fashioned traveller who has faith in his legs and follows patiently the trail among the rocks, dells and wilds mile after mile, with the breath of the sea on the high moors around him!

A long way off he sees the landmarks of the East Cliff, St. Mary's Tower and the crumbling Abbey, while the glints of red and blue underneath are Whitby. There is a point of view for every famous ruin in England. Tintern, disappointing from without, is transfigured into stateliness and loveliness from within, with the green turf in place of the tessellated pavement and with masses of ivy softening with verdure the cold gray lines of the matchless arcades. Malmesbury triumphs gloriously over time, decay and patchwork restoration when the majestic south porch is closely approached. The time-worn tower of Fountains Abbey must be seen abruptly at the turning of the road through the park, or its sombre beauty, isolated majesty and aloofness from the workaday world will not be appreciated. Whitby Abbey lacks neither charm of color nor refinement of decoration, but its austere simplicity needs long lines of perspective. When it looms up far afield on the crest of the cliff it seems in perfect accord with its environment. There is the solemn silence of the wild moorland; there is the loneliness of the sea, and there is the pensive melancholy of the thirteenth century ruin, with its splendid west screen, its shattered aisles and transepts and its crumbling choir. It fits in with its scenic setting precisely as the Escorial seems to have sprung out of the mountain defiles, because the spirit of the stern, rockgirt barrens is in it. It matters not who St. Hilda was, or what was done in the storied abbey when it was harried by Danes or Norsemen, or when the tower fell and the ruinous nave was left desolate. The silhouette of the mediæval temple high among the rocks between the moors and the sea is complete in its sombre grandeur. On closer approach the rough-hewn steps of a Via Dolorosa will be counted, architectural details revealed, ancient and modern wayside crosses, discovered and a sixteenth century manor house forced into prominence; and then it will be known that the subtle fascination of the gray abbey is an enchantment of dreamy ranges of distance.

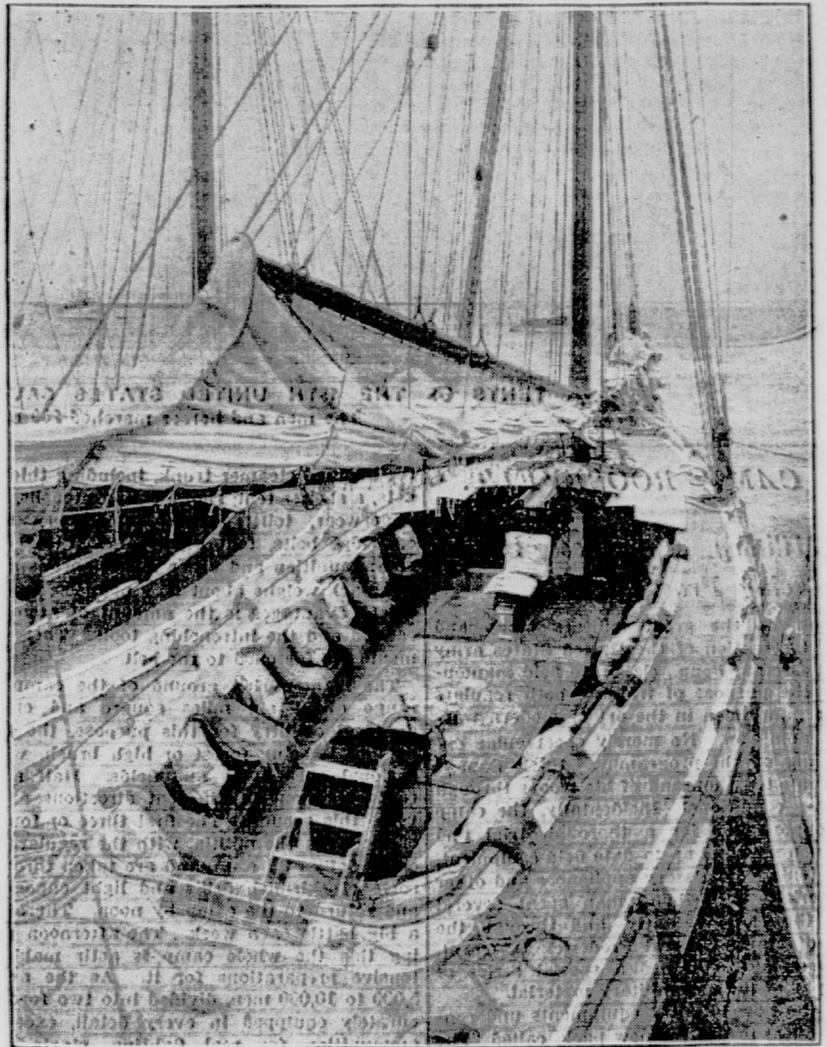
So also is it with the low stone tower of the Parish church. When it is seen across the moors it has a primitive dignity, and, jutting

out of the shattered walls of the abbey, like a vine out of the hollow bole of a dead oak, it quaintly suggests the survival of religion from the decadence of mediævalism. On closer view, when the parapet of the East Cliff has been scaled, it proves to be an ugly edifice without form or distinction, and with the original Norman features marred by restoration clobbering, and when the porch is passed there is a fantastic jumble of staircases, galleries, high-backed pew boxes, a pillared canopy for the squire and a three-decker pulpit for the vicar, until every arch is littered with furniture and every window is blocked with timber.

The old haven under the hill cannot be seen from the distant moors. The bell shoals must be approached as far as the ropewalk, and then the older quarter of the port is disclosed as a long, rambling street under the East Cliff, with a tangle of lanes on either side and a clutter of red tiled peak roofs pierced with chimney pots above the gray gables and dormers. The narrow Esk, with fishing craft aground in mud banks at low tide, is crossed midway by an old stone bridge, with steep corkscrew streets behind it. There are two stone piers with lighthouses at the river mouth, and on the west cliff opposite there are huge hotels, long esplanades, a pretentious spa, and all the garish contrivances and sideshows of a modern summer resort. The old port has been ruthlessly modernized, but it has not yet lost its beauty of color and quaint aspect. Painters love its dull reds, soft greys and blue mists, and with the herring

boats in the shallows, the overhanging cliffs and the winding stone stairways and the background of moorland, pictures compose themselves. It must have been quainter and more primitive twenty years ago, before the river terraces and stone piers were filled with swarms of trippers and summer boarders; yet the fisherfolk are still here; there are picturesque rookeries and corners; the uplands are covered with heather, and the coast line is as bold and rugged as the river scenery is tranquil and lovely. Whitby, with all its modern innovations, retains the aspect of a Dutch fishing port. Holiday traffic

fishwives used to see by moonlight in one of the high abbey windows, has not been an efficient patron of the old town. She has not protected the industries of the port and the natives have not known how to do it for themselves. Captain Cook, whose house in Grape Lane, near the bridge, is now a curiosity shop, used to bring his ships into harbor and some of them were built here. There was commerce in those days, but it has gone, although the stone jetties reach out their long arms to draw it in. There was once a prosperous shipbuilding trade in the lower Esk, but the last yard was closed long ago.



A TYPICAL ATLANTIC CITY SAILBOAT WAITING TO BE HIRED BY THE HOUR, DAY, WEEK OR SEASON.

has not taken away its heritage of beauty and simplicity. St. Hilda, whose white face in a shroud the

Whitby was one of the centres of the whale and seal fisheries during the eighteenth century, and its sailors were among the hardiest seamen in Greenland waters. The herring fleet is still harbored among the mud banks, but it is a meagre remnant of what was once a flourishing marine industry. During the Elizabethan period the alum beds were worked successfully, but the business has been discontinued. Large supplies of crude jet were found among the shales of the coast cliffs, and hundreds of skilled artisans were employed in polishing it and converting it into ornaments. Fashions have changed since the early Victorian period, and there is no longer a demand for these trinkets. Some of the factories still stand, but the wheels are no longer running, and jet is numbered among the lost industries. St. Hilda has been too busy mending her shroud among the moonbeams on the cliffs to look after the trades of the humble fisherfolk. The industries have been going down steadily, while the abbey walls have been crumbling. Is it strange that the impoverished town has turned to Dame Fashion's shrine when all other resources have failed? It has sought to convert the old fishing port into a summer resort by building spacious hotels, multiplying villas and lodging houses, and working up, by hook or by crook, a catchpenny holiday traffic.

It can hardly be expected that the sentimental tourist who has been tramping twenty miles across the moors for glimpses of the Yorkshire coast will like the new order of progress in Whitby. He will condemn with fine irony the garish architecture, the open-air concerts, the golf links and the motor cars as sordid concessions to the commercial spirit, and will follow the trail of the painters to Runswick and Staithes, where fishermen are contented with their lot and live as the Whitby sculler used to do before whaling, shipbuilding, alum working and jet polishing gave out and they were forced to minister to the pleasures of the leisure class and to set up sideshows for trippers. Yet, even as he goes, he will cast a long, lingering glance behind him at the desolate abbey, which has witnessed the pathetic decline of the fortunes of the ancient fishing port and its fantastic masquerade as a modern watering place. The saintly Lady Hilda may be a name as legendary as Caedmond, and her face may never be seen peeping through the broken lancet windows with their delicate tracery, but the temple on the white cliff embodies the spirit and genius of the Yorkshire coast.

I. N. F.



ROBERT L. GERRY.

This son of Commodore Elbridge T. Gerry had an opportunity the other day, when he "came a cropper" at the hunt of the Monmouth County Hounds at Newport, to show the kind of pluck that wins. His horse slipped at the first jump, and together rider and beast rolled over. Dazed, Mr. Gerry lay for several minutes on the grass beside his mount. Spectators ran up from all directions and assisted him to rise. Although bruised about the face and body, he insisted on mounting again and continuing after the hounds. He took the following jumps in flying style, in his efforts to be in at the "kill" and succeeded in overtaking all except Prince Cantacuzene, to whom he was a close second. After the hunt he found that his bruises were sufficient to prevent him from engaging in the sport again for several days. Mr. Gerry is a member of the Knickerbocker, Metropolitan, Racquet and Tennis, New York Yacht and Harvard clubs.

RARE EDITION

Prof. John James Audubon's Quadrupeds of North America. Portfolio, 149 plates; elephant edition; published in colors in 1844. Perfect condition. Interested purchasers address T. W. FRANKLIN, 826 Broadway, N. Y. City.