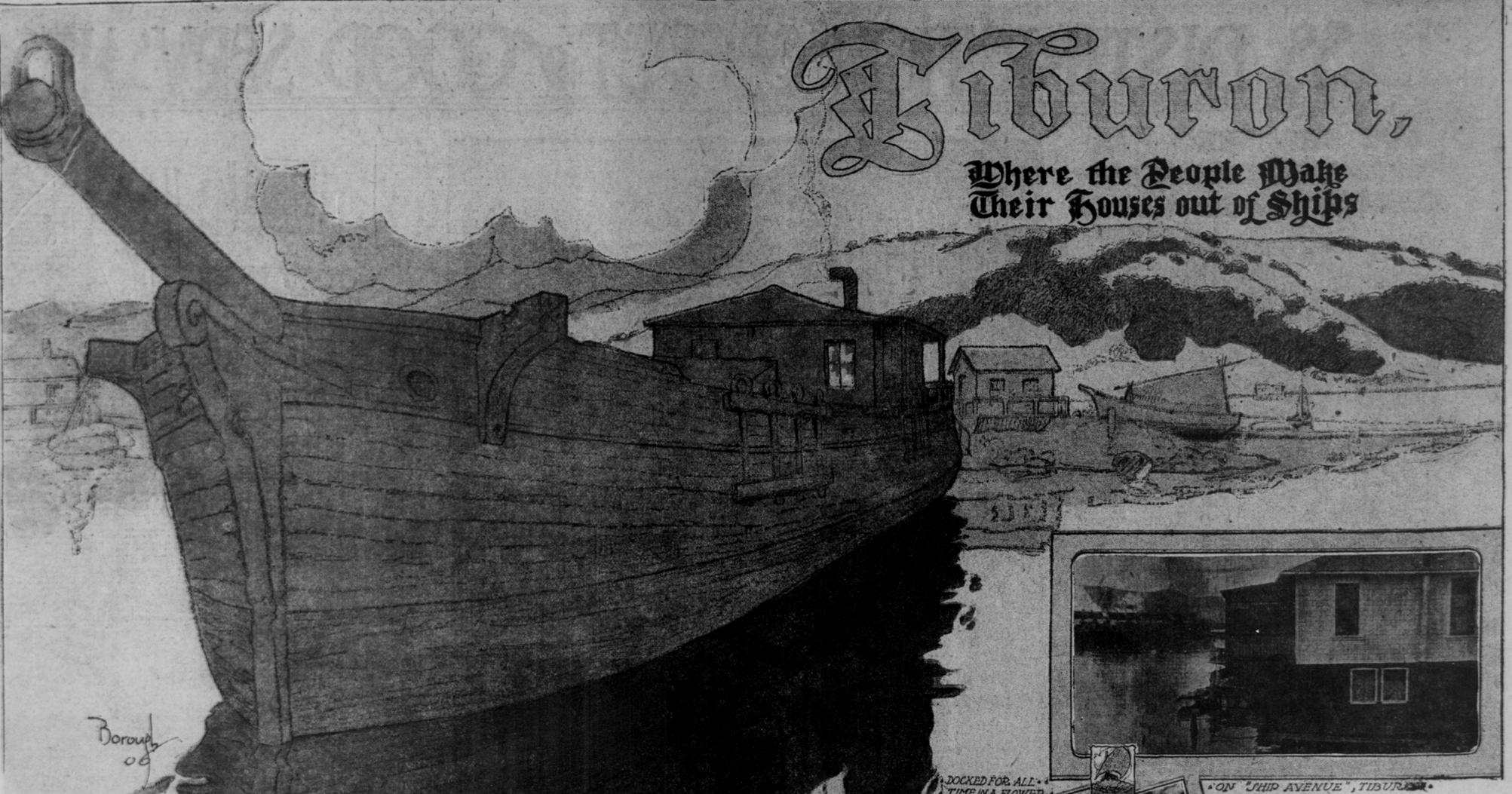
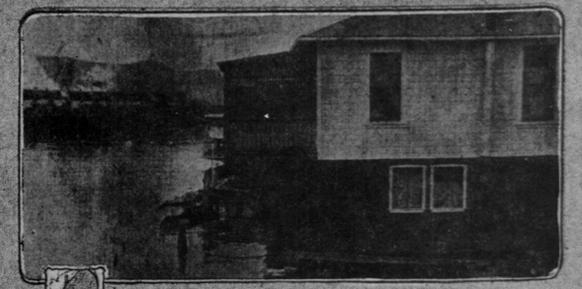


Tiburon

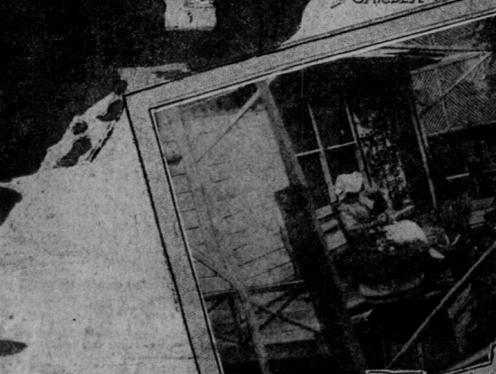
Where the People Make Their Houses out of Ships



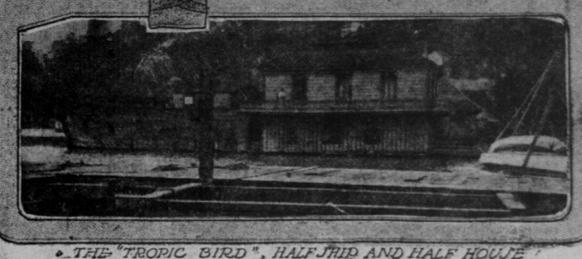
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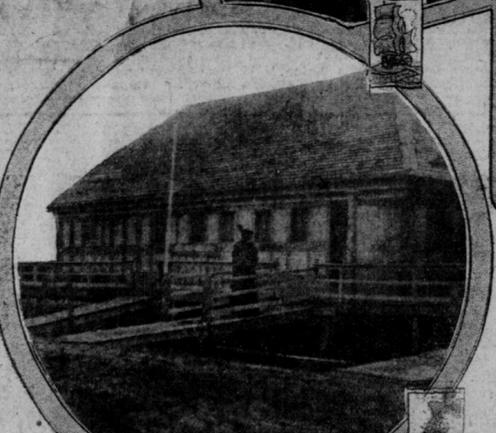
ON "SHIP AVENUE", TIBURON



DOCKED FOR ALL TIME IN A FLOWER GARDEN



THE "TROPIC BIRD", HALF SHIP AND HALF HOUSE



THE CABIN OF THE "CHINA", NOW A COZY HOME



INTERIOR OF THE "CHINA" CABIN, NOW A PARLOR

After all, I am unable to say whether the evolution of the natives is from the aquatic to the terrestrial, or the other way round. I leave that point to the scientists. Not that it makes any difference; they are charming just as they are, I think. Knickerbocker, the gentle historian of New York, more than hints that the old Dutch housewives from their excessive cleanliness and their constant dabbling in water had developed web feet. The natives of Tiburon do not show any such development, at least none visible to the casual observer; if they are evolved from mermaids and mermen, or if they are tending in that direction, it is impossible to say. It is in their houses that the evolution shows.

Taking the view that the evolution is from water to land, which may be entirely wrong, then my friend the boatman comes at the very bottom of the ladder. In kindness and gentleness he comes at the top, which is saying much. Never was there such open-hearted hospitality of such open-hearted answering of questions as in the village of Tiburon. Old yarns were revived, rusty doors cracked on their hinges for my benefit; young girls ran after me to say that "We have found the key, you can get in now"; children showed me the sights and chased away the dogs that wanted to chew my personal belongings.

In one respect my friend the old boatman was different from the others; that was his very real shyness. Because it was so genuine I shall respect it and not mention his name. He had done the honors of the town the last time I visited it, and had provided me with a lunch of crackers and cheese on the beach, regretting that I preferred this outdoor repast to any indoor attraction that the place could offer. He regretted, too, that I gratefully but firmly refused to carry home the remains of the feast—something less than a ton—to the city, and in his turn refused regretfully, but with finality, the illustrated magazine which, when I saw his interest in it, I would have left with him.

"Now where do you live?" I asked, when I had seen all there was to see.

"Oh, I live over there somewhere," he replied, waving his hand largely and impartially.

"But where is the house? Where can I find you, when I want you to take me out in your boat?"

"Oh, you can find me easy enough." And with that I had to be content.

The next time I came my eyes were attracted to something that I had missed before—a little rowboat with a tent over it, made of sails, supported by spars tied together at the top. The boat was lying a few yards out from the shore, but the children, who had been following me, obligingly explained to you just had to cross that plank to the raft and jump over to the other raft, and there you were. They also told me that an old man lived in the boat, and had lived there all the time, and had lived there ever so long. Evidently he was a particular friend of theirs; they were so sure of my hos-

table reception should I visit him. It looked risky, but "Faint heart," etc. It was three steps on the shaking, billowing board, then the broad sooty of the large raft, then the more uncertain quantity of the other raft, and I had reached the entrance to the quaint dwelling and stood face to face with the boatman, who was working his broad shoulders out of the tent opening.

There was surprise on both sides, but on his there was something more—pain at the treachery of a friend, shame for me who he thought had played him a trick, confusion at being found out.

"No, you can't come in. No, I don't live here. No, no, no, you must not come up; why, you can't climb it," he ended triumphantly.

It was an unfortunate line of argument. He should not have questioned my accomplishments in the way of climbing. The next moment I stood on the infinitesimal deck, for I did not yet take his protest seriously. There were two tiny rooms, one just long enough to hold a couch and wide enough to admit of passing between the couch and the tent wall; the other, very much more tiny, holding the owner's pots and kettles. It was "all upset," he told me, and I must not on any account look in. After admitting by his apologies his ownership, he again perjured himself by vowing that it was not his, then admitted that the boat was his and that he had fixed it up to go hunting on the river, but did not live in it except once in a while; then owned to liking to be on the water. The last statement I accepted as the real thing, and in view of his confusion I think the recording angel blotted out his gentle perjuries.

There was dinner cooking in the galley and sending out odors of things frying. As it was quite evident that I was not to be invited to partake I left him alone with his midday meal, while I retired to terra firma. Presently he looked out.

"What are you doing?" he said, suspiciously.

"Trying to take a picture of your house."

More protests. Then, more suspiciously: "The young fellow that was with you this morning, what was he up to?"

"He took a picture of your house, but I want one with you in it. Just stand where you are, please."

"No, no, no, you are not going to put an ugly old fellow like me in a picture."

"You are handsome enough. Just stand still."

"But I spoke to the empty air. He had disappeared within the tent, and peered cautiously out once in a while to see if I was still there."

An hour later I met him in his Sunday best, carrying a big bunch of red berries as an offering to his friends in the city. After an hour's reflection the wily old man had seized upon what he felt to be the best line of explanation. He had lived in his boat only since the fire; for they have had a fire in Tiburon, too. I assured him that I quite understood, which was true, and made all the apologies I could think of. The hurt look did not leave the kind old face, but I got so much of forgiveness as to be invited to come over and get some red berries another time.

Now, by what principle of evolution on land or sea should a man who prefers living on the water be ashamed of being caught in the act? It was all

very funny, and then again, somehow, it wasn't.

From living in a boat on the water the next step—always supposing the evolution is from the watery element to the solid earth—must be that of living in a ship on land. One of the sights of Tiburon is the old ship *Tropic Bird*, which, lying half on land and half on water, houses three families. All manner of stories cluster around the *Tropic Bird*, chief among which is the tradition that she was once in the slave trade. This would be charming if true, but there is reason to think that it is the creation of a lively imagination, easily stimulated by the sight of the old hulk itself. There is nothing in the world which so incites fancy to spin yarns as an old ship with all its traditions of adventure and trips to strange climes now lying stiff and stark on the beach.

One thing is certain, the *Tropic Bird* is of a venerable age, so great that her timbers are falling to pieces and crumble to the touch. She has been a brig in her time, which alone is a certificate of age, for, as everybody knows, brigs are not built now. Her last owner was Nick Richard and H. E. Ozouf, who employed her in the coast freight and codfishing business, but very soon after they had bought her her old bones gave out and she could no longer be patched up sufficiently to be safely used. So she was run into the cove at Tiburon, weighted with stones and made into a swimming tank. This was before the Belvedere days, and the *Tropic Bird* became the original summer resort of the locality.

Then, after ministering to the pleasure of the gay and the giddy for a while, she was made into a humble home for plain people. The owners ran her up on the beach so that her stern was firmly stuck in the sand, while the bow pointed out over the water. The deck, all except the part before the mast, was cut away, and on the ship's bottom was built a large house, with the entrance from high steps on land. It is just a square, ramshackle building, and does not make the most of its advantages at all, but behind it what is left of the old ship's deck forms the quaintest back porch

any house ever had. The bowsprit, which always seems such a particularly tempting perch, is still there, though crumbling, and the view over the bay and the hills is one that a millionaire might be glad to barter some of his millions for. The tiny forecabin and galley of the *Tropic Bird* are still standing and come in handy as a woodshed.

The basement of the house is in the ship's hold and is the place which must be seen. Even if it never sheltered slaves, it is possible in the dark room with its roof supported by water-logged timbers, with the pitty-pat of the dripping roof and the swish-swash of the waves lapping over the floor to get quite a deliciously creepy sensation. There is quite a possibility of horrors lurking in the dark corners of the prison-like room. Nor is there lacking the "ray of hope" in the shape of a big hole in the forward end of the ship letting in a flood of light to play on the dark imprisoned waters. The bottom of the *Tropic Bird* is half on and half off.

The additional floor, which has been put over a portion of it, is sometimes covered by six inches of water, which would be enough to frighten even a refugee away, but considering the aquatic habits of the natives it is not surprising that there is a family living, eating and sleeping in the little room bounded by the in-

curving walls of the ship's hold.

Come to think of it, such a house has its advantages. Housework must be simplified to essentials. No need of sweeping the floor; the waves will do all that. The dishes might be set out on the firmest of the remaining planks to await the coming of the high tide, which would wash them clean and restore leaving them to dry in the breezes that blow through the cracks of the ship. The children could be set in a tub to keep them out of mischief and

ship which furnishes the house, but it is taken completely out of its native element and set firmly on the dry land. It is the social hall of the liner *China*, which, after a long and able course of travel between port and the Orient, was broken up and burned for her copper fastenings. Before this ignominious fate befell her the cabin was lifted off and after being sold to Mr. Richard, who had rented the beach from Mr. Ker-shaw and built most of the houses on it, was made into a dancing hall. The spacious hall, which now is divided into three rooms, was ornate with white and gold, more magnificent than any a fine ocean liner in these days, the high raited roof being particularly effective in giving an air of style.

The white has become gray and the

gold is dingy in the one room which retains the original finish, but it is easy from its faded and elaborate elegance to reconstruct a picture of the time when the cabin of the *China*, serving in all its second capacity of usefulness, was gay with the flutter of pretty dresses and resounded with laughter and light music, while the moonlit beach afforded an unexcelled promenade in the balmy summer evenings.

But the ferry has come and with it the traffic from the city. Society no longer contented itself with treading a merry dance in the cabin of an old liner and it was soon deserted for more fashionable resorts. Then the cabin entered upon its third era of a useful life. It was partitioned off into living rooms, and kitchens were built on. It has been serving in this capacity these many years, and it is only a few weeks ago that it was disfigured with a steep shingled roof that almost destroys its nautical character. Only a close observation of the doors and windows will distinguish it from any of its neighbors.

The arks and houseboats are familiar. In Tiburon the owners of such boats who have forsaken their nomadic life, but still cling to the water, have effected a compromise that is half of the land and half of the water. One of the most delicious of these homes was a big houseboat moored so that its deck and a bit of flooring on the beach formed one square that was veranda and garden in one. Steps led down from the roof to this nautical Eden. Marguerites grew close to the water's edge; gay flowers were set out in pots, and ivy was trained over the cabin of the boat.

Every bit as marine in aspect are the houses on either side, and it is not always easy to tell the arks from the houses. The nautical style of architecture prevails altogether whether it floats on the water or whether it is supposed to be undetachable from the shore. All hang over the water supported by an underpinning of timber. This being so, the narrow veranda or passage running across them is naturally furnished with a railing like that of a ship, and one might very easily, leaning out over the water, imagine one's self on the deck of a ship. On the "deck" is set a little square house, painted a different color, preferably red, and rounded like the bow of a ship, carries out the illusion perfectly. Everything is shipshape and Bristol fashion even to the steps slung on a very nautical looking chain to the side of the house, by means of which the inhabitants can easily descend to their boats.

In between these houses the various boats from the magnificent houseboat to the sorriest old scow with its shanty on the deck, combined to form what might be called *Marine Row*. It is a unique row and as picturesque as it is unique.

By Hanna Astrup Larsen

It seems a great pity that the good people of Tiburon and their homes did not fall under the observation of a real scientist instead of a mere writer of stories. A student of evolution might find much to interest him in the apparently amphibious character of the inhabitants. "Amphibious," you may find by a reference to the dictionary, means "capable of living in the air or the water," and the people of Tiburon, if they do not actually live in the water, at least come as near to it as possible and give to their dwellings as nautical a character as possible.

It is an opportunity for an essay on the influence of environment which it really is pathetic to pass by. If I might hope that this humble story could call scientific attention to the phenomenon, perhaps even to the extent of causing such an essay to be written by a wiser pen, then the ink used in printing it would not be wasted