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Farther down east. (Yachting in Maine) *James E. Minnoch.*

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Many sailors must think that the sailing world ends just east of Schoodic Point in the Acadia National Park. For reasons I have never understood, few pleasure boats sail the waters east of this point. It is rare indeed to see boats enter the lovely bays of Petit Manan Point. I do see sailboats offshore from time to time, but it is uncommon for them to come in to enjoy the marvelous scenery and quiet anchorages.

It is true that in the past Petit Manan lighthouse station regularly recorded the greatest number of hours of fog annually in the U.S. It is also true that this area of Maine, 15 miles northeast of Bar Harbor, is subject to strong and peculiar tidal currents and that there are numerous rock ledges and shoals. But these inconveniences shouldn't discourage the able and adventurous yachtsman from enjoying the pleasures of cruising the waters off Petit Manan Point. Here are beautiful islands, sparsely settled shorelines, many isolated, protected anchorages and tranquility and solitude awaiting the intrepid explorer.

Two bays abut the peninsula: Pigeon Hill and Dyer. Numerous islands dot the area; some have seasonal residents, but many are uninhabited. There are several small fishing hamlets with workboats riding at their moorings, while summer residences are scattered along the mainland's shoreline. Fuel and water can be obtained at the lobster pound near Chitman Point on Pigeon hill Bay. And though there are no marinas or special facilities for cruising boats, many good, secluded anchorages are to be found.

The 123'-high lighthouse, located on Petit Manan Island, 1-1/2 miles from the mainland, is the focal point of a cruise here. The water between the light and land is shoal and considered dangerous without local knowledge. A narrow channel is marked on the west with a bell buoy, but two major current flows collide at this bar and the water is frequently tumultuous.

Last summer our dead reckoning from Winter Harbor was right on target in a thick fog when we made the bar marker buoy "WB." It was strange to see our 33' Bristol sloop Springtide being jostled over the bar by cross currents; you must beware of large sea swells here which could bottom out a boat. The alternative to these problems, of course, is to go around the lighthouse.

Pigeon Hill Bay, to the east of Petit Manan Point, should be entered at the lighthouse with nun "2" to starboard as it guards Whale Ledge and Egg Rock. Petit Manan (pronounced Titm'nan locally) Bar will be to port and you'll see a good-size bay extending six miles in front of you. Bois Bubert (pronounced bo BEAR) Island is on the east side of the Bay. Just six summer houses sit on this island, which is heavily forested, with a little pond at its summit (178' up) that you can hike to.

Parker Head, to port as you enter Pigeon Hill Bay, is a cove with several fishing boats and a cluster of small houses. This is a typical settlement of fishing families. When passing Parker Head take care to locate and avoid the large fishing weir that is set just outside the cove.

Most of the land south of this settlement is now part of a National Wildlife Refuge. Just beyond is Pigeon Hill (elevation 317'), which is great fun to climb. At the base of the hill a cemetery is directly across from the path that will lead you to the top in about 20 minutes. The sweeping view is spectacular, taking in dozens of islands, the lighthouse and land and water for many miles up and down the coast. Blueberries flourish here in July and August and the tiny All-Souls-by-the-Sea Chapel, unexpectedly appearing on a winding back road, has an indefinable charm and grace.

Continuing on up the Bay pay attention to the narrow channel at Chitman Point and array of rocks eastwardly. The local advice is to come in at low water so you can see navigational hazards. Entering the inner bay you'll see the lobster pound to port, but note that there is but two feet of water at the dock at low tide. Gas, diesel and water can be obtained here. This is a pleasant mooring where Bob West will probably sell you some lobsters at a most reasonable price, and the mud bottom is excellent for anchoring.

The land is forested with fir, spruce cedar, white birch, hard maple and other indigenous species. Petit Manan Point itself has few trees and is always swept by a fresh breeze. Much of the shoreline is rocky; there are no fine sandy strips as most people envision beaches. When landing in a dinghy it is prudent to haul it up beyond the tidal range if you expect to be gone for a while; otherwise, it may soon become flotsam as the surf grinds it on the rocks.

The best months to visit here are July and August when the normal daily temperature is above 70[deg.] F. The rest of the year the weather is extremely variable with heavy fog on an average of 60 days per year. The mean annual wind velocity is ten knots, and is fairly consistent each month.

I have always been entranced with the changing scene at Petit Manan. On any given day, you can expect to find fog, showers, bright sunshine, beautiful cloud formations, changing winds and varied temperatures. The constant movement of the 12' tidal

range enhances the picture.

I especially enjoy the scene during a low spring tide which occurs near the times of full moon and new moon when the range of tide tends to increase. Then you can see beach that otherwise is covered with water. Plants that need air just twice a month become exposed, huge mud flats open up and you can seek out the elusive razor clams and the big "hen clams" or quahaugs. A dinner of mussels can easily be picked in a half-hour, then steamed and eaten with garlic and butter. You can walk along this new intertidal-zone shoreline looking in tidal pools for crabs and miniature sealife. The beachcoming is terrific.

Conversely, on a high water spring tide, the shoreline you usually stand on will be covered with water and it seems it will never stop flooding. A northeast gale at spring high can add three feet to the level. This undermines some trees, eventually causing them to tilt at precarious angles. Logs, seaweed and all manner of seaborne things are left high and dry when the tide recedes. The magic of these tides seems to make every shore observer stare seaward for long periods, and fishermen are prepared with their nets to catch the huge schools of herring that come in with the flood.

An island which we like very much is Jordan. About 100 acres in size, with high vertical cliffs rising up on its lee side, Jordan lies four and a half miles northeast of Petit Manan Island and one mile off Pond Island, where the movie "A Summer Place" was filmed. For many years the island was used for sheep grazing. The animals would be put there in the spring and retrieved in the fall; no shepherd was necessary as there was nowhere for the sheep to go. Today, thousands of seagulls call Jordan home.

Petit Manan Point is located in the town of Steuben in Washington County, an area often called the "Sunrise County of the U.S." as it is the easternmost territory in the nation.

First organized in 1975, when this territory was part of Massachusetts, Steuben was named for Revolutionary War hero Major General Steuben. Baron von Frederick William Augustus Ferdinand Steuben (1730-1794), you may recall, was the Inspector General of American troops in the Revolutionary War. I find it incongruous, in a way, that the town named after the famous drillmaster should be populated by New Englanders who almost universally display the trait of fierce personal independence. Get to know these people on a cruise to Petit Manan and you will find a lifestyle as unique as the land and its waters.

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