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PIRATES, BEWARE! FAEROE GUNS STILL GUARD AGAINST RAIDS

Above the ancient fort commanding Thorshavn flies the flag that proclaims the islands a Danish possession; yet the islanders proudly announce that they are not Danes, but "men of The Faeroes." Settled largely by Norwegians, the archipelago remains under Danish sovereignty through an oversight in the treaty which was drawn up following Norway's secession from Denmark in 1814.

VIKING LIFE IN THE STORM-CURSED FAEROES

BY LEO HANSEN

With Illustrations from Photographs by the Author

A MOTHERLY hen clucking to three wild ducklings strangely out of place in her landlubber flock!

Such a picture Denmark presents, as she scratches vigorously for better times for Iceland, Greenland, and The Faeroes. To the last named, particularly, Denmark has given much attention because they have been made economically sick by changes in world trade.

Four days out of Copenhagen, past the southern point of Norway, beyond the Shetland Islands, we came at last to Thorshavn, capital and chief port of The Faeroes, for which Denmark labors. As the *Tjaldur* came to anchor behind the sheltering arm of a new concrete breakwater, much evidence of Danish aid was visible. I saw in the town, but out and away from the haphazard roofs of the dwellings, the new hospital and the high school. Over the barren hills went a procession of Government telephone posts bearing the wires which now make possible communication with six of the 17 inhabited islands. Indeed, the *Tjaldur* itself is an evidence of Danish aid, since the Government helped the islanders buy the trading steamer which plies regularly between Copenhagen and Thorshavn.

Still, The Faeroes remain practically unchanged by modern civilization and untouched by the tourist. Modern civilization can find no foothold on their windy cliffs; there life can exist only when modeled on ancient, primitive patterns. And so the islanders, forever wrestling with waves and winds, have little time for the tourist or his money.

THE FAEROES RIDE THE STORMY ATLANTIC

Like the giant battle fleet of some latter-day Thor, The Faeroes ride the stormy Atlantic, straining each at its anchor. First comes Myggenaes, in the "destroyer" class, taking against her 370-foot bow the Atlantic's biggest waves. At her stern is Vaagö, a "battle cruiser" by comparison. Then come the "dreadnaughts" on a broad fan front: Syderö, Sandö, Strömö (the

largest), and Österö, with the smaller Kalsö, Kunö, Bordö, and Viderö ranging along on the right. The group also contains even smaller islands (see page 610).

Each of these islands rises from the sea with flanks as sheer as a ship's sides and with a plateau top, flat like a ship's deck. In all The Faeroes there is only one small, sandy beach of a hundred feet or so, a beach which is considered such a remarkable gift of Nature that the big island of Sandö takes its name from the tiny strand.

Basalt cliffs rise majestically on all the islands. Some tower nearly 2,000 feet above the restless sea, and against these black barriers the Atlantic sends her mighty waves, to break with explosive force and burst into probably the most remarkable clouds of spray and surf to be found in all the world (see page 608).

SAFE HARBORS A RARITY

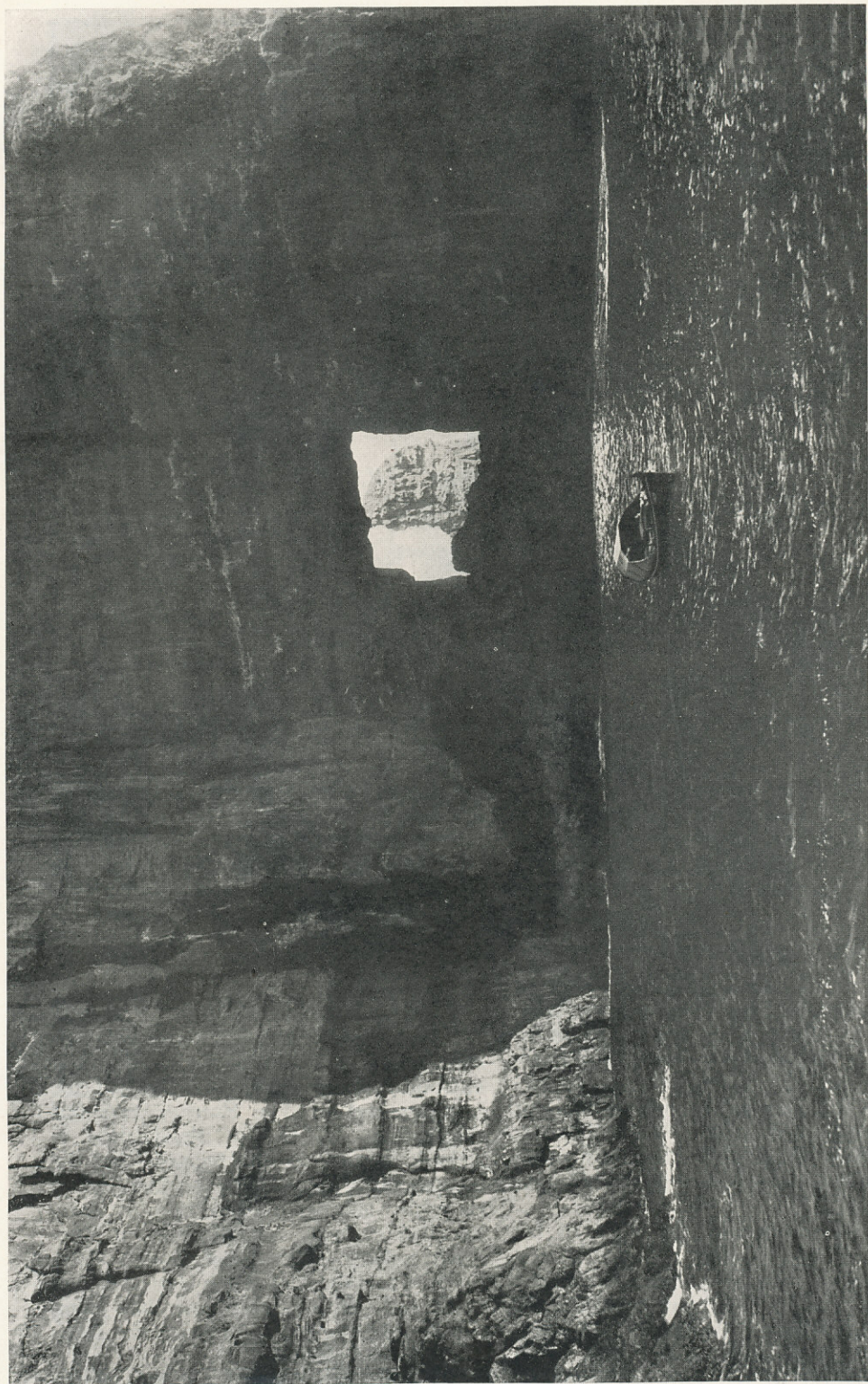
Thorshavn I made the headquarters for nearly 200 trips to photograph the Faeröese people, the astonishing cliffs of their islands, and the populous colonies of sea birds inhabiting those cliffs. It is more accurate for me to say that I "started" on 200 trips, because many were futile. Bad weather in The Faeroes is so very bad, tide rips are so tricky, and safe harbors such a rarity, that often my companion and I were compelled to turn back to our base.

In Carl Bech, the official Government veterinarian in The Faeroes, I found at Thorshavn a staunch assistant, who made possible my photographic survey of the archipelago. He was born in the islands and his early training was such that he swims like a seal and climbs like a mountain goat. Education in the veterinary school at Copenhagen had, however, opened to him a world unknown to the provincial islander. His duties, which require a professional visit to every inhabited island in the archipelago at least twice a year, draw on his boyhood sailing experience as well as his education.



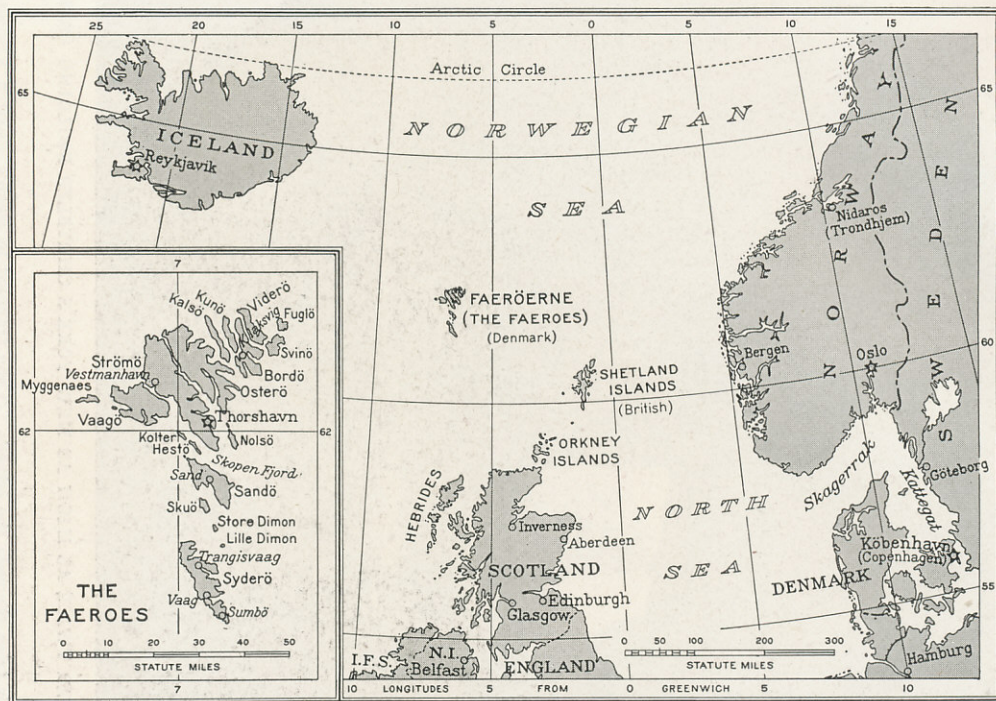
WHEN IRRESISTIBLE FORCE MEETS THE IMMOVABLE MASS OF A FAEROE CLIFF, THE FORCE EVENTUALLY CONQUERS

Nowhere does the sea summon greater power than in The Faeroes. On the tiny island of Kolter giant waves, prodded by furies of the storm, and unable to climb its 1,500-foot ridge, throw their scarf of salt spray over the crest, and winds fling it as far as Thorshavn, six miles away. Up on a Myggenaes bridge, 150 feet above sea level, the surf threw a rock so heavy that two strong men were required to move it.



THE "TUSK" SAILS UNDER THE FAEROE CLIFFS, SOME OF WHICH TOWER TWICE AS HIGH AS NEW YORK'S CHRYSLER BUILDING (SEE PAGE 519)

Carl Bech, official veterinarian of The Faeroes, accompanied the author on his trips through the islands. They traveled in Bech's *Tusk*, a Viking-style native boat in which is installed a 2-cylinder motor and a Viking figurehead. A cover over the bow provides a tiny cabin. The veterinarian has already made the 1,000-mile journey from The Faeroes to Denmark in his 26-foot craft and hopes to cross the Atlantic in it (see, also, text, page 610).



Drawn by A. H. Bumstead

SEVENTEEN OF THE FAEROES ARE INHABITED

Twenty-two thousand hardy islanders eke out a precarious existence on 540 square miles of storm-swept cliffs.

Most of the 23,000 islanders know Bech as a friend, a benefactor, and one whose courage matches that of any of them; so his introduction brought me coöperation from the natives which I should not have had otherwise.

SURVIVALS OF VIKING LIFE

Soon after I met Bech he took me down to Thorshavn's shore to see his motor boat, the *Tusk*. Once it had been a 10-oared, 26-foot, Vikinglike native boat. The Faeroes were settled by Viking chiefs, and surprisingly many survivals of the ancient life continue to this day. Especially is the influence apparent in the native boat, which is high-sided, narrow, and pointed at both ends.

Bech had carried on the spirit of his forefathers by mounting a carved Viking figurehead on the prow; also, he built over the forepart a cover forming a small cabin, which undoubtedly ruined the *Tusk* artistically, but it once saved our lives. The 20-arm power of ten stalwart islanders, which once sent the *Tusk* flying through

the waves, he had replaced with a 2-cylinder motor.

Sufficient proof of the little boat's seaworthiness was established by a 1,000-mile trip Bech made in it from The Faeroes to Copenhagen. Its proud owner declares that he will yet cross the Atlantic in the *Tusk*.

LANDINGS CALL FOR AGILITY

We chugged out of Thorshavn's anchorage one morning bound on our first extended survey expedition. Viderö, the northernmost of The Faeroes, was our destination. When the island came in sight it loomed up impressively, like the companion islands which we had passed en route; another massive cake of stone bounded by wave-washed cliffs—a blue-black iceberg. The *Tusk* floated along under Viderö's sides like a chip in a tanner's vat. It seemed to me that going ashore was like trying to board the *Leviathan* from a skiff.

At last Bech reached a break in the cliffs and piloted the *Tusk* through a gap

to a tiny harbor, safe from the wind, but not from the swell, which sent the water splashing against the rock ledges that were to serve us as a landing place. I took off my shoes and in my heavy, waterproof Faeroe wool socks crouched waiting in the bow. Shoes cannot be trusted on wet, slippery rocks. In my hand was a rope. Bech brought the *Tusk* near the ledge. A wave carried the boat up and in 12 feet, 10 feet, 6 feet. I jumped for the rock. Bech threw the motor into reverse, racing backward. Smack, the wave hit the rock, but the *Tusk* was not with it.

I clung to the best handholds within reach and dug in my toes. As Bech backed away, the rope, whose end I held, ran off from the *Tusk's* deck. When my companion had lowered the heavy anchor, the boat swung around to the pull of the outgoing tide. Indeed, to sail among The Faeroes a man must know the tide changes of every inlet and all the strange tricks of the tidal currents among the islands. Seldom did Bech anchor the *Tusk* unless the tide was going out.

Now came my part in the difficult process of landing. I pulled on my rope, bringing the stern of the boat near enough to shore to permit Bech to pass over the cameras and luggage. Then he made the jump ashore and I slackened the rope, permitting the *Tusk* to ride at a safe distance.

IT IS HARD TO KEEP DRY

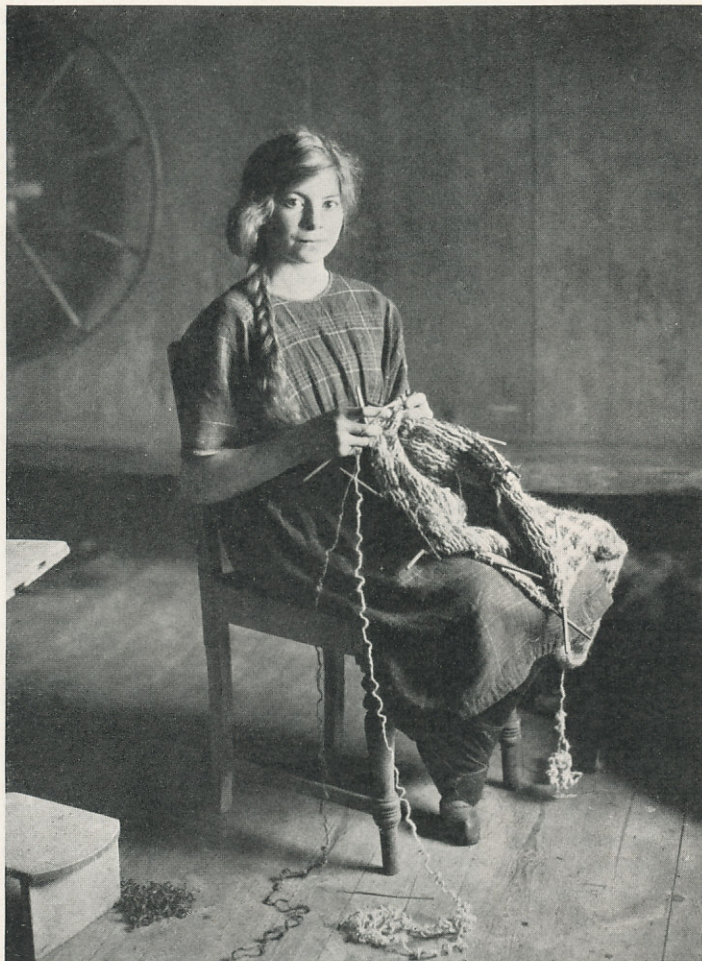
That is how we landed on Viderö and on every other island, and how the natives themselves land, if everything goes well. Three times in the course of our expeditions, however, my jump was too short or the rocks were too slippery. Into the cold water I plunged. Bech was ready always for such an accident. Quickly he would pull on the landing rope, to which I held firmly. Thus the *Tusk*, moving out, dragged me away from a battering on the rocks, and in deep water I would climb aboard once more. Wetting was not pleasant, of course, but since in The Faeroes it is impossible to keep dry, once away from a town, I learned not to mind being damp. After a submergence I always dried off to my usual degree of dampness in the sun or beside a campfire, if we were in the hills or at a farmhouse.

In one tiny, rock-walled harbor inlet we were not so fortunate. Bech was making



SAILING UNDER A NATURAL BRIDGE

Layers of lava rock laid down by old volcanoes are occasionally interrupted by rock wedges or dikes of different consistency. Pounding surf wears away the dikes first, opening great caves or carving deep, fjordlike inlets which provide sheltered landing places.



EVERY FAEROE GIRL LEARNS TO KNIT, EVERY BOY TO ROW
A BOAT

a professional call to treat a sick pony. He ran the *Tusk* to a bottleneck inlet and, while I stayed with the boat, he jumped ashore and went up the hill. A few minutes later he saw one of the sudden storms bearing down. Deserting the pony, he began to run for the boat, sliding and tumbling 150 feet, directly into the cockpit. There was no time to lose. We headed full speed for open water, but a gust of wind and a wave hit us at the inlet entrance. It threw the *Tusk* toward the rocks.

Beck shouted to me. We both jumped over the side of the boat. With our fingers clutched on the gunwale and our feet against the rocks, we held the boat off until the backwash carried us out. Quickly

we hauled aboard, got the engine going, and rushed out to sea, where there was no wave the *Tusk* couldn't ride.

Our arrival on Viderö was unusual, since the island is probably the bleakest of them all and therefore visitors seldom land here. But the effort pays, for there the dwellings are of the most ancient type, customs have been handed down unmodified, and it is such a colony as Leif Ericsson might have planted.

There is no town; not even a store. Low stone farmhouses, half sunk in the ground and girded by outer stone walls to escape the violent winds, cling to the barrenness. Sheep graze at will.

THE SMOKE ROOM HARKS BACK TO VIK- ING FEAST HALLS

So poor is Viderö that only one house, that belonging to the schoolmaster, a very great man indeed, has a "glass room." Such an extravagance is not for the average Viderö dweller, who lives with his family in a "smoke room," or a converted smoke room. The smoke room, which was once typical of all rural homes in The Faeroes and still survives in many, harks back to the feast halls of the Vikings. Usually it is large, since it is often the only room in the house, except the stable below it for horses and cows, and must serve for the entertainment of the neighbors as well as for all family uses. Around the room there are no windows; only the entrance door and those that open on the original "Pullman beds," which may be single- or double-deck.



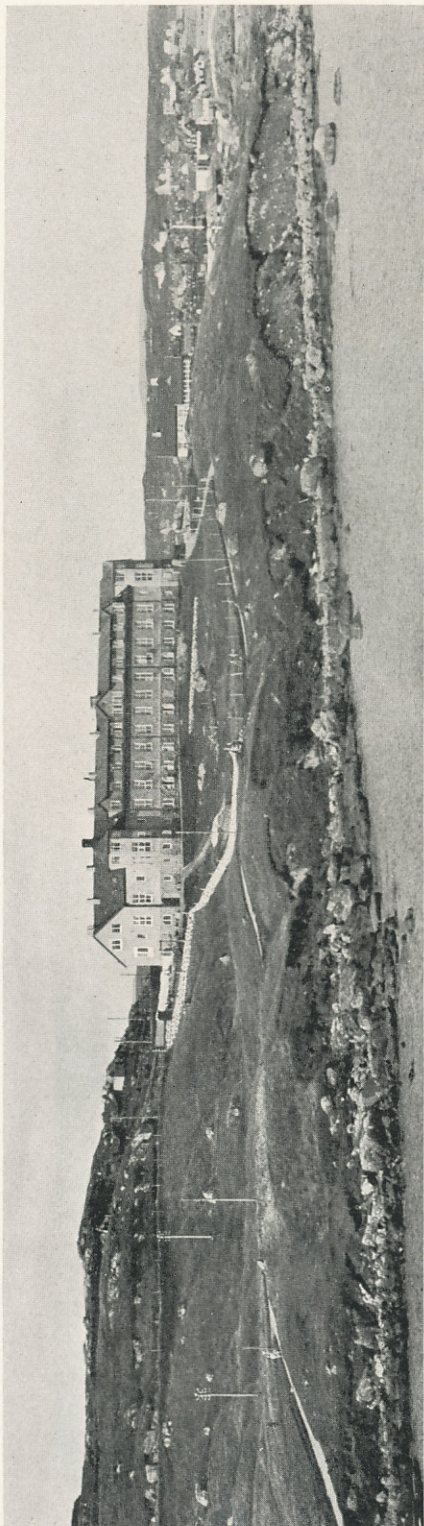
THORSHAVN NOW BOASTS A HIGH SCHOOL

The Faeroes are neither a source of income to Denmark nor a market of any importance for Danish goods. Nevertheless, the mother country works consistently for The Faeroes, extending educational and medical services, promoting communication and the marketing of codfish.

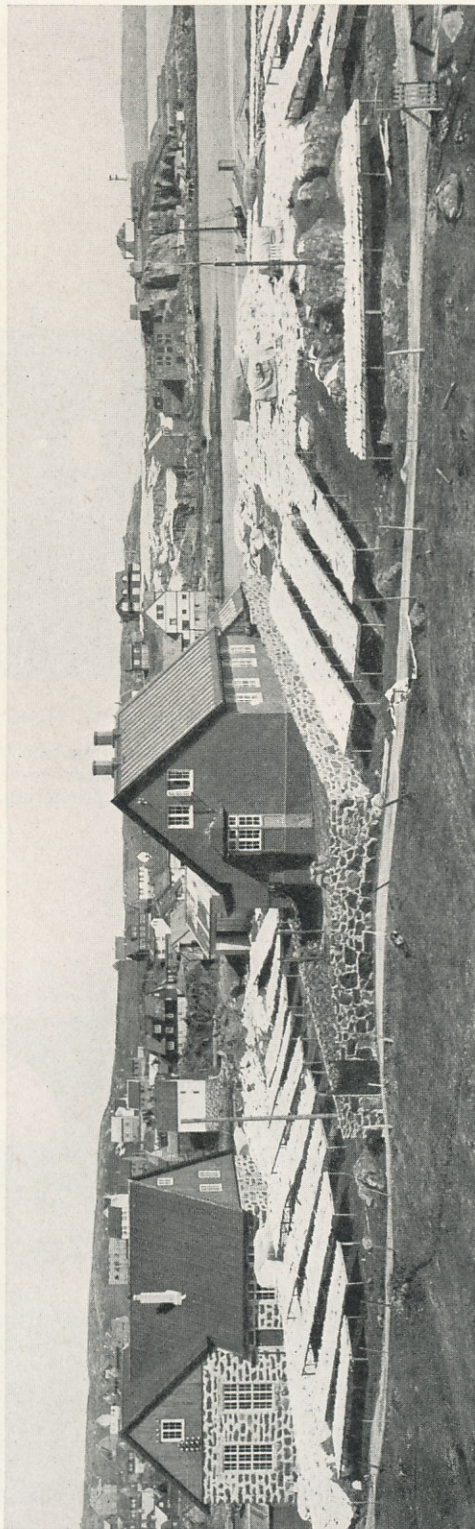


A NEW BRIDGE VITAL TO THE FAEROES' ROAD SYSTEM

Two automobiles, both American, have been brought to the islands. The longest trip that can be made in them is two miles, on a narrow road out of Thorshavn. What gondolas are to Venice, rowboats are to The Faeroes.

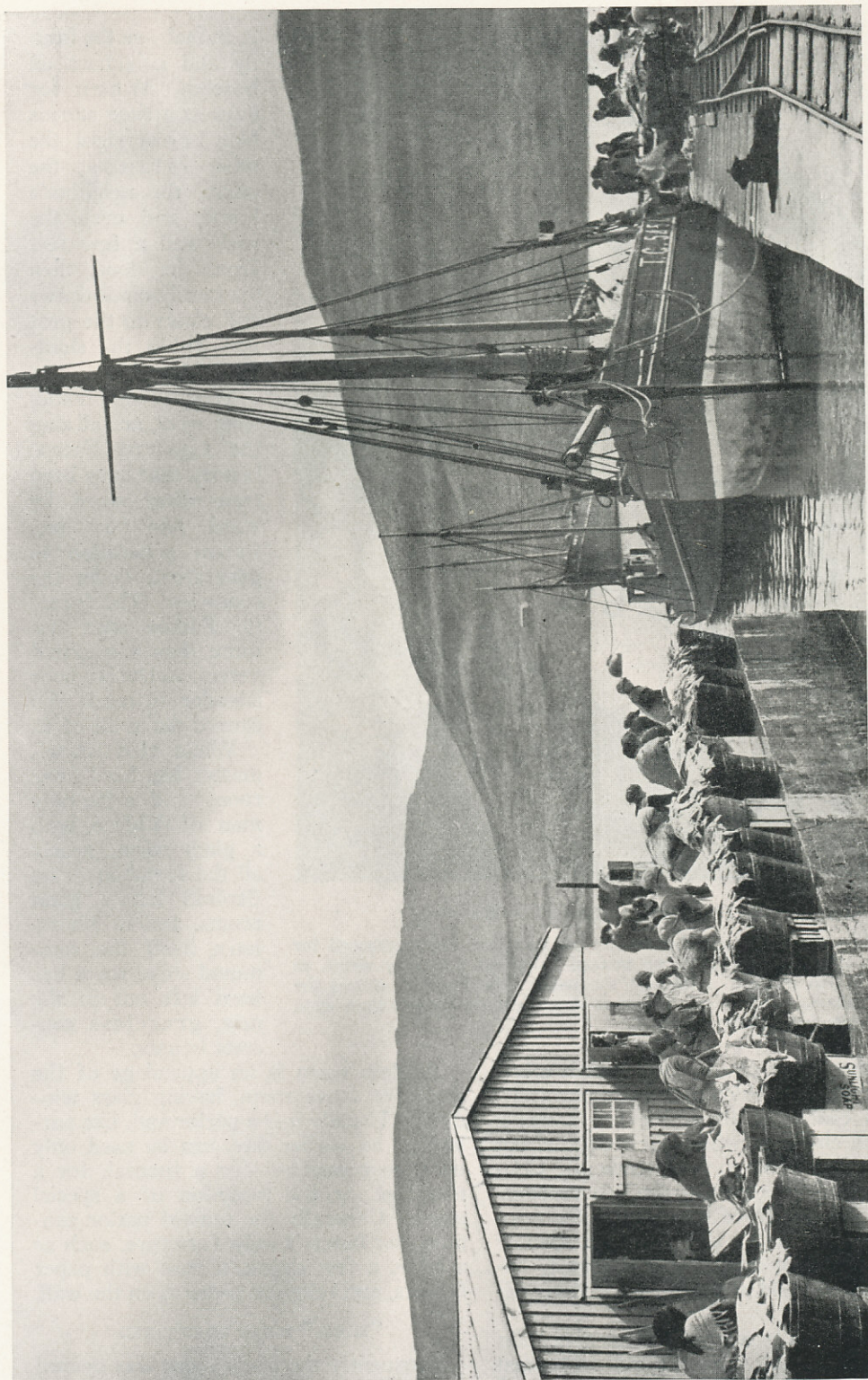


A NEW HOSPITAL SERVING ALL THE FAEROES OVERLOOKS THORSHAVN'S BAY



ACRES OF CODFISH, BUT NONE TO EAT

"In this citadel of the cod I foolishly tried to get some to eat. My request was regarded as outlandish. It is all very well to sell cod, but it is much too costly to eat" (see text, page 634).



EVERY DAY IS WASH DAY THAT THE FISHING SHIPS COME IN

Women bent over tubs scrubbing, not clothes, but the firm, white flesh of freshly caught codfish, are a common sight on Faeroe wharves. Spain, Italy, and Argentina are the principal markets for the catch.



A COD FISHERMAN LANDS A HALIBUT

Occasionally the man who throws his hook and line overboard for a 5- to 25-pound cod pulls up instead a halibut that may weigh as much as 600 pounds. Although the name, The Faeroes, means the Sheep Islands, the natives are more dependent on codfish than upon their flocks for a "money crop."

In the center of the room stands a low stone forge on which burns peat or, rarely, brown coal, and above the fire hangs a wooden chimney, which carries some, but not all, the smoke to the outside air. Converted smoke rooms with modern improvements boast a stove where once the open fire gleamed, and a skylight glass window where once an aperture in the roof, uncovered in good weather, sufficed to admit light.

A visitor's streaming eyes give him evidence enough why the old communal living room is called a "smoke room." Around the hearthstone—entirely around

it, in fact—sit the family and neighbors on benches. When for days at a time storms blot from sight the other islands, the ocean, the neighbor's house, and even the rock wall a few feet from the door, then the family circle draws still closer to the peat fire within the shuddering house.

Women knit home-spun wool, and all sing the sagas of Faeroe history that have been transmitted word by word, line for line, from generation to generation, down the centuries. The favorite Faeroe saga has more than a hundred verses, and he is a poor islander indeed who cannot recite all of it.

While the school-master has his "stove room" and is the only man of Viderö with a glass room, nearly all the farmhouses on Strömö have glass rooms, and in Thors-havn itself the communal stove room has been left out in the new, graceless concrete houses.

A glass room is an appendage of the smoke or stove room, having glass windows. Usually it is a parlor and, like parlors of an earlier day, can be used only on state occasions—for a funeral, for a marriage, or the reception of a special guest. Generally the unused parlor contains the family's only furniture, such as a table, a few chairs, a vase with paper flowers, and religious pictures on the wall.

"HIGH" MEAT PREFERRED

Frequently the glass room was opened for me, but I preferred the family living room, with its warm stove, to these par-

lors, which gave forth the cold, musty odor of a cellar closed for many years.

The stove room serves, of course, as the dining room, and often I joined the islanders at their meals and ate their food. Sheep, fish, and whale are staples with them. The first two are common enough to most peoples. Still, the method of preparing the food for the table in The Faeroes scarcely recommends it to the fastidious, and my experience among the Eskimos in Alaska and northern Canada stood me in good stead when I was invited to share a Faeroe sheep.

Like most primitive northern peoples, the islanders prefer "high" meat, and to satisfy this desire they hang a skinned sheep in an open shed for about a year before eating it. The carcass acquires a crust like Camembert cheese. This is pared off, each man using the knife which he carries constantly. The highly toned meat beneath the crust the natives eat raw.

Similarly, whale blubber must season for a month or more before the family makes high feast. Other seafood, however, receives different treatment. Newly caught fish are cleaned and dried and dried and dried—until they become so hard that one's teeth can make no impression. But with a stout hammer the islander will powder his durable codfish on a stone and eat its dust, so to speak.

No one, they say, goes to Myggenaes, the westernmost island of The Faeroes, unless the trip is necessary, for it has the

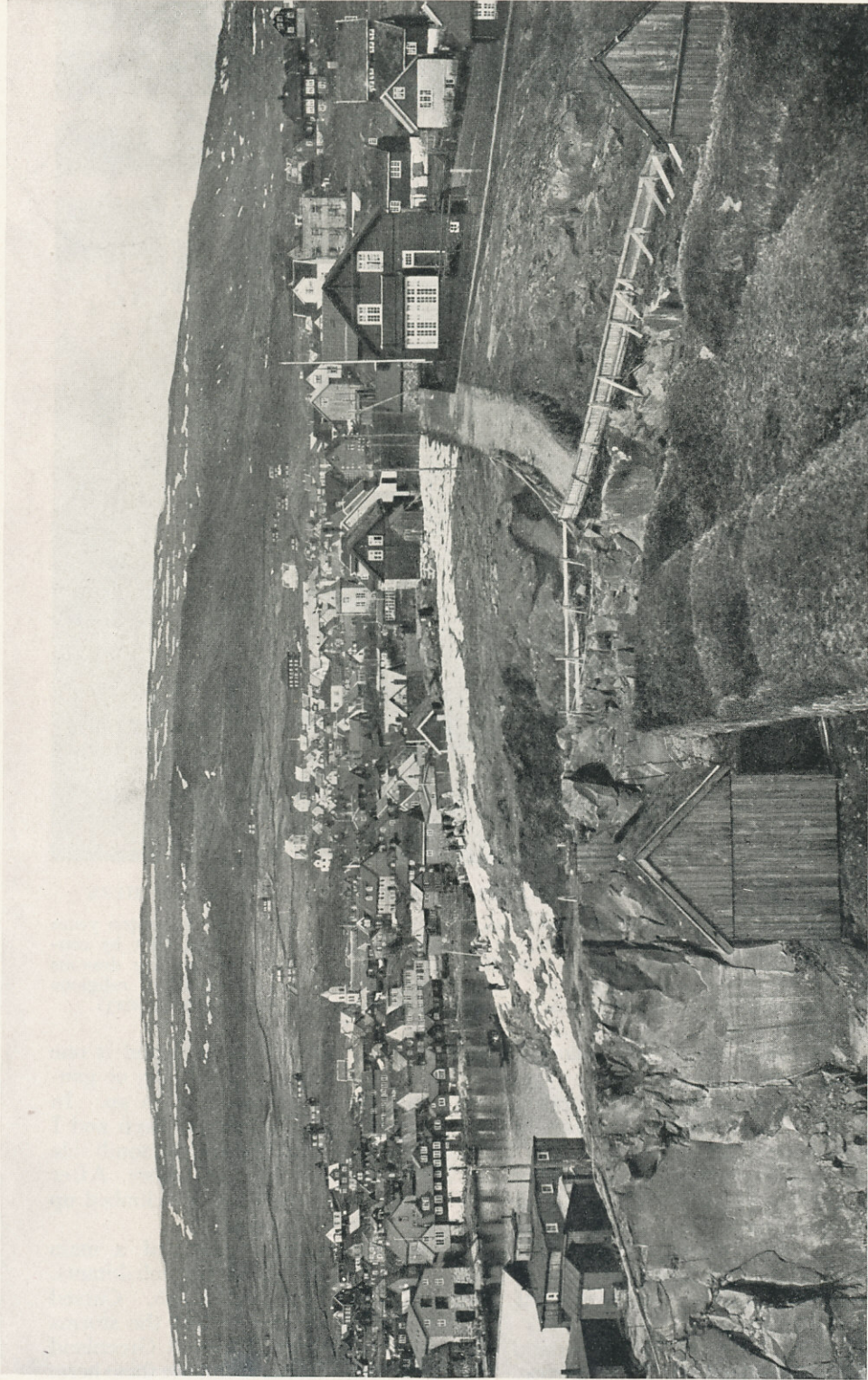


SCALDS, VIKINGS, AND MISSIONARIES ENTERED HERE

Kirkebö's farmhouse, that was built to shelter a bishop 900 years ago, receives visitors through its old Norse doorway, built by contemporaries of Leif Ericsson. More accustomed to carving dragons than crosses, the artisans sculptured sea beasts instead of religious emblems to guard the bishop's doorstep (see, also, pages 621-623).

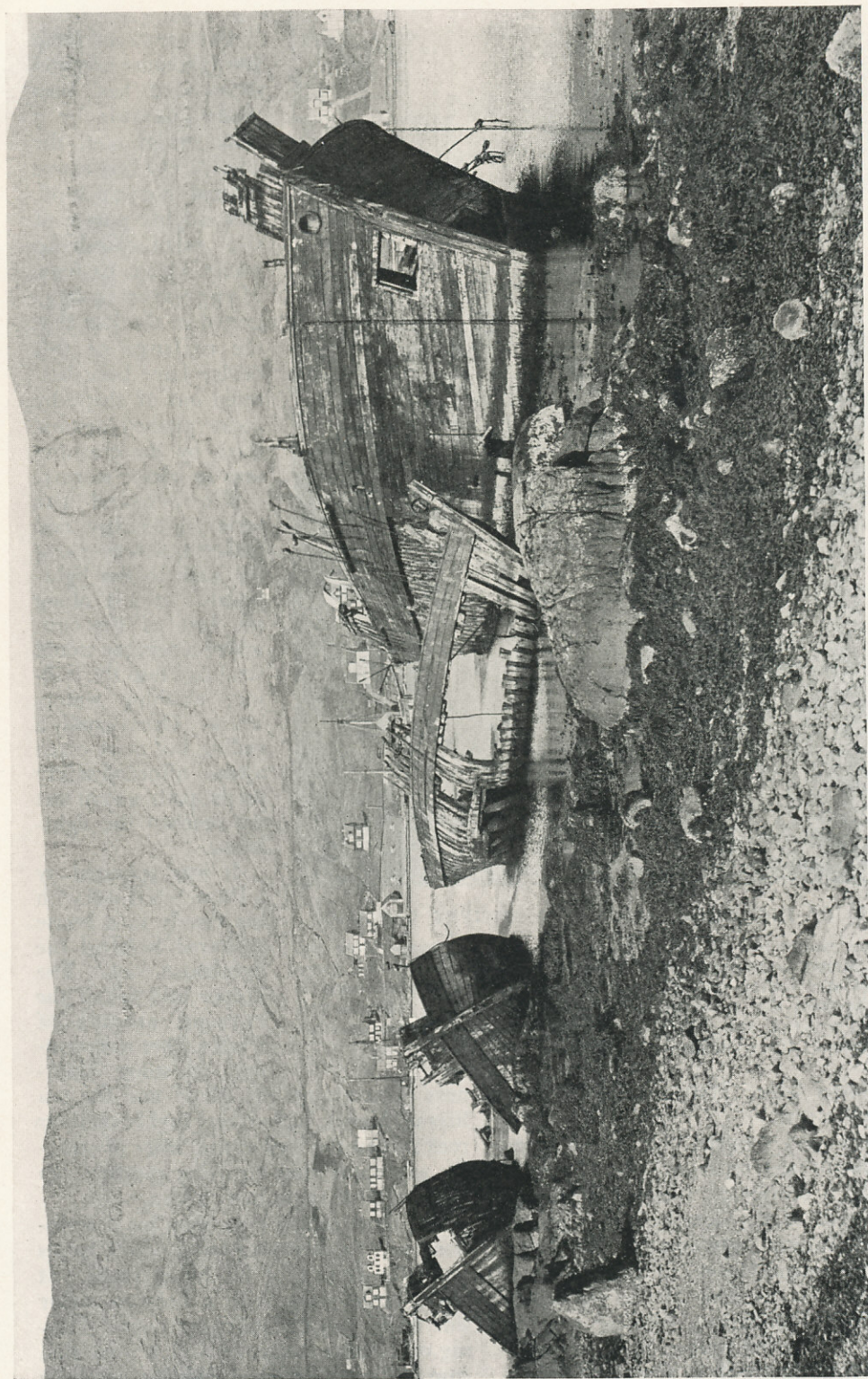
most violent surf. But the island is one of the nesting places of the *sule*, or gannet; so I found it necessary to go. In eight hours from Thorshavn, Bech and I reached a miniature fjord on the south side of Myggenaes and I leaped ashore. After he had anchored the *Tusk* we climbed up the cliff with the cameras.

Now, Myggenaes consists of a main island, supporting about 125 inhabitants, who raise sheep and catch fish. Cursed it is by winds and waves, for the storms that leave Newfoundland and Greenland gather all their forces and loose them here. The rest of The Faeroes and Europe get



THORSHAVN, CAPITAL AND CHIEF PORT OF THE FAEROES, VIEWED FROM THE FORT (SEE PAGE 606)

The old part of Thorshavn is picturesque, crowded, cluttered, and slightly dirty; the new part hygienic, modern, and less picturesque. Corrugated iron roofs of the new buildings may be better to live under, but they cannot please the eye like an old sod roof colorful with green grass and flowers. Although all wood must be imported, the islanders follow in the footsteps of their Viking ancestors, building homes of timber instead of native rock. Even the chimneys are of wood.



MURMURING TIDES SING DIRGES THROUGH THE SKELETONS OF DEAD SHIPS

Once stout vessels rot in Thorshavn's graveyard. Tide rips, blanket fogs, and black gales out of the west bring many snug fishing craft to a quicker but less peaceful end under The Faeroes' skyscraper cliffs.



PROUD OF HIS ROCKY ISLAND AND ANCIENT LANGUAGE

Higher wages and an easier life on the continent cannot lure the Faeroe farmer from his sod-roofed house, his thin soil that will grow no grain save barley, and his flock of sheep that suffers as much as he in the gales that spray the black rocks and pastures with the salt spume of a raging sea. When he cannot find a sheep, he knows what has happened: the wind has blown it over a cliff.

the storms later; Myggenaes gets them first and worst.

At the very western end of the island is a *holm*, or islet, separated from the main block by a crevice 75 feet wide. At the outer point of the detached piece stands the westernmost lighthouse of The Faeroes. Its beacon blazes out 413 feet above the sea. At the foot of the lighthouse cliff, their foundations melting year by year in the tossing waters, are two pinnacles of rock on which in summer the gannets nest.

Passage to and from the lighthouse islet and mainland has been made possible by a cable bridge over the crevice 150 feet above normal water level. The mighty power of the cliff-climbing waves that pound Myggenaes is suggested in the fact that the railings of this bridge have been battered out of shape by rocks pitched against them by the crashing seas in winter storms!

We crossed the tortured bridge and picked our way along the path to the lighthouse. It led along the face of the cliff, where a misstep would send one into the boiling, writhing waters below. Occasionally a railing, but more often a rope, afforded safety on the path, and at last we reached the lighthouse.

It was operated by a Dane, who lived with his family in a house sheltered behind the lighthouse rock. The keeper told me of the awesome storms of winter, when a screaming, whistling black-

ness descends on the island and the sea lifts up higher, higher, and higher on their rock; when the suffocating blast of stinging salt spray that no living creature can stand against rages mercilessly.

But more telling even than his descriptions was the kerosene lamp which hangs from the ceiling of his living room. It has a large globe with a hole on either side, as if a shot had passed through. During one winter storm, he said, a wave that rose up the cliff dashed over the precipice a pebble, which broke his window, passed

through his lamp, and struck against the wall! He showed me the water-worn stone, which he retains as a keepsake.

THE FAEROES ARE DISSOLVING IN THE SEA

Myggenaes and the other islands are of stout basalt, but the power of the waves constantly wears them away. The attack of the sea, coming chiefly from the west, has split off the rock more on that side; so The Faeroes' highest cliffs face the advance of the waves, and here daily is enacted one of the most violent dramas of Nature—the ceaseless, relentless assault of the breakers on the braced shoulders of rock. Unequal though the battle may seem, The Faeroes are dissolving in the Atlantic surf like sugar in tea. I was shown a rock needle which would scarcely give foothold to a mountain goat; it was all that remained of an island that had supported, within the history of the islanders, a thousand sheep.

On one rare, calm morning we rode out beyond Myggenaes lighthouse to the pinnacles where the gannets nest. Up the rock climbed a skilled islander carrying a rope, which he fastened aloft, permitting us to scramble after him with comparative ease.

The first man up has such a dangerous task that I asked, since I knew they climbed it each year for birds, why they did not fasten a permanent cable to the rock. They replied that more than once they had fastened such a cable, but the waves in winter always washed it away. Once they



A STONE CARVED WITH THE CRUCIFIXION SEALS THE KIRKEBÖ CATHEDRAL, RELIC CHAMBER

Denmark wanted for a Copenhagen museum a leaden box and its contents found when a relic chamber was opened here a few years ago. Faeroe protests resulted in the resealing of the niche with the contents intact. Kirkebö is a village a few miles west of the capital city, Thorshavn.

fastened an iron chain to the pinnacle, but that, too, was carried off. Each nesting season these gannet eyries are covered with guano and, although the breeding places stand 150 feet above the sea, waves wash the rocks clean every winter.

AT THE MERCY OF A CAPRICIOUS FAEROE WINDSTORM

Toward the end of the fifth day on Myggenaes the sky began to darken, so Bech and I put out in a hurry to beat the storm to Thorshavn. We had no desire to remain cooped up on Myggenaes



A SUNDAY DANCE

Faeroe history in 200 verses, sung to one tune, without instrumental accompaniment, is the music for the native "Paul Jones." While they sing throughout the night, the dancers shuffle from left to right, sometimes slow, sometimes fast. Women are admitted to the party, but usually keep to their own sector of the circle.



MEN CLING TO OLD FAEROE STYLES MORE STEADFASTLY THAN THE WOMEN

Shoes with buckles, black knee breeches, and short jacket, decorated with rows of bright buttons, and a soft wool "liberty" cap striped red and dark blue or black, are the vogue for Sabbath and holidays. The man on the left wears the workaday sheepskin slippers tied with woolen strings.



RUINS OF THE FAEROE CATHEDRAL, AT KIRKEBÖ

Built in staunch Norman style, with walls $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, the edifice has withstood wind and rain for 800 years. According to legend, the cost of erecting the Cathedral provoked the islanders to kill the bishop and no other has ever taken over the post. Faint traces of Viking dragon heads can be seen in the stone ornament (see, also, illustration, page 621).



A FAEROE LEADER LIVES IN THE OLD BISHOP'S PALACE

Close to the Cathedral ruins at Kirkebö stands one of the oldest dwellings on The Faeroes. Its walls of timber, hewn by yellow-haired Vikings 900 years ago, have never weakened. Here was organized the theological college whose students went forth to preach Christianity to Norsemen who had worshiped Thor and Odin.



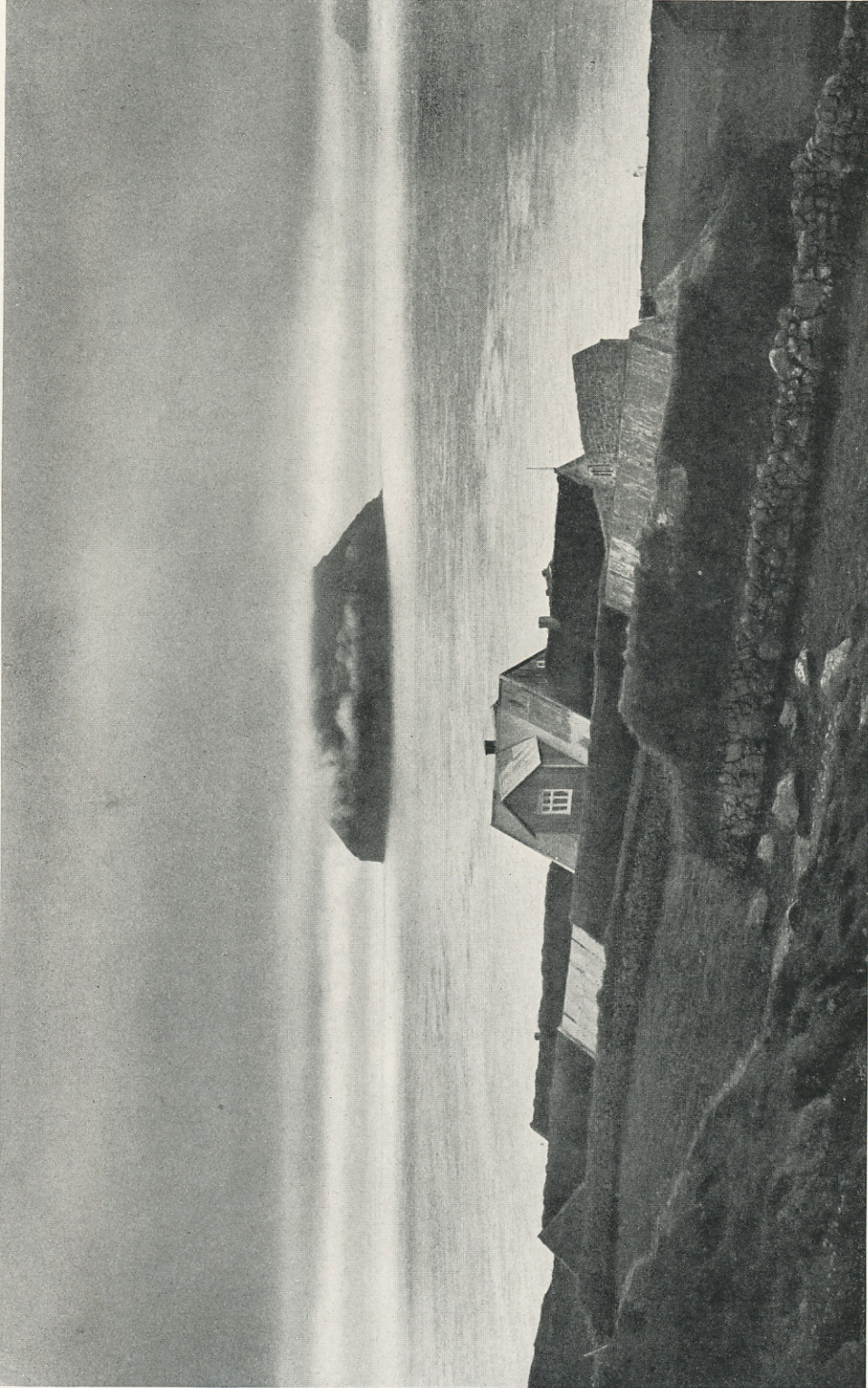
RUGGED LIVING DIMINISHES NOT A WHIT THE NORSE BEAUTY OF FAEROE WOMEN

Spinning, dyeing wool, weaving, knitting, cooking, washing and drying codfish, carrying on when their husbands and sons are killed on the sea or on the cliffs, are the lot of native mothers and daughters. Their only amusements are saga singing in wintertime and dancing the native dance. Often, when storms howl down on the islands, blotting out even the rock walls barricading the house, entire families hug the fire for weeks at a time, never venturing outside.



A GIANT FAN OF BLACK BASALT ON SYÐEROI

Eons ago a chain of volcanoes from northeast Ireland, through Scotland, the Hebrides, Shetland Islands, The Faeroes, and Iceland, spewed out lava. The Atlantic's ceaseless attack has chewed at the land masses until, in The Faeroes, a once broad, high plateau is reduced to 22 diminishing islands with a total area slightly less than half that of Rhode Island.



STORE DIMON'S LONE DWELLING FACES A WILD AND SOMBER SCENE

The world is a narrow strip compressed between a leaden sea and a leaden sky. The front yard of the island's single home ends in a precipice that drops sheer 600 feet into the Atlantic. Lille Dimon beyond is an uninhabited rock.



THE ISLANDERS HOLD THEIR DERBY ON JULY 29, A NATIONAL HOLIDAY

Amateur jockeys in white shirt and necktie, atop diminutive ponies, gallop down the home stretch in something less than 2:40. Faeroe ponies, survivors of the Celtic pony, more common in the Shetland Islands and Iceland, eat fish heads when they cannot get grass. Syderø shepherds frequently use ponies to drive their sheep. There the natives trained them, according to one early account, to ride down a sheep and hold it fast between the forelegs, until the shepherd could dismount and take charge of the animal.



MEN ALSO SPIN AND COMB WOOL WHEN WINTER LOCKS THE DOORS

one or two months, as visitors there often have been detained. But the storm overtook us before we had rounded the north end of Vaagö. We went by the north passage to keep in the lee of the island, and yet the course nearly cost us our lives, because we ran afoul a capricious Faeroe wind. I had read of this wind in the lee of precipitous islands that acts like an angry waterspout, or like the worst eddies around the corners of giant skyscrapers during fierce gales, and I had heard the natives tell of it. This was my first, and very nearly last, encounter with its furious blasts.

Vaagö contains very high land. The gale struck the west side and blew upward over the top and around the sides. I cannot fully account for the forces at work,

but we would find ourselves and the *Tusk* in the midst of a fountain of sea water, a veritable cataract upside down, that would rise straight up 15 feet or more from the surface of the sea. Again it would spray us from the side, as from some mammoth nozzle, or as if some playful giant, bathing, had deluged us by "scooting" water with the palm of his hand.

At any rate, the gusts repeatedly drenched the boat with water. We bailed for dear life. The covering *Bech* had stretched over the front half of the *Tusk* threw off part of the deluge and probably saved us from the dread fate which has carried many islanders in open boats to their deaths.

But the waterspout wind was only the first obstacle in our handicap race with



LIKE SHINGLES ON A ROOF, DRYING COD COVER THE BEACH AT TRANGISVAAG



THE SMELL OF FRESH SALTED COD PERVADES THE WHARVES

When the men bring in their fresh, cleaned catch their work is ended. Faeroe women unload the ships, wash the fish, and, with the help of old men and children, dry it in the fitful sunshine (see, also, text, page 633).



IT TAKES TWO MONTHS TO DRY A CODFISH IN THE FAEROES

When the sun comes out, everyone hurries to spread the slabs of fish on the stony beach. Every evening and every time rain threatens, the fish must be stacked up again, under shelter.

fate. We were still far from Thorshavn, on the opposite side of Strömö, which takes its name, meaning Stream Island, from a swift tide rip which passes between it and Vaagö, and therefore on our course. In these narrows the current has been known to run 20 miles an hour and to hold steamships striving against it immovable.

As we rounded Vaagö, escaping the gusts, we met the contrary tide rip and it took us 15 hours to make a passage of a few miles.

By this time it was dark again. Rain and snow beat down on us. We had to feel our way through the space open to the storm between Vaagö and Sandö (see map, page 610).

Bech kept the *Tusk's* nose into the mountainous waves and we made the passage south, laboriously moving sidewise like a sand crab; now racing the motor, now running slow, now scaling a feathery-topped roller, now zooming down into a black, bottomless void, now bailing, now watching anxiously the dangerous white line of surf.

Aboard the *Tusk* was some raw sheep meat, which we ate hungrily. Our fresh water was soon exhausted, and the salt water in our mouths, noses, ears, and eyes—everywhere, penetrating salt spray—made us desperately thirsty. Fortunately, the gasoline supply held out, else we should have been dashed to pieces on Strömö in the



BRACED STONE WALLS DEFLECT THE VIOLENT WINDS

Sudden blasts can blow on one small area with hurricane pressure, while a candle a few yards away will burn with an upright, steady flame. The washing in front of the Store Dimon farmhouse hangs on steel reinforcement wires that give to walls made of cemented stone six feet thick additional support against erratic gusts (see, also, illustration, page 626).

white breakers that roared above the sizzling whitecaps and the singing rainblast.

A STEAMER MISTAKES THE SHORE

Early in the dark dawn of the second day we rounded Strömö's south point and in the mist made out a steamer. We saw that the captain, although he was maneuvering with infinite care, had mistaken Sandö for Strömö and was in imminent danger of piling his ship on the rocks. To shout was useless. We tried signaling with a hand flashlight. They did not see us. Still the steamer continued to sound its siren, waiting for the echo from the

cliffs in order to determine its distance from shore—the wrong shore!

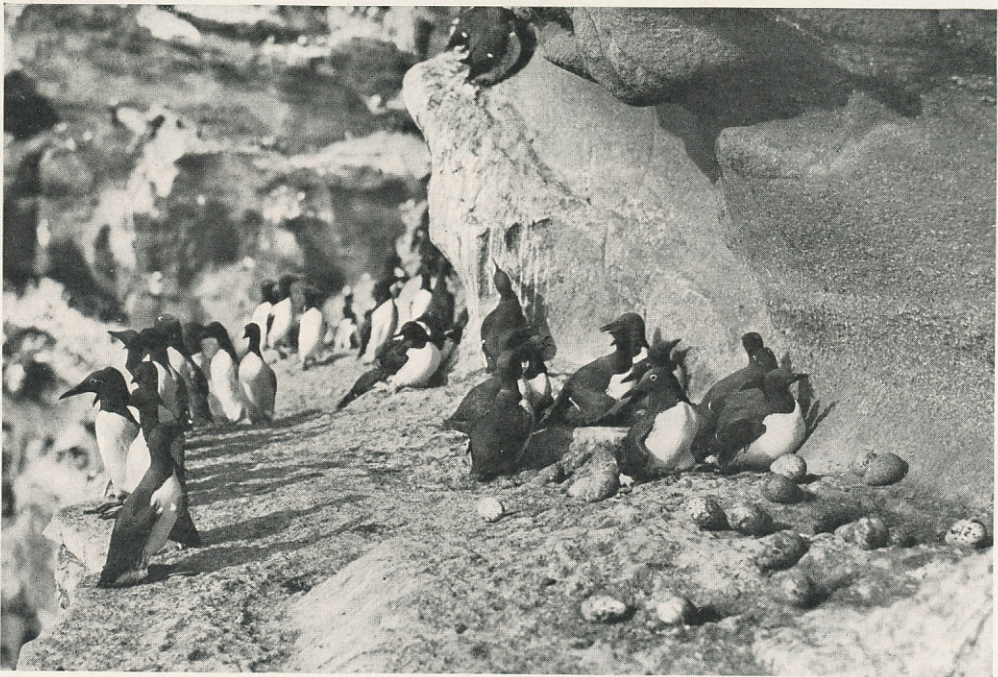
There is a lighthouse at the end of Strömö, so Bech headed the *Tusk* for it. When we reached a protected place I took off my shoes and jumped ashore. I awakened the keeper and warned him that the steamer had not seen his light. He at once telephoned Thorshavn. The wireless station there called the steamer five miles away, probably saving it from destruction.

Meanwhile I had regained the *Tusk* by grabbing the gunwale on a flying leap into the water, and we blew into Thorshavn on the wings of the gale and the push of



GANNETS BREED ON TOP OF PINNACLE ROCKS

The dangers attendant upon climbing rock needles rising out of the sea do not prevent the islanders from raiding the high-perched gannet rookeries.



LOMVIES AT HOME ON A CLIFF LEDGE

Such a scene and such a narrow pathway, with a rock wall on one side and an abyss on the other, confront the bird hunter after he has swung himself into a balcony. Eggs of the lomvies (guillemots) are, by unique adaptation of Nature, top-shaped, so that they will roll around in a circle, but will not roll off a gently inclined surface.



OVER THE TOP FOR BIRDS

The top is 600 feet above the cold, blue ocean, to which he calmly turns his back as he walks down the overhanging cliff, net in hand. "Just as he reaches the outermost point, he must give a push with his feet to start himself swinging, because the bird galleries have been undercut and can be reached only with a swinging motion."

the tide, 40 hours after leaving Myggenaes. Never did fresh water taste so sweet nor bed feel more comfortable.

Although our experience was not different from the risks the adventurous natives run frequently, I hope that I shall never have to make such a journey again.

ACRES OF FISH

While the farmer-fishermen of the north islands like Myggenaes and Viderö are self-supporting, living on the fish of the sea and the sheep on their barrens, almost independent of what the world has to sell or wishes to buy, different conditions obtain in the southern and more populous islands, where extensive fisheries have long been operated.

So I went to Syderö to observe the landing, cleaning, and curing of the famous Faeroe *klippfisk*, or dried cod, which finds a market in Spain, Italy, and elsewhere.

A decline in this major industry has been occasioned by many factors. The modern equipment used by steam trawlers elsewhere, newer and quicker methods of packing used in Newfoundland and Nor-

way, and a reduced world demand necessitated the recent extensive program of aid by the Danish Government. Figures show a tragic loss of trade; but to me, a newcomer, Syderö appeared to have all the fish any island could possibly wish.

The rock walls of the inlet redoubled the sound of our motor as we chugged into the port of Trangisvaag. Because it was a bright day, the rocky shore was white with the codfish which are Syderö's chief stock in trade. We must land, but where, without stepping on a codfish spread out to dry? Acres of fish lay everywhere, soaking up the fitful Faeroe sunshine. Fish followed the shore line as if they had been cast up by the sea. They covered a slope like slates on a roof, thousands of oval slabs of white fish meat—a thirsty sight!

In order to see the industry from beginning to end, I went out on the banks in a fishing schooner. A line, two hooks, and some fish or bird intestines for bait are all the gear a native needs. When the boat has been anchored, over go the lines and in come the fish. For the novice, there is



SEA GULLS LIKE AN APARTMENT WITH A VIEW

a thrill in pulling in a 5- to 25-pound fish, but it is an old story to the islander.

Fish are cleaned at once and salted down. Often a ship will return to port with 250,000 pounds of hand-caught fish. Again it will go out and never return at all! These are brave men who go to sea for cod.* Each year numbers of island fishermen lose their lives at their trade. Each grim cliff is the tombstone of some schooner and her crew.

Once safely back in Trangisvaag, or the neighboring port of Vaag, the schooner unloads its fish, which are passed on to women out on the piers, who bend over

* See, also, "Life on the Grand Banks: An Account of the Sailor-Fishermen Who Harvest the Shoal Waters of North America's Eastern Coasts," by Frederick William Wallace, in the NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC MAGAZINE for July, 1921.

huge vats of water, scrubbing the cod clean. Pictures of these arduous workers I obtained only with great difficulty, for in The Faeroes, as elsewhere, women do not want their pictures taken unless they are dressed in their best clothes (pp. 615, 629).

COD TOO COSTLY TO EAT

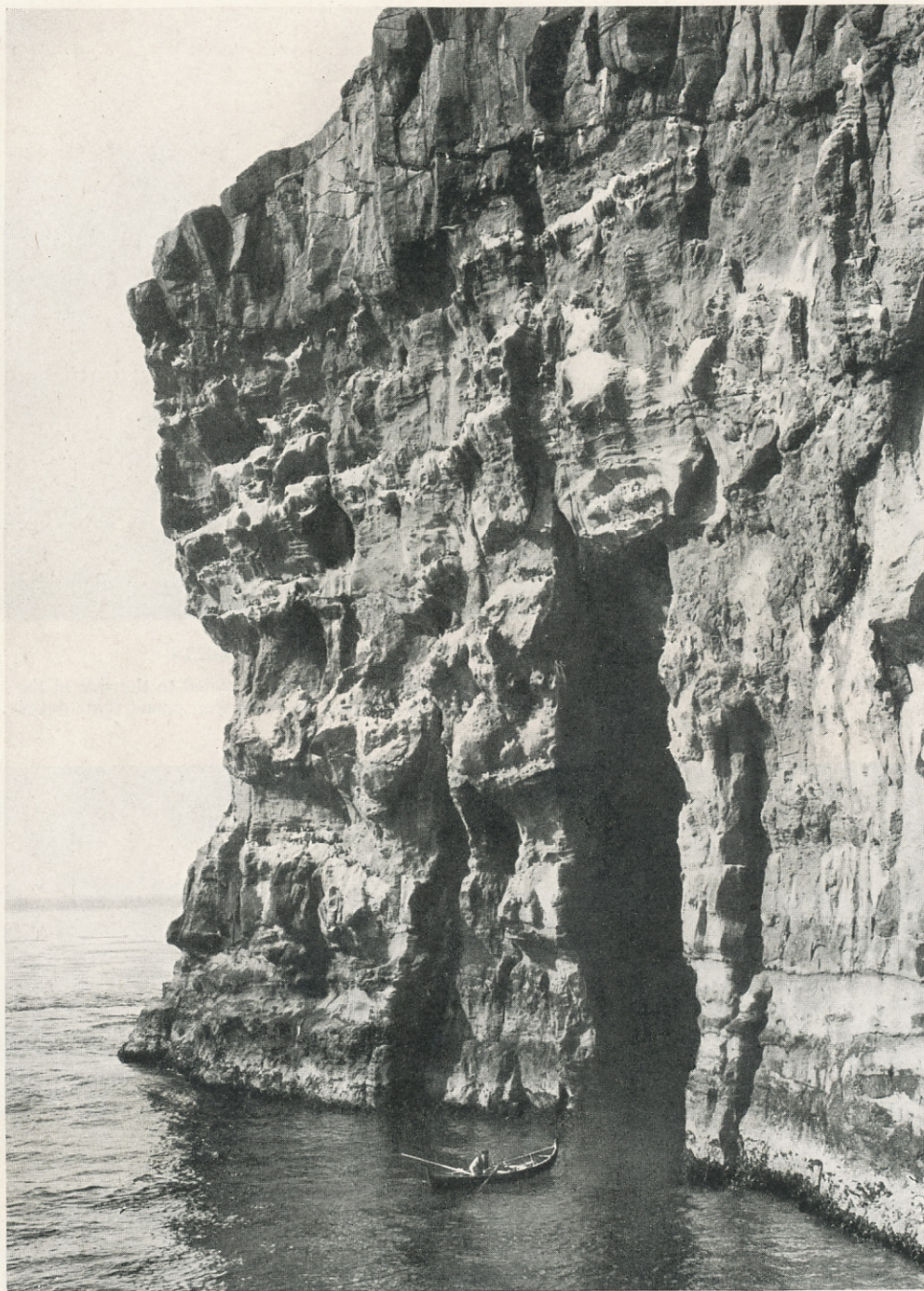
In this citadel of the cod I foolishly tried to get some to eat. My request was regarded as outlandish. It is all very well to sell cod, but it is much too costly to eat; so thinks a native. But at last I persuaded a storekeeper to cook me some, and I found it quite the finest I had ever tasted.

The excellence of their cod the islanders attribute to their method of curing, which they have followed for generations. In fact, it is disrespectful to one's ancestors to do any task

in The Faeroes differently from the way it has been done in the past. Loss of their world markets, hunger, privation—none of these evils warrants a change from old ways.

With an average of 60 days of sunshine in a year, air-drying of cod, which the natives insist upon, becomes a toilsome, long-drawn-out task, requiring one to two months. Rocky shores are the drying ground, although occasionally tables are used (see pages 614, 629, 630).

Men, women, and children watch lovingly over their fish. One person stands guard constantly at each drying field to frighten away the birds, and each community designates one old man as weather expert to scan the skies. When a squall threatens, he beats a gong and everybody



WHERE THEY RISK NECKS TO WRING NECKS

When the hunters swing themselves onto the undercut rock balconies, they catch the birds with a pole net, wring their necks, and drop them into the sea to be picked up by a boatman. Men working on the cliffs must be careful not to drop birds or eggs or dislodge rocks directly above the boat. Objects falling from Store Dimon cliffs, which rise 600 feet above the sea, attain great speed. Eggs have been known to pierce the bottom of a rowboat.



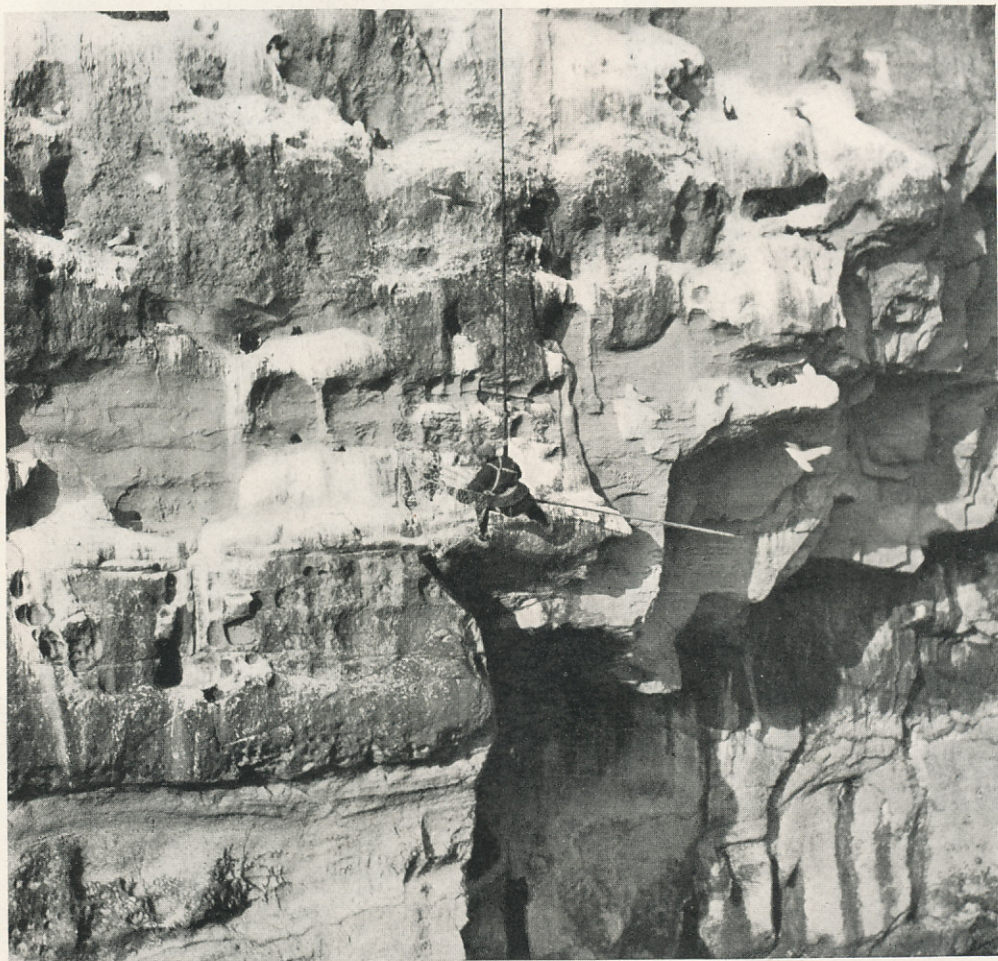
SEA PARROTS, OR PUFFINS, FORM THEIR SCALP BELTS

The birds may be eaten fresh, salted for winter use, or more rarely nailed to the side of the house and preserved by drying. Feathers of the birds bring 25 cents per pound, two dozen birds yielding a pound of feathers.



THE SEA PARROT DEFENDS THE ENTRANCE TO ITS NEST

The bird makes an excavation three to four feet deep and forms its nest on the bottom. Here seven to eight birds live together, and in case the breeding pair dies, the other birds care for the young.



HIS LIFE HANGS BY A THREAD

The birdcatcher swings himself back and forth, leaping for a ledge he can hang to, snaring chattering birds with his net. By churning his legs in the air, he keeps his face toward the cliff. Stones dislodged by the rope biting into the rock lip above sing dangerously close. Falling stones have killed many birdcatchers.

who can use his legs rushes shoreward to pile the fish in stacks under canvas. No one is exempt, according to the custom of the country, from rescuing the codfish from a rainstorm, and only once, in order to make films of the people running, did I fail to join the codfish stackers; otherwise I should have been looked down upon.

Sometimes the fish are distributed and stacked seven times in a single day!

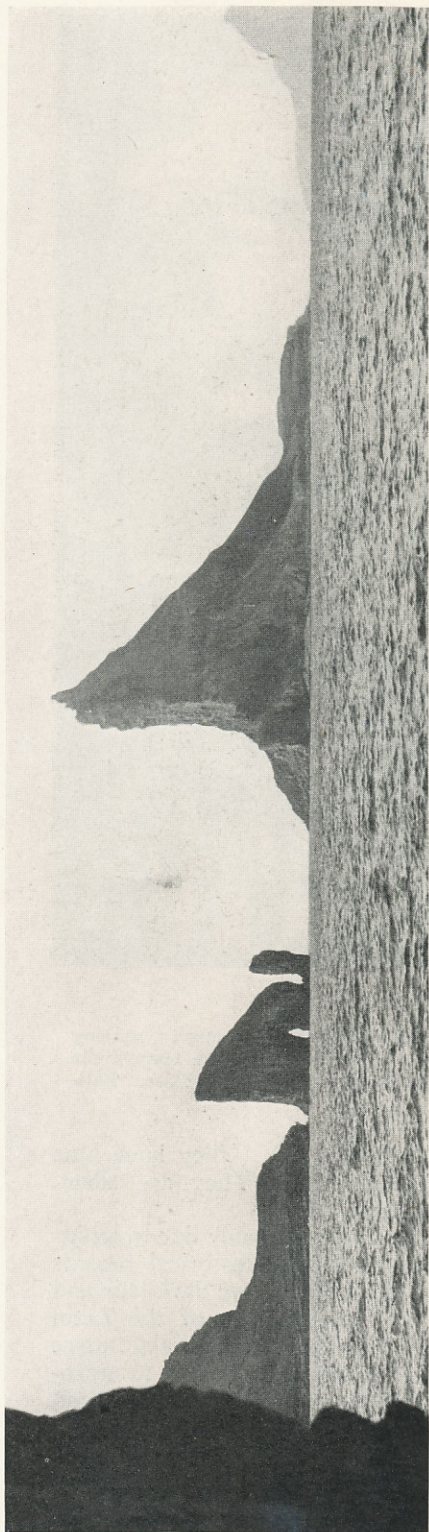
FAERÖESE—AN ANCIENT LANGUAGE

I found the islanders of the south quite different from those of the north. On Viderö and Österö live the true sons and daughters of the Viking settlers, who

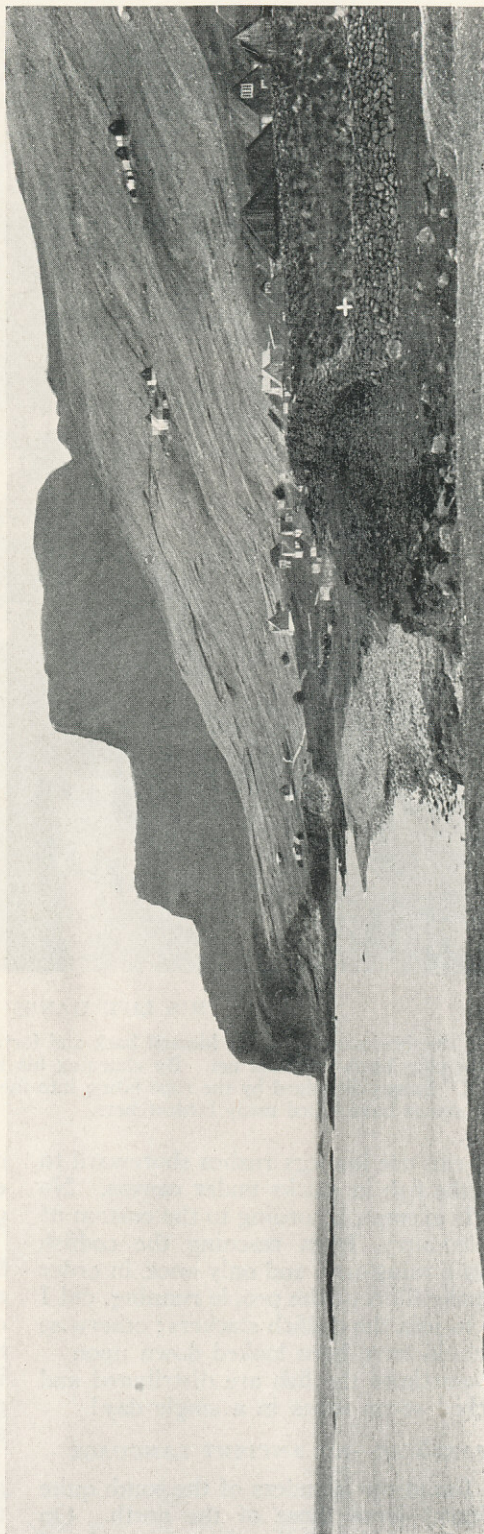
came about 800 A. D. They have blue eyes and flaxen hair. They are silent, grim, determined.

But in the south, probably due to an influx of foreign blood—historical records are foggy—they often have dark hair and eyes and are more nearly of the Latin temperament, being more excitable, more impetuous, and more hospitable to strangers than their northern brothers and sisters.

Despite these marked differences, a single language serves all the inhabitants, and the native costume is used throughout the archipelago without important variation. Faeröese is such an old Scandinavian



SEA-CONSUMED ISLANDS WHICH, WITHIN THE MEMORY OF NATIVES OF THE FAEROES SUPPORTED HUNDREDS OF SHEEP, NOW OFFER ONLY ROOSTING ROOM FOR BIRDS



SUMBÖ VILLAGE LOOKS OUT ON A RARE CALM SEA

Southernmost of Faeroe villages, Sumbö, on Syderö, has chiefly brunette residents of short stature. Infusion of Celtic blood, possibly through original inhabitants or through Norse invasions of the British Isles, is believed to account for the variation from the blue-eyed, blond Faeroe Viking type.



FOR THE WINTER FOOD SUPPLY, NOT PUBLICITY, THE FAEROE HUMAN FLIES RISK THEIR LIVES

Four islanders, with their heels dug in the loose soil of a narrow shelving ledge, let a companion in a rope seat over the edge of a precipice that hangs over the sea. The objective of the daring hunter is the whitened ledges below, where sea birds, overconfident of their security, make no attempt to fly as the hunter approaches. When men leave home to go birdcatching on the cliffs of Store Dimon, they are often mourned as dead by their families, so hazardous is the occupation.



A FAEROE COMMITTEE OFFERS FREE ADVICE ON THE BEST WAY TO GET A COW INTO A BOAT



SCOOPING SEA PARROTS OUT OF THE AIR

A hunter, armed with a net on the end of a long pole, hides among the rocks. When the sea parrot, or puffin, flocks, circling the island, fly by he deftly snares the bird in mid-air. If the bird carries fish in its beak, the catcher lets it go, knowing that it is feeding its young. A skillful hunter can catch a thousand sea parrots in a day.



IN THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

Spring sometimes brings terrific snowstorms to The Faeroes. Winds blow so violently the year around that trees are a rarity, growing only in the most protected places.



SAVING AN ORPHAN OF THE STORM

Bad weather in The Faeroes usually comes in the form of rain, so that an unusually severe snowstorm spreads havoc among the flocks of sheep. The author was one of a party that went out after a heavy snowfall to rescue sheep. Deep in the drifts this young lamb was found.

tongue that few Danes, Norwegians, or Swedes can understand it without training; yet from the sagas preserved in it the Danish people have recovered songs and tales lost to them many generations ago.

On our way to Syderö we passed Lille Dimon and Store Dimon, one of which was the scene of a later expedition. They rise like pyramids from the sea, greater and grander and rougher than Cheops's own tomb.

No one, so far as I can learn, has ever landed on Lille Dimon, because its cliffs rise sharply on all sides; but on Store Dimon lives one family which did have a calf and still has a cow and some sheep to graze on a small cliff-girt plateau. At a certain period of the year Store Dimon's population is increased by four or five young men from neighboring islands, who go birding and eggng in the vast rookeries on the bluffs facing south and west.

Four times we went to Store Dimon and failed to effect a landing. The fifth time the sea was calm enough and the tide was right. Bech anchored the *Tusk* and followed me to shore. The way to the lone farmhouse led 600 feet up the face of the cliff, where holes had been cut in the rock to provide a foothold (page 626).

The sole householder on the island, a taciturn man, guided us up. At perilous places he would say: "So-and-so fell here some years ago and was killed." Or, "Be careful here; the priest slipped and was dashed to death at this point." No one ever got hurt, no one ever got off with a broken leg; one either got killed or didn't get killed.

CABLES BRACE WIND WALLS

Despite his dispiriting death list, which reached seven or eight, we gained the top of the cliff safely and walked to the farmhouse over against a hill. It was a large building surrounded by stone walls, which were higher and stronger on the east and west sides. These main wind walls, constructed of cemented stone, were six feet thick and were braced internally by heavy wire cables, which stretched from the top of each wall, past the front of the house, to an anchorage at the base of the opposite wall (see page 631).

Cable-bracing on so firm a barricade surprised me; so I asked the owner if it were necessary. Even with the support of the cables, he told me, the wind pouring

from the hill twice broke down these walls and nearly wrecked the dwelling.

The sad story of the family living in this lonely farmhouse well illustrates the hardships and perils that the inhabitants endure. And yet they love their islands and will not leave them for an easier life in Denmark. Furthermore, each islander thinks his own island and its precipices more beautiful and marvelous than any other in The Faeroes.

The household which we joined consisted of a boy four years old, his widowed mother, a male relative (our guide) who had taken charge of the farm, and five young birdcatchers, who had come over from Strömö for the season. The little child's father had been killed by a rock that fell on him while he was catching birds on the face of the cliff; his grandfather had been killed by falling into the sea while engaged in the same occupation, and his great-grandfather had met sudden death from an avalanche of rocks.

Birdcatching on Store Dimon's cliffs is considered more hazardous than going to sea, and the young men who pursue the quest are mourned by their families as lost before they leave home.

The widow of Store Dimon had not been off the island for three years because she would not risk the dangers and difficulties of the trip down the cliff.

SEA BIRDS NEST IN CLIFF APARTMENTS

On all the islands birds nest on the south and west cliffs, where they can get the maximum warmth from sunshine. Store Dimon has especially large colonies, which, each year about April, move into compartments on the precipice, as New Yorkers move into skyscraper apartments. On the very top, where there is some soil, the sea parrots, or puffins, settle down, while the *lomvies*, or guillemots, also of the auk family, congregate in thousands on the rock balconies overhanging the sea.

First we photographed the black-and-white sea parrots. Often we found them, yellow hook-billed, scrappy little defenders of their properties, in the grass at the entrances to their nests. They burrow sometimes a yard deep in the soil to build warm, protected nests for their young. There they hatch their babies, one at a time, but rapidly, and thus there may be eight or ten in the nest at once.



TWENTIETH-CENTURY VIKING BOATS LINE UP FOR A RACE

Narrow-waisted, pointed and upcurved in stem and stern, Faeroe rowing boats to-day show their direct descent from the Viking raiders in which Norsemen a thousand years ago swept down on England and northwest France and even sailed to America. To such boats The Faeroe islanders dashed on Sunday, six weeks ago, abandoning church services, when screaming sirens announced the approach of a school of *grind* whales. Even the minister joined in the wholesale killing of a school of 100, one of the largest kills in many years (see text, page 648).

The male is the chief, although not the sole, forager for the minnows on which the family feeds. If he should be caught or killed, another male bird will take his place at the nest; if the mother bird is killed, another hen will come; if both disappear, a foster parent, male or female, will take charge of the little ones and feed them until they can care for themselves.

How different from the lomvies and gulls in the apartments below! If a fuzzy young gull's parents are killed, the other birds on the rock balcony not only fail to feed him, but will push him over the edge to death in the waters hundreds of feet below.

Sea parrots are snared in hoop nets on long poles by men who station themselves in the rocks on the sides of the cliffs. Such a position brings them close to the birds, flying around the island in dense flocks, as they scout for schools of fish. One swoop with the net and the bird-catcher has a bird; never more than one to a swoop. But an expert will take a thousand birds in a day. If a sea parrot

has a fish in his beak, the catcher will always release the bird, because he knows that it flies to feed its young.

BIRDCATCHING NOT AN IDLE SPORT

Catching lomvies along the rock galleries requires a different technique and is much more dangerous. The catcher takes his pole net, fashions a swinging seat at the end of a stout, thick rope, and approaches the cliff edge. Then he walks backward over a brink 600 feet above the sea (see illustration, page 639). Four or five strong men let him down gently.

Just as he reaches the outermost point, he must give a push with his feet to start himself swinging, because the bird galleries have been undercut along the precipice face and can be reached only with a swinging motion. Once when I went down I failed to push off properly, so the men on the rope had to pull me up again until I could reach the rock with my feet. Once swinging, one can increase or decrease the arc at will.

Another difficulty is found in the twist-



FAEROE PONIES ROAM THORSHAVN'S STREETS, MUNCHING GRASS TUFTS

ing of the rope, which brings one's back instead of one's feet against the rocks, but by kicking and churning his legs in the air a trained birdcatcher can keep his face to the cliff.

Once he has reached the proper level, the birdcatcher makes a long swing, lands on the rock balcony with a flying leap, and hangs on like grim death. He finds himself in a colony of parent birds, fledglings, and eggs, which lie exposed on the bare rock. Moving his net in front of him and half concealed along the face of the ledge, he works toward the chattering throng, always carrying his rope. Suddenly he elevates his pole and the frightened birds fly into his net.

The catcher, like a duck hunter, hangs his birds at his belt until he can throw a number of them to an assistant waiting in a boat below.

But he must be careful not to hit the assistant or the boat. Because of the great height, eggs falling off the cliffs have been known to go through the bottoms of row-boats standing by at the base (p. 635).

Birding is no idle sport for the islanders, but a serious business, worth the hazards, for the flesh of the catches provides food for many mouths for many months and the eggs also are eaten.

In order that I might get pictures, we prepared two ropes. The birdcatcher went over in one, while I was let down at the end of the other. He went at his work among the rookeries as I turned the crank of a small camera and concentrated on my task in the vain endeavor to forget the white surf rushing wildly against the rocks hundreds of feet below.

SHATTERING THE NERVES OF A CALF

As a matter of fact, the task of filming the bird life of The Faeroes brought me into no actual danger except once when I took a position on an isolated pinnacle of rock in order to "shoot," photographically speaking, a birdcatcher against the sky as he came over the lip of the cliff. Weathering had rotted the rock and, in going over, the native boy dislodged a loose mass directly over me. By good fortune, only tiny pieces hit me and the camera.

Shortly before we left Store Dimon an incident occurred which, with the coöperation of the farmer, I photographed at the risk of shattering the nerves of his calf. He had sold the beast to a man on one of the neighboring islands, and the new owner had come in a boat to get her.

The master of Store Dimon fastened a large belt around the calf and, with the

assistance of everyone in sight, eased her over the cliff into mid-air. I photographed the calf's departure, but I wanted also to get her arrival down below; so I persuaded the farmer to leave her suspended in air for an hour and a half, while I picked my way down the steep path with my equipment. Then I photographed the calf landing at the base of the precipice.

Every kind of goods that goes on or comes off Store Dimon rides on the 600-foot improvised freight elevator used to remove the calf (see page 648).

A TELEPHONE CALL FOR WHALES

Leaving a telephone call for whales was, I suppose, the most unusual experience of my two summers on The Faeroes. After many false alarms, we got a call that sent us racing around to the north shore of Vaagö, where a herd of more than a thousand *grind* whales (also known as caaing or pilot whales, or blackfish, a species of dolphin) had been sighted. We saw the whales, but I failed to see a native whale hunt brought to the gory success that makes it such an astounding combat between men and beasts.

Whaling plays such an important part in the island life that I was eager to see it all—modern commercial whale hunting in a steam whaler carrying a harpoon gun, and also the primitive Faeroe hunt. The former was more easily arranged.

For some years the Norwegians have maintained on Strömö the sole Faeroe commercial whaling station, although the Danish program of aid calls for the establishment of another, to be operated by Danes and islanders. So I went whale hunting in the Norwegian ship. Just as the captain was about to give up and go back, the lookout sighted a big bowhead (Greenland right) whale.

My camera and I were at once lashed to the side of the bridge, where the high position gave me a view of the harpoon gun, mounted in the bow, and whatever the gun was pointed at. There I swung, cranking as the gunner shot and missed, shot again and missed, shot again and hit the whale in the tail. The wounded creature dashed off, pulling the boat at considerable speed until the rope snapped.

Soon we sighted the whale blowing again, and this time the harpooner made a clean hit. Our monster broke three lines that day. Although we had reason to be-

lieve the last harpoon killed the whale, a storm blowing up compelled the sailors to abandon their quarry and return to port.

Whales of various species are taken off The Faeroes. They are used mostly as food by the islanders, because the Danish Government requires the Norwegian whaling station to sell to the natives at a very low charge all the whale meat they need. Any surplus the Norwegians reduce for the oil. A captured whale's usual ultimate destination, therefore, is half-and-half, so to speak—part for the dinner table and part for the laundry tub as soap.

Catching the grind whale is another story. It is no leviathan, like the bowhead whale, and seldom attains a greater length than 25 feet. Still, it is fair game for the islanders, who are forever watching the sea for a fleet of fins cutting the water, for these mammals travel in packs.

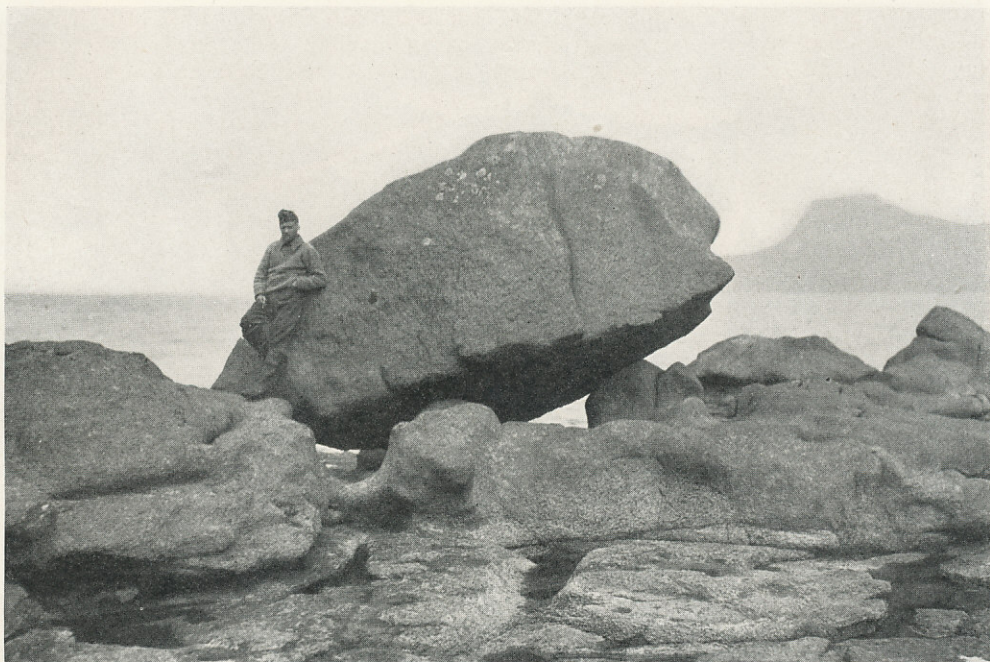
Appearance of a school off The Faeroes sends the islanders into a frenzy of excitement. A rush of volunteer village firemen to fight a local blaze compares mildly with the madness that breaks loose when whales swim by. As soon as a pack is sighted, all the men of the nearest community dash to their boats. They put out to sea, surround the whales, and herd them close to shore by tossing rocks in front of those that try to escape.

Meantime, if a telephone of the inter-island system is near, a general alarm goes out over the lines to every community whose oarsmen could be expected to reach the scene of action. If no telephone is available, the inhabitants fall back on the ancient device of a smoke signal.

We had begged to be called, night or day, rain or shine, and in answer to the most hopeful whale-hunt telephone call Bech and I sped north in the *Tusk*. As we turned a cape on Vaagö, a dozen Viking boats (see page 644) appeared, tossing on the waves, in a great semicircle. One carried a white shirt on an improvised mast, a sign that its men had discovered the pack and were leading the hunt.

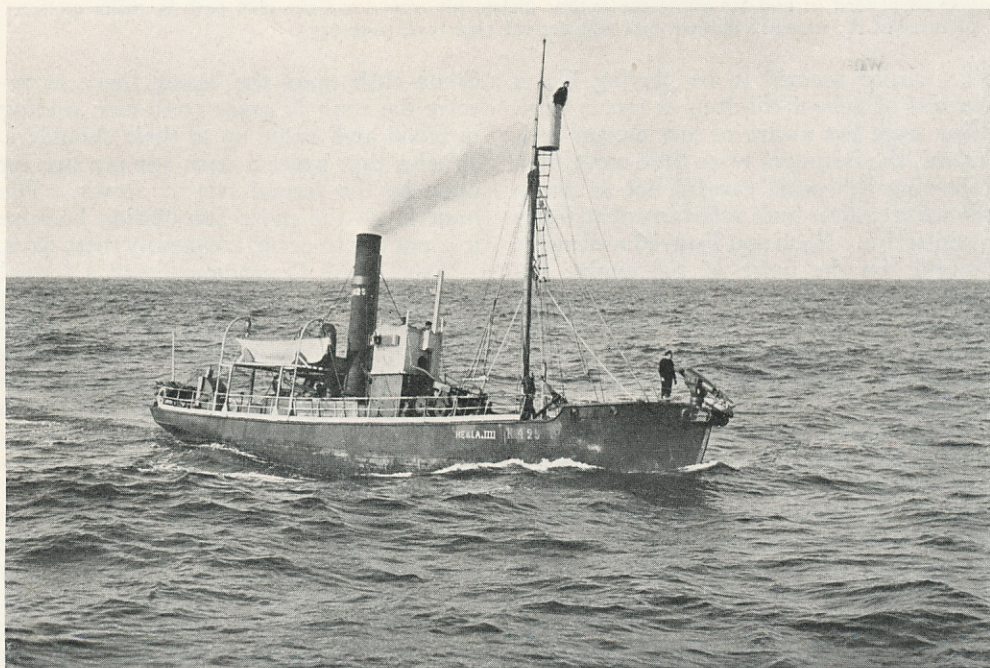
HARPOON, LANCE, AND KNIFE DESTROY THE CORNERED WHALES

Within the arc of boats hundreds of glistening-wet, sharp-pointed fins flashed and gleamed and slithered along the sea.



A BOWLING TOSSED ON SHORE BY A RAGING SEA

Forty tons is the estimated weight of the rock thrown up by a tremendous wave to a ledge 160 feet above sea level.



THE "HEKLA" GOES OUT FOR WHALES

With her harpoon gun poised for the kill, the steam whaler cruises around The Faeroes in search of finback and blue whales. Law requires the whale fishery to sell to natives at a low price all the whale meat they demand for food; the surplus may be reduced to oil for export.



A CALF RIDES ON THE STORE DIMON ELEVATOR

All animals, produce, and supplies going to or from the island dangle on this open-air elevator, which compares well with the longest vertical transportation possible in New York's tallest skyscrapers. At the risk of permanent damage to the calf's nervous system, the bawling beast was suspended in mid-air while the author picked his way down the cliff path to make motion pictures of the animal's descent and safe arrival (see text, page 645).

The whales seemed to be playing like a yardful of school children at recess time. They were not aware of any danger and, indeed, the islanders were little more than following the pack, careful not to alarm the sea creatures until reinforcement boats could arrive. Bech and I stayed well away, fearful lest the noise of the engine exhaust frighten the pack. Tense excitement gripped us, but our hopes were dashed when a storm came swiftly down and all the hunters abandoned the hunt to run for safe harbors.

If the whale hunt had gone on to a successful kill, the first ring of boats would have herded the pack into the mouth of an inlet. When a second line of boats had been rowed into position back of the forward circle, the attacking islanders would have moved in closer, forcing the whales up the passage. Then, at a signal, harpoon, lance, and knife would have begun their gory work. Kill, kill, kill! The men strike and slash, yell and row wildly, in their haste to destroy the cornered pack.

Some of the mammals in their terror batter their heads against the rock cliffs.

Some rush upon the beach, there to receive the *coup de grace* from men wading in blood and water up to their shoulders. Whales that make a dash for sea are set upon by the second line of attack. The hunt is all the more stimulating because it is not apt to occur frequently these days.

The Danish Government pays a special commissioner to supervise the distribution of the meat after a hunt has been completed. When the rights of the men who actually killed the whales are satisfied, the village that sighted the pack receives a special quota, while the remaining meat is divided equally among the other communities that sent boats to the hunt.

Two long summers I waited in vain for a grind whale hunt. From what I have been told I know that, as it is conducted in The Faeroes, it must be one of the most heroically primordial conflicts now to be seen on earth—a scene out of a saga, an incident in some hoary epic of heroes of the sword suddenly reenacted in all its stirring, fearful ruthlessness. So I am going back some summer and wait for that telephone call, "Whales sighted!"