

" SHIP BUILDING

and

MARITIME RECORDS

SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE "

by

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DELAWARE STATE ARCHIVES

F O R E W O R D

1987 is Delaware's bi-centennial. We were told they were planning a Celebration of the state's maritime heritage. Our records were less on this item than we liked, but we felt it appropriate to assemble those that we did have to add to some more of the history of our much-loved area. We feel that we are all Delmarva people not just exclusively either Marylanders, Virginians, or Delawarians.

With all good wishes to Bethel on their heritage day on October 3rd

Sincerely

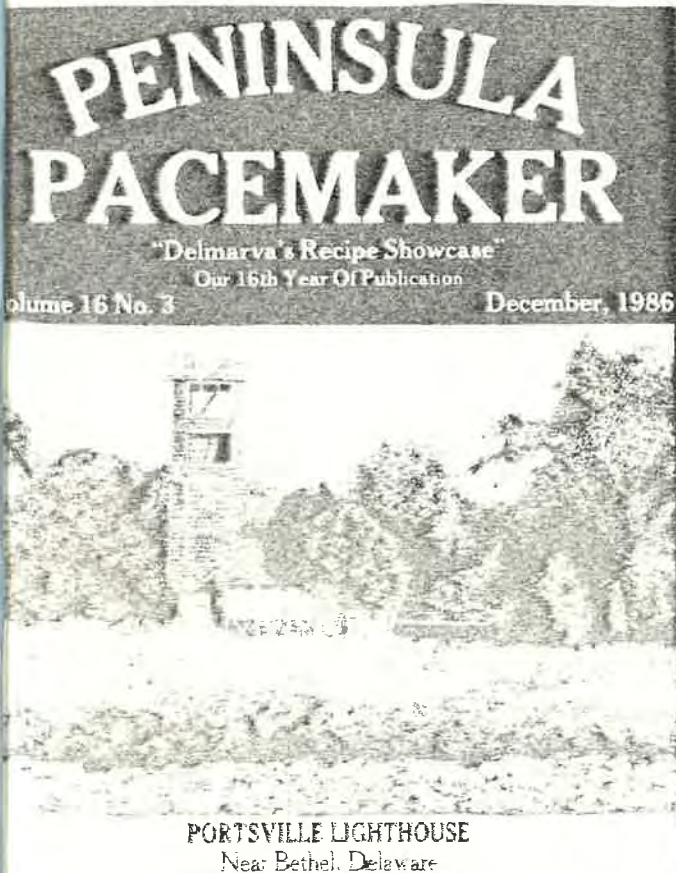
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July, 1987

" Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake
forth, "



The Book of Job

Chapter 38

Verse 8a

Historic Structure of the Month

The Portsville Lighthouse shown on this month's cover was not built to warn seafarers of impending danger. It could more readily be described as one man's folly. It was built by Judge Edward R. Koch who served on the New York Supreme Court. He inherited the property in 1930 and used it as a summer retreat. It originally consisted of a plot on Broad Creek, near Bethel Delaware, and a 19th century house. Next he moved the Portsville Shirt Factory onto the land and joined it to the house.

He then hired local carpenters to fashion the six-story cypress tower so that he could enjoy the view of the creek. For a final building spree, Koch oversaw the moving-in and conversion of the Portsville General Store to his property for use as a boat house.

When Koch died in 1965, he left instructions for his landmark to be deeded to Delaware. The Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control now owns it and has developed the grounds as a public fishing area through its Division of Fish and Wildlife. The architectural fantasy has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Copied from "Lists of Merchant Vessels of the United States". These books were issued annually by the government printing office in cooperation with the Department of the Treasury, Bureau of Navigation. They date from 1869 to perhaps the present. We have seen some fairly late editions. They list those ships still afloat or registered at the time of publication. We have access to two volumes, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum library has a number of volumes and we have been told that the Maritime Museum at Newport News, Virginia has most if not all of them. If someone is interested they might like to consult these volumes for vessels built in the lower Delaware areas.

From 1890 (For the year ended June 30, 1890) All are sailing vessels

| Name of Vessel | Where Built | Year Built | Gross Tonnage | Type |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|---------------|----------|
| Alert | Bethel | 1831 | 66.78 | Schooner |
| Allie Virginia | Lewisville | 1877 | 10.14 | Schooner |
| Amelia Hearn | Laurel | 1873 | 113.56 | Schooner |
| Annie E. Moore | Laurel | 1870 | 126.21 | Schooner |
| Belle | Sussex Co. | 1872 | 20.24 | Schooner |
| Bessie and Lelia | Bethel | 1884 | 69.11 | Schooner |
| Charlotte Moore | Lewisville | 1877 | 18.23 | Schooner |
| Cherubim | Sussex Co. | 1872 | 98.42 | Schooner |
| Custus W. Wright | Drawbridge, Del. * | 1871 | 113.36 | Schooner |
| Edward L. Martin | Sussex Co. | 1882 | 84.95 | Schooner |
| Emily E. Burton | Lewisville | 1871 | 88.41 | Schooner |
| Eureka | Laurel | 1872 | 19.69 | Schooner |
| Fairwind | Portsville | 1872 | 63.14 | Schooner |
| Hattie E. Giles | Lewisville | 1874 | 134.93 | Schooner |
| Industry | Sussex Co. | 1871 | 26.32 | Schooner |
| J. Dallas Marvel | Bethel | 1889 | 160.14 | Schooner |
| John McGinnis | Laurel | 1872 | 130.65 | Schooner |
| John A. Curtis | Laurel | 1874 | 155.33 | Schooner |
| John S. Foreman | Sussex Co. | 1858** | 43.79 | Schooner |
| Lena Willing | Bethel | 1883 | 53.58 | Schooner |
| Lizzie J. White | Woodland | 1864 | 9.08 | Schooner |
| Maggie | Lewisville | 1876 | 50.17 | Schooner |
| Minnie Mar | Bethel | 1887 | 8.18 | Schooner |
| Minnie H. Smithers | Bethel | 1885 | 137.03 | Schooner |

FROM THE RECORDS OF
J. HOWARD & LOUISE H. ADKINS

* uncertain as to location ** this date was smudged in printing

Sussex Co. Vessels

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| | | | | |
|-------------|------------|------|-------|----------|
| Ocean Bird | Sussex Co. | 1855 | 77.85 | Schooner |
| Odd Fellow | Sussex Co. | 1849 | 45.85 | Schooner |
| Remittance | Sussex Co. | 1843 | 63.93 | Schooner |
| Silver Moon | Sussex Co. | 1875 | 11.78 | Sloop |

In the list of 1887, there is one vessel listed that is not in the above listing

| | | | | |
|--------------|--------|------|--------|----------|
| Bessie Brown | Bethel | 1884 | 260.48 | Schooner |
|--------------|--------|------|--------|----------|

Note: Dimensions were included in the listing for this year.
 Dimensions of the Bessie Brown were: 124.8 long 32.3 breadth 9.7 depth

FROM THE RECORDS OF
 J. HOWARD & LOUISIANA