

FROM THE SCRAPBOOK
The Treasure of Indian Lookout, Lower Southhampton, 1934
by Dr. William Randall
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My Smokey is a beautiful solid black cat born March 4, 1993. She has gorgeous yellow eyes and is for us the personification of what a beautiful native cat should be. Of course, I really wanted to know her genealogy! O.K.?

She came to us from the Henry's in Magundy. Her parents were from Donnelly Settlement, Lake George. Her grandparents were from Rosborough Settlement on the upper Pokiok Road and their ancestors came from Lower Southhampton - before it was called Nackawic. Jocelean Hall will surely ask "what is the verification of your sources?" - and Jo, honest, would YOU trust what a tomcat told you? Well here's my verification. George Frederick Clark wrote a book "Six Salmon Rivers and Another" and in his book he relates a story told to him by Joe Perry that I recount again here...

Joe, in 1934 was teaching in the little country schoolhouse at Lower Southhampton. He says that after a couple of weeks in the village three young men told him they were going to dig for treasure on the Indian Lookout and they asked him to accompany them. Now the Indian Lookout was a prominent low flat land projection created by the St. John River as it made its sharp oxbow turn just above the Nackawic stream it was known as the Munroe Flats.

Well they told him it had to be after midnight on a full moon and the utmost secrecy was intended. In Joe's words "it was just after midnight when we reached the Look Out. We had shovels and a grub-axe to work with, and a lantern which at first we didn't light because the moon made everything as bright as day. It was a weird sort of night. Between the clumps of small growth trees on the Look Out we could see a low bank of mist, as white as milk, over the St. John River. In the hollow on our left, the Nackawic rippled and gurgled over its rocky bed. Occasionally the plop of a salmon in the pool at its mouth reached our ears. Far back of us, we heard the wolfish howl of a dog, which Jerry O'Neil whispered to us boded ill for some poor body. Now and then we also heard the *baa* of a sheep from the hillside pasture, while the faint tinkle of a cow bell rose at fell on the night air that was as still as death itself. At long intervals, from across the river, came the hum of a motorcar and we saw the headlights sweeping the highway with a concentrated path of gold.

There were a few rocks and roots where we dug, but for the most part it was easy work, and in a very short time we had dug a hole as big as a molasses puncheon. As it got deeper we took turns getting into it, throwing up the earth to those above, who then removed it to one side.

My companions seldom spoke, and then only in a low voice. I gathered that they were quite nervous, so I began joking with them: told them we might dig through to China and find no treasure. As for being disturbed by spirits, or anything else -- that was all poppy-cock. They begged me to be quiet but I joshed them all the more.

Well it was about half past two when Jerry - who is taking his turn in the hole, shoveling out - whispered that he'd struck rocks and asked for the grub-axe to loosen them. It was passed down to him and he began picking away, pausing every minute or so to throw up the rocks. Finally, we heard a dull, splintering sound then Jerry's excited voice: "I've gone through something that's hollow. This is it, boys!"

The rest of use clustered about the mouth of the hole dropped to our knees and peered down at Jerry. I admit we were all as excited as he was. "Light the lantern" Jerry said "So's I can see what I'm doing."

Archie Hailes, who was beside me, said "alright Jerry", and reaching for the lantern, which was

behind him, pushed up the little lever that controlled the glass globe, then struck a match. No sooner had he done so than there was the darndest caterwauling I ever heard, and the hole was suddenly alive with tomcats - black tomcats - hundreds of them and they came in droves up the sides of the Look Out. Jerry gave a yell you could've heard a mile. Then exclaimed "give me a hand up." Archie flung the lantern at a dozen big black tomcats but it smashed against a tree and then went out. The both of us grabbed Jerry's hand and pulled him out of the hole. Then we all ran down the slope of the Look Out and across the field towards the highway. With every footfall we stepped on a howling cat. They sprang at our legs, clawing at us. One reached my shoulder and I grabbed the fiend by the back, tore its claws loose and flung it from me. It struck Jerry and he cried out to St. Peter, St. Paul and St. Anne to persevere him. All of us save Archie Hailes had thrown away our shovels, and half way across the field he laid about him like a veritable Sampson, mowing down the cats in swaths of fifty at a time. The din was terrific. I could see the fiends; they were all black, and their eyes glowed like fireballs. We were almost to the fence that separates the field from the highway when we got another scare that almost turned us inside out. It seems that after the hay cutting Mr. Munroe had turned his cattle out to graze on the after grass. They had been lying down near the fence, and now, hearing us coming, and the yowling of the cats, they jumped to their feet and stampeded in all directions. An ugly old white bull that was the terror of the countryside threw up its tail in horror and with a succession of bellows tried to escape the cats. They landed on his back, as thick as flies on a dead carcass. The bull was in such a frenzy that it jumped into the river and swam up to the Pokiok Falls. It jumped the falls, staying in as deep water as it could, and then headed for the highlands. Finally as it began to run up over Rosborough Ridge daylight began to creep into the sky and the black cats began to fall off him. The old bull laid down, exhausted.

There may be parts of this story, which cannot be easily proven, but I'm sure that's where my Smokey came from.