

## **SHE IS A CAPTAIN**

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Traverse City, October 15 - Northern Michigan has an interesting character in the person of Captain Florence Haas of South Manitou Island, mail carrier between that Island and Glen Haven. A quiet, unassuming little woman, with slight form, light hair and blue eyes, she has the determined and assured look, which comes from facing and successfully overcoming dangers from which the majority of men would shrink! Three times a week in storm or shine from the earliest days of spring until the ice forms on Lake Michigan, she makes the ten-mile trip, often in storms which drive large lake boats to harbor at the Manitous.

Mrs. Haas comes naturally by her love for the water. Her father Captain Raimo, was one of the old time lake captains, remaining on the water until advancing age caused him to give up his boat and spend the remainder of his days on a farm in Leelanau county. His daughter is a master hand with a sailboat and nervy and daring to a degree, and her neighbors tell of many adventurous risks she has taken on the lake. For a long time, she has carried mail in her sailboat, which has a twenty-four-foot beam [sic.], but she has more recently decked the boat entirely over back of the mast and put in a twelve-horsepower gasoline engine.

She ventures out in any kind of sea, sometimes with the waves washing over the cabin. She says "No water can get in now, so what's the use of being frightened?" Several times this summer she has taken the seventy-five mile trip across to Green Bay, WI, starting at night. Her boat is speedy for its size, making twelve miles per hour.

### **Woman Knows no Fear**

One night last year she started out from Green Bay at dusk accompanied by her husband and son. As it grew late, they both dropped asleep, and thinking it a pity to waken them, she made the trip entirely unaided reaching home harbor in the early morning. The boat is a great convenience to people wishing to cross between the island and the main shore and in addition to carrying mail it is used as a passenger ferry. Last fall during an unusually sever storm, a lumberman was a passenger on the boat. When about halfway over he became greatly alarmed and offered her \$500.00 to turn back. With a flash in her eyes she turned upon him and said, "You keep still and I'll land you on the other side for 50 cents which is the regular fare."

Mrs. Haas is not compelled to carry on her perilous business. Her husband is an exceedingly well-to-do farmer on the island, where Mrs. Haas has lived since she was seven years old. She has a son who is an experience sailor, and she loves the water and would not be happy anywhere else.

[transcript – from the November 2003 issue of the South Manitou Memorial Society Newsletter]