

Toronto Telegram, August 11, 1951
Schooner Days, MXIV (1014)
By C.H.J. Snider

Scotch Bonnet and tenants.

Greatly rejoiced were we, with all lovers of sail, to see the Scotch Bonnet chosen by Tom Roberts, ARCA, OSA, as a subject, and worthily expounded in the Ontario Society of Artists March exhibition at the Art Gallery of Toronto. My southwester is off to the Lake Ontario school of sailor artist like Roberts, Manly Macdonald and Rowley W. Murphy, who can give us the real thing in all its stark strength and simplicity and beauty both of form and of colour as it lies neglected at our very door. Needless to say these snapshots are not a reproduction of Mr. Roberts treatment of the subject. The artist who paints the Scotch Bonnet as is has imagination and stamina, for to get near enough and stay near enough for a study of it requires sealegs as well as fingers for the brush. The Bonnet is a reef off Nicholsons Island towards the foot of Lake Ontario, and is reached by steering south 10 miles, often in very rough water, from Presque Isle light near Brighton. The lighthouse was built in 1840 but the berth is so rough and lonely that a keeper could not live on it. His stone house was abandoned long ago, and the light in the tower is one of those automatic affairs, installed each spring. When we landed on the Bonnet recently it was taken over by 150 families of cormorants and 100 families of gulls; at least we counted that many nests, and more hundreds of young ones, when we took the pictures. A word for Mrs. Cormorant – please don't shoot or destroy her nest or young. Cormorants are the deadly foe of lamprey eels, and the eels kill more fish than all the birds combined.

(Picture.) Scotch Bonnet lighthouse and birds.

[Transcribed, G.B.M. Sept. 24,1976.]