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Capt. David A. McLeod: My Early Years The following stories are taken from a much longer autobiography by Capt. David Alexander McLeod of Cleveland, Cape Breton. He was born in 1857 and died in 1940. There are still many people who remember him. It is said that he was a successful local merchant and quite a farmer-- that he had "the biggest barn in Richmond County." He is also remembered by distinctive scars on his face, mementoes of a mutiny-- part of the story of his life at sea, icebergs, and shipwrecks, that we hope to offer in a future issue. For now, here is a bit of his early life and the making of a Cape Breton seaman. Things I don't care who knows, when my book is written. What I will write is without the help of the dictionary or any course in story writing. I don't want to dilute what I have to say with a lot of imported words I could not handle. I was born and brought up in the country and although I have been knocked around and knocked about, I like the country still. What I write now is not material I have hunted up but what I have lived, seen, and went through myself. I am naming my book "Reminiscences of Fifty Years Afloat and Ashore." I was born in Cleveland on May 1st, 1857; went but very little to school for there was no school house. What I did get was up above my father's store after the little log house stogged with moss got too cold for winter use. I got my first whipping for poking a hole through the moss to see if I was too late for my morning lesson. My brother Will, two years older than I, was far fonder of swimming and skating than going to school. On account of there being no school so often, when a teacher did come for a six-months term it was nearly over before we were got under control. We were mischievous, but I will never admit bad boys. One morning we were late getting to school caused by our noticing the arrival of a young lamb at the bam, and we had to get in the mother and make them both comfortable, and give the sheep a warm drink. Now we expected a talking to. but not a whipping. However, we were immediately called and ordered to hold out our hands for being late. Will protested and commenced to explain and would not hold out his hand. Then the teacher caught him by the coat collar and commenced laying on the birch, but with the first blow Will hit him in the stomach and I came on with a grey stone inkbottle in each hand and let fly at close range. Well, the teacher taught no school for a day or so. This took place in April 1866 when I was eleven years old. Next morning Will was ordered to go on his knees and apologize to him, which he would not. He was then told by the teacher that he would not touch him until he would do so. Will walked towards the door and said, "If it come to that I'll go out." A few days afterwards my sister Maggie, now Mrs. Bowling, was told to stand up and hold out her hand for showing a little girl, Mary McLeod, how to do a sum, and the teacher gave her six lashes on one hand and told her to hold out her other hand. I got up and said, "Look, that whipping is enough for a horse." He said, "You'd imp, I'll teach you manners in my presence"--and he made for me, but I jumped over the desk, grabbed the drinking water bucket, and quick as a flash let go-- bucket, water, and all. We had the afternoon to ourselves. His Majesty had to go home to get dry clothes. Now, mind you, my own father used



to tell the teacher, "You whip them boys and make them mind you." Tbe Grubstake
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