

# THE FIFTH COLUMN

By E. T. Rattray

Last week, when our dour Town Fathers unbent long enough to return Louse Point Road its glorious and ancient name (after a short spell as East Harbor Drive), one of the legislators slipped into a brief, Congressional Record style, dissertation on the general topic of maidenly delicacy and placenames.

One local lady, he recalled, could never pronounce Louse Point as others did. To her, until the end of her long life, it was "Lowsay Point," with a vaguely French rendering of the offending adjective.

The Victorian influence must have been strong, for it persists unto the second and third generation. It isn't prudery, for in most cases there is nothing salacious involved, but just an aversion to plain English.

Our Town Board, which has shown common sense and respect for our forebears in restoring Louse Point to its place on the official map, has at the same time been trying to promote the use of the term "disposal area" for what all of us, except the disposal engineers, call a dump.

This sort of dressing up the language has a good deal in common with the work of our whaler grandparents, who dragged in the Mother Hubbards and the missionaries after the developing had been done.

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