

Maynard S. Bird: The Saga of a Maine Son

Rose Waterman



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In 1897, Maynard Bird, of Rockland, Maine, was visiting an insurance client, Fred Hall, on the island of Vinalhaven at the mouth of the Penobscot River. "You know, Maynard," Fred was saying, "staying in touch with the mainland is getting more important every day. I was thinking on how we might go about getting some telephone service out here.""Let me look into it, Fred," Maynard responded. These sentences were enough to start him on one of his Adventures.Born four years after the Civil War, Maynard saw life as a series of adventures. He was uniquely equipped, through his quick, mathematically analytical mind, and his adventurous spirit, to take advantage of an era of great commercial, industrial and technological innovation. At 24 he started his own insurance brokerage, founded the Knox County Telephone Company, a local bank and a successful investment brokerage. At fifty he met and married a beautiful concert singer. After her tragic death, he left Maine and resumed his career in New York. The Depression found him still affluent, but the final loss of his third wife left him alone bereft of her support. He died at 91, his resources largely depleted; too proud to admit his need to those who cared.

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