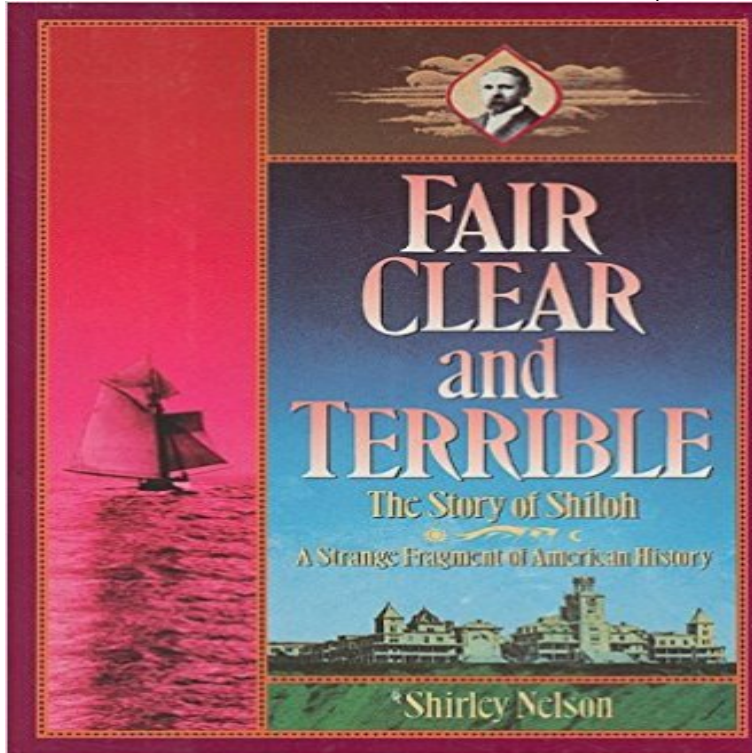


## Fair Clear and Terrible: The Story of Shiloh, Maine



This bizarre, true story of a dynamic religious leader and his perfectionist followers gives insight into countless extremist movements today. At the turn of the century, a young man named Frank Weston Sanford, proclaiming himself the fulfillment of certain Biblical prophecies, founded a movement called Shiloh, its central location on a hill in the town of Durham, Maine. The movement's purpose was sweeping and ultimate - to prepare the world for the Second Coming of Christ and the cataclysmic events which would usher it in. The enactment of this mission spanned twenty-five years, involving many hundreds of people. Sanford, an appealing and volatile leader, erected an extraordinary complex of buildings in Durham, opened stations in major American cities, then set sail on the high seas in a racing schooner with a select group of followers. Their intention was to circle the globe for Christ. Instead, they headed for doom. As the movement expanded, so did its aspirations - and its dangers. The concept of itself as an apocalyptic force in the world exacted relentless personal demands. Rigorous fasts and purges kept members in a constant state of anxiety regarding their spiritual condition. While Sanford diverted funds to expand the effort to an international scale - England, Africa, Jerusalem - food and necessities became scarce on the Durham hilltop. Professional medical care was repudiated. Deaths began to multiply. In the court trials that structure the story, Sanford was finally convicted of manslaughter and sentenced to prison. Shirley Nelson, whose parents grew up in this unusual society, tells Shiloh's powerful story with passion, understanding, and grace. She captures the inner dimensions of an intense religious culture and deals poignantly with themes that remain current and haunting: authority, heroism, martyrdom - and the frightening

phenomenon of one personality in control of many others.

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