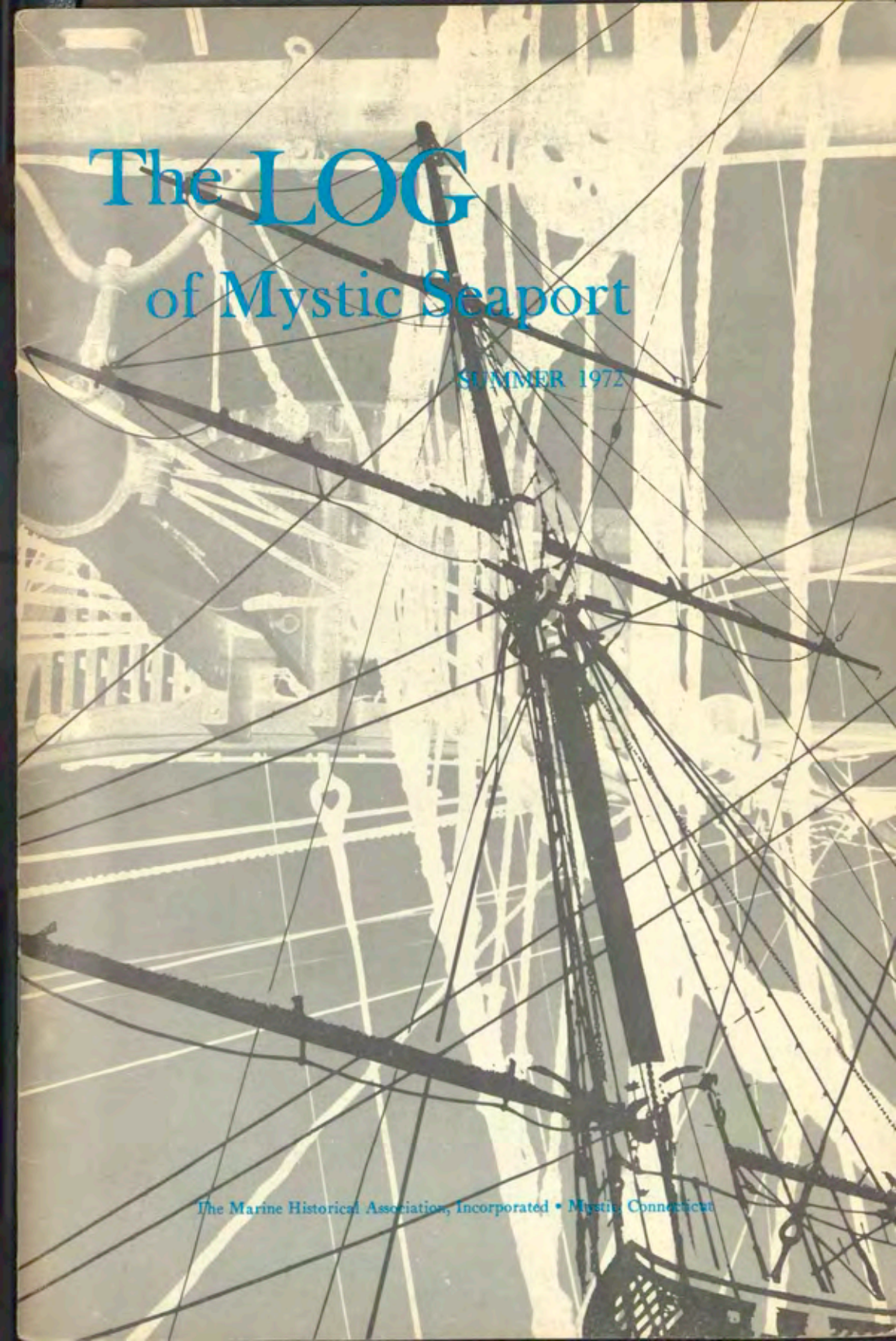


The LOG of Mystic Seaport

SUMMER 1972

The Marine Historical Association, Incorporated • Mystic, Connecticut

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cf. 59.1286 FIDDLER

THE HERRESHOFF FIFTEENS

By David Cheever

The collection of small sailing craft at Mystic Seaport is a magnificent one, and perhaps the brightest jewel in this diadem is the Herreshoff fifteen-footer, *Fiddler*. The one-design racing class of which she is almost the last surviving example was notable alike for its excellence of design, beauty of form and perfection of construction. There was an admiration almost akin to idolatry in the minds of those who owned, sailed and raced these boats. These tender feelings remain green to this day.

It is a fine thing that Mystic should have completed a thoughtful, well-documented restoration of the *Fiddler*, and it makes it incumbent on us who know this class well to record some of its history and traditions. The writer's family has been involved with the Fifteens since the winter of 1899-1900, and there has been only one summer since then that our boat has not been sailing around Buzzards Bay. Putting it another way, four generations of the same family have enjoyed the Fifteens.

It has been said that when the world needs a new development it is waiting in the wings. So it was in 1899. Handicap racing had been proven unsatisfactory over and over again. It is fair to say that it encouraged innovative design, but counterbalancing this advantage was the fact that it led to design excesses, to high expense, to countless frustrations and to acrimonious arguments.

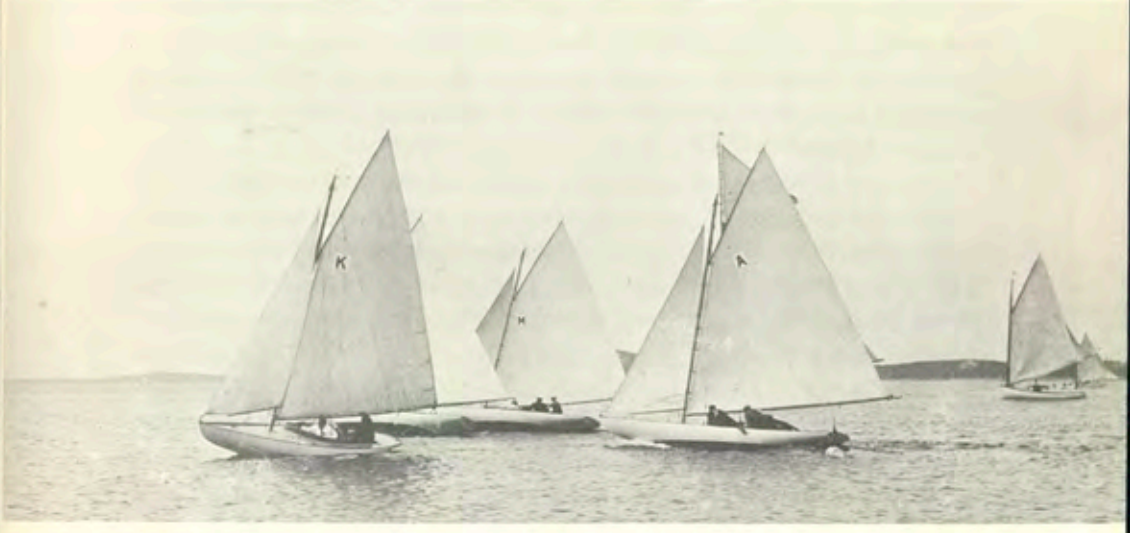
The national hero in the yachting field of design was Nathanael Herreshoff of Bristol, Rhode Island. Following the death of Edward Burgess he developed to a point where he was without peer in his profession. In 1899 his latest and one of his most perfect creations was *Columbia*, the defender of the America's Cup. So outstanding was she that she was twice selected for this honor.

In the same year the Beverly Yacht Club had come to the moment of decision. Founded in 1872 in protest to the Eastern Yacht Club's decision to confine its racing activities to yachts of twenty-five-foot waterline or over, it took form gradually, holding regattas in many locations until it finally settled on Buzzards Bay as its sole racing area. It was only natural that the emphasis should have been on catboat racing at first, but gradually handicapped classes of racing sloops and knockabouts crept in. The difficulties

of handicapping are too obvious to require more space here, and with a generation of keen young yachtsmen and yachtswomen (note well the reference to women, of whom more anon) the stage was set for a one-design class of superior quality and design.

The class was more than fortunate in having the guidance of a family famous in American yachting, the Emmonses. They were skillful and keenly competitive. Even more importantly, they were well known to Nat Herreshoff. (The career of the Emmons-owned *Avenger* against the rock-ribbed New York Yacht Club committee is a saga in itself.)

A committee was formed and with its chairman, R. W. Emmons II, waited on the great Captain Nat. To avoid the slightest possibility of purchaser pressure the boats were all ordered through Emmons and the owners' names were not preserved in the Herreshoff records. Furthermore, the boats themselves were unnamed. In the spring the great moment came when Captain Nat appeared off the Beverly Yacht Club, then on Wings Neck, in his steam yacht, *Squib*, with all the identical Fifteens in tow. They were drawn for by lot and designated by an alphabetical letter. The first choice fell to the writer's grandfather, F.W. Sargent, and the boat was named *Vim*. *Fiddler* was not among the original eleven boats but was built in 1902 and joined the racing ranks the following summer under the ownership of Miss Caroline M. Dabney.



1899 – the first year. K, Wanda, *John Parkinson, wind clear and in the lead; A,* Vim, *F. W. Sargent.*

Every early Fifteen owner was convinced that his boat had much of *Columbia*'s modeling in her and perhaps that was true. Let's take a look at the dimensions of these small yachts to bring their picture into focus. Herreshoff had picked up where Burgess left off on so-called compromise sloops. Basically this meant that the centerboard worked through a slot in the lead keel. The result was that the yacht in question had moderate draft with the board up and would still be manageable even to the point of going to windward, while with the board down she became a deep vessel which pointed as well as the gaff rig and cotton sails of the day would permit. Let no one be fooled by the term Fifteen-footer. It is true that these boats were fifteen feet on the waterline, yet they were all of twenty-four feet overall. They had a beam of 6'9" and drew only 2'3" with the board up.[1] Truly a perfect hull for shoal water. The owners in the class had names that were or would be large in American yachting – Bob, Bill and Nat Emmons, Jack Parkinson, Chandler Hovey, J. Lewis Stackpole, and the Eustis twins, to mention a few.

Now we come to a very interesting development. The racing in the class was extremely keen with four different champions in the first five years, thereby establishing the superiority of one-design racing. As might have been expected, all the owners were men. In 1904 it became evident that the girls were giving the men a run for their money, for the championship that year was won by Miss Dabney in *Fiddler*. Furthermore, she was not alone, for others appeared. The Misses Warren, Emmons, Codman and Williams bear testimony to this. The reason for the affinity between the fair sex and the Fifteens was not far to seek. The girls had wrestled with the brutal steering of some of the early catboats so that the sensitivity of handling and lightness of gear of the Fifteens was a source of delight.

The rest of *Fiddler*'s history is quickly told. Her young owner grew up and married and had sons of her own. They were active in racing during the decade from 1925 to 1935. Not a championship boat but always fast and to be reckoned with, her greatest triumph was reserved for her twilight years.

Ever since 1896 a trophy for the winner of a handicap race open to any sailing yacht in Buzzards Bay has been the object of hot competition. Known as the Van Rensselaer Cup, it is emblematic of championship of the Bay. In 1933 *Fiddler*, sailed by Augustin H. Parker, younger son of the original owner, and with only his wife as crew, won this trophy in a fleet of twenty boats, thus climaxing an outstanding competitive career.

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1. An apparent repetitive error has been uncovered in researching the history of this class. Starting in 1900 and continuing until 1945, the beam measurement was erroneously given as 5'10", when in reality it was 6'9". Actual measurements prove this.



1904 — Fiddler. *One hand for maxiskirt, one hand for the ship.*

In all these years *Fiddler* was carefully and intelligently cared for. Her long ends were properly shored up. She was refastened in the twenties, being given some needed sister ribs in the process. Thus when Augustin H. Parker finally gave her to Mystic she came and will now remain, thanks to her fine rebuilding, in original condition. Her lovely lines speak for themselves. She stands a monument to the early prime of Herreshoff's career.

Now let's enjoy a typical race in this great class as it existed in the 1920s, for there was a special art to handling these boats which should be recorded. The Bay will serve up its standard fare for the afternoon. The wind is southwest and would normally call for one or two reefs depending on common sense. The start will be off Butler's Point outside Marion Harbor and will be dead to windward outside of Bird Island to Angelica Point off Mattipoisett. Then straight downwind to a buoy off Bird Island and a reach to the finish.

There are sixteen in the fleet, not bad for more than twenty-five years of racing. Most of the boats are twenty or more years of age, although two were added as late as 1926.



1928 – Bandersnatch, *Cheever*; Vixen, *Sherburne, above.* 1971 – Awahnee, *F. S. Cheever, below. All photographs courtesy of the author.*



It is a known fact that although common sense calls for reefing, a boat so handicapped seldom wins. The secret in keeping a Fifteen on her feet lies in the handling of the big clubbed jib. This *must* be sheeted home tightly the second the tack is made. Meanwhile, the force of the wind dictates carrying a luff nearly out to the battens. Failure to so sheet the jib home results in a knockdown, and almost certainly the boat in question is full to the seats and out of competition.

Our two crewmen are on the light side and this, coupled with the fact that our boat generally does better in light weather anyway, makes our chances of winning poor. For the good ones are out – Casserly in *Ptiloris*, Angier in *Polly*, Hovey in *Awahnee*, Stackpole with *Tricoon*, Sherburne with *Vixen*, the Parkers with *Fiddler* and, most feared of all, Hoyt with *Maribee*. (An old wives' tale but believed by many in the game was that the Hoyts gave their boatman Leland Powers a gold watch every time *Maribee* won the championship. If so he must have had pockets in his pajamas because there wouldn't have been room in his suit. Incidentally *Maribee* is still owned by the original family. While it is only a guess, there may be half a dozen of this class left scattered up and down the New England coast.)

A cluttered start with several boats out of control and there she is – *Maribee* – with her wind clear scooting for the slight lee afforded by Bird Island. The short, sharp Buzzards Bay chop is wicked. One wonders how nine-sixteenths-inch cedar can stand it. Lying out on the rail, half the centerboard is visible as she rises to a sea. It is impossible to look to leeward because no one has invented plastic "see throughs" yet. Already she is beginning to fill from a combination of spray beaten aft by the overhanging bow and the wash over the lee gunwall. My brother calls one of us in off the rail to pump. Up to our shins in water, the pump will not suck through the lifted floorboard. She is perfectly dry there. Everything is behind her seat under her leeward rail. Damnation! As we toil away a starboard tacker comes up under our lee. We'll clear him all right as far as hull is concerned, but how about five feet of boom overhang? There is yelling and at the critical moment my brother puts the tiller hard up against the weather washboard. This act throws the end of the boom upwind and the bow downwind, providing just extra room enough to let the starboard tacker slip by our stern with a foot or two to spare. More water, because that maneuver nearly filled her. Under the Mattapoisett shore things get a little better and *Angelica* looms in the sou'west smoke ahead. Full sail pays off now.

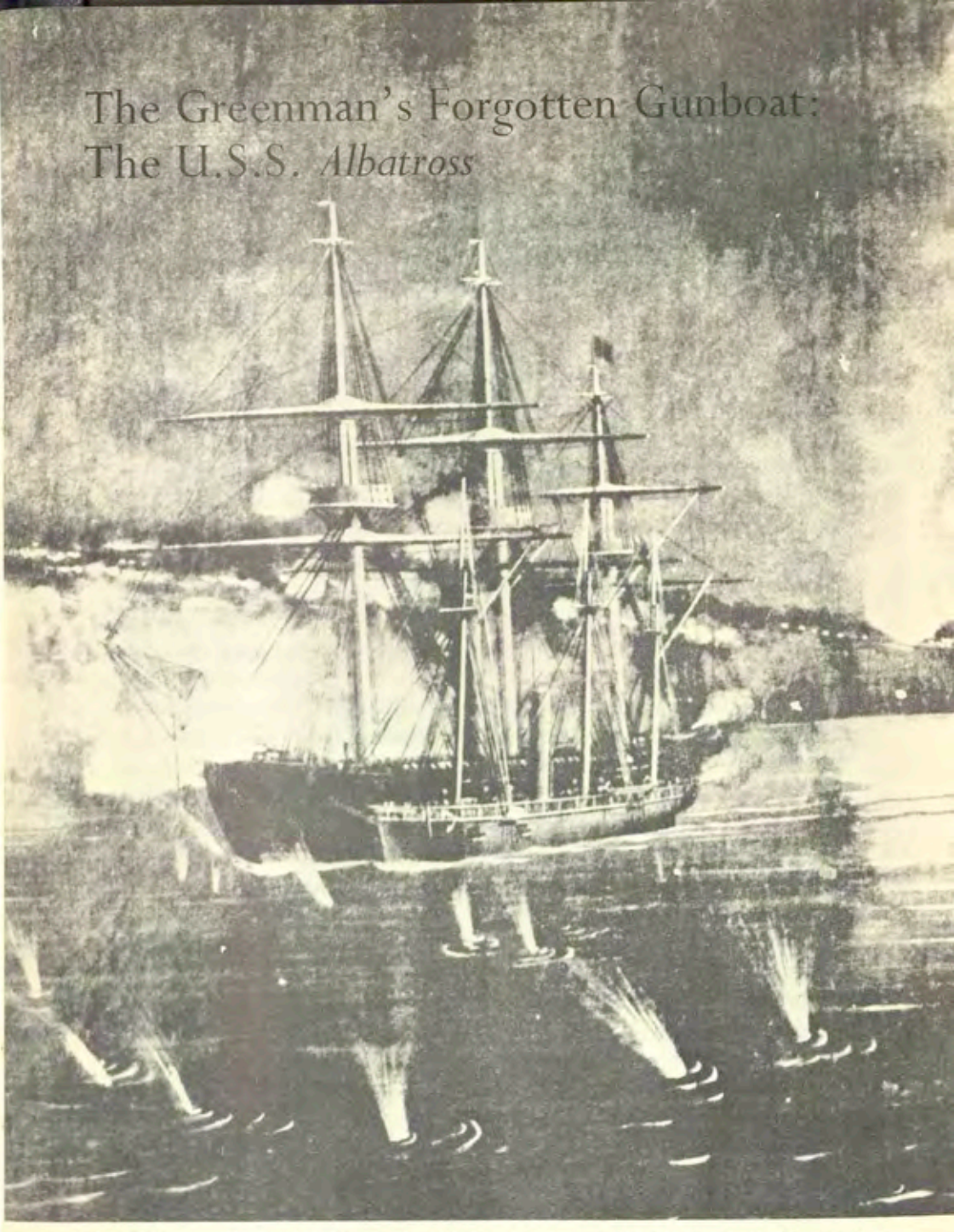
We reach the buoy and round it, slack off the boom, settle the peak and now comes decision. The spinnaker boom is full fifteen feet long. The

big flat-cut spinnaker is masthead and the running back-stays go just above the jaws of the gaff. We are in the middle of the fleet. We can't win. In short, we are crazy to set a spinnaker at all. The boat next to us makes no move to set hers. One of those ahead has scandalized hers by tying a canvas stop part way down the sail, thus reducing its area by one-third. We say a prayer and break ours out full. Leaping ahead of the boat next to us, we start after our short-spinnakered friend. The unstayed upper portion of the mast has a curve like a buggywhip. Then she does it. Suddenly and without warning – but just as hoped – she catches a sea under her lovely Herreshoff stern. She starts to surf. This is no scow-type boat. This is a full-bodied hull moving beyond its designed speed. At moments she is throwing her spray from the back stays, which means that fully fifteen feet of her hull is suspended over the seas. She quivers and vibrates while we shout with excitement.

Before we know it we've passed Bird Island and the leeward mark is upon us. We must douse the spinnaker and we *must* jibe. It would be impossible to tack her in under two or three minutes. The slender boom is whipping and one wonders how that light traveler, those puny backstays and those small cleats can stand it. Herreshoff had them all fined down to the last ounce. A good fast man on the mainsheet, another on the backstays, the jib has been pretrimmed and the sodden spinnaker is underfoot. Hoping the spinnaker boom is somewhere, somehow, secured we go into the jibe. She will likely lose her mast or swamp if not handled right now. Over comes the boom with a crash, but the mainsheet man has paid out fast enough to lessen the shock. With jib hard-trimmed and mainsail wide we rush for the finish.

"Only the middle of the fleet," you say, but what a thrill, and one that any of the fortunate owners of this class racing in Buzzards Bay will always remember. Long life and an earned rest to you, *Fiddler*.

The Greenman's Forgotten Gunboat: The U.S.S. *Albatross*



Admiral Farragut's flagship Hartford, *with the* Albatross *lashed to her port side, passing Port Hudson. Detail of watercolor by E. Arnold, from the Loyall E. Farragut Collection in the Division of Naval History, Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian photograph 64852.*

By Myron J. Smith, Jr.

Fond memories still linger over some of the unusual roles played by Mystic-built vessels, civilian and naval, during the American Civil War. Stories of the whalers purchased in town for the Great Charleston Stone Fleet of 1861; stories of the blockade of the Southern coast; of how Messrs. Bushnell launched one of the first Yankee ironclads, the *Galena*; and of how the Mallory ship *Owasco* distinguished herself at the Battle of Galveston. Indeed, Mystic's naval efforts of the 1860s give much to be proud of.

Interestingly enough, the greatest success gained by Mystic warships was not found along the Atlantic coast. Ship-for-ship and gun-for-gun, these small steamers performed the greatest good in the tough West Gulf Coast Blockading Squadron commanded by David G. Farragut. Under this loyal Tennessean, the *Oneida* and *Varuna* won fame during the April 1862 campaign against New Orleans. The *Galena*, a failure in her attack on Drewry's Bluff outside Richmond that year, later showed up – unarmored – in his fleet at Mobile Bay in 1864. One other locally constructed ship also saw service with his command and proved, in many ways, the most successful of all.

Farragut, never a man to pass praise lightly or grow overly attached to any ship except his beloved *Hartford*, was particularly pleased with this minor unit added to his group in late 1862. Plagued with a name meaning an ugly bird or an "intolerable burden," and now largely forgotten, the U.S.S. *Albatross* enjoyed a continuously fruitful wartime career.

This ship was typical of the ocean craft built in Mystic either specifically for or later converted to the Union Navy. Originally, the *Albatross* was built for the Providence, Rhode Island, Commercial Steamboat Company by Geo. Greenman & Co. to run, probably, between that city and New York. When she was enrolled and licensed on December 21, 1858, the single-decker weighed 378 tons and measured 150′ x 30′ x 9′1″. She carried three masts for schooner rig and was screw propelled. Unfortunately, she had no figurehead.

When Secretary Gideon Welles began enlarging the Federal navy in the spring and summer of 1861, the steamer was one of those civilian-owned craft chosen for conversion. Commodore Samuel L. Breeze purchased her at Brooklyn, New York on May 23 for $75,000 and ordered her to the New York Navy Yard for alternations.

Few changes were necessary. Basically, these consisted of "piercing" her for gunports and mounting the battery. According to the Navy *Official Records*, her armament was altered five times during the war. For our

purposes, the guns carried in 1863 will suffice: a 30-pounder Parrott rifle on the forecastle, six 32-pounder broadside guns, three to a side, and a 12-pounder rifled Dahlgren boat howitzer on the quarter. On June 25 she was commissioned and sent to sea under Commander George A. Prentiss.[1]

Perhaps the most exciting service performed by the *Albatross* was on the Mississippi River in 1863 during and after the final Vicksburg Campaign. Her role in Farragut's dash up that stream in March is memorable, and to better understand the gallantry of this exploit, an examination of the scene behind it is in order.[2]

The opening of the third year of the conflict saw the Father of Waters nearly, but not quite, open to the commerce of the North. In addition to Farragut's efforts below, the Mississippi Squadron, under the colorful Rear Admiral David Dixon Porter, had cleared the river south as far as the Yazoo River. In cooperation with the Federal Army of U.S. Grant, the inland navy was now preparing for the capture of Vicksburg; Farragut's squadron, meanwhile, was aiding General Nathaniel Banks in his war upon fortified Port Hudson. Until these two citadels, less than two hundred miles apart, fell, the Yankee goal of an "unvexed" tributary was incomplete.

Across the narrow reach of the Mississippi, yet under their control, the Confederates were able to draw in supplies via the Red River from western Louisiana and Texas. To halt this traffic and thereby weaken the twin outposts, Admiral Porter dispatched first the ram *Queen of the West* and then the new *Indianola* past the Vicksburg batteries in February. Unfortunately for the Northerners, both vessels were captured, with the *Indianola* – a powerful ironclad mounting 11-inch guns – sunk in the process. The Red River breadline was still operational.

Downriver at his New Orleans anchorage, Farragut was growing tired of "doing nothing but blockading." When he heard of the disasters above, he wrote to Secretary Welles, "My first objective [now] will be to destroy the [Rebel cargo] boats and cut off the supplies from the Red River. We expect to move in less than a week." To prevent the Confederates salvaging the hulk of the *Indianola* and especially her heavy armament was also clearly on his mind.[3]

On March 12 the admiral, aboard the flagship *Hartford*, came to Baton Rouge where advance elements of his fleet were gathered. To guard against attack from the enemy rams supposed to be hovering everywhere about, he ordered the *Essex*, *Albatross* and *Genessee* to the head of Profit Island. His famous General Order for passing Port Hudson was given to Commander John Hart of the *Albatross* and the other skippers whose ships would attempt this deed.



David Glasgow Farragut as Rear Admiral. Smithsonian photograph 37157.

The following day Farragut inspected his fleet and "found everything well arranged." Late that afternoon he signaled all of his commanders aboard the *Hartford* for a final conference. "We conversed freely," he later wrote, "and I found that all my instructions were well understood." During these proceedings, it was decided to pair the light gunboats with the heavy vessels according to the speeds of each. The *Albatross*, capable of 8 knots, was thus assigned as consort to the *Hartford*, first in line. It was hoped that by tying the ships together in this manner the motive powers would be increased enough to overcome the strong river current.

March 14 was taken up with final arrangements aboard each ship; the advance would be made that evening after dark. Toward dusk, the gunboats were ordered to assume their stations and the *Albatross* moved abreast the *Hartford's* port side to be lashed on. By 10:30, the flagship and her consort, followed by the *Richmond* and *Genesee*, *Monongahela* and *Kineo*, and the sidewheeler *Mississippi* were standing upstream "in good style."

About a half-hour later, the lead ships came within range of Port Hudson's guns and soon a terrific cannonade was underway. Passing the lower Confederate batteries, the river's wicked current attempted to swing the *Hartford* around and ground her. By moving her ahead full and ordering the *Albatross* backed, the flagship's skipper avoided this end and continued upstream.

Even though somewhat shielded behind the admiral's ship, the *Albatross*

was able to return the enemy fire. Charles Raich, Commander Hart's steward, fell mortally wounded "while nobly fighting his gun." After midnight, as the battle raged on, the Parrott in the bow was hit by a shell and part of the right trunnion knocked off. A piece of shell of unknown size also passed through the smokestack. In fact, so many small hits were taken that the watch officer, filling out the ship's log after the passage, remarked simply, "struck by small pieces of shell in many places." At last toward 1:00 A.M., the leading two ships were above the guns of the fortress town – the only ones to make it. Farragut wrote his wife, "I passed the batteries of Port Hudson with my chicken [*Albatross*] under my wing. We came through in safety."[4]

After additional adventures, the *Hartford* and *Albatross* finally took up the blockade of the Red on April 1 and from that time it was complete, with Admiral Mahan confirming it would "not again . . . be open to the Confederates during the war." On that river a month later the *Albatross*, more like an eagle than a "chicken," would take and pass her greatest test.[5]

During April, Porter's squadron ran by Vicksburg, outflanked the Rebels at Grand Gulf, and aided Grant's army to land south of town. With these accomplishments in hand, the bearded navy chief decided to take some units of his squadron down to the Red to reinforce Farragut and aid General Banks with a proposed expedition to capture Alexandria, Louisiana.

In anticipation of this move, Commander Hart on May 3 received orders to take his *Albatross*, accompanied by the steamers *Estrella* and *Arizona*, up the Red on reconnaisance. A Confederate fort, De Russy, was rumored a strong point and the admiral also wished to learn if the Rebel commander of Western Louisiana District, Richard Taylor, had received enough reinforcements to block this "First Red River Expedition."

Shortly after reading his orders and coaling, Commander Hart ordered the three ships into the tributary. By sunset, they reached a point some thirteen miles below the Southern fort. Hostages taken that night stated that the fortifications were being abandoned and the armament shipped upriver for the defense of Alexandria.

Dawn on the fourth found the little squadron working its way through the crooked channel toward the Rebel position. Sometime before 8:30 A.M. a lookout in the rigging of the *Albatross* hailed a warning of steamboat smoke ahead. Not knowing exactly what he would find, Hart nevertheless decided to launch a surprise attack.

Unknown to the Federals, the vessels issuing smoke off Fort De Russy were the Confederate States Army gunboats *Grand Duke*, Captain J. M. White, and *J. A. Cotton*, Lt. E. T. King.[6] Both were engaged loading the



Daisy with her father, Captain W. J. Card, *owner and master of the* Iolanthe.

SEVEN HAPPY YEARS

By Daisy Peebles

There have been many tales told – some truth, some fiction, some prose, some poetry – about the men who go down to the sea in ships. This is the true story of a two-year-old-girl who went down to the sea and lived on it for seven years.

My father, Captain W. J. Card, was owner and master of the three-masted schooner *Iolanthe*, a windjammer – to the uninitiated, a freighter. She was built the year I was born and I loved to see the year 1883 in gold letters on her stern. I was a scrawny, sickly youngster; in fact the doctor callously told my mother that it wasn't worth bothering with me, I would never live to

grow up. The good doctor was very much mistaken. I was baptized Daisy Ina Mabel May – perhaps that had some effect on my health.

My mother thought a sea voyage might be good for me, so they rented their home in Windsor, Nova Scotia, packed our belongings, and we boarded ship. Although Windsor was our home port, we sailed mainly from New York, that being the trade center of the Western Hemisphere.

You will wonder, as I tell my story, how I remember all these years. Don't we all remember the outstanding things of our childhood? There is much that I have forgotten but special events are very clear.

The first thing I remember with good reason is my joyful adventure of running with the roll of the ship across the quarter deck, and catching the taffrail to stop myself. As the taffrail was higher than my head and the stanchions were four feet apart, it was not exactly a safe performance, but I thought it great fun. The man at the wheel spoiled it for me by complaining to my father that he could not take his trick at the wheel if I continued. I was strictly forbidden to do that again, and most soundly spanked in the bargain.

In those days, yellow fever was a plague and a scourge and doctors were just beginning to connect it with mosquitoes. Mosquitoes meant warm weather and water, so the West Indies and northern South America were good places not to be, but when we had a cargo for Havana, to Havana we went.

My mother did not want to go to a hotel, so we stayed on board – my father put up mosquito netting over their bed and mine. My bed was a big drawer cut into the side of their bed; it was pushed in for the daytime and pulled open and fastened at night. One morning, just as it was coming daylight, my mother woke me, screaming at the top of her lungs, and that was something, "A rat, Willie, a rat." Just then something landed with a thud on my stomach. I didn't like it, and grabbed the intruder. Yes, my mother was right, it was a rat, and I, by sheer luck, had caught him by the scruff of the neck. He started to kick, and I clamped down on his tail. I had him fast, but he swore at me in seven different languages. Meanwhile my mother was still screaming, and my father was trying to soothe her.

"You were dreaming, Annie, there's no rat here."

Then I piped up, "Yes, there is, Papa, and I have him."

My father came out of bed so fast, he brought the mosquito netting with him.

"Be careful, Daisy, don't let him bite you."

"He can't," and when Papa saw the hold I had, he laughed, frightened as he was. He put his hand over mine and got a good grip. "Now you can let

go, you have done a good job. It's your choice, what we will do with him. Will we throw him overboard or kill him?"

Killing sounded cruel to me so I voted that he go overboard. We were one-and-a-half miles from shore, with the tide going out, so I doubt if I did the rat any kindness.

We had a cargo to Algiers, Africa. The voyage over was uneventful, as far as I can remember, but the return trip was a different matter. If you will look at a map of the Straits of Gibraltar, you will find them rather narrow. With a strong west wind, it is a very tricky job to get through. My father preferred to wait for a favorable wind, so we anchored back of the Rock. At last the wind was in our favor, and we set sail for New York. The trip usually took about four weeks, so my father had provisions for about six, thinking he was allowing enough for emergencies. We were just about out of sight of land when the wind died down, and finally gave up altogether. We were becalmed. When the wind doesn't blow, a sailing vessel doesn't go, except where the tide takes her, and the tide was taking us in just the wrong direction. For even on the ocean, there are steamship lines and sailing vessel lines to follow, plotted as the nearest distance between two points.

The days went by, and we drifted, and drifted and drifted. We, and the sailors had to eat. At last, the steward came to my father.

"I'm sorry, Captain, but the potatoes are all gone."

"Have we rice?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, use that."

A day or so later, "Captain, the coffee is gone."

"We'll have to do with tea."

And so it went, day after day, the sails hanging motionless, the provisions getting less. What worried my father most, however, was the water supply. Not one drop of fresh water was to be wasted. Clothes were washed in salt water, or mostly not washed, dishes were washed in salt water. We were all limited to three drinks – breakfast, dinner and supper. My father started experiments in distilling water, but without proper equipment it was a laborious process.

Still no wind. Still drifting off our course, and provisions getting lower and lower. My father played no favorites. We ate what the sailors ate. Even the canned fruit that my father had bought with his own money, not ship's stores, had been turned in for general use. But the very day my father had given the order, "one Pilot biscuit and a handful of raisins for a meal, for every one," there came a breeze – a steady one in the right direction. The sailors threw up their caps and cheered, as if our luck had



The three-masted schooner Iolanthe *and the author shared the same birth date – 1883. Photographs courtesy of the author.*

really changed. Just then, the lookout shouted "Sail, oh!" Sure enough, there came a big liner.

My father said, "Break out the flags."

In that day of no radio, ships communicated with flags. Different shapes and colors would spell out a sentence. We broke out our country's flag, the British flag – to show our nationality, then the sentence, "Out of provisions. Will you supply us?" Imagine our surprise and dismay when the big steamer hoisted one flag, "No," and giving no explanation, sailed calmly away. The captain had broken the most honored law of the sea, *Always give aid to a ship in distress.* My mother went below to cry, sure we would all starve to death, and for the first time while I had been aboard, I heard the sailors swear. They had always been so careful that I didn't hear them, but this time my father did not reprove them.

Early next morning, the hail came again "Sail, oh!" My mother would not go on deck, but I went. You couldn't keep me below. And there was a sail, a little Portuguese fishing boat, indescribably ragged and dirty, with patched sails and ragged rigging. But up went our flags, and back came the answer promptly.

"Send a boat."

A captain never leaves his ship while at sea; even in a shipwreck he is the last one to leave, so father sent the first mate and two sailors. None of them could speak Portuguese, and the folks on the fisher could not speak English, so they had rather a hectic time, but the captain of the fisher knew one thing, we needed food. He had his steward bring out everything he had, and divided it evenly. Half was ours.

Our mate protested, "What would they do?"

The captain pointed, they were going back to port, they would have plenty. Pay for it? Of course we couldn't pay for it, he might need help some day. The mate had to make him understand that my father would not take it without pay, before he would agree. As they came on deck and started to load the food into the long boat, the captain caught sight of me.

"Bambino?"

The mate nodded, "Captain's bambino."

"Wait" and the captain went rushing down into the cabin. He came up with a half-bushel bag. "Bambino, bambino." When they brought the provisions on board, the mate handed the bag over to me, I opened it, all excitement, to find every kind of nut that grows, I think: Brazil nuts, English walnuts, pecans, peanuts, cashews, some even my father did not recognize. Boy, oh boy, was I one pleased youngster. Each ship dipped its flag, and we were on our way, but I waved to the captain as long as I could see him.

Back in Havana again. What Havana is like now, I have no idea. In those days a ship that drew much water had to anchor off shore, and have her cargo rafted out to her as the water was not deep enough at the docks. The greatest thrill and joy of all my years at sea came that time in Havana. We were anchored about a mile-and-a-half off shore. My father had to go ashore every day to try for another cargo, so a sailor sailed him in every morning and went for him when he signaled at night. I was between seven and eight then, and loved the sea and sailing, even as I do to this day. So every morning and night I went with them. One morning as we were leaving my father at the dock, he said calmly, "Why don't you come in for me tonight, Daisy? You can handle the long boat."

"You mean me, alone?" I couldn't believe my ears.

"Yes, Jack will bring the boat alongside and you can sail it in."

WOW!! I knew I could sail it all right, but coming in to the wharf was another story. I had to put over my helm to bring her up to the wharf, lower the sail and catch the spiles with the boat hook to hold her there, all at the same time. To add to my troubles, I saw three other captains there

on the dock. Well, I did it, and I did it right, but how I'll never know.

Again we were coming up from South America, Paraguay I think, but instead of yellow fever, my mother had picked up typhus fever germs and was violently ill. She grew rapidly worse until my father despaired for her life, and as she had a horror of being buried at sea, he decided to put in at Rio de Janeiro. It was still yellow fever time and he wouldn't expose the crew unnecessarily, so he called them together and made the offer to put the mate in charge of the schooner while he, my mother and I would take the long boat and sail to Rio. The sailors refused absolutely: where the captain went, they went. The day we changed our course my mother's fever broke, but my father decided to go on with his plan: he wanted to consult a doctor and get special provisions for my mother. It was just about daybreak when my father called me to come on deck.

"Daisy, where is the harbor? How do we get in?" I didn't see any harbor. There was nothing but a very rocky coast. The man at the wheel shifted his course a little and there before us was the river. We sailed in without any trouble but when my father asked me to look back and tell him where we had come in – I was completely stumped. I don't know what Rio de Janeiro looks like now, but to me that morning it was the most beautiful city in the world. There were really two cities, the business part on the waterfront and the homes on the hillside above the harbor. The houses were all painted white except their roofs, which were every rainbow color. I have never forgotten the impression it made on me.

Now, I am coming to the end of my story, and what was nearly the end of me. We left Charleston, South Carolina about the middle of September. There was no radio then to give us weather forecasts, but a falling barometer and a rising wind were pretty good signs of trouble ahead. My father gave the order to shorten sail and to change our course, hoping to run out the gale. We had a cargo of pine lumber with a full deck load and the old schooner could not make very good time. The gale grew stronger and the waves higher. There came a tremendous crash and the mizzenmast went overboard. The wreckage had to be cut away at once or the banging against the side of the ship would be disastrous. But every wave was washing the full length of the deck, and chopping the rigging was a risky business. The sailors would chop for dear life, then grab anything solid and hang on till the wave had gone over them. One sailor, a deliberate old chap, was not watching carefully enough and was caught between holds. The wave was carrying him overboard when the mate, who had a good hold in the rigging, grabbed him by his collar and hung on. The wave was so powerful it carried them both overboard but as it lost its force they landed back on



Chart 770 Imray 1874: Entrance to Rio de Janeiro.

deck. The old sailor was very slow spoken. He drawled, "It's lucky I had on a new shirt."

The storm was getting steadily worse. My father was at the wheel and had the sailors tie him there, and there he stayed for thirty-six hours. By this time the cabin floor had about two feet of water on it and everything that could float was banging around. With another crash the mainmast snapped below the deck. The sailors grabbed everything within reach to fill the hole, then nailed a sail over it to try to keep the water from filling the hold. The water was deeper in the cabin now, and my mother put me up on her bed to keep out of danger. I asked, "Are we all going to drown, Mama?"

"Your father says not."

"Oh, if Papa says not, then we won't be."

I think about that time I was surer of my father being right than she was. Then came the granddaddy of all waves. It literally buried the schooner, washed my father off his feet and washed me out of bed into over three feet of water and the bedclothes came with me. The companionway doors were swept off their hinges. My father called for men to board them up. One sailor running through the cabin as the shortest way fell over what he thought was a bundle of clothes. He stopped to pick them up so no one else would fall, and was much surprised to find me, half drowned, but mad clear through.

That wave seemed to be the hurricane's final effort for we didn't have another. But, oh, what a mess the schooner was in! One mast instead of three, both lifeboats smashed, most of the sails blown away and every window broken, and we were still many miles from New York. The sternboard of one lifeboat with the schooner's name washed ashore on the New Jersey coast, so word reached New York ahead of us and it was taken for granted that the schooner was lost. My uncle was a heavy drinker and happened to be in New York, walking down the dock, when he saw my father walking up toward him. He thought the Bogey man had him for sure, and his yell was really something. He didn't drink again for a week.

The hurricane was too much for my mother's nerves, and she utterly refused to go to sea again, so she and I settled in Brooklyn, and thus ended my seven happy years at sea.

Editor's note: *In response to an appeal in the December 1970* Wind Rose *for information on life at sea for a child growing up under sail, Mrs. Robert D. Peebles sent us this delightful account.*

Director's Message

The time is ripe to give the members of MHA a brief report on the progress we are making toward restoring the *Charles W. Morgan* and placing her, once again, afloat at Mystic Seaport.

Recently John Leavitt called her "a lucky ship" – an apt term, because for well over a century her owners, captains and officers have convened with shipbuilders, riggers and shipwrights in ports near and far to promote her health and well-being and discuss the measures necessary to keep her at sea. Their extraordinary concern and something of a charmed life amid the hazards at sea saved the *Morgan* from entering Poseidon's Valhalla long ago. Assuredly, she was born under a lucky star!

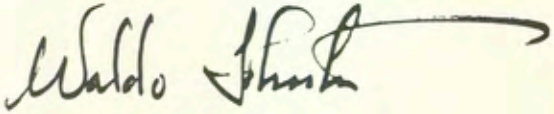
Probably at no time since her launching in 1841 has the *Morgan* been subjected to such intense research and scrutiny as she has undergone during the past five or six years. A registered National Historic Landmark and internationally famous, the venerable old ship has taken on even greater dimensions – if that were possible – in our planning for her future welfare and longevity. Experts throughout the world have been consulted, the progress and results of ships' preservation and wood technology in current use have been studied, her condition analyzed and the options open to us debated and discarded. She has been placed in the care of a crew of dedicated and skilled admirers whose lives and expertise are wedded to her future. Also in the bridal party at her relaunching will be Waldo Howland and other members of our Ships Committee who have worked so diligently in every stage of preparation for the event.

Once the ultimate decision to relaunch the *Morgan* was made two years ago, all our research and effort have been concentrated

toward this end. It is a costly enterprise, but it must be done! Successful completion of the project requires the precise dovetailing of a number of coordinated projects: continuing study of her present strength, rebuilding of her 'tween decks to withstand the strain and stress of movement, load and ballast calculations, step-by-step procedures to disengage her from her bed of sand, opening of an outbound channel, construction of the lift dock and development of facilities, and the training of the crew to carry out with precision and timing the inter-related procedures so necessary to assure the safety of the ship.

All these activities are coming along well, as I write this in April, 1972. The Henry B. duPont Ships Preservation Facility is in operation and the lift dock should be ready for a trial run by the end of summer. New beams and hackmatack knees have been installed in the *Morgan*, adding immeasurably to her strength. Her copper sheathing has been removed and the caulkers have completed their work. Planning in all stages is continuing well.

But my admonishment that the safety of the ship is paramount above all else is being heeded, and as a result of consultation with Maynard Bray, Waldo Howland and his Committee, I believe that to move her from her bed of sand this fall to the lift dock would be premature. I have therefore set 1973 as a target date to bring this about. At this point in time, this appears to be a realistic date to bring to pass certainly the shortest and possibly the most fortuitous voyage in the eventful life of the *Charles W. Morgan*.



A Picture Story: The Pugsley Clock Shop

Photographs: Les Olin.



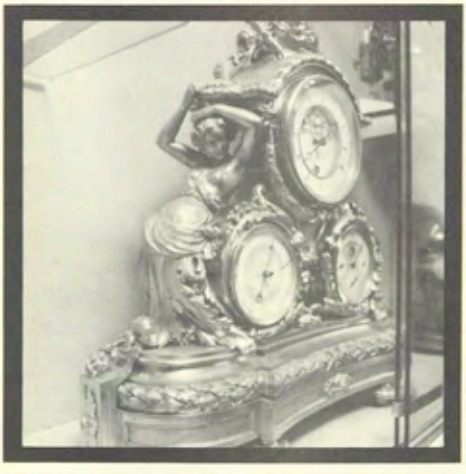




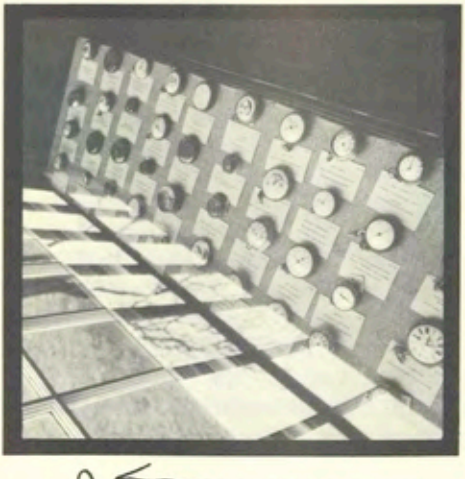














UP

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ACQUISITIONS



Model of the steel four-masted bark *Kenilworth*, approximately seven feet long, which is on exhibit in the Stillman Wing. Of 2,308 tons, with register dimensions of 300′ x 43′ x 24′, the *Kenilworth* was built in 1887 at Port Glasgow by J. Reid & Co. for Williamson & Milligan's "Waverly" line of East India traders. Loading wheat at Porta Costa, San Francisco Bay in 1889, she caught fire and was so badly damaged that the owners abandoned her to the underwriters, who sold her to Arthur Sewall & Co. of Bath, Maine. The first steel sailing ship to fly the American flag after she had been rebuilt at a cost of $45,000, she was so successful that Sewall decided to go into steel shipbuilding. She could load about 3,400 tons of wheat or 93,000 cases of oil.

In November 1908 the *Kenilworth* was sold to the Alaska Packers Association for $60,000, and renamed *Star of Scotland*. In 1930 she was sold to owners in Los Angeles to become a fishing barge and was stripped down to her lower masts. In 1938 she became a gambling ship and was renamed *Rex* under other owners. The next year the gambling ships were closed by law. In 1941 she was sold once more, this time to Frank Hillethal and associates after a survey showed the hull was sound. Rerigged this time as a six-masted schooner, she was sent to sea with a wartime cargo and was lost on her first voyage.

The model was made by Carroll Ray Sawyer of Andover, Massachusetts and is a fine example of his superlative workmanship. It is the gift of Andrew H. Hepburn of Marion, Massachusetts. Photograph: Les Olin.

The G. W. Blunt White Library has received a bequest from the late Edgar Dalton Collins' personal collection of books and manuscripts. Included are 150 imprints, of which two are rare books, and two bound volumes of the New Bedford *Whaleman's Shipping List and Merchant Transcript*, (1849-1850 and 1852-1853).

In the manuscript portion of the gift are fourteen ships' journals, five diaries and one account book. Of particular interest among the ships' journals are five whaling voyages: the ship *Hudson* (1841-1842), bark *Lewis* (1857-1860), ship *Tahmiroo* (1852-1856), ship *Trident* (1859-1864) and the ship *Victory* (1831-1832).

BOOK REVIEWS

THE NORTHSEAMEN by John Leather. *Terence Dalton Limited, Lavenham, Suffolk, England, 1971.* £4.50.

This unusual book is the story of the fishermen, yachtsmen and shipbuilders of the Colne and Blackwater Rivers and the various craft that were all important in their lives. These small rivers are in Essex on the British coast, on the north side of the mouth of the Thames and empty into that famous river's delta. It is an area that has been inhabited since the beginning of history by seafaring men; Romans invaded, Norsemen raided and plundered, and Saxons settled to become the fishermen, lifesavers, salvagers, smugglers, shipbuilders and yacht captains of whom John Leather writes. It is mainly concerned with events after 1700 up to modern times, although it extends back to the sixteenth century. The author is correct in stating it is an adventurous, varied and often harsh story, a never-ending series of fascinating nautical anecdotes.

John Leather himself is a shipbuilder of Wivenhoe on the Colne, in the area which contains such towns as Brightlingsea, Rowhedge, Colchester, West Mersea and Maldon, well known to skippers of British small yachts but not on this side of the Atlantic. Neither do we know of the exploits, the nautical triumphs and tragedies of their inhabitants in years gone by. Leather is well qualified to tell them, as for generations his male ancestors on both sides of the family were skippers of the little smacks that worked year round in those treacherous, frigid and stormy waters, trawling for bottom fish and shrimps, oyster dredging, and "spratting" with nets in the winter. (Sprats are very small herrings both eaten and used for farm manure.) They were desperately poor men whose family's very lives depended on the catch. No wonder they did a little smuggling and risked and lost their lives frequently in salvage efforts.

In the age of sail and the era of early primitive steam vessels, before aids to navigation were properly established, the waters in which the fishermen of Essex plied their trade were death traps for merchant ships. Such dread shoals as the

Knock John Sand, the Galloper, the Kentish Knock, and particularly the infamous Long Sand were the graves of thousands of vessels in storms and fog over the centuries. Leather's Northseamen had a glorious history of lifesaving, and lost their own lives rescuing the crews and passengers, in their little sailing smacks, of doomed vessels stranded and breaking up on the shoals in frigid winter gales. The author's great-grandfather, Thomas Barnard of Rowhedge, 1816-96, was probably the greatest lifesaver of them all. I consider the chapter concerning him the best in the book.

The book is divided into three parts – Fishing, Yachting, The Shipbuilders. The Fishing section is the most colorful, unique to most of us on this side of the Atlantic. However, the Yachting section is most interesting because it deals almost entirely with the professional yacht captains and deckhands, men now gone from the yachting scene. In the nineteenth century the professional captains, not the owners, steered the yachts and made the tactical decisions in races. In England the popularity of yacht racing and cruising had a tremendous growth in the last century and the fortunes of the Northseamen grew with the sport. In Essex a multitude of yachts were built in the yards that had only built fishing boats before, and the skippers and crews of the smacks that went to sea year round were recruited by the tens of scores to skipper and man those yachts.

In those days before naval architects, the yard owners designed the yachts with consequent profit. It was a far better paid and pleasanter life for a Wivenhoe fisherman to spend his summers racing on a yacht than fishing in the North Sea, and welcome, able hands they were on those yachts. In the winters they went back to the smacks. John Leather tells of the yachts they were aboard and the races they sailed. It was customary for the owner to pay his crew a sizable cash bonus when a prize was won. In the nineteenth century it was usually a Northseaman from Essex that skippered and steered the challengers that crossed the Atlantic and raced for the America's Cup. The proof of the pudding is the picture of the King's *Britannia,* in 1894, sailed by Captain John Carter of Rowhedge. Captain Albert Turner of Wivenhoe was skipper of Sir Thomas Lipton's *Shamrock IV* in 1914.

The third and final section, "The Shipbuilders," is definitely unique. Besides the smacks and the yachts, large ocean-going vessels were also built in Essex. Around 1500 Henry the Seventh laid the foundations of the Royal Navy, and several ships of his fleet were built in Brightlingsea. During the Armada scare ships from the area assisted in defeating the Spanish fleet and over the next three centuries sailing men-of-war were built in Essex. In due course iron steam vessels were constructed. In World War I wooden small craft of all sorts were built for the Royal Navy, and in World War II magnetic mines brought ancient yards to life building wooden minesweepers. Leather tells of all this and devotes a chapter to the Harveys of Wivenhoe, yacht designers and builders throughout the entire nineteenth century, and one to "Aldous of Brightlingsea," another famous and colorful builder-designer of the same era.

The illustrations are a very important part of this book, well over 100 very clear old-time photographs. They depict long-gone smack sloops, fishing ketches, yachts of yesteryear, large and small, sail and power, individual fishing skippers and yacht captains, their assembled crews, yard crews, yacht racing scenes of the last century, and dockside scenes in the ancient towns. The portrait photograph of

Captain Jack Spitty of Rowhedge, noted fisherman, salvager, and smuggler, beats anything of its kind I have ever seen. I wish I had once known him but I would have been careful not to annoy him.

JOHN PARKINSON, JR.

BEYOND THE CAPES: PACIFIC EXPLORATION FROM CAPTAIN COOK TO THE *Challenger* (1776-1877) by Ernest M. Dodge. *Little Brown & Company, Boston, 1971.* $12.50.

The Director of the Peabody Museum at Salem has killed two birds with one stone, producing a volume that is both important and lively. It will rate a place on the library shelf alongside J. C. Beaglehole's *The Exploration of the Pacific*, which carried the story from Magellan to Cook. Now, at that same high level, Dodge continues it for another century. With his thorough mastery of Pacific exploration and anthropology, he can enliven the story with colorful details. He even tells of the islands where the women have two husbands; it is understood that when No. 1 is away on business, No. 2 takes over.

The main feature of the book is the recording, in proper relationship, of the scores of exploring voyages and the men who commanded them. Many of the names are new to us, but there are also others of whom we have heard without appreciating just what they did. Among them are the Britons – Flinders, Portlock and Owen Stanley; the Russians – Krusenstern, Kotzebue and Bellingshausen; the Americans – Ingraham, Fanning and Palmer; and a very colorful group of Frenchmen – LaPerouse, (whose fate was unknown until his wrecked ship was found on Santa Cruz nearly forty years later), D'Urville, (described as "the greatest Pacific explorer after Cook,") and Dupetit-Thouars, (who appropriately gave Tahiti to France).

Summing up the first half of his period, Dodge wrote: "While the French expeditions were crisscrossing the Pacific . . . amassing collections and publishing monumental tomes, the English were quietly slogging out the details of coastal delineation. Tenacious, dedicated, professional navy hydrographers in small ships worked some of the most intricate waters in desperately bad climates in order that accurate charts could be made to guide the world's commerce."

From Cook onward, the scientific element had been prominent in almost all those voyages, but after 1830, three such major enterprises get particular attention. There are sixteen pages on "Darwin and the *Beagle*" (1831-36); twenty-seven on the "United States Exploring Expedition" under Wilkes (1838-42) and finally, twelve pages on the pioneer oceanographic voyage of HMS *Challenger* (1872-77), which "closed one era and began a new." There are nearly sixty contemporary drawings or photographs. The book has a most striking jacket design, duplicated in the frontispiece, showing a little exploring square-rigger skirting a lonesome coast.

ROBERT G. ALBION

PORTRAIT OF A PORT – Boston, 1852-1914 by William H. Bunting. *Harvard University Press, 1971.* 234 photos, 5 charts and maps. Appendices, footnotes and index. $20.

Inasmuch as I am a Bostonian by heritage, spent many a Saturday tramping the Boston waterfront in the days when the last commercial sailing vessels called

at the port, and served aboard several such vessels owned in Boston, I feel it a privilege to have met Mr. Bunting, to have assisted him in obtaining some of the photographs in this book and to have had the opportunity of enjoying this wonderful collection with its exhaustively researched legends.

Not only has he gathered together an amazing group of photographs showing the Boston waterfront at various periods of its development from 1852-1914, but has included such a broad range of ships, trades and activities that one would be overwhelmed if it were not for the orderly manner in which each phase is handled.

Although ships are mainly the center of interest, Mr. Bunting presents each photograph with concise descriptions that not only explain the subject but also make the reader feel that he is part of the picture. Shipbuilding, waterfront views, fishing, coastal sail, coastal steam, deep-water sail, tugs, pilot vessels, the navy, yachts and numerous other subjects are included. Ships, trades and financial matters are discussed. Shipowners, captains and seamen come to life and the author several times explains the presence of certain photographs because they especially appeal to him.

In spite of the exhaustive .research and work of assemblage one feels that Mr. Bunting has almost lived the pictures he has displayed and interpreted with a warm personal feeling.

Included here are many previously unpublished photographs by the foremost marine photographers of the period: Southworth and Hawes, Nathaniel L. Stebbins, Thomas A. Luke, Baldwin Coolidge, Harry G. Peabody and Richard Hildebrand are all represented. Some of the finest were the work of either George or Frederick McQuesten of the McQuesten Lumber Company. In some cases, portions of wide photographs have been brought up to close detail and thus give the viewer personal glimpses of life in the past century that he otherwise might have missed.

In his preface, the author self-effacingly apologizes for whatever may be "weak or wrong" with this book. There are bound to be a few errors in a work of this scope, but I feel that those I have discovered are typographical or from research material that may have been inaccurate.

Mr. Bunting has taken up the profession of commercial fishing, but I am certain that readers of *Portrait of a Port* will join in a fervent plea for him to let nothing deter him from further historical work of the quality here displayed.

FRANCIS E. BOWKER
Captain of the *Brilliant*

SHIPBUILDING

Extracts from *The Mystic Press*
May 1, 1874

We have from time to time given accounts of each and all the vessels on the stocks at the different yards in the Mystic villages; it may, however, be well enough to re-enumerate them:

Beginning at the upper yard at Greenmanville – Messrs. Greenman are building two scow-lighters for the Apanaug Print Works, one of them to propel by steam and act as tow to the other.

At Chas. Mallory, Esq.'s, Mystic Bridge, Capt. G. W. Mallory in charge, – is the ocean steamer for C. H. Mallory & Co.'s Galveston line, now framed to the following dimensions: length 200 feet, width 30 feet, depth 18 feet, about 1000 tons burden to cost not far from $150,000.

At Hill & Grinnell's, Mystic Bridge – the ship for Capt. Wm. Brand shows its fair proportions, being framed and nearly ceiled; she is to be 100 tons burden, 180 feet long, 36 feet broad, 20½ feet deep, and to cost, ready for sea, $75,000, more or less. In the same yard, Haynes & McKenzie have nearly finished, to be launched in a day or two, the schooner originally contracted for with Capt. J. Fredk. Tribble, but since bought by Providence and Orient parties; named the Pocasset, she is 125 feet overall, 30½ feet beam, 10½ feet deep.

At Forsyth's Yard, Mystic River – now rented by Capt. J. Fredk. Tribble, Haynes & McKenzie, builders, – two three-masted schooners are contracted for, and preparations commenced for their building. One is for Capt. Rodney Parker, of Clinton, to be the largest schooner ever built on the river – a double-decker, 700 tons, 125 feet keel. The other is for Capt. Tribble himself – 600 tons; length 115 feet. The two vessels are to cost $60,000 to $70,000.

At Maxon & Irving's (Old Field, Mystic River) – The Joseph Eaton launched last week, is a three-masted schooner of 250 tons burden, length overall 112 feet, breadth 26½ feet, depth 8 feet, cost ready for sea, $19,000. Also on the stocks just raised, two double-decked three-masted schooners alike in their dimensions, viz: 120 feet keel, 135 feet overall, breadth 30 feet, depth 16 feet, cost ready for sea, $28,000 each. Two vessels are also rebuilding – the old steamer Gen. Sedgwick, which is to be razed and turned into a barkentine; the other is the schooner Jane, formerly of Westerly.

At D.O. Richmond's Mystic River – the fishing sloop for Green & Co. is nearly ready to launch.

At R. Palmer's, Noank – the E.L. Dow, built for Capt. Ezra Daboll, is ready for sea, if not already sailed. Her cost was $28,500. A steam tug, 100 feet keel, for New London parties, is on the stocks. Also a three-masted schooner for Boston parties, designed for the Mediterranean trade, clipper built, long and sharp, 117 feet keel, 27½ feet beam.

It will be seen by this recapitulation, that there is really a goodly amount of business doing at ship building in our villages, and other contracts are frequently offered, so that the business at some of the yards might be greatly increased had they the capacity and men.



The British brig Terrier, *hove to off New York June 1, 1886, signalling for a pilot. She had just arrived from Harbor Breton, Newfoundland and sailed for that port on June 10 after discharging her cargo at Pier 14, East River. The* Terrier *was a wooden brig of 144 tons and register dimensions of 104.3′ length, 21.2′ beam and 12.5′ depth. She was built by Philip of Dartmouth, England in 1872 and was owned by Newman, Hunt & Co. of London. Her rig was seldom seen in American vessels after 1850 and it will be noted that she had the Cunningham patent roller topsails which were fairly common in British vessels of the 'seventies. The photograph was taken by Edward Hale Lincoln, an excellent marine photographer of his day and is one of a collection of photographs and negatives just acquired through the generosity of The American Museum of Natural History. This photograph is reproduced with their permission.*

LETTERS

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

My son-in-law Gale Huntington loaned me a book you wrote called *Wake of the Coasters*. I had read very little of it when I realized that you knew what you were talking about.

I left school when I was fourteen, got a job working for a trap fisherman at forty dollars a month. For my age that was good pay for those days. When the traps were hauled out in the fall I went coasting with my uncle Zeb in the *Wilfred W. Fuller*. She would carry thirty ton. After a few years he gave her up and bought the *John B. Norris*. She would carry eighty ton. I went with my uncle Zeb winters and trap fishing summers. Later I went with him steady. Then he bought the *Wentworth* and for eight years straight I went with him steady. We carried oysters in the spring from Greenport Bay to Chatham. And sometimes we took contaminated oysters from Princes Bay to Chatham. We carried thirty-two hundred bushels a trip. That was the hardest work with the poorest pay.

We carried cordwood from Marion to Nantucket, coal from Perth Amboy to Nantucket. Also coal dust. When they started building hard-surfaced roads on the Vineyard we got the job carrying asphalt for the Standard Oil Company. When my uncle was sick with pneumonia I ran the *Wentworth* single-handed carrying asphalt. She was really too much for one man to handle.

Later when freights began to fall off and there was little money coming in the *Wentworth* began to get in bad shape, and I had a big family to support so I went fishing – dragging. I bought a fifty-five-foot schooner-type fishing boat built in Vinalhaven, and renamed her the *Three Belles* for my three daughters. I fished the *Three Belles* winter and summer for thirteen years. Flounder, cod and haddock winters south of Nomansland, on Nantucket Shoals and back side of the Cape. In the spring would fit out for swordfishing, and followed the fish to the northern edge of Georges Bank.

I sold her ten years ago when I was seventy-five. And had a small sport fisherman until two years ago. The arthritis is so bad in my knees that it isn't safe for me to go afloat much any more.

Thomas T. Tilton
Vineyard Haven
Massachusetts

Editor's note: *Captain Tilton was a nephew of Captain Zeb Tilton and also of Captain George Fred Tilton – a well-known whaleman in his day and shipkeeper in charge of the* Charles W. Morgan *while at Colonel Green's.*

Dear Mr. Gardner:

Your article on "Early Days of Rowing Sport" reminded Olin of "our Early Days" of rowing. It so happened that my Father, for whom Olin was named, was a rather famous oarsman. He was a champion single sculler and also rowed sweeps on Nassau Boat Club crews.

I was not big enough to be a sculler or sweep oarsman but was fairly competent in both categories, and was coxswain for many crews – four- and eight-oared. In fact, I rowed bow at Po'keepsie to fill out the second of two four-oared shells during the trials to select the "Varsity" four-oared crew for the Inter-collegiate Re-



A "three generation centipede"-Father's Day
Travers Island- June 21st,1925

gatta there in 1902. We were visiting with the Columbia coach, who was a friend of my Father.

Two decades later, a "three generation centipede" was created for Father's Day at Travers Island. Olin II was stroke, Rod Jr. was bow and coxswain, I rowed #2 and Father #3. I enclose the evidence which may interest you. Please return the photo. I have no spare.

Roderick Stephens
New York, New York

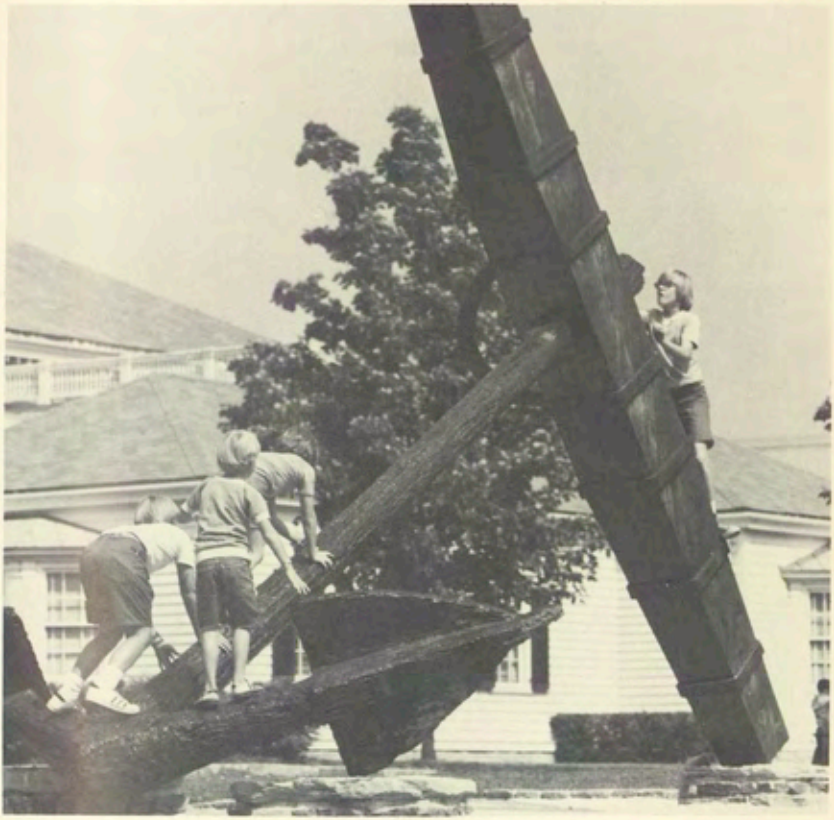
Dear Mr. Johnston:

There appears on page 120, Volume 23, Number 4 (Winter, 1971) of *The LOG* of Mystic Seaport, the following language: "While the Atlanta Boat Club of New York, the oldest rowing club in American waters. . . ."

We would like to point out that the Detroit Boat Club is the oldest rowing club in the United States. It was organized on February 18, 1839 in the office of Mr. E. A. Brush. The other organizers who met with him and adopted the Articles were James Armstrong, John Chester, J. H. Farnsworth, A. T. McReynolds, Alfred Brush, A. Williams and S. H. Sibley. The Detroit Boat Club has been operating continuously since that time and has engaged in a very active rowing program.

We would appreciate your pointing this out to your readers.

Arthur S. Bond, Jr.
Secretary, Detroit Boat Club
Detroit, Michigan



The young visitors, above. Photograph: Les Olin. Front Cover: composite photograph of the Conrad's *foremast. Photograph: James T. Perkins of Mystic, a U.S. Coast Guard photographer. Back Cover: a label from a sextant case in the new exhibit on navigational instruments in the Clock Shop. Photograph: Les Olin.*

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