

The Silhouette Owner

The journal of the Silhouette Owners' Association

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An International Challenge

THE French Corsaire Owners' Association has accepted in principle a challenge from the Silhouette Owners' Association for a series of team races between Silhouettes and Corsaires to be sailed during Southend Yachting Week in 1963. M. Jean-Baptiste Tricaud, secretary of the Corsaire Owners' Association, writes:

Your idea of team races between Silhouettes and Corsaires looks very attractive to us, and we are ready to discuss sailing matches during 1963. Many thanks for your kind invitation: we will be delighted to meet Silhouette owners at your national party on June 23.

M. Guy Sabatier, President of the Corsaire Owners' Association, M. Tricaud, and a small delegation of Corsaire Owners hope to attend our national party at Southend on Saturday, June 23, to discuss details of the challenge for next year. The Corsaire is designed to serve much the same purpose as the Silhouette II as a small cruiser, but she is a bit larger than the Silhouette and probably faster in light airs. Experience on Lake Michigan, where a Silhouette and Corsaire have sailed against each other, suggests that when the wind freshens the Silhouette is quite capable of holding her own. The idea is that a series of team races should be sailed next year, over perhaps a week, giving a good chance of meeting different kinds of weather. They should be great fun, and it will be a delight to make friends with fellow sailors from France. If all goes well, we may hope that there may be a return match in French waters in 1964, and perhaps this international meeting may become an annual event.

The National Party on June 23 will be at the Overcliff Hotel, Manor Road, Westcliffe-on-Sea. There will be a good buffet during the evening. Tickets (12s. 6d.) can be obtained from the Vice-Commodore, Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex. We hope that there will be a really good turnout for this party, which is during Southend Yachting Week. It will be a great help if people who hope to come will let Stan Morgan know as soon as possible.

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Alone Across the Atlantic

ON Friday morning, June 1, Francis Chichester, who presented our trophies at the Silhouette party in London in January, is setting sail from Plymouth in an attempt to beat his own record for a single-handed crossing to New York. When he won the single-handed Transatlantic race in 1960 his time from Plymouth was 40½ days: his aim is to make the crossing in 30 days. To achieve this, or to make the crossing in anything under 40 days sailing a 13-tonner single-handed, will be a formidable task. We wish him fair winds and the best of luck.

Gipsy Moth III, Francis Chichester's boat, has been equipped for this voyage with a battery-operated radio telephone by Marconi-Marine, with a range capable of being received in Britain over most of the trip. *The Guardian* has made arrangements to publish his daily narrative, as reported over *Gipsy Moth's* radio each day. There have been many notable accounts of single-handed voyages, but all have been written at leisure afterwards. *The Guardian's* reports of Francis Chichester's passage will be published as the voyage is being made, and record his daily experiences as they happen. Now that *The Guardian* is printed in London as well as in Manchester it can be obtained from newsagents anywhere in the country, at the same time as any other morning newspaper. To attempt to report a single-handed voyage as it happens is unique, and provides a unique opportunity for yachtsmen to share in an outstanding human experience.

News from the South East

IT IS a good job that Easter arrived late this year this year, for in spite of our class captain's efforts to arrange for us to launch three weeks before the first Silhouette event, there were many who were not prepared to speed up their fitting-out programme until the weather showed signs of improvement. When the improvement came there were signs of great urgency, and on Saturday and Sunday of each week since there have been a few more splashes, and frantic "knitting" with the rigging.

There are still quite a few more Silhouettes to be launched—notably John Smith's *Shanghai* which he has finished building in one year practically to the day.

John could not find a really suitable site to build on, but such was his enthusiasm and tenacity that he decided to build in a field. His only comforts during the long winter months were a light run from a farmer's chicken shed, and a pub close at hand.

Bill Reynolds has now turned over his hull and is pressing on with the interior and upperworks. Eddie Coxall is turning *Sarah Brown* over this week, and predicts that she will be launched in September. Eddie has a large notice in his workshop to discourage him from rushing the job: it reads, "*A botched up boat is a well built coffin*". A good thought.

Easter Saturday saw six boats at the line for the Paglesham Oyster cruise-race, and with a freshening breeze from the East against an outgoing tide it was clear that it was going to be a bit of a windward tussle. Although Genoas were at the ready, working sail seemed to be favoured except by Bernard Collins, who took a gamble with his big jib which didn't pay off. (But that's B.C. all over, win or lose, lets have some fun.)

Harry Malone with *Wee Three* took an early lead, closely followed by Ken Barratt in *Cherie*, who after rather a belated start had worked his way through the fleet to take up the challenge with Harry. Stan Morgan in *Midnight* hoped to make a race of it, but owing to the infant crew having an Easter Egg or two too many had to retire through "*mal de mer*". Paul Brewin and son had the misfortune to put *Pep* aground, eventually getting her off in the middle of the night to find themselves dry again next morning on the other side of the river.

We were all very pleased to have Ernie and Moira Large sailing Reg Garrod's *Rosette* with us, and they did very well. They towed the rubber dinghy because they were apprehensive about letting it down since they couldn't find the inflater. Ernie and Moira are members of the Royal Cinque Ports Yachts Club at Dover and are known to most of the S.O.A. members who went there last year to attempt the Channel crossing for the help they gave.

Harry Malone was the only skipper to complete the course under sail, and consequently won the Paglesham Oyster Trophy which was

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handed over to him by the host of the *Plough and Sail* at Paglesham where the day was wound up by the skippers and crews.

All the boats returned on Sunday, after a slow but pleasurable sail back. The less said about Monday the better; one or two boats did get off their moorings to try a few bad weather tactics, which was all the day was fit for.

In the Straits

WITH her original rig unchanged except for Terylene sails, Herbert Firth's *Dolphin* (S II 488) romped home to a clear victory in a splendid race for the Firth Cup in the Menai Straits on Easter Sunday. This gives Herbert Firth the distinction of winning the cup he presented last year to the NW Group of the SOA—and no victory could be more popular. *Dolphin* was crewed by John Pegg and Roy Beaumont's young son.

The Firth Cup race was due to be sailed on Easter Saturday, a cold and miserable day, with not even a breath of wind to cheer things up. In spite of unpromising conditions a start was made, and boats managed to drift across the starting line with the tide. After an hour it was decided to abandon the race, and boats drifting helplessly with the tide were recalled. Sunday was a very different day, with brilliant sunshine and a brisk wind, a real "Silhouette wind" of Force 4 gusting to 5. Seven boats lined up at the Gazelle jetty for the start.

The Firth Cup is a handicap race, allowing both Silhouette owner members and associates of the NW Group to take part, and the starters included a *Caprice* (Don McKnight), a *Mystic* (W. Jacques) and a *Pimpernell* (Mr and Mrs Hind.) The rather rough and ready system of handicapping to accomodate such varied boats in practice worked well,

for after a race of about 12 miles the Caprice finished 3rd, the Mystic 4th and the Pimpernel, 6th. It may be that the Mystic and the Pimpernel, particularly the Pimpernel, were a little heavily penalised, but it is difficult to tell, because the Pimpernel made rather a bad start. For the benefit of other groups organising mixed races it may be worth giving the system of handicapping used.

It went like this (for a 12 mile course):

Start 00.00		Silhouettes, original rig, cotton sails.
00 + 5 mins	..	Silhouettes, original rig, Terylene.
00 + 10 mins	..	Silhouettes, masthead, Caprices.
00 + 20 mins	..	Mystics, Pimpernel.

Roy Francis, in *Restless* (184), original rig with cotton sails, should have been first away, but he had difficulty in making the Gazelle in time, and started after some of the bigger boats. In spite of this he gallantly finished the course. Herbert Firth in *Dolphin* was thus first away, and he held the lead given to him by his start for the first couple of miles. After this the race was a tussle between *Dolphin*, *Kotka* (765, Ian Holyman) and Don McKnight's Caprice, *Sampan*. For a time it looked like *Sampan's* race, but towards the end both *Dolphin* and *Kotka* passed her, and *Dolphin*, superbly sailed by Herbert Firth, came in first by about one minute. *Kotka* came in next and *Sampan* third, again with about a minute between them. The results were:

1. *Dolphin* (H. Firth).
2. *Kotka* (I. Holyman).
3. *Sampan* (D. McKnight).
4. *Karena* (W. Jacques).
5. *Buttercup II* (R. Bradbury).
6. *Pimpernel* (Mr and Mrs Hind).
7. *Restless* (R. Francis).

There was a keen struggle for 4th place between Wilfred Jacques's Mystic *Karena* and Ron Bradbury's Silhouette *Buttercup II*. *Karena* just managed to cross the line first, but there was only a second of two between them.

Easter Monday was a glorious day, with summer sunshine, but alas, next to no wind. It was decided to hold a race for an RNLI pennant, and six boats came to the starting line. "Came" is perhaps an over-statement, for there was little that anybody could do but drift, in spite of some valiant efforts with paddles against the tide to hold off before the start. Somehow or other the fleet managed to get away, and picked up enough wind to keep going on the first leg, and even to make some headway against the tide coming back. Ian Holyman in *Kotka*, crewed by Helen Anderson, just managed to cross the finishing line of a shortened course, but the rest of the fleet lost every scrap of wind off Bangor Pier and slowly drifted backwards. *Kotka* was the only finisher, and Ian Holyman was presented with the RNLI pennant.

After an unpromising start it turned out to be a thoroughly enjoyable Easter in the North West. A good many boats whose fitting out had been delayed by the miserable weather of March and early

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April were not ready, but there was a splendid turnout of group members in Anglesey for the long weekend, and those without boats sailed with others. The Group Commodore, Reg Pegg, with Mrs Pegg and undergraduate son John spent the weekend with the fleet, and some particularly welcome visitors were Mr and Mrs Wallace from Penrith, in Cumberland, who made the long journey to spend a day with the group.

North Kent Coast

SILHOUETTE owners who sail off the North Kent coast, Swale and Medway are hoping to get together to form a regional group of the SOA, or a flotilla attached to the South East Group. Mr. P. Smedley, of Arcturus, 38, Honor Oak Rise, Forest Hill, London SE 23 has volunteered to act as organiser, so will anyone interested please get in touch with him? At weekends, Mr. Smedley is mostly to be found at Whitstable—his address there is Resthaven, 36, Preston Parade, Seasalter, near Whitstable, Kent. This is a fine sailing area, and we hope to see a flourishing fleet of Silhouettes there.

Isle of Wight Race

THE Solent Group of the SOA is organising a race round the Isle of White, to be sailed over Saturday and Sunday, August 4-5. This should be a most interesting race, and an opportunity for some splendid sailing, and it is hoped that a good fleet of boats will take part. George Oliver is anxious to get some idea of the size of the starting fleet, so will all owners who think that they may be able to attend please let him know. His address is 52, Middle Road, Higher Denham, Bucks (Denham 2602).

Does This Happen to You?

IS there any other sport or pastime, call it what you will, that has so many published books and articles as our own recreation of boating? How to sail, where to sail, what to sail, books for beginners, racing types, and cruising enthusiasts, the shops and bookstalls are full of them. Lists of what to do and what not to do, all are available to the reader, but in all the words ever printed or read, to my knowledge never has there been the most important "Don't" of all, which should be put as follows: *"Don't buy a boat unless you can paint"*.

Beholding the tarry look of my first bike frame, which I had tried to improve with a large tin of "Best Stove Enamel", it dawned on me that I had not been singled out to wash the pallettes in the school's art class because of my dexterity with a dish mop, but rather that it had been an attempt by a public spirited teacher to try not to waste educational funds on so hopeless a case. It would not need a study of psychology to realise that I grew up with, and still have a king sized inferiority complex about my efforts with a paint brush. All attempts at home decoration have been fraught with such accomplishments as whitewash, distemper or emulsion finishing with a look like the surface of the moon, or showing shadowy patches of nonedescript colour, paint that remains permanently tacky, and undercoats that mix gleefully with the existing colour to produce the most unexpected results.

Take a look at the "Fitting-out Number" of your favourite monthly, carefully study the artist's impression printed on the page of the how-to-do-it article, and there you will see a large area near the water's edge, big barn-like sheds, a few boats propped up on legs that would not disgrace the cabinet making craft, with ample scaffolding arranged all round them. Film-star looking males, casually dressed in the smartest but most comfortable slacks and sweaters, puffing contentedly at well filled briars, with a full supporting caste of glamorous females, happily handle pots and brushes, with a benign Spring sun shedding warmth and comfort on the entire scene.

Compare this with the conditions in real life. The boat is wedged up with a heterogeneous collection of spare pieces of firewood and rammed into the corner of an all-too-small back garden, where the ground is wet and soggy from last year's horticultural efforts; or it is in glorious isolation on some desolate wind-swept mud flat, totally bereft of any form of primitive comfort. See our owner-painter muffled to the ears with every stitch of bedraggled garments that would be fitting to a scarecrow, with the forlorn hope that some of the bitter wind will be averted from his bones. If it is not raining hard, it has been, or will be shortly. The wind whips the paint from the tip of his brush, and sprays all the already finished surfaces. Let the painter try to emulate our previously described workers, and seek solace in the succulent weed; he finds his fingers are so gummed up with sticky colouring that the handling of pipe or cigarette is not only unpalatable but virtually impossible. Don't for a moment believe that it is possible

lively
minds

(like yours)

like



to paint and keep the handle of the brush clean; every bristle is a suction pump, scooping up the liquid one end, and dribbling all out at the other. If with the aid of paraffin, turps substitute and many yards of old rag, the tobacco is finally alight, along comes the same old wind this time, whisking the ash carefully on all the wet parts of the newly adorned surface. Ultimately, the decks will be finished, after being precariously balanced on a constantly rocking hull, the bilge keel wedges sinking deeper into the mud with every movement, or waving unsteadily should a harder piece of earth be met. It is then that the national concern about air pollution becomes painfully apparent, for all the discharge from chimneys from miles away, has settled liberally only to be dappled by the inevitable rain that follows.

At least none of these troubles worry you when the bottom is attended too, for this can be done in comparative comfort, lying in the soft mud. The damp that oozes through all the waterproof clothes can be disregarded, but it is suprising how accurately every drip or speck of dust finds its target first time, that is, assuming your eyes to be the target.

Comply with three simple conditions, and the painting of the interior can be termed easy. The conditions are: 1. be a dwarf in stature, 2. study all the aspects of "Yogi", 3. practise suspending yourself in mid-air. Fail to observe this advice and, sure enough, you will sit in, tread on, and leave hand-marks everywhere, long before a square inch has had time to dry.

The whole painting programme has to be carried out to astrict time schedule, as wifely conversations, go something like this, "Working on the boat tomorrow, dear?" "Yes" "Don't forget we're going to _____ at half past four. You won't be late, will you?". This leaves the alternatives of enlisting her aid and thereby starting at least an hour later than intended and finishing at least two hours before necessary, or going alone, and arriving back in time to

THE SILHOUETTE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee—1962

Commodore: J. R. L. Anderson, The Old Hall, Marple, Cheshire. Marple 1458.

Vice-Commodore: Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.

Rear-Commodore: Bernard Collins, Hilltop, Lincoln Road, Rochford. Essex. Rochford 56876.

Hon. Secretary: G. R. Oliver, 52, Middle Road, Higher Denham. Bucks. Denham 2602.

Hon. Treasurer: J. D. O'Brien, 12, Malpas Drive, Pinner, Middlesex.

Sail Number Registrar: W. H. Chambers, 79a, Adelaide Grove, London, W.12. Shepherds Bush 3856.

National Member: Herbert Firth, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Altrincham 0765.

The Commodores and Secretaries of all recognised Regional Groups of the SOA are ex-officio members of the National Committee.

Hon. Technical Adviser: Robert Tucker, 58, Southbury Road, Enfield, Middlesex.

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Hon. Editor: J. R. L. Anderson, The Old Hall, Marple, Cheshire.

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receive the full "Black Look" treatment for being late. There are of course, other slight snags that crop up, such as trying to remove last year's paint from badly cleaned brushes, realising that someone has used your best varnish brush for enamelling, trying to match colours when the last tin is used up late on a Saturday, and restoring the hands to a presentable state before meeting the saner members of the community. But these are too trivial to mention. The glow of satisfaction when the whole operation is finished and, launching day is at hand is a wonderful experience, to the adept. But in a case such as mine, I have the feeling that I must be the originator of the term "Messing about with Boats". R.G.

Beaumaris Town Regatta

BEAUMARIS Town Regatta will be held this year on Saturday, July 21. Last year the organisers included a race for Silhouettes, with a handsome cup as first prize and other prizes as well. It is hoped that Silhouettes will again have a chance to compete this year, and that there will be a good entry of boats. We should like to express our thanks to the organisers of this famous old regatta for their kindly encouragement of the Silhouette Class in the Menai Straits.

SOA REGIONAL GROUPS

Regional groups of the Silhouette Owners' Association have been established in the following areas:

South-East. *Hon. Sec. Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.*

North-West. *Hon. Sec. Herbert Firth, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Tel. Altrincham 0765.*

Solent. *Hon. Sec. J. R. Caulder, Sellafield, Orchard Lane, Hermitage, Emsworth.*

Bristol Channel. *Hon. Sec. Cyril Watts, 5, Vassall Road, Fishponds, Bristol.*

Avon. *Hon. Sec. E. G. Oldham, 206, Hagley Road, Edgebaston, Birmingham.*

Scarborough. *Hon. Sec. B. M. Beeden, Elm Tree Cottage, Doncaster Road, Thrybergh, near Rotherham.*

Blackwater. *Hon. Sec. P. F. Croft, 48, Annalee Road, South Ockendon, Romford.*

Scotland. *Provisional Hon. Sec. W. G. Lang, Clyde Chandlers, 200, Great Western Road, Glasgow, C.4.*

Sharp Left at The Needles

By H. Sheen

(Concluded.)

THURSDAY we woke with the wind whistling through the rigging. Things looked grim at that moment, but after breakfast the clouds began to break, and the wind abated. We were going ashore to do some shopping, and as I sat propped against our mast looking at the weather is struck me suddenly that this was just the job for Carentan. The wind was North West, we should have it on our quarter, and it would be off shore a good deal; the sea would be moderate. In half an hour we were sailing out of St Vaast, and then began a glorious sail down the coast. Out at sea lay the islands of St Marcouf, about six miles off the mainland. I had hoped that we might be able to visit there, but in the circumstances I did not think it wise to make the detour. We were delighted to be on our way. It was 11.00 when we left St Vaast and early afternoon before we reached the estuary of the Vire and Carentan Rivers.

Not a sail in sight, and a lovely stretch of water, as wide as the Solent around Cowes. Here again, we found the channels well marked with buoys and then stakes, as we neared the mouth of the river. As we entered the river we had to motor. We had turned West, and the wind had veered slightly, too. It is a smashing river—thirty yards or so wide. There were no moorings, no boats, except for an odd dinghy high up on the bank. The river was full of fish, too. We could see the surface dappled where the shoals lay just beneath. They would flash away as

we approached. It was really pleasant jogging up this river. The tide was going out, but we plugged on steadily. Just in front of Carentan the river divides—indeed, there is a cross roads. Before us lay the open lock gates leading into an artificial basin, which runs direct to Carentan. We tried this, but found it too shallow, and after a little exploring we decided to anchor in the main stream, about twenty yards from the lock gates. The two arms of the river had shallows, and a Bailey bridge, a relic of the war, spanned one of the arms.

It should be possible to get into the French canal system from here, but although the lock gates were all freshly painted there were few other signs to suggest they had been used recently. (The dead dog in the first lock had been there for some time.) One of the small bridges across had a huge crack in the middle, and they had shored it up, thus blocking the canal. Yet going away from Carentan inland was a wide canal. It is possible you would get on better up the Vire river at Isigny.

We wandered back to *Marigold* at dusk. The tide had not risen, and we were rather surprised when during supper it seemed to run out faster. It was well on the ebb when we came in at 14.00 and it was now 21.30. But it was all very peaceful, and we turned in. I did mention to Brian that we were rather in front of the lock gates, but we both agreed there was little chance of anything coming up that night. I laid my head on my pillow, which consisted of a couple of life jackets, my jeans and pullover. I mused about this strange river, so well cared for, no craft, no moorings, full of fish. Suddenly Brian said, "There's something coming up the river." Sure enough there was, and it sounded like a motor launch, coming along at quite a lick. I leapt into the cockpit grabbing our large torch, waving it frantically, and searching for the hull of a vessel. I could not see a thing except the black river. Something moved between us and the bank, and at the same time a wave hit our transom. I was flabbergasted. *Marigold* was spun round in a fierce current, and began lashing to and fro, our anchor rope was like a bow string at times.

By this time my powers of reasoning returned, and we realised that it was a bore. I also became aware that I had been standing like the boy on the burning dack with one foot in the bucket we keep in the cockpit at nights.

I knew that they have a bore in the River Seine in September; we now knew that they have one on the Carentan River, and no doubt the Vire. We discussed what little we knew about them, decided that they only happened occasionally, and went to sleep.

I had doubts next morning. Zero hour would be 10.30. The river behaved just the same as last evening, and it was obvious that we had to survive another bore. At 10.15 the lady in the house above the lock came out and leaned over the Bailey bridge, joined a minute or two later by her husband. At 10.20 a lorry drove up and two men started emptying bins of rubbish into the river. They are pretty good at this sort of thing over there. Job done, the dustmen joined the couple. Everybody was gathering round to see the fun. Sure enough, at 10.30

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prompt, round the corner it came. It did not look too formidable—a wave about two feet high stretching across from bank to bank, with the same sinister rushing noise we had heard last evening.

We had only about nine inches of water under us, and were lying close to some large stones which had fallen out of the river bank. Brian and Ralph were in the cockpit with a paddle each, to fend us off the stones if possible. I was for'ard, standing on the deck. As the wave came within a few feet it seemed to grow, and curled over viciously. It caught us a mighty wallop, some water shot into our cabin, yet Ralph, who was in the stern, never got wet. We heeled over, and there was a nasty crunch. I sat down with a bump, then we were lifted clear and spun round to face the onrushing water.

All seemed well with *Marigold*! It must have been the bilge keel that saved her. Now all depended on our anchor holding. It did, or I doubt whether we should be here to tell the tale. We were lashing about only twelve feet or so from the lock wall. After ten minutes, the worst was over. The tide rose about six feet during that time. It comes in in two hours, and runs out for ten.

The dustmen went off, satisfied with their morning's work; but surely all the garbage must have been back in Carentan long before they were.

Shortly afterwards we moved through the lock and into the basin. Here we moored high up against the grassy bank. There was a long avenue of tall elms on either bank, and we had the whole length of the basin to ourselves. We were able to sunbathe and to relax, although we seemed always to be walking up to the town fetching food, eating, and back for more. One of the features of the holiday was that we were everlastingly hungry.

We did not find Carentan the ideal centre for touring. Buses and

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trains seemed infrequent, and since the weather reports were still bad we dare not spend our francs too freely.

On mid-day Saturday, tiring of our rural surroundings, we decided to move out to the coast to Grandcamp Les Bains. Another fishing port, but also a small holiday resort on the Calvados coast.

The wind had been Force 6 to 7 all morning, but it dropped off, and although we reefed to start, we soon shook this out and it proved to be a delightfully peaceful sail. Grandcamp Harbour lies behind a huge mass of flat rock; on the chart it looks quite hair-raising. This area of the coast is difficult, and it is only possible to sail during the six hours around high water. With a boat of four to six feet draught it would be a nightmare. We went into Grandcamp under sail, a small square harbour, but at least it had a few moorings for private boats.

We lay off from a high sloping rock wall, with our anchor rope tied to a bollard at the top, and a line astern to a buoy. It was the foulest bottom I've ever seen—no paddling ashore through this lot. The only way was commando fashion, up the wall on our anchor rope. We became experts at it during our short stay there. The first six feet where the wall was slippery with weed was the danger spot.

Our thoughts were turning to home and we decided on Monday to make our way back to Barfleur. A small shopping spree in Grandcamp, and we sailed out after a light lunch. I had not given the trip up to Barfleur much thought. There was a nice breeze East to North East which would be favourable, but I had not calculated the effect it would have on this shallow sea. There was a wicked swell on, and we soon realised that this was going to be no cake walk, it was inclined to be misty, too. We made a mistake in not setting a course by our compass; instead we decided to keep the coast of the Peninsular in sight. Hope of reaching Barfleur soon faded; we were not making good speed in these heavy seas, and we reckoned Barfleur Harbour mouth would be a grim sight, anyway. St Vaast was much better with Tatihou Island protecting it. On our way back we passed close to two of the caissons which formed part of the Mulberry Harbour. We had not seen these on the way down, and we figured we were too close inland. This proved correct, for the fort on the headland at St Vaast loomed up out of the mist dead to windward. We decided to motor, as time was running out. We were hoping to start back across Channel again in the early hours of the next day, but at this time it seemed an impossibility.

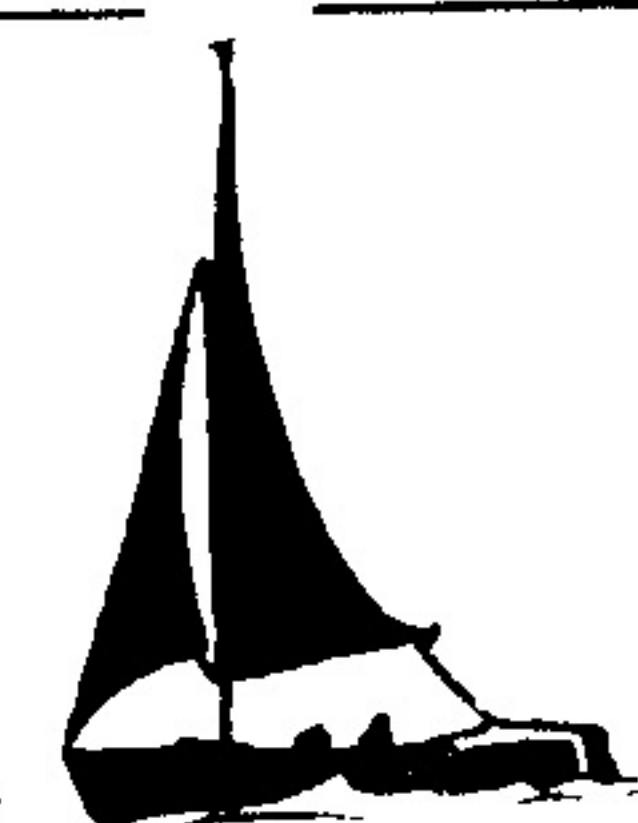
Our perseverance was finally rewarded, and we rounded the small lighthouse which stands on the end of the South arm of St. Vaast Harbour entrance. Strange how homely it felt to be back here. No sooner had we settled down than I noticed the wind had veered Southerly. Hopes of sailing home again rose.

It was 03.00 next morning as we slipped out of St Vaast, back across the oyster beds. It was a pretty black night, and rather tricky, for there were rocks off the near corner of the island, and a line of rocks running across from the Reville headland, all under water now but we were not sure how far under. We headed Eastwards out to sea

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for the first hour, then turned North East, and as we brought Barfleur light on our beam we turned due North for home. The breeze was very light, but we pressed on until dawn. We made reasonable progress but we decided to motor.

In the grey light a bird about the size of a linnet flew lamely round our tiny boat. It circled us three times, decided we were going the wrong way for him, and then flew on towards France. I hope the old chap made it. Barfleur Lighthouse was still only about ten miles away. We were to see a lot of swallows after this, always alone, they seemed to rise off the sea in front of us. Nothing faltering about these birds, they sped by like an arrow. The forecast at 07.00 gave us a South West wind, Force 3 to 4. But it never did blow to anything like that strength, and we found it necessary to motor continuously. Morning dragged by, and the afternoon wore on. We reckoned on sighting land around 15.00, but 16.00 came, and 17.00. To the North East lay a dark patch on the skyline but that had been there for hours. A coaster hove into sight, and a fast launch cruised around far away in the haze.

We realised that the dark patch was a headland, and decided to close with it, to find out where we were. This was a mistake, we should have had more confidence in our compass, and stuck to our course. It was St Catherine's Point on the Isle of Wight. We had been dead on course again.

Then we boobed again, for we decided to make for Bembridge (for we were ravenously hungry). We had biscuits, chocolate, etc. on board, but we wanted a real good meal. We had visions of going ashore at Shanklin or Sandown. Also we found the tide beyond us, and although we could get closer to the island, we were held by the tide just level with the stubby St Catherine's Lighthouse.

It was now 19.30, dusk was falling, our slap up meal fading, and we had to make the hard decision to turn and run with the tide down the length of the island to the Needles. Wearily we went through the rough water of St Catherine's. I decided to cook something (we never do when out at sea, but something had to be done). I managed a tinned rice pudding, and some watery French soup, washed down with an indifferent cup of tea. It passed the time away, and cheered us up. Once round St Catherine's, too, the sea grew reasonable.

By 23.15 we were by the Needles, a weird spot to come round in our weary condition. By midnight we were tucked away in our beloved Keyhaven. Ten minutes after the anchor went in I was fast asleep, and so was Ralph. Brian, he was boiling eggs!

Just William

I WELL remember standing on the quay at Dover watching a very smart little cutter enter the Wellington Dock, turn up-wind, and moor to the wall, without a trace of a bump. She was crewed by father, mother and two teenage daughters, and I was amused by the remark of another onlooker, "That's the way! If you want a good crew breed 'em", the truth of this statement could be well illustrated by the performance of the father and son combination who sail *Sapphire* in most of the U.R.Y.C. events, and who, true to their name of Jones, really do need some keeping up with.

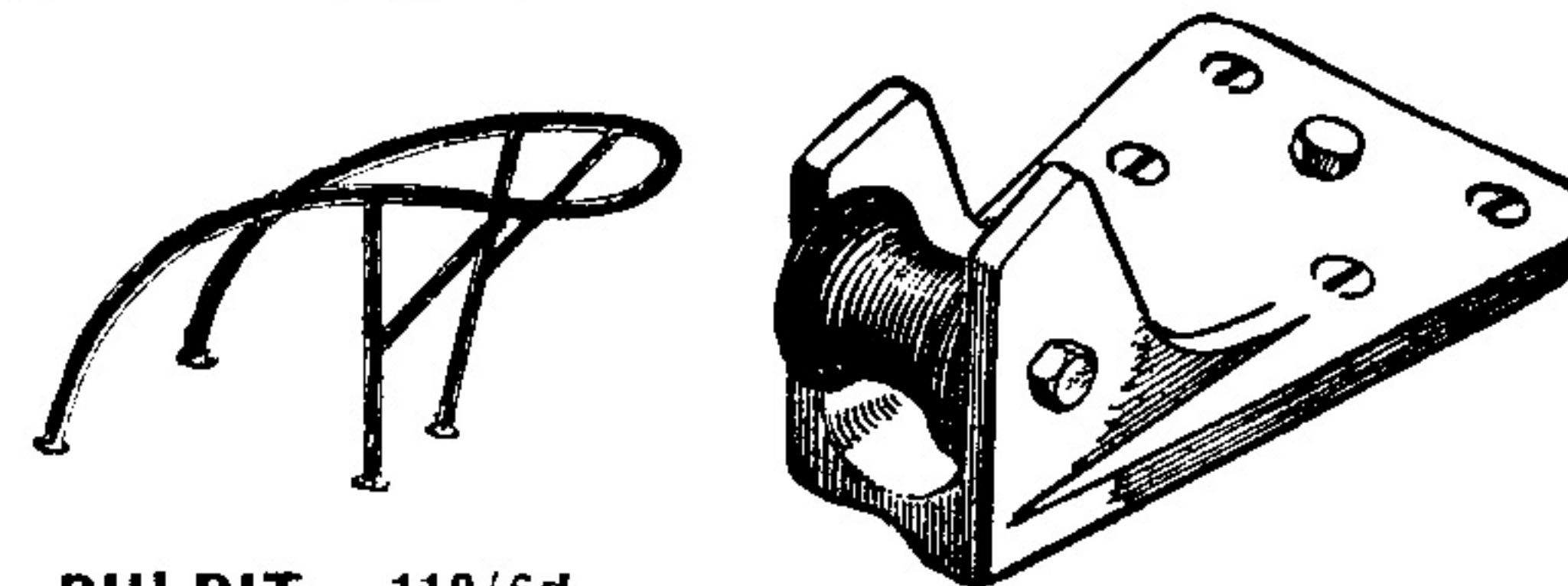
It should not be surprising, therefore, to know that, although I have never been blessed with a son and heir, when looking for a crew, I decided on the next best thing, a nephew. That is why all last year William was aboard regularly whenever I was afloat. William is a sturdy youth with a mop of the fairest hair this side of a peroxide bottle, a round rosy face with a permanent grin, and an aversion to wearing a life jacket. Although not (then) yet ten years old, he could be easily mistaken for a lad in his teens, and it was only when one realised that he had a passion for toy motors that his age became apparent. In spite of his youth he is a good crew by any standards, even though he had a habit of disappearing in the dinghy whenever we came to anchor. His love for the little boat, or perhaps, rather, his delight in being in sole command, overcame all thoughts of helping to lash up and stow. Even so, this slight fault could be put to good advantage, especially when something had been left ashore, or when water was needed.

Perhaps it is difficult for an adult with little experience of small boys to understand, but William's appetite took some understanding. Nobody has ever accused me of being a mealy trencherman, but William could out-eat me at any sitting: on one occasion a large packet of sandwiches, prepared by my better half to last us both the full day, were wolfed in the car between Enfield and Hullbridge. The tin I keep on board with a few chocolates in, was always empty before we had rounded Brandy Hole. Egg and chips seem to be his favourite dish and any cafe that could provide this food would always find a willing patron if we were in the vicinity. But I think his best performance was two rounds of cheese sandwiches, two packets of crisps and two platefuls of pickled onions, as snack, before turning in one night we slept aboard.

We have all the implements for making tea aboard our boat, but I have found that a bottle of ordinary fizzy lemonade is William's tippie. The consumption of this beverage was almost alarming and I finished up with a standing order to the local shop for a dozen bottles a week. His walk ashore resembled the swinging gait of a Hollywood cowboy with a bottle of pop stuck into each pocket of his denims like regular forty-fives.

I really enjoyed having him as company for far from being a noisy individual, William listened more than he spoke, though his

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looks were eloquence itself when I did something wrong, like running aground or missing stays, (neither being very infrequent happenings when I am at the helm). I have the feeling that he had rather a poor opinion of my ability as a helmsman, but he became quite articulate when he found that there was a likelihood of a cash prize coming our way for the Southend regatta. His sense of justice, however, is complete; a third for me, a third for him, and the rest for the boat.

Why am I writing these words, as a form of lament? I had no doubts that within a very few years William would be a force to be reckoned with, in whatever class of dinghy he decided to race, just as I had no doubts that he would take up the sport. But I regret to say that I am looking for another crew. William's father has bought a "Gin-palace", and the whole family are now chugging up and down the Blackwater to the tune of a diesel engine, and the poor little Silhouette is scorned in comparison with the de-luxe fittings of a cruiser. But who knows how long will it be before the throb, throb, throb, gets boring, and the thrill of beating into a stiff breeze with all the rigging twanging like bow strings, will become an urge? I am willing to bet that it won't be long before that near white head is seen to be bobbing about in our little cockpit. R.G.

FOR WOMEN

On Stores

By Anne Fowler

"IT IS ridiculous," said the skipper firmly, "to be afraid of a stove. All one does is to obey the instruction intelligently."

Before we collected *Sou* from Hurleys two years ago we made a lengthy list of all the items we needed and spent a hectic week in London buying *Sou's* trousseau. We had never possessed a boat before,

so there were no leftovers to be passed on, and *Sou* had to be sufficiently equipped for us to live on her immediately.

We searched yachting magazines for hints, and I succumbed to nearly every enticing advertisement until over-ruled by the skipper, who preferred to concentrate on mundane things like anchors and compasses, both essential I admitted but, as I had a shrewd suspicion that I should never be able to cope with either, I could not arouse the same fervid enthusiasm with which I studied brightly coloured Melaware crockery or gay Frenchified plastic curtains.

"We must have one of those self-pricking foreign stoves, using paraffin and methyated," announced the skipper. This, I considered, was an invasion of my territory. All my life I have been terrified of stoves and lamps which have to be pumped, having experienced some in India. I was quite prepared to admit my fear and face the skipper's mild surprise and contempt.

"I should like," I said firmly "one of those delightful little stoves that look exactly like a gas cooker. You just turn on a tap and it all sounds very simple."

"Gas!" The skipper was horrified. "I'll never have gas on board. That's how so many fires are caused."

"Do you mean you are frightened?"

"Not at all," replied the skipper coldly. "I just don't think it is a necessary risk to take".

"Then I should like a foolproof stove with a simple wick. I, after all, shall have to use it."

"I'll show you how to work the other kind. It is perfectly simple. We don't want to wait all day while something cooks," decided the skipper.

We chased all over London looking for stoves. In the first fine flush of enthusiasm I insisted that I must have an oven. It was only after visiting our sixth and most famous shop that it dawned on me that small boats don't have ovens unless they use gas. Looking back now it seems a peculiar fantasy for me to have thought that there is ever time on board to use an oven, unwilling as I am to cook at sea. Womanlike if I had found one I should have insisted on using it and I can see that a great deal of marital friction would have been caused. A pressure cooker is all that is needed.

I made my last stand however. I declared that I must take my waterless cooker so that I could roast and bake in it. I still remember Mr. Hurley's helpful patience when together we measured the height required and made exhaustive plans for fitting it in. The skipper had slunk off in the way husbands have, embarrassed because he considered I was indulging in the man-hated sin of fussing. It was a triumph for him, however, when the cooker remained unused on the shelf in the foc'sle for the whole season, invariably getting in the way of everything else.

Stoves seem more elusive than any other equipment and gimbals impossible to find for small stoves. If I had seen my old fashioned type

of stove which had accompanied me all over the world I would have bought it but instead, against my better judgment, I was forced to accept an expensive, very handsome looking burner stove. Again the skipper slunk away while I wrote every detail of the instructions from an obliging assistant, one quick glance at the pamphlet having shown me that every point was not enumerated. It sounded so easy. Even I, I felt, could work it..

My courage, however, had ebbed away by the time we had started out on our first journey.

"I" I said firmly "will read the instructions while you light it."

The skipper has an impetuous nature. He knew how to light the stove, the principle was well embedded in his mind, but it was too lengthy a time for him to wait until all the methyated spirit had burnt away. Flames leapt up to the roof licking the aluminium sheet which, fortunately, was one of my less unreasonable suggestions.

My courage died. Not once did I manage to light the stove myself. The skipper intermittently lit it successfully, then would be frustrated by the delay and leaping flames would again caress the roof. He became nonchalant while I cowered in my corner. I had to admit though that once alight the stove was successfully quick and trouble-free.

When our second season approached we decided that it would be best to have the stove overhauled in a local shop. Frankly I was not sure what freakish ideas it might have developed after six months' rest

"We've had it burning for an hour," we were cheerfully told, so felt frustrated when we could not turn on one burner and the other oozed paraffin all over the galley, soaking the asbestos mat.

The stove was placed in the boot of the car while we experimented with a pocket size burner. I had carefully wiped all the paraffin from the blue formica on the galley but I replaced the asbestos mat. The skipper lit the tiny stove. In one second the cabin was ablaze, as the asbestos mat burst into flames. Neither of us thought of our fire extinguishers, but the skipper seized stove and mat after a horrifying pause and flung them out on to the roadside, where the damp grass fortunately put out the fire. The episode had frightened me more than a rough sea had done.

We are both firmly convinced now that the best stove is our Bluet (not to be confused with the French *Bleuet*) which costs 48/-, uses paraffin and is never sick or sorry. It is also simple—even I can light it.

The Fleet in Scotland

There is now a considerable, and growing fleet of Silhouettes in Scotland and a meeting was held in Glasgow on May 18 to constitute a Scottish Group of the SOA. A full report will appear next month. We wish the Scottish fleet good sailing, and a splendid season.

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