

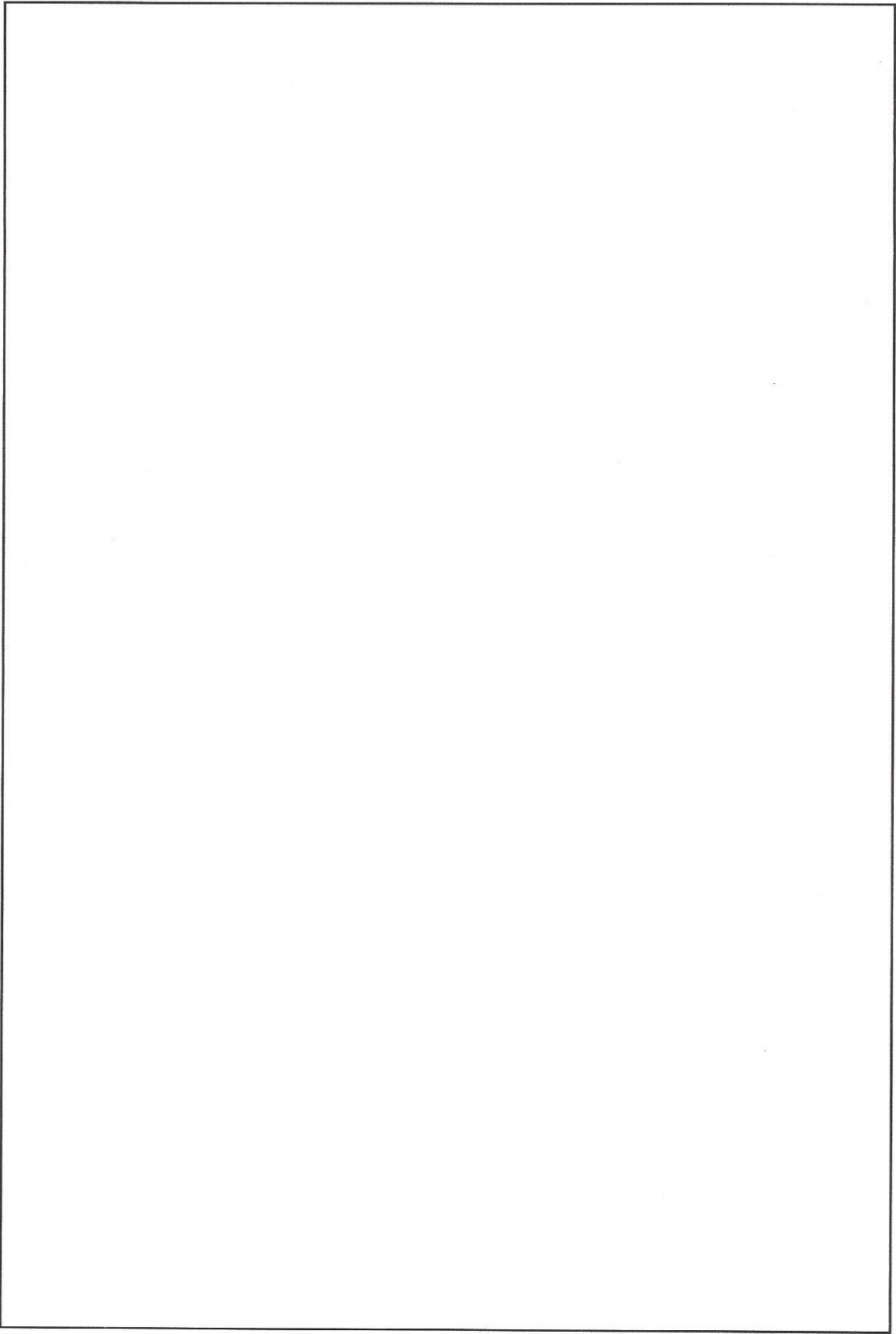
*Across the Atlantic  
in Dorade*



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*Member of the Port Watch*



ACROSS THE ATLANTIC  
IN DORADE

*I*T IS ONE THING to go through a unique experience and enjoy it tremendously, but it is quite another to try and write about it in such a way that others may enjoy it, too. The latter is an undertaking much too large for the writer to attempt, and were it not for the fact that considerable interest has been manifested in the rather unique experience of racing a small yacht across the ocean, this would never have been written.

However, it is with the hope that perhaps a few may get some sort of a picture of what goes on when seven men race a fifty-two foot yawl across 3,000 odd miles of ocean that I submit my tale through the courtesy of the Record. For us who sailed on Dorade, winner of the transatlantic yacht race from Newport, R.I., to Plymouth, England, it was a thrilling cruise, a great experience, and a wonderful vacation which will forever be for all of us an endless source of vivid memories. If, by any chance, I can bring some of this to light so that others may see even a small part, I shall be most pleasantly surprised.

When, last fall, the Cruising Club of America and the Ocean Racing Club of Great Britain got together and decided that they would jointly sponsor a race for sailing yachts not under forty-

five feet and not over seventy-five feet in overall length, it was just an interesting announcement to me as one somewhat enthusiastic about sailing, either cruising or racing. Little did I realize that a few months thereafter I would be eagerly accepting an invitation of some friends to sail with them on this race in a fifty-two foot yawl: There is neither time nor space in which to outline what took place in the way of preparation during the winter and spring—suffice it to say that as the result of tireless and thorough work by Mr. Roderick Stephens, the owner of the boat, and his two sons, Dorade was in tip-top shape in every respect when we set sail for Newport and bade farewell to those who not only let us go, but who also saw so much more danger about the race than we ever dreamed about. We were all amateurs and had all been aboard Dorade in the race to Bermuda in 1930; having had a most enjoyable time on that trip, we all looked forward to a much better one on the ocean race. When I say “all”, I may be speaking out of turn, for I’m not sure what Ed Koster, our amateur cook, thought. He had fed us going to Bermuda and back, and was inclined to feel that we ate, as he said, “like a bunch of wolves”, so perhaps he was somewhat skeptical about the kind of time he would have! Our chief worry centered around the cook’s ability to remember where all the food was stowed, but as things turned out, our worry was not well founded, for the cook, often with his bald head (he was only 28) covered with honest perspiration, turned out three hot meals a day without a miss and very often got out a nice hot drink of soup for us at the change of watch at midnight. His task, a most difficult one most of the time and a well-nigh impossible one when the boat was tolling badly while running before a confused sea, was alleviated some-

what by a nice, roomy galley with two stoves, a sink, and a wall ice chest. One of the stoves was a double burner, kerosene outfit swung on gimbals which kept the stove upright even when we were well heeled over, thus assuring us of a place to cook at all times, no matter how the boat was behaving. The other stove was a small coal burner which we used only for keeping food warm, taking the dampness out of crackers and cereals, and keeping the cabin dry and warm during wet weather; it more than earned its passage over and back. The care of the galley was left to the cook,, and all the rest of us had to do was keep out of his way, put our clothes away in our lockers, and get in and out of our bunks.

We carried two hundred and thirty gallons of water in six copper tanks placed in various parts of the ship. For the first week, we were extra cautious about using too much of the precious liquid, but after that, upon finding that we were using hardly any water, the skipper permitted us to use it for brushing teeth and even went so far as to urge us to drink more: When we arrived on the other side, we found that only about seventy-five gallons had been used, and during our month's stay in English waters, we continued to use New York water.

But, to get down to the actual race, we were third smallest boat in the race, and according to experts on the subject, had an outside chance if we hit light going all the way over. We were considered, however, the least sea-going of the fleet, probably because of our narrow beam and general racing lines. This rather amused me because we knew that the little ship was quite solid, perfectly rigged, and if well handled, would go anywhere in most any weather. We had one of the three all-amateur crews in the fleet, and hoped to make a creditable showing against

some of the others who relied rather strongly on the services of several professional hands.

As is practically always the case at the start of ocean races, the great day, which happened to be July the Fourth, brought us a smooth sea, one or two light breaths of southerly air, and a good deal of fog. As a consequence, all the racers left their moorings in Brenton Cove under tow for the starting line off Brenton Reef Lightship. We were escorted by a very lively spectator fleet ranging in size and shape all the way from the magnificent bark-rigged yacht ALOHA to a chunky little sixteen-foot sailing dory, whose occupants were subjected to a rather severe bumping around in the wash of the large power boat fleet.

Once out by the line, we sailed around under working sails, trying to gain a good berth for the start, and as we watched LANDFALL, the big, blue, seventy-five foot ketch, scratch boat and very sea-going looking outfit, we wondered just how we were going to be able to stay near enough to her to finish within the forty-six hour time allowance she had to give us. Nineteen days later we were to have the great thrill of watching her sweep past the Plymouth Breakwater to finish just forty-seven hours after we had dropped our anchor in the lee of Drake's Island. Our margin over her in time thus was about ninety-three hours, a fact which was not only unthinkable before the start, but was even too surprising for us to believe until the official figures were posted on the bulletin board of the Royal Western Yacht Club at Plymouth.

## PART II

*A*BOUT TWO MINUTES before noon, we broke the big balloon jib out of its stops and headed for the start: at the stroke of noon, we reached across the line close under the stern of the old yellow lightship, whose steam fog whistle screamed a throaty farewell to the ten racers. We were moving nicely through the long swell, and although the larger yachts worked slowly past us, Dorade hung on determinedly until darkness put an end to the picture. From then on, until we were very near the English shore, we were to have the stage all to ourselves save for frequent appearances of those great funsters of the scale-wearing world, the porpoise family. We were visited daily and nightly by these carefree fellows, and if they left us for more than a few hours, we would suddenly miss their playful snorts and antics, and hope for their return. At night, we were, time and again, delighted as the water would suddenly become alive with sparkling silver streaks, the wakes of the clowning porpoises as they rushed hither and thither through the phosphorescent water. Pictures such as this went far to make the trip so uniquely fascinating—yet off Cape Race we had occasion to invoke the wrath of the gods on these same playboys for eating our log line practically in half.

Our skipper, who was also designer and amateur navigator of Dorade, had elected, after careful consideration of all possibilities, to follow the course which most nearly approximated the Great Circle, which is the shortest course to England. By going this way, he had about two hundred miles less to sail than those who went eastward into the Gulf Stream and then worked north, but he took a chance on ice, fog, an adverse labrador current, and a trying session with cold northerly gales. As the trip progresses, it will be seen how fortunate we were in our choice of courses; the skipper gambled rather heavily, though only after careful figuring, and made a real "haul". There is neither the time nor the space in which to talk with those who are anxious to ask, "But if . . ." : one could speculate for days on what might have happened had things broken against us, but it would rather spoil our story. Suffice it to say that a good deal of such speculating was done by a few fond mothers during July and August: and will be done during the winter months before many open fireplaces.

No sooner were we out of sight of the spectator fleet than we settled down to the routine which we were to follow for seventeen days without let-up. We split up into two watches of three men each, the cook being exempt from regular duty on deck but subject to call at such times as it was deemed necessary to have all hands on deck. Each watch worked on a schedule of four hours on and four off—the watches were not dogged at all, so that as a result we got used to being on deck at certain times and in our bunks at certain others. The writer was a member of the port watch, along with the owner of the boat and his younger son, who was first mate. We were on deck regularly



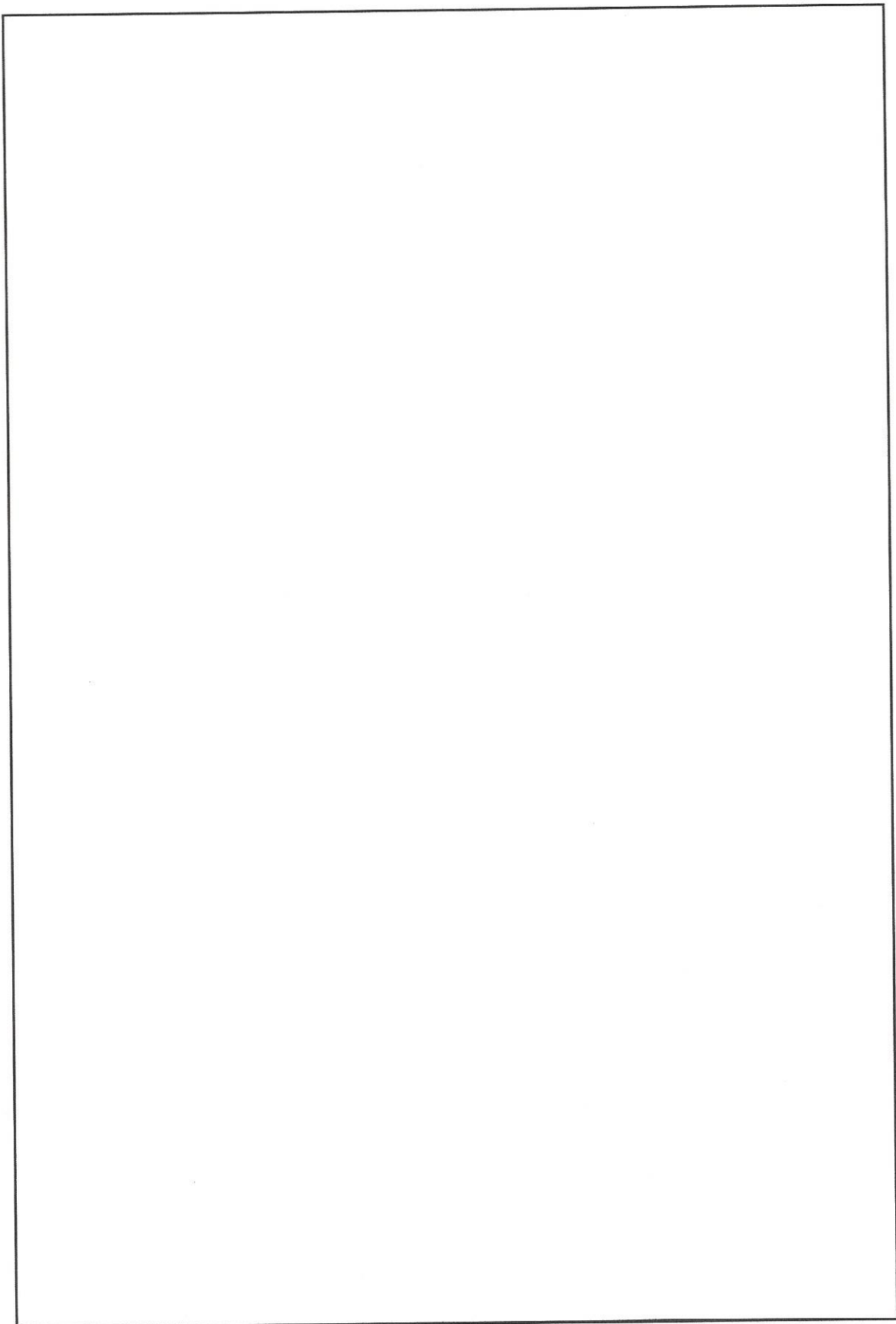
from 12 M. to 4 P.M., and 4 to 8 A.M., and during the latter two watches had the delightful experience of bringing many beautiful moons and suns over the horizon while the starboard watch lay below and let it be known in no uncertain tones that they were full content with things in another world.

The first night out found us trying to run before a breeze which was decidedly "up and down", with the result that the rotor on the end of the log line hung lifeless well below the surface. The fog settled down in a thick veil and dripped heavily off soaked sails and rigging. Under such conditions it was most difficult for the helmsman to keep from nodding over the brilliant but motionless compass card; one gets plenty of thrills from handling a tiller when the boat is alive underneath the helm, but when the ship is lying becalmed, holding the stick is a most trying task. About eleven o'clock a light sou'wester crept in between the feet of the fog, and we made haste to ease off the main boom and get the big spinnaker up. We should have known better, for our efforts scared the little breeze and left us with more canvas to slat about and gather in wet fog. Off to leeward we could hear the faint roar of a high-speed motor and wondered how much they would make on each case; at any rate it was a tough night for the coast guard: Not until late in our morning watch did the wind haul into the northwest and come down to sweep away the fog. About breakfast time, the sun burst through and ushered in a beautiful day during which we reached along with a rail breeze about fifteen miles off Nantucket. During the afternoon, we sailed through a small fleet of picturesque fishermen hove to under trysails; hearty salutations came from all those that we passed close aboard, and we eagerly returned the greeting. There is something about such a

meeting at sea which is bound to stir even the saltiest heart. We hoped to see more of these fellows farther north on the banks, but were to be disappointed.

In the first two days, the log showed only about two hundred miles, and we were a trifle concerned lest the others, whom we were satisfied had gone the southern way, were getting a better lift. But a small receiving set, which the skipper used only for getting weather reports, although an orchestra would have sounded very nice at times, kept us informed as to conditions on the other route, and we were relieved to hear for several days that light head winds were prevailing in the upper Gulf Stream: In the mean time, we were pushing up toward Cape Race on the wings of a generally moderate southeast breeze carrying some assortment of light sails all the time, with the big balloonier, spinnaker, and one of our two mizzen staysails doing a great part of the pulling. The weather was very kind to us, and seemed especially mild in comparison with the picture we had expected. We were expecting a miserable siege during which heavy woolen underclothing and several layers of thick outer garments would barely suffice to keep those on watch from freezing, and sail handling would be a nightmare. In place of this, the banks fishermen's delight, we had a minimum of fog, no air as cold as that encountered off Point Judith on our trip to Newport several days prior to the start of the race, and a fairly smooth sea. Rubber boots and light "oily" suits over our regular clothing kept us warm and dry during foggy weather, and until we passed Cape Race these could be done away with after the warm sun had driven through the gray blanket each morning. Off Cape Sable we had one anxious night rushing through a thick fog before a thirty-mile southerly. The ship was skating

around in lively fashion through a lumpy sea and rolling rather badly. The large spinnaker was more than matching the pull of the mainsail, and before midnight the two booms were having a wonderfully close contest to determine which could dip deepest into the murky sea! On deck we simply sat tight, one man steering, one man administering occasional blasts to our hand fog horn, and the third watching the contest of the booms with one eye and the halyards and guys with the other; to say the least, it was not entirely a comfortable night, but it was nothing short of thrilling. It was rather futile to try and think of other vessels which might be close by; for us the dismal calls of our own horn were quickly lost in the steady roar of our leeward bow wash, and if anybody had heard us, he would have had to hustle plenty to clear the driving hull. As an added thrill, our spinnaker halyard, unable to stand the terrific strain and chafing to which it was subjected, parted with a loud groan and put an end to the contest of the booms for the time being. The great sail bellied forward in a mad swirl of snapping canvas and then settled under the foam-encased stem with alarming rapidity. Quick work in getting forward and a few minutes of feverish pulling by all hands resulted in getting the heavy wet mass of cloth on deck in its entirety, which was most fortunate. The hard-driving mate here brought into play those personal forces which figured so prominently in Dorade's success, namely speed, expert knowledge, and a keen determination to keep the boat going at all costs. A new halyard was rove through the block aloft, and inside of twenty minutes after the accident a smaller, heavier spinnaker was lifting us along with no loss in speed and a decided gain in comfort by virtue of considerably reduced motion.



### PART III

*W*E WOULD HAVE liked to carry this breeze all the way, but during the following day it slackened off and the needle on the speedometer, an instrument, by the way, which was most useful to us all summer, especially in indicating changes of speed as influenced by setting or taking in various headsails, began to drop deplorably. Our noon to noon runs from July 5th to 11th were numerically, in nautical miles, as follows: 110, 189, 159, 178, and 142; this brought us just about abeam of Cape Race, and the skipper encouraged us by remarking that once we got past this point we would, or at least should, have clearer weather and more breeze. Nothing much in the way of excitement had occurred since the parting of the halyard, but on the morning of the 9th we got a little thrill which might have amounted to more had it come at night. We were moving slowly through a fog which was just beginning to burn off when suddenly we heard the throaty roar of a steam whistle. Somebody quickly replied with our hand horn, and immediately we were all eyes. After a few more exchanges of signals, with the steam whistle coming ever closer, our bow man suddenly sighted the white superstructure of a steamer ghosting through the thickness about one hundred yards ahead

and a trifle to starboard. Fortunately enough, she was a slow tramp and had evidently seen us first, for even as our eager eyes located the approaching vessel she began to swing under an altered helm and glided by just far enough off to starboard so that we couldn't quite make out her name—perhaps we were just as glad for that:

This incident must have in some way affected the cook's sense of responsibility—perhaps he wanted to be sure that if another steamer should come just a bit closer we would all go down without any unnecessary loss of time—at any rate, the morning of the tenth was to bring us another surprise, this time from the galley. About six-thirty, up popped the well-known bald head through the companionway for the usual breath of morning air before work was begun on the stove. The smooth sea and idle canvas seemed to bring something into the cook's mind, for suddenly his teeth began to show in a broad smile, and, after rubbing his hands together in a gesture of complete self-contentment, let the port watch in on his secret.

“Well, I guess I'll treat you boys to some real flapjacks seeing as it's such a fine morning,” he announced, fairly bubbling over with honest pleasure at his happy thought. So long did that wide grin last that a meaning glance between my eyes and those of mate revealed that at least the shade of a doubt that the cook had told us everything. Mr. Stephens, otherwise known as the “Commodore”, was the only other one on deck he thought the idea a fine one. The mate, rather than take a chance on antagonizing the cook (he being the biggest of the cook's “wolves”); thought the suggestion was first-rate and wanted it to take form immediately. Still being skeptical, I tried to make it clear that I didn't care the slightest bit for flapjacks, and besides they were

very hard to digest. I couldn't have been very forceful in making my point, for a hearty "Bronx cheer" from the mate's throat was picked up and echoed by the watch below, who always seemed to be awake when matters of the galley were up for discussion; we had flapjacks! At seven-thirty the Commodore and the skipper sat down to the first batch of delicious-looking, steaming cakes and, in the jargon of the fo'c'sle, "killed" them with the aid of some wonderful, pure maple syrup from the hills of Vermont. But these two were only men with ordinary appetites; it remained for the four remaining to do the cook's work real justice. At about eight bells they sat down with mouths fairly watering; approximately one hour later the cook, now quite sweaty and to a greater extent grim, extinguished the flame under the griddle and with a great sigh sat down the last batch of twelve cakes, for of which he took himself. Gone was his contented smile, and he ate slowly. We inquired if there was anything wrong (it gave us an excuse for not trying to move). The answer came, practically floating on a wave of tears, "I thought I would be good to you guys and give you a real treat," we all nodded, "but I sure got fooled. Do you know what you 'square-heads' did? Well, there are two empty packages of Hecker's flour out there, and a quart can of syrup drained dry as a bond: to say nothing of how I feel!" The four "square-heads" looked just a bit dumbfounded and glances converged on the mate. Finally that wretch managed to ask in a lowered voice (the only record of such action on the whole trip). Just how many cakes had gone the way of all good food, but the cook was not to be stopped. His very look foreboded evil, and as he rose slowly to his feet we even thought he was slightly agitated. "You should ask me," he growled. "Well, in case I never

speak to you again the count was—" here he paused and gave us a scathing look of contempt—"ninety-four!" I have forgotten just how I got up the companionway or in what position, but I do know that nobody but the Commodore and the skipper went below until certain noises issuing from the port berth assured the rest of us that the great cook slept.

And so we sailed on. All we could show from the 10th to the 11th was 85 miles, our worst day's run, and even the imperturbable skipper began to frown. But on Sunday the breeze began to come in again and we worked it for all we were worth. By noon we had picked up to a run of 145 miles; the next twenty-four hours netted us 170 more and we were getting a real push out of the West with signs of even more. The needle on the speedometer was once more climbing back into its high seat, the big spinnaker was hustling us along a trifle faster every hour, and had not our mates accordion contracted swelling keys, it would have been brought out in an attempt to hold the favor of Aeolus. The long green seas were making up all the time, as the broad Atlantic turned from a tranquil pond into a rugged mass of heaving, trembling, green-and-white sea. The straining spinnaker pole again became actively engaged in a tit-for-tat contest with the main boom and both were dipping under the confused sea pretty regularly. Off and on, the Commodore would bring out the movie camera and get some interesting shots of extra-large seas or of interesting moments on board Dorade. We were now averaging about thirty-two mile to every four-hour watch, and a keen competition developed between the two watches to see which could run up the best four-hour run. Driving the boat like this made the cook's job a ticklish one, but his long arms and legs always found some



points at which to brace themselves, and the master of the galley continued to issue three hot meals a day with lots of smiles thrown in. Running at night during this weather was a beautiful and sometimes a rather weird experience. The moon had disappeared after about the fifth night out, and there were only the stars to gaze down upon us as we slid along seemingly in a small world of our own, encompassed by the elements. It was rather thrilling to feel the boat settle in the trough of a green sea, hesitate just a moment, and then lift slowly as she was picked up by the next white-capped monster and shot down the tumbling incline with sheets of spray leaping wildly off the fast-moving bows. Streaming astern, a thin, wavy, phosphorescent line marked our progress through the canyoned sea, and underneath us the driving, swaying keel was a sheet of sparkling silver. It was glorious sailing, and a little wetness and discomfort were forgotten in our desire to keep the speedometer needle pointing as high as it would go. There were times when we were shooting down these long seas that the needle would run up over the eleven-knot mark, but as the instrument was over-registering somewhat, we figured at those times we were doing about ten and one-half. Our noon-to-noon runs from not of the 12th until noon of the 17th were 170, 181, 208, 198, and 201 miles respectively, and the breeze was still out of the west-northwest, running in force between twenty and forty miles an hour. On the 15th it blew very hard for a while in the afternoon with the breeze more abeam. We doused the balloon jib and the mizzen and ploughed along under full mainsail and a reaching jib. We went so far as to get all our reefing gear out, and it looked for a while as though we might have to use it. The sea was pretty steep and occasionally a big one broke aboard, to

be whipped off to leeward very quickly by a squally breeze. However, Dorade hung on grimly and handled the elements in masterly fashion—it was at this time that we appreciated most the wonderful rigging job which had been done under the mate's careful supervision—and the tall mainmast stood up like a church to all the strain which was thrown upon it. At this point we knew we were making a pretty fast crossing for a small vessel, but were in no position to know where our competitors were, or how fast they were going. Not having seen a soul except the tramp steamer, which had no code flags flying for identification, and probably wouldn't have reported us anyway, we knew that the folks ashore had no news of us after thirteen days at sea; we wondered if they were beginning to feel a bit anxious, and wished they could have been along to enjoy the wonderful sail.

## PART IV

*T*HE EARLY HOURS of the morning of the 17th found us having a pretty lively time of it. About four-thirty, the breeze, which had been pretty hard all night, stiffened still more; the sea was very much confused and for the first and only time during the crossing we found it necessary to have two men at the helm, one to push and the other to pull. Great dark clouds were milling around in the wind-driven sky, and occasional showers of cold rain dropped therefrom. The big spinnaker was doing about everything except blowing away, so we got all hands and the cook on deck to take it in, setting the forestaysail to lessen the wild rolling. The cook made us all feel better with some hot coffee and pilot biscuit smothered in jam, and with two men at the helm we carried on until late in the morning. By that time the sun had finally battled through and we had gorgeous day; the breeze slackened away to about twenty-five knots and the sea became just regular enough to permit one man to handle the tiller. We were really beginning to feel that it was about time for some traffic to appear since the English coast was only about 800 miles ahead and our course was steadily bringing us closer to the steamship lanes. All hands, including the now pacified cook, had agreed to con-

tribute twenty-five cents toward a pool to go to the man who first sighted smoke in this region; so with an eye toward the time when we would be ashore and perhaps find a little extra money very helpful, everyone began to scan the horizon ahead for something more than the sake of idle curiosity.

Soon after the starboard watch had taken charge of things, strengthened by a good lunch from the cook's magic pans, the helmsman, Jim Merrill, suddenly cried out that he saw smoke, and, sure enough, there was a dark smudge against the clear horizon ahead and a little to starboard. It was a steamer, and what was more, it was west-bound, for even as we looked, the smudge rapidly assumed the form of smoke issuing from two stacks, and this was quickly followed by the appearance of the black hull of a large passenger steamer. She was altering her course and coming up close to us while the skipper and mate started a frantic scramble to get out the International Code Book and our own code flags. On deck we quickly took up positions by the signal halyards which we had on both masts, and the Commodore broke out his binoculars in preparation for some fast identification work. The liner came up very quickly despite a fairly strong head wind and a moderately sloppy sea which, although making not much more than a splash against her high bows, was tossing Dorade around in a lively fashion. Fifteen minutes after the smoke from her funnels had been sighted, we looked across several hundred yards of tumbling water at a picture which was to leave an indelible imprint on our memory and for the time being thrilled us to the very roots of our hair. Moving majestically through the swirling ocean and tossing aside the encompassing seas as though they were mere ripples was one of the great man-made Titans of the North

Atlantic passenger service. The two smoking funnels with their red, white, and blue bands and the proud name in gilded letters on the high bow identified her as the S.S. George Washington of the United States Lines. From her signal halyard a string of code flags snapped smartly in the breeze, giving us our correct position in terms of latitude and longitude. Her rails were lined with enthusiastically waving spectators, and on the bridge we could see several uniformed figures who were apparently subjecting us to a very thorough examination with the aid of powerful "glass eyes". None of us on Dorade knew much about the fine points of code signalling, but the mate, having spent a good part of his time off watch memorizing the various flags, led us in a scrambling effort to communicate intelligently with the bridge. We managed to hoist our large identification code flag "G" to a position under the lower main spreaders, and then rushed aft to run up a series of signals asking the liner to report us ashore. On board the steamer they sat and lowered several sets of flags before the mate and skipper could find the proper interpretations in the book; we picked up one asking us if there was anything we needed. By this time, the great vessel had swept astern, but to our great delight she began to swing to starboard, and, listing slightly under the altered helm, turned broad across our jumping wake. For a moment, it looked as though she was going to circle around us, but then the swinging stopped and the steamer hung there as if waiting some action on our part. The mate, with things now under good control, whipped up a set of flags reading, "We wish you a pleasant voyage"; at that the lingering vessel nosed slowly around to port once more and, with both funnels belching forth the black breath of laboring boilers, plowed off in all

her glory across the white sea into the depths to the westward.

This meeting with one of the queens of the ocean fleets endowed us with renewed vigor and added determination to drive the ship harder than ever for Plymouth, and we were glad to think that on the morrow our friends at home would be reading a brief report from the George Washington's wireless assuring them that we were all safe and making steady progress. The good cook was so anxious to see land that he forgot all about the hardships of a bucking galley, and when we were piling down the side of a surging sea in a smother of milky foam, he would shout up through the half-closed companion-way, "Drive her boys, drive her!" Sometimes he added a few more things, but neither space nor the writer's conscience will permit the recording of such. But drive her we did, our only fear being that the fine westerly, which had been pushing us along for the past week at an average of 198 miles per day would leave us and that its successor might not only be less energetic but also from a less favorable direction. Luck was with us, however, and the steady roar of rushing water up forward gave ample evidence that we were going places. By noon on the 18th, another good run of 196 miles was checked off on the chart; in the afternoon, a large steamer with four funnels crossed our bow going west—she was about six or seven miles away, but the consensus of opinion identified her as the Cunarder Aquitania, subsequent information at Plymouth confirming our guess.

The breeze came in with renewed vigor out of a cloud-choked sky in the late afternoon but still kept shifting back and forth across our stern, the result being that the sail drills which had been the order of a good deal of the way over were

still continued in an effort to get that extra half knot out of the boat. Jibing ship under these conditions was a good work-out with all seven of us on deck, but we managed to get by each time without losing any gear or having anyone slide through the lifeline which was rigged the length of the boat on each side and which came in mighty handily on several occasions. On the night of the 18th, we drove through a dark, squall-swept sea with the breeze pulling more to the northward, just far enough forward to prohibit carrying the spinnaker, but far enough aft to make it a trying task for the helmsman to keep the big balloon full. The sea continued to run fairly high and occasionally one would swirl up and break over our weather quarter, but Dorade handled the big ones beautifully; at no time did she give us any cause for concern over the danger of being "pooped" by one of the pursuing "greybeards". On the following noon we marked off our best run of the trip, 210 miles, which is about as good going as one could want from thirty-eight feet of waterline. Another run of 162 miles with a somewhat slackening breeze lifted us to within striking distance of the English shore, with all hands getting just a bit on edge. The morning of the 20th brought the breeze around to a trifle east of north and we hardened down sheets to put Dorade jam on the wind with the result that we had to watch the speedometer needle take a considerable drop for the first time. By noon, however, the wind backed into the west and up went the large Spinnaker again. The Commodore broke out the movie camera and took some intimate shots of our beards, which were really something to look at (if one is interested in unique variety only!). The competition for best growth narrowed down to a choice between the Commodore, the mate, and the writer. After

considerable deliberation, the latter was given the judges' decision for thickness and for color scheme (they said it was a delightful reddish gold, but its owner unfortunately had no way of checking up).

Early in the afternoon, the "boy skipper", as the English papers represented him, announced that we ought to make our landfall on the Scilly Isles about six-thirty that evening. At the designated time the agile mate literally walked up the port shrouds to the masthead, about seventy-five feet above our heads, and after scanning the horizon very thoroughly suddenly shouted, "Land ho! Two points off the lee bow!" There were the Scilly Isles in the very place the skipper said they would be, and we congratulated him most enthusiastically before rushing below to devour a delicious fig pudding with hard sauce from the cook's own recipe; the time before he had used salt instead of sugar in it, but this time it was perfect. So after supper we began to see many lights ahead, and a lovely new moon rose astern as if to compensate for the dying breeze. All night we drifted with a very light wind occasionally stirring the lifeless sails, and somehow managed to work past the myriad lights which marked the entrance to the famous Channel. Dawn came out of the east in all its glory and thrilled us as only a sunrise at sea can; overhead a great flock of squawking gulls wheeled and swooped in search of a scaly breakfast, while out in the Channel a lumbering freighter wandered haltingly across the brightening horizon, leaving a trail of black smoke hanging rather undecidedly over the placid surface of the sea. Abeam to port, less than a mile away, was the Lizard Head with its green slope supporting several quaint white buildings, including the one housing the powerful light which sweeps across the



night sea to warn passing vessels that a wide berth should be give the point. This was our first look at land for two and one-half weeks, and it was most delightful—but Plymouth was forty miles away and the wind, at beat, was up and down. From the signal station on the hill flew the code signal, “What vessel are you?” The first mate, aided by a smooth sea, whipped up our flag which read, “Dorade.” Then the burning question in all our minds was fished out of the Code Book and the proper flags hoisted. “Which am I?” The mate alone dared watch the flags at the station, but with book in hand he was ready as a new set went up and then with a blood-curdling yell read out, “You are first!”

Bedlam reigned for several minutes as we took the attitude of wild Indians, while the Commodore shot off a clip of cartridges from a .45 calibre automatic. But then we thought, “Perhaps somebody has sneaked by without reporting.” It was a wretched thought. The Commodore shaved to invite some breeze, and after an absence of practically twelve hours, a nice southerly came in and we were off for Plymouth with all kites set. Shortly after five that afternoon we swept around Rame Head and across the finish line in Plymouth Harbor, after 17 days, 1 hour, of sailing. A fleet of small boats came out to greet us, their occupants shouting, “Hooray for the Yankees!” Inside the harbor we sailed past the beautiful big racing cutters Britannia, owned by His Majesty, George V, and Shamrock V, owned by the late Sir Thomas Lipton. Their crews lined their respective rails and gave us three hearty cheers—a most thrilling greeting. The hook was dropped in the lee of Drake’s Island, and while the crew made a hurried job of furling sails, the skipper, smiling and modest, talked with several distinguished visi-

tors from neighboring yachts. Finally we got ashore to enjoy a wonderful bath, shave (a horrible job), and dinner at the Royal Western Yacht Club, whose members greeted us with open arms. On the bulletin board were radiograms from the George Washington and Aquitania, reporting us as they had seen our different positions. News of the other boats was scant, but from what we could gather, our dangerous competitors were several days out. With wonderfully contented thoughts, we turned anxiously toward bed. It had been a glorious adventure for us all; we had worked hard and had gotten all kinds of breaks; we were the first boat to anchor in Plymouth Harbor after a very fast crossing for boats of our type and size; our dangerous competitors were hopelessly behind us. It was all too good to be true, but no one thought of arguing. There was only one thing left to do—we slept.

THE END