



THE JOLLY ROGER

RYE HARBOUR SAILING CLUB QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



The first Windsurfer in Rye

By Derek Bayntun



Sailing in Gibraltar

By John Powell OBE



Sailing—My Life Afloat

by Richard Cooper



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Who's Who

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Welcome to this Spring 2021 edition of the Jolly Roger.

After the traditional Commodore's note, Derek Bayntun relates his experiences as the first Windsurfer in Rye. I take my hat off to him because I tried sailing one of the early versions of Windsurfers on the West coast of France and found myself drifting out to sea. I found a laser dinghy was a lot easier to manage.

John Powell OBE gives a fascinating account of sailing in Gibraltar; the conditions were not as benign as they appear from John's photographs but it is clearly a good place to hone one's sailing skills and at least one is not likely to encounter cold water shock. Anna Knight then relates some of her entertaining sailing escapades.

We continue the further extracts from Richard Cooper's book, "Sailing-My Life Afloat". It was evident from the start of the series that Richard possesses that essential quality of a good sailor— a sense of humour!

Stuart Cleary recently lent to me a cache of highly entertaining, historic material about Rye and I have included a selection of advertisements which I hope will be a source of amusement.

I recount my experiences and some sights on a cruise around the upper reaches of the River Medway. It is a river with a rich history and home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.

I end with an extract from a book which recounts an expedition of a Dutch explorer, Admiral Van Noort at the time of the beginnings of the Dutch East India Company. Any supposed connection between the Admiral and our Commodore is pure speculation.

As always, I am very grateful to all those who have contributed articles or material for this edition of the Jolly Roger. Due to a family illness and work commitments the next instalment of Gary Palmer's voyage from Ireland to Rye will appear in a subsequent edition.



Message from our Commodore, Eric Zon

It looks very likely that we can restart sailing before too long with organised outdoor events allowed from March 29, all going well. Currently our first race withing this schedule will be the Easter Egg race on April 18 but we will see if we can fit in anything before. Most likely we will see many dinghies out in the Easter weekend to get back into the swing. The cruisers have the first race planned for April 2 so that will depend, I assume, if everyone can get their boats ready (and back in the water) but if so it could be a great long season. If you are interested in crewing on a cruiser please let David Preston (Rear Commodore cruisers) know (dpreston303@btinternet.com) and he can try to find you a position on one of the boats.

The club will have a full spring clean before re-opening. The old ladies' changing room has been emptied ready to get converted into a lounge. All buoyancy aids have now been moved to the old men's changing room

I am excited to have entered the Fastnet race, the first one that will finish in Cherbourg, France. The start is still at the Isle of Wight on Sunday August 8. There will be over 500 boats in the race and plenty of space to have them all together at the finish for a big party. By the way for those that have never partaken, it is in general not the nicest of races, a beat all the way to the Fastnet Rock and a run on the way back to the finish but we seem to forget that over time...

The Vendee Globe is now finished with 25 official finishers and two (Sam Davies and Isabel Joschke) finishing outside the results but completing their sail around the world, after having to stop to repair their boats. More boats finished then ever and a very exciting finish it was indeed. A great shame that Sir Ben Ainslie with the INEOS Team UK didn't make it to the final of the America's cup, I am sure they will be back.

We have been busy renewing the website. It looks good and we now have all passwords to be able to add any changes needed. The program is on the website and I hope that we will have the race results pages and the webshop ready as well when you read this. Have a look and see if there is anything else we could add to make it as useful for all members as possible. There will also be updates for the start of the season and, hopefully, a full social program later in the year.

The membership renewal forms have gone out. They are now send by our new membership secretary John Powell and come from the address rhscmembership@gmail.com. If you haven't received this please have a look at your spam box and/or send an email to this email and John can resend it. Great time as well to remind anyone interested in sailing that now is the time to join to take advantage of a full season.

Hope to see you out there , fair winds

Eric

Following Tim's piece (see the 2020/2021 Winter edition), I was spurred on to share with readers that I was the first windsurfer in this area.

It all started in Honolulu, 1960. I was on a world cruise working aboard the HMS Caronia, a luxury Cunard liner. As soon as I could, I went to Waikiki Beach to hire a surfboard - they were much longer than you see now.

I paddled out a long way. The waves seemed small and wide apart. To catch a wave, you had to paddle hard and orientate the board at just the right angle. Having caught a wave, I immediately collided into a local surfer who jumped on my board, and we rode the wave in with him standing in front, yelling his head off, with me crouched behind. It was most thrilling - even better than planing in a sail boat.

After I returned to life on dry land in Rye, I opened the Old Forge Restaurant in 1966. It was after that that I saw people had begun surfing at Camber. That winter I asked one of them if they could source a surfboard for me. However, the surfing at Camber is not very good; as soon as you catch a wave, it crashes.

With the restaurant closed after Christmas for a week off, I drove to Cornwall with my then-wife, Jennie. It was literally freezing - there was snow on the road most of the way, and ice on the beach. The waves looked big!

Nonetheless, I paddled out there; the waves were huge - like a house coming at me. I had a go on a large wave... and got dumped! It was like being in a washing machine - I did not know which way was up. It felt too risky to continue in those conditions, on my own. However, I met a guy who told me about the new sport of wind-surfing, which sounded good.



In 1974 I bought a wind-surfing board at the only place I could find selling them at the time, in West Wittering. The wind-surfing board was demonstrated for me at the beach there, and I paid £150 and took the huge wind-surfing board (as they were in those days) home to Rye (see photo).

Then I had to teach myself on the open sea, which meant that every time a wave came, I fell off.

I competed in the first National Championships and was first place to the First Buoy. Then I fell in. The chap who won was the distributor!

I tried my skills at Kite Surfing at Camber Sands too; people had persuaded me that it was meant to be easier than wind surfing. However, I started too late in age and did not manage the jumps which had attracted me; I instead enjoy watching the pros at Jurys Gap.

I have just bought a paddle board for my daughter's family for Christmas, and I look forward to having a go. I will then, I believe, be able to claim to be the first wind-surfer, as well as the oldest Paddle Boarder, in the area. I will be 81 in March 2021.

Whether or not I succeed in that, I am the longest sailing member of the Rye Harbour Sailing Club - continuous since ~1952. At the age of 16 years, I was sailing my Lyminster Scow at the Club (see photo below).



Sadly, because of the COVID situation, the Dinghy section has not undertaken any sailing that is worthy of reporting. Though it has been good to see information being exchanged on the Dinghy WhatsApp Group (often with concerned reports about dinghies after high tides and strong winds); and it is good see that, despite everything, a sense of humour abounds.

Many club members will know that my last job in the Army was Chief of Staff British Forces Gibraltar. In lieu of dinghy sailing activity at Rye Harbour I thought some of you might find a description of how dinghy sailing in Gibraltar was conducted of interest.

Despite the Garrison being much reduced in modern times, Gibraltar remains a great place to deliver sport and what the military term 'adventurous training' and I took full advantage of the sailing on offer (adventurous training encompasses activities such as: sailing, skydiving, rock climbing, potholing, skiing and diving). In normal times, the Combined Services Sailing Club was situated at Four Corners right next to the Spanish Border and within easy reach of a part of the Bay of Gibraltar that we used for racing.

During my time there the estate was being refurbished and for a few years the club was relocated to Admiralty Waters halfway along the western edge of the Rock. Much of the challenge and fun of sailing in Gibraltar during this time was getting from the Club to the race area in good order (and back again). Please refer to the aerial photograph below which is annotated to make what follows easier to understand.



British Armed Forces have always encouraged sport and adventurous training since it maintains fitness, encourages self-resilience in the face of adversity and generates a sense of bonhomie and wellbeing (the generation and maintenance of morale remains an abiding 'Principle of War' famously espoused by Napoleon Bonaparte). The facilities in Gibraltar were used by visiting units from the UK and Germany so there was always activity on the water.

One advantage of moving the club to Admiralty Waters meant that in addition to sailing on a Saturday, I could walk out of my office at the Headquarters to the club to sail on a Wednesday evening with little effort.

Winds are predominantly westerly in Gibraltar so launching anywhere on the western coast is nearly always from a lee shore. The slipway was in the innermost of 3 harbours and tacking out avoiding moles and other berthed vessels was quite challenging – just as you eventually got to the main harbour in Admiralty Waters there is a RN berth to the south and very often you would run your dinghy across the bow of a Frigate or support vessel.



Sailing past a frigate into Admiralty waters. The Submarine Berth can be seen in the distance.

Directly opposite, as you sailed into Admiralty Waters, was the nuclear submarine berth; if a submarine was in dock a security boom had to be negotiated (controlled by the Maritime Branch of the Gibraltar Defence Police). Thankfully, by now we would have turned north onto a beam reach so getting through the gap did not

usually present a problem – though the occasional lost diver, in training with the Royal Marines, surfacing in front of you did!

Now out of Admiralty Waters the inner harbour (long since given over to the civil government in Gibraltar) had to be negotiated. Full of commercial and pleasure traffic it was generally easy to avoid the jet skis operating at high speed (often smuggling cigarettes and sometimes being chased by the Gibraltar Police).

In high winds the Detached Mole provided welcome cover from the westerlies but as you moved from the harbour out to the Bay where the cruise ships berthed you would enter what is best described as a washing machine of waves. The waves would bash against the Northern Mole and reflect into oncoming waves (think of the wall by the Red Light on the River Rother mouth and the waves seen in rough weather there). Getting through here was a real challenge. Sometimes (particularly on a Wednesday evening) one of the cruise ships would be leaving Gibraltar as we arrived at the Northern Mole. If you got it right, you could sail on the ship's wake which had the effect of calming the sea and providing a smooth ride.

Getting through the harbour with an easterly wind also provided an interesting challenge. The wind would hit the largely uninhabited eastern side of the Rock rise up then dump down on the harbour. This had the effect of making localised wind patterns (they would be dust devils on land) that rotated in different directions. On many occasions you could be hiking out on a Starboard tack and a dinghy 20 ft away would be hiking out on a Port tack – the localised nature of these winds meant that the wind often stopped suddenly dumping the unlucky sailor in the water if they were hiking out.



Sailing north just leaving Admiralty Waters – the ship off the Port bow is moored at the Detached Mole. Seemingly the wind is from the west.



Further into Gibraltar Harbour still heading north towards the Cruise Ship Berth. Here the wind is coming from the east.

Finally, we approach the race area some 30 or 40 minutes after launching. Though there are many vessels around (including Guardia Civil patrol boats who are illegally patrolling in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters), there is plenty of space and relatively few hazards – except for the runway from Gibraltar’s airport. At the end of the runway there are strobe lights which are activated to warn mariners that an aircraft (usually Easy Jet or British Airways) was about to take off or land and to keep away from the end of the runway. If you sailed a little further out and were ready for it and were lucky, you could catch part of the blast from the jet engines to give your dinghy a lift – more often than not though it would end in a capsize, but great fun if it worked.

The tidal range in Gibraltar was a maximum of about a metre so we went out at about the same time each week and were not clock watching against the falling tide to get back. On a Wednesday we would free sail and on Saturday run two races back-to-back; then make the journey back to the club house. Being tired getting the dinghies back onto a lee shore was quite tricky but pointing the dinghy into wind at the last minute to allow the dinghy to move backwards to the slipway generally worked– the cold beers in our temporary clubhouse were very welcome at the end of the session.

Later the club moved back to Four Corners with a slipway right up against the Spanish Border. It was much easier to get out to sail though launching on a lee shore with high winds meant that avoiding the rocks and barbed wire on the border was a bit tricky – but that is another story.



John Powell sailing with the iconic Rock of Gibraltar as a background. The runway ends just out of shot to the left of the picture.

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You know the Fairlight disaster and the award winning capsized. Well, Andrew needs copy, so I have a few more for you.

When the slipway re-opened last year, we weren't allowed to have crew other than family, so Sue and I couldn't sail together. I must admit I was the one who was sticking to the rules.

Anyway, she reluctantly accepted the situation and agreed that we shouldn't sail together yet. So that's why I ended up taking a Topper and you have read about the lessons learned on one memorable occasion.

However, I have developed a liking for single handed. Sue has learned that I'm not afraid of a few waves, but she has been a sensible crew and put a brake on my recklessness. Nowadays, only when it's only me who will end up in the drink, am I likely to end up in trouble.

Then one sailing day when I was rigging the Topper, I happened to notice my Wanderer. That lovely boat that I hadn't sailed for 2 years. My gorgeous Wanderer that I took to Cornwall, to the Lake District and to the Isle of Man. (I think I already wrote about Bosham here.)

It was Mullion in Cornwall I went to this time. Well the beach was all pebbles but not too steep. In those days the kids and Jeff were still keen so we had enough manpower to launch. The steep cliffs on each side of the cove gave to the wind some cheeky choices of direction, but I did take all three to the open sea a few times. There was never enough wind. Luckily there was always just enough to scrape back to the beach. We spent more time getting on and off the beach than what I would call sailing. The ratio of stress to happiness gave me something to think about.

We had a holiday in the Lake District. We got a cottage near Bassenthwaite Lake for the sailing. One evening, a fairly calm evening, taking a barbecue as well, we trailed Kittiwake about a mile to Bassenthwaite Lake. We were the only people there and weren't sure if we should, but went out anyway. Wow! How scary that was. The water was deep deep blue. Almost black. The wind died and we were half a mile away from shore. I was with William. All credit to him he didn't panic. He's one of those children who likes knowing best. But on this occasion I was able to show off my light wind sailing skills, with my heart in my mouth.

Katy had found a rope swing, much to her delight, and Jeff was prodding the BBQ into life. They had absolutely no concept of the danger Will and I were in of spending the night in Kittiwake on Bassenthwaite Lake. Thank goodness.

I had come to the Lake District wanting to sail on Derwent Water where Swallows and Amazons had been filmed. (It was apparently Derwent - I was told). During the week there had been light winds mostly, but on that fateful day there was plenty. We trailed over to Derwent. Jeff and William went off to find something interesting to do to pass the time. Katy, ever trusting daughter, came in Kittiwake. We had a fast sail down the lake, to the Swallows and Amazons Island. Then after sailing around a bit the wind picked up to F5. Suddenly I was aware that Katy hadn't been in weather like this before and was bravely saying nothing at all. My adventure had once again become risky where I hadn't imagined there would be a problem. I took a very bad decision, and down the jib came. After some time struggling to tack, we were spotted and towed back much to my embarrassment.

Jeff and William, having been on sailboards and unable to tack either, had somehow sailed across to a bank. Got off and went back again. They were full of it. Hats off to them.

I am ashamed to say, safely ashore, I was still weak at the knees, my fingers were actually trembling on the

shackles. Katy was haring towards the boys shouting to them! Oh my God! I'm a terrible mother who puts sailing first and everyone else a long way behind! So what was our daughter telling them?

"It was exciting and dangerous but it was great - we weren't worried!" So they seemed impressed. That's my girl!

"We were towed back" she added.

Oh dear, I thought. Hang on Katy, there's no need to go that far. Ouch!

I trailed Kittiwake up the motorway to my next adventure on the Isle of Man, having an overnight stop near where Katy and her partner Ian lived and we had dinner together. I was on and off the ferry first, with my long load. I drove to Port St Mary which has a boat compound. I amused the Harbour Master because he wasn't used to issuing permits for only a fortnight.

Possibly I told this story before in *The Jolly Roger*. If not, it's for another time. I should confess though I am not proud of having put my 78 year old mother in danger of hitting the rocks and drowning or of speeding in Kittiwake through the 'Sound' on standing waves, where one false move would mean joining the seals on the rocks.

I googled 'Risk Taking' out of interest

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It's an addiction. I'm very sad and depressed!

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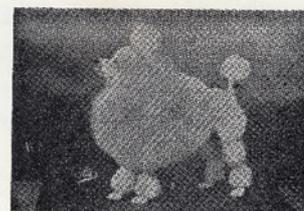
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Before starting my studies at Guy's Hospital, I had quite a few months to find something to do and I needed some income. Thus I took a job at the local NHS office. My job was to fill in new medical cards, which to say, at the least, was not, mentally very rewarding. I was one of only two males in the office and for light relief, used to take one of the girls, they took turns, for a spin on my motorbike and sidecar.

Then I was glancing through a copy of 'Yachting World', when I saw an advert for 'Bosun required for the Royal Ocean Racing Club' yacht 'Griffin'. So I replied. To my surprise, I was granted an interview at the club's London headquarters,

To my utter amazement, I was given the job at the princely wage of £3 a week, with all found. Maybe I was the only applicant!

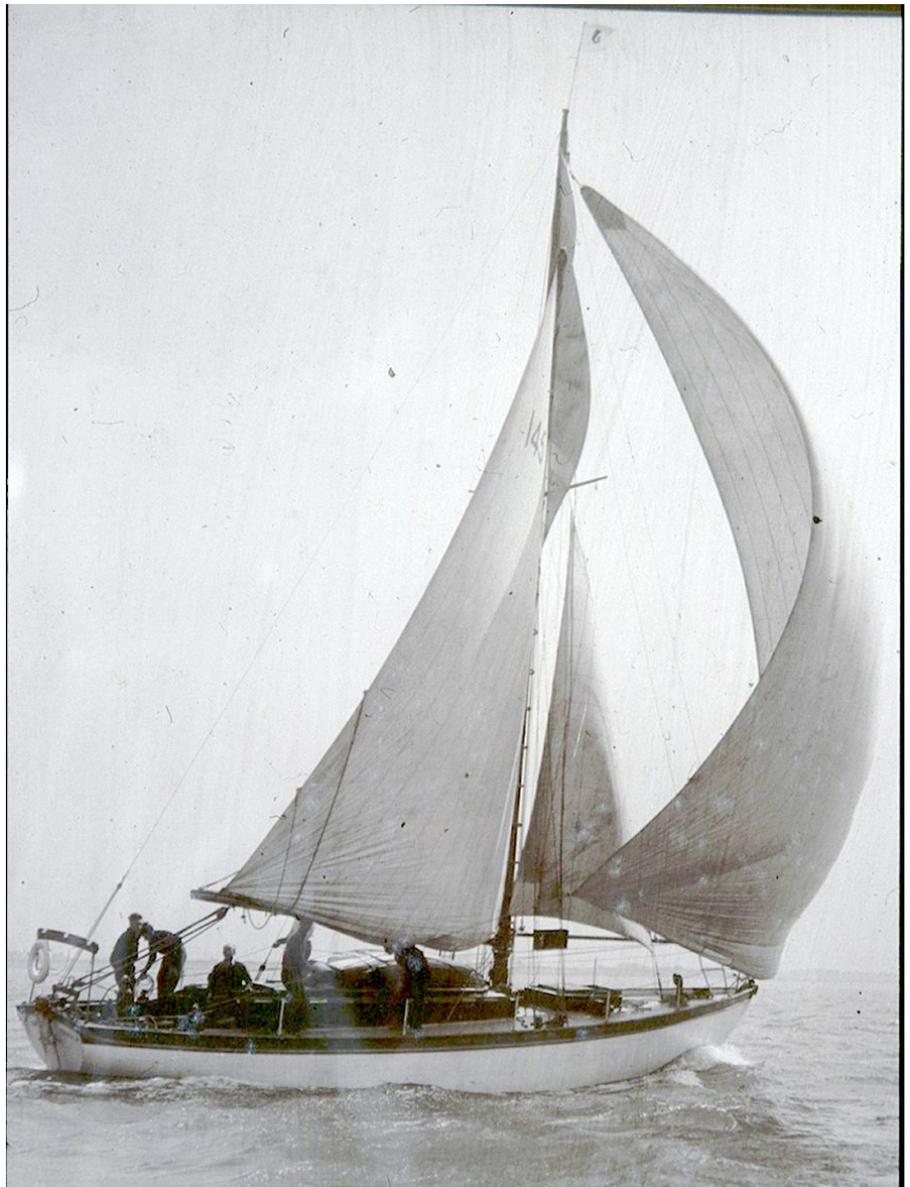
GRIFFIN

She was built at Pin Mill in 1938 for the Admiral of the Club. She was 44ft. long overall, a gaff topsail cutter with no engine. She also had no electronics, except a Beme Loop, which was not much use. She had electric lights and navigation lights, powered by Nife batteries, with a portable petrol generator to keep them charged. This was one of my duties as bosun.

Generally we actually used paraffin navigation lights to save the batteries. We had no winches and no life raft, just an alloy dinghy stored on deck. I think we had Mae West life-jackets, that were seldom worn.

It was definitely built as a cruising boat and not a racing one. However on a run or reach, we could more than keep up with the racers.

Thus on one April day, I took a train to Poole, where she lay and joined *Griffin*.



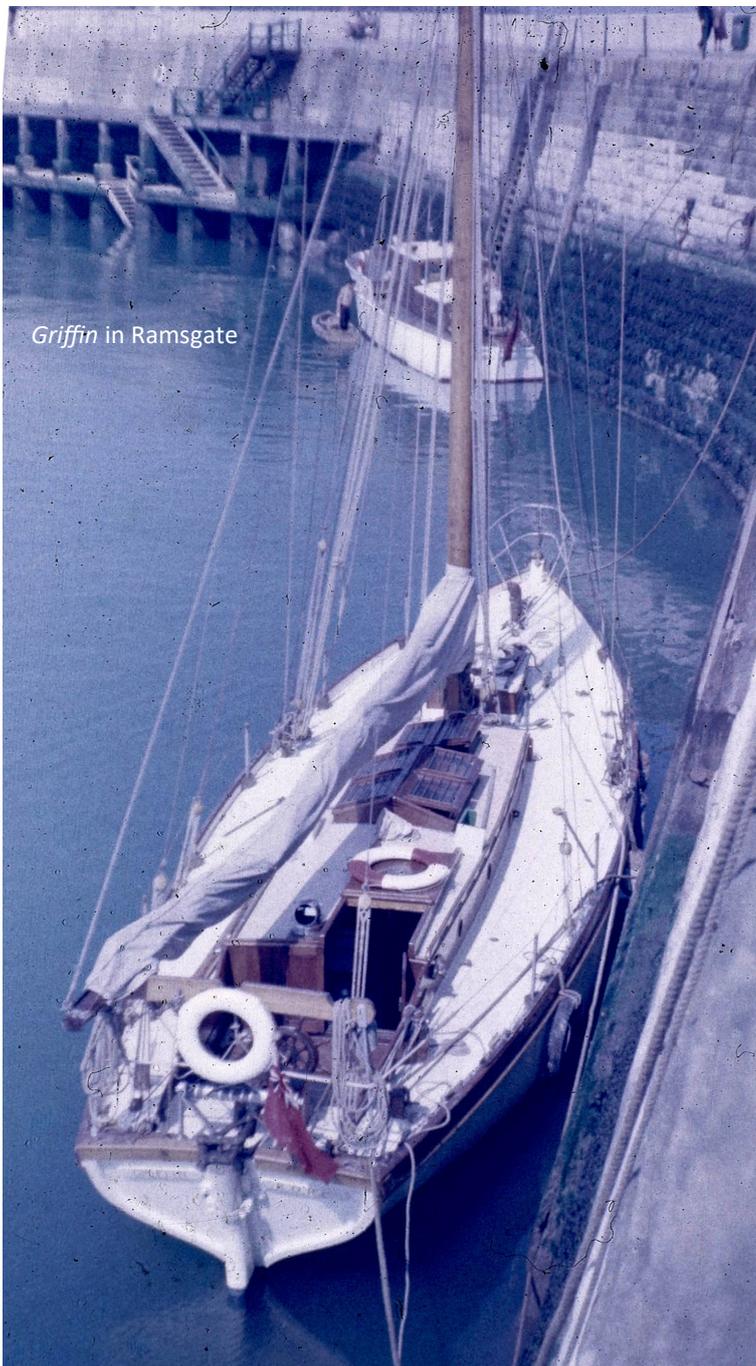
Griffin with full sail

I was lucky in that my first cousin, Jean, lived there her husband Reg and children. Reg did two tours with Bomber Command, as a navigator and had been awarded the DFM. He had joined the RAF, aged 17. Deciding that, after two tours, he had done enough, the RAF posted him to a training unit. They crashed on a training flight and he escaped unhurt, until he returned to investigate and to try and help the pilot, who, he realised had not

escaped. Then on approaching, the plane exploded and burst into fire, engulfing Reg. Subsequently, he underwent about eighty operations at East Grinstead, where he met my cousin. He eventually became a surveyor, first in Maidstone and then as Head Surveyor at Crawley, when it was in its infancy. I went to several parties at East Grinstead with the Guinea Pigs. They were the most fun loving group I have ever known, despite their often hideous injuries.

So back to *Griffin*.

With the boat's food stores replenished, the cleaning and varnishing completed and with only the sails to receive attention, we were ready to sail. Thus the Griffin secretary, John Bush, came down to skipper *Griffin*, with other crew members with him. Amongst those was Colin Cowen, the ex-bosun and who provided me with endless help and advice.



Griffin in Ramsgate

On a Saturday morning, when we were due to cast off, I, lodged in the fo'c'sle, sorting out our many sails, suddenly remembered that I had completely forgotten to buy any milk. I rushed ashore and bought six bottles and hurriedly rushed back to the quay. On arriving, there was no sign of *Griffin*!

I asked somebody if he had any idea where she had gone, and he said that he had seen her set sail about five minutes ago!

What to do? No radios in those far off days, so I was stuck for ideas, until I saw a RN lieutenant about to board his motor gunboat. I said to him I wonder if he could possibly give me a lift. “Sure, jump aboard”. We left the quay and speedily set off. With barely time to swallow the gin, that he kindly provided me with, we set off and saw *Griffin* aground, near to the harbour entrance. We came alongside and those on board, stood in amazement, as their bosun jumped onto *Griffin*, clutching six milk bottles!

It appeared that they thought that I was still organising sails in the fo'c'sle. By good luck, they had managed to go aground (remember no echosounder) right opposite the Royal Motor Yacht Club.

We had an excellent meal and a few glasses of wine in their sumptuous clubhouse. The next day we had a pleasant sunny sail in moderate winds to our mooring, which was close to Fawley Refinery.

We had a few small races and sails, before we set out for our first race to the Continent. This was the Harwich to the Hook race.

Our skipper, on this race, was the racing correspondent of the 'Yachting World', Bernard. He taught me to sail by the stars at night and many other things, including how to tie a bowline quickly, as I fumbled to do one.

In Rotterdam, as we moored up. I had my first ever really superb steak, something not easily obtained in the UK. I was introduced to Bols Gin, already having had a taste, as a Dutch yacht came close to our stern and, by leaning out over his boat's pulpit, was able to pass us a bottle, as we sailed down the River Maas.

Our return trip to Ramsgate took over two days as the wind was barely in existence for much of the time. The twelve bottle case of gin was reduced to one half bottles by the time we arrived in Ramsgate. I've never touched Bols gin ever since!

There followed a race in the Channel, when one of the marks that we had to round was the Royal Sovereign Light Vessel and, having taken a compass bearing, we headed for the mark, but then the course to be sailed changed. This happened more than once, until a crew member, through binoculars, realised that the Light



Griffin racing around the Nab Tower

vessel was actually under tow by a tug! It was going to dock for maintenance. It had been replaced by a temporary buoy, which meant changing the course significantly in order to round it. Much time was lost and we did not finish the race too well.

Race to Dinard

The race started at Cowes. Amongst the crew was a chap doing his qualifying race for RORC membership. My task was to set the topsail, by using the bosun's chair. Having set it, I shouted down to this particular crew member, to lower me. Instead he did the opposite, which did not do anything to improve any sex prospects! Actually no damage done, but it felt it at the time, when I was squashed by the rope's pulley block. On arrival at Dinard, we all migrated to a party, which was held at the Yacht Club de Dinard.

Having had a very convivial time there, we went down a large slipway towards our various tenders. A loud cry was heard “*Le homme dans l’eau*”, to which nobody took the slightest bit of notice, until someone shouted in English, that someone had fallen into the water, whereupon, he was pulled out very quickly. Guess who shouted in appalling French?. Yes, you are right!

Our return to the UK meant starting at a lowish tide and picking our way round sand and rocks. With no echosounder we had to 'throw the lead', which we kept doing. When the crew member, previously noted, took over, our skipper, Henry Trefusis of Trefusis, in Cornwall, asked him what was the depth and bottom type, sand or mud, he exclaimed “How do I know?”. I did not retrieve the lead and it probably remains where it is to this day. Henry was not TOO pleased!

The one person who did not achieve RORC membership, whilst I sailed on 'Griffin', was our unfortunate garage owner.



In 2018, I called at the club and enquired whether my wife and I might have lunch there, the Secretary said “*of course you may*” and asked if I had visited the club before. Yes, in 1952! She was taken aback and rushed to find her phone camera and asked me to repeat it in French, which, although told what to say, I managed to get wrong and we mutually abandoned the project. Lunch was excellent.

Channel Race Two (disaster!)

Skipped on this race by Jack Merricks of Rye, it became a fairly windy one. After successful spinnaker runs and reaches, we eventually found ourselves beating against a strong tide and F7 winds. We went inshore off the coast in an attempt to stem the tide. We had to round the C11 buoy, off Cherbourg, before heading for home. I remember changing jibs, with water gushing over the pulpit, aided by a young keen vicar, who also became soaked to the skin and who uttered a few non-Christian words.

My watch was over, after rounding C11, so I changed into a dry shirt and trousers and immediately fell asleep in my bunk. I was woken about five in the morning by Jack shouting: “*Every one on deck, AT ONCE, BE QUICK!!*”

Once on deck I saw that we had collided with a very large tug and the seas kept crashing us under the large, all round fender of the tug. We were running, with the boom out to starboard and vang'd in tight so it would not move. The three of us crew tried, with no avail, to push us apart, but it didn't work. To try and obtain more push, I turned round and grabbed the bulwarks, which, being a tug, were low and attempted to push *Griffin* away with my feet, also with no success.

Jack then shouted to us to get back on board, as a sea was trying to sweep *Griffin* away. The other two made it, but I had first to turnover, before jumping. The gap between the two boats was now about four or five feet and I thought that I could make it and got ready to jump. Jack shouted: “*DO NOT jump, DO NOT JUMP. Stay ON BOARD THE SHIP!*”

This, actually, was very sound advice, as I probably might not have made it . If I had jumped, and with both boats still travelling at about eight knots, I would probably have drowned or been crushed. I climbed aboard the tug to be met by a sailor, who said “*Where the Bl-----Hell, did you appear from, mate?*”.

I realised that the tug, 1200 tons, was a Royal Navy ship, which was commanded by two Regular Navy Lieutenant-Commanders.



Passing the Gin– River Maas

My request to speak to the captain was refused, despite me saying that *Griffin* might well have been damaged and in trouble, but this was ignored. I was sent to the Petty Officers Mess for a full English breakfasts and two large tots of Navy Rum.

The PO harboured great doubts as to the ability of the two officers and had especial misgivings about the Number One, who often stood on the bridge and often shot seagulls, with a 2.2. rifle.

An hour or so later, I was bidden to go to the Captain's Cabin where I was offered a gin, which I accepted, despite having had the rum earlier and told that he would pay for any damage suffered by *Griffin*, out of his own pocket. He also gave me a copy of the signal that he had sent to the Admiralty.

He said that, on the completion of the NATO exercise, that they had been part of, they would return to Portsmouth and moor to S buoy. I would be taken ashore by barge. This duly happened and I was immediately asked who I was and why I was there, by the Officer on board, who actually turned up to be the Admiral of the Fleet, in command of the home fleet and the organiser in chief of the NATO Exercise.

He asked me what I thought of the officers on board. I replied: “Not Much!”.

Obviously no watch had been kept and they were unaware of us, even after the collision. The result was that both the officers were ordered to attend a Court Martial, at which both were found guilty and both received severe reprimands. I gave written evidence.

I was welcomed back on board *Griffin*, gave Jack the copy of the signal, which showed us on the chart to be miles off our true position. *Griffin* finished the race as third in our class, after a protest committee found that, due to one member of the crew not being aboard at the finish and that due to exceptional circumstances, the protest was thrown out. It was not so happy for *Griffin*, who received severe damage and was never the same boat again, sadly!

Sailing to and from the UK—new guidance

The following note contains guidance issued by HM Revenue & Customs on the new steps which need to be taken if any members are planning a sailing trip which would take them outside UK territorial waters and which was kindly forwarded by the Rye Harbourmaster.

UK/EU Entry & Exit Formalities

Following the United Kingdom's exit from the European Union, owners of recreational pleasure craft (non-commercial) who sail their craft to and from the United Kingdom (including the Channel Islands) must notify the UK border authorities upon their first arrival into a UK port.

Before leaving the UK (which includes going to the Channel Islands), you must advise the Border Force of your intentions by posting form C1331 (the address it must be posted to can be found on the form).

Both non-UK flagged vessels and UK flagged vessels returning from a trip outside of UK territorial waters (12 miles from shore) must now fly the 'Q' flag where it can be readily seen as soon as UK waters are entered. The flag must not be taken down until you have finished reporting to the customs authorities. Failure to comply will make you liable to a penalty.



'Q' Flag

Arriving in the UK

When arriving direct from outside the UK you must phone the National Yachtline on 0300 123 2012. You will need to inform the Yachtline if any of the following apply:

UK VAT has not been paid on the vessel

you have on board goods which are to be treated as surplus stores as per Notice 69A.

you have any prohibited or restricted goods

there is any notifiable illness on board

there are any people on board who need immigration clearance

any repairs or modifications, other than running repairs, have been carried out since the vessel last left the UK

you have any goods for personal use on which you need to declare and pay UK tax or duty and cannot do so via the online service.

For further information, please view the Government Notice.



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Wanted– articles for the Jolly Roger!

If you would like to share any sailing experiences or your expertise with our readership or simply make a comment, your articles or letters to the editor will be gratefully received and considered for inclusion in a subsequent edition of the Jolly Roger, We aim to maintain a balance between material relating to dinghy sailing and cruisers and also between articles which are informative, educational or downright comical and so please do not be offended if an article you contribute does not appear immediately. Articles or letters should be submitted to the editor (apowell@lawdisputes.co.uk) no later than 14 days before the publication date (**i.e. by 16th November for the Winter edition, 14th February for the Spring edition, 17th May for the Summer edition and 17th August for the Autumn edition**).



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DELIVERIES POSSIBLE THROUGHOUT MAINLAND UK

On a warm day in June I crossed the North Downs and descended to the mainly urban area in the vicinity of Rochester. Turning off towards Upnor, I immediately entered a more rural landscape. I was due to meet a friend, Martin, a very experienced sailor, who moored his Sadler 32 at Upnor and who had offered to take me on a trip to explore the upper reaches of the River Medway. Chatham, which would itself justify several articles, lay to the South. Martin's boat was moored in the river which meant that it was possible to leave at all states of the tide. We therefore located Martin's tender which was stored close to the shore and rowed out to *Oystercatcher*.



Upnor Castle lay close by. By the reign of Elizabeth I, the upper Medway had become the principal anchorage for Royal Navy ships which were out of commission. There was then an urgent need for fortifications to prevent attacks on vessels and storage facilities along this section of the Medway. Initially, the castle was armed with a variety of 18 cannons. However, as Samuel Pepys noted in his diary, the castle was not provided with adequate provisions which left this section of the river exposed.

In June 1667, at the time of the Second Anglo-Dutch War, the Dutch launched a raid on the River Medway. Lieutenant-Admiral Michiel de Ruyter captured Sheerness at the mouth of the river and then, after sailing past Upnor Castle, captured HMS *Royal Charles* and HMS *Unity*. His raiding party also succeeded in burning several ships at anchor. Notwithstanding the damage inflicted during the raid, Upnor castle was considered at the time to have acted effectively by destroying Dutch boats and eventually forcing the raiding party to retire.



We left the mooring and followed the river with the Saxon Shore Way on the North bank and passing the remains of Cockham Wood Fort. Before long we encountered the flat landscape of upper reaches of the River

Medway which had its own desolate beauty and which mirrored the landscape of the Essex marshes on the other side of the Thames. This was the landscape which formed the backdrop of some of Charles Dickens' literary works and, most notably, *Great Expectations*; the church at Cooling, which lay to the North of Upnor, was the inspiration for the churchyard scene at the beginning of the novel.

Fortifications to protect the River Medway continued into the Nineteenth century and included the construction of two forts on either side of the river: Fort Darnet and Hoo Fort.

Fort Darnet lies on the Southern bank of the river (Co-ordinates: 51°24'25"N 0°35'47"E). Construction works were completed in 1875. It was originally intended that there would be three tiers but this was reduced to two due to problems with subsidence. There were accommodation casemates and magazines on the ground floor which were built around a circular parade ground. There was accommodation for 3 officers and 69 NCO's and men.

Eleven muzzle-loaded guns were mounted (8 9-inch and 3 7-inch). These were never



used in any conflict and eventually the fort was used for gunnery practice. Hoo Fort had a similar construction.

Further images of the interior can be seen at <https://www.longshoreinternational.com/longshore-international-blog/2018/11/3/medway-forts-and-wrecks>



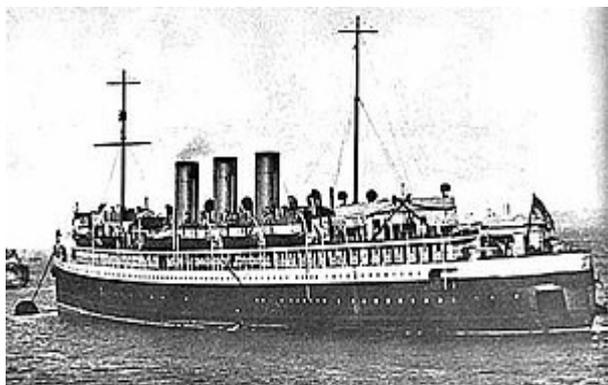
The Sheerness Guardian of 25 July 1874 reported "A detachment of the Royal Artillery at Sheerness has been ordered to proceed to the new fort at Hoo Ness, one of two which have been constructed for the defence of the Medway and Chatham dockyards and stones are now being conveyed to the fort. This powerful circular fort and one built on the opposite side of the river at Bishop's Marsh will command the passage of the river with the immense guns with which they will be armed. "

We continued to follow the Northern passage of the Medway in the direction of Sheerness. Nearby lay the remains of a World War I German U-boat, thought to be UB122. At the end of the war German U-boats and other naval vessels were seized by the Allies. It is thought that this particular submarine was being towed to the Thames Estuary when its tow broke and the submarine ended up drifting towards Humble Bee Creek.

In the Upper reaches of the River Medway are the sites of two tragic explosions. Launched in 1899, the pre-Dreadnought battleship HMS *Bulwark* formed part of a newly-formed Channel fleet and was later transferred to Sheerness in view of mounting concerns about possible invasion. On 26th November 1914 HMS *Bulwark* was moored at Kethole Reach near Sheerness. A powerful explosion completely destroyed *Bulwark* leading to the



Loss of 741 men. Only 12 crew survived the blast. This remains the second most catastrophic explosion in the UK. A subsequent inquiry found that the probable cause of the explosion was the ignition of cordite charges which had been stowed against one of the boiler room bulkheads as part of the re-stowing of the six-inch ammunition magazines.. As part of this process, hundreds of 6 and 12 inch shells and at least 30 exposed charges had been left in cross passages. An even larger explosion took place on 27th May 1915. HMS *Princess Irene* was moored in



Saltpan Reach between Port Victoria and Sheerness and was being loaded with mines as part of a minelaying mission. A sudden explosion, which a subsequent Court of Inquiry found was due to the priming of the mines, led to the complete destruction of the ship with the loss of 352 people including 273 crew. The explosion was larger than the one which had destroyed HMS *Bulwark*. Wreckage landed up to 20 miles away with fatalities or injuries occurring on

the Isle of Grain and as far away as Sittingbourne. The risks of an even greater explosion remain. During World War II an American Liberty ship, the SS *Richard Montgomery*, was wrecked near Sheerness on the Nore sandbank in the River Thames. As shown by the photograph below, the three masts of the ship remain visible. The

wreck contains about 1400 tonnes of explosives including high explosive bombs and fragmentation bombs. A decision was taken to leave the ammunition in situ, possibly influenced by an attempt to secure a Polish cargo ship in 1946 which resulted in an explosion equivalent to an earthquake measuring 4.5 on the Richter scale.

Some reports estimate that the explosion of the



SS Richard Montgomery would throw into the air a column of water 300 metres wide to a height of 3000 metres, lead to a tidal wave up to 5 metres high and shatter all windows in Sheerness!

So, unless you wish to be known, posthumously, as responsible for the greatest pyrotechnic display in British history, if you are ever sailing near the mouth of the River Medway it would be advisable to give the wreck a wide berth and steer well clear of the exclusion zone! There have already been several near misses.



Another fort or gun tower, Grain Tower, is situated at the mouth of the river Medway. It was constructed between 1848 and 1855 following the design of Martello towers which had been built in numerous locations along the British coastline.

The initial, primary purpose of the tower was to defend the entrance to the River Medway and the docks at Sheerness and Chatham. This was prompted by what was seen as a French naval threat at a period of heightened tension.

The initial purpose had to be abandoned due to the development of more powerful, rifled muzzle-loading guns. Proposals by a Royal Commission included rebuilding the tower but these were not pursued due to cost. A new fort, Grain Fort was constructed on the mainland. Apart a period as a communications tower, the tower was eventually refitted during World War I with quick firing guns as a defence against torpedo boats. A boom was



also attached between the tower and Sheerness. Apparently, the massive iron chain which formed the boom can still be seen wrapped around the base of the tower. Further modifications were made during World War II including the installation of a twin quick-firing gun. The building is now in private ownership. Car parking at the site might be problematic.

We turned back close to Sheerness and headed towards the River Swale. At the entrance to the Swale is a small island consisting of marshland known as Deadman's island. It is separated from the Chetney Marshes which form part of the mainland by Shepherd's Creek. Fortunately, the island is protected and a site of Special Scientific Interest.

Now this island is not so named for some reason, connected with folklore, lost in the mists of time; this really is a Deadman's island. In 2016 the remains of about 200 humans were found. It is thought that these are the skeletons of men and boys who died on prison hulks which were moored in the area during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth centuries and later. Charles Dickens would have seen these hulks in view of his close connections with the area and they play a significant role in the opening of his novel *Great Expectations*. I recall visiting a client in prison on the Isle of Sheppey where the conditions must be a considerable improvement on those on a prison hulk!



Returning from the mouth of the river with an approaching squall



The bodies were originally buried in wooden coffins in about 6 feet of mud but these have become exposed at low tide due to coastal erosion.



Prison hulk HMS *Discovery* at Deptford



Photo: Richard Dorrell (richarddorrell@aol.com)

On our port side we passed Queenborough, an ancient town known as Cynningburh in Saxon times. It is thought that Admiral Lord Nelson learned some of his sea-faring skills in the waters of the Medway and he may also have shared a house here with Lady Hamilton.

For a time, Queenborough was a thriving port but its importance diminished when there was better navigation along the Thames to London and following the silting up of Wantsum Channel and Yantlet Creek

We followed the River Swale for a time before turning back in order to return to the moorings at Upnor.

After mooring up and Martin had stowed everything away we rowed back to the shore and enjoyed a welcome drink in a local Inn. I left Upnor with feelings of gratitude to Martin for a thoroughly enjoyable day on the River Medway and for enabling me to discover its considerable charms.



Yachts moored off Queenborough



Marshland with Squall



Returning to Upnor

Not already a member of the Club but would like to join? - follow the simple instructions below:

1. Download an application form from our website: <http://www.rhsc.org.uk/Membership>
2. Refer to the notes on page 3 of the form and decide which category of membership is appropriate for you or your family and complete the form accordingly
3. Calculate the fee payable based on the notes on page 3 (including any berthing fee)
4. Either:

Send a scanned copy of the completed form by email to the Membership secretary, John Powell OBE (RHSCMembership@gmail.com). Fees are only paid once membership is confirmed. Bank transfer is preferred; details are:

Sort code: 30-90-28 Account No. 00752410 (Rye Harbour Sailing Club) quoting your surname as the reference.
5. Alternatively you may send a paper copy of the form to:

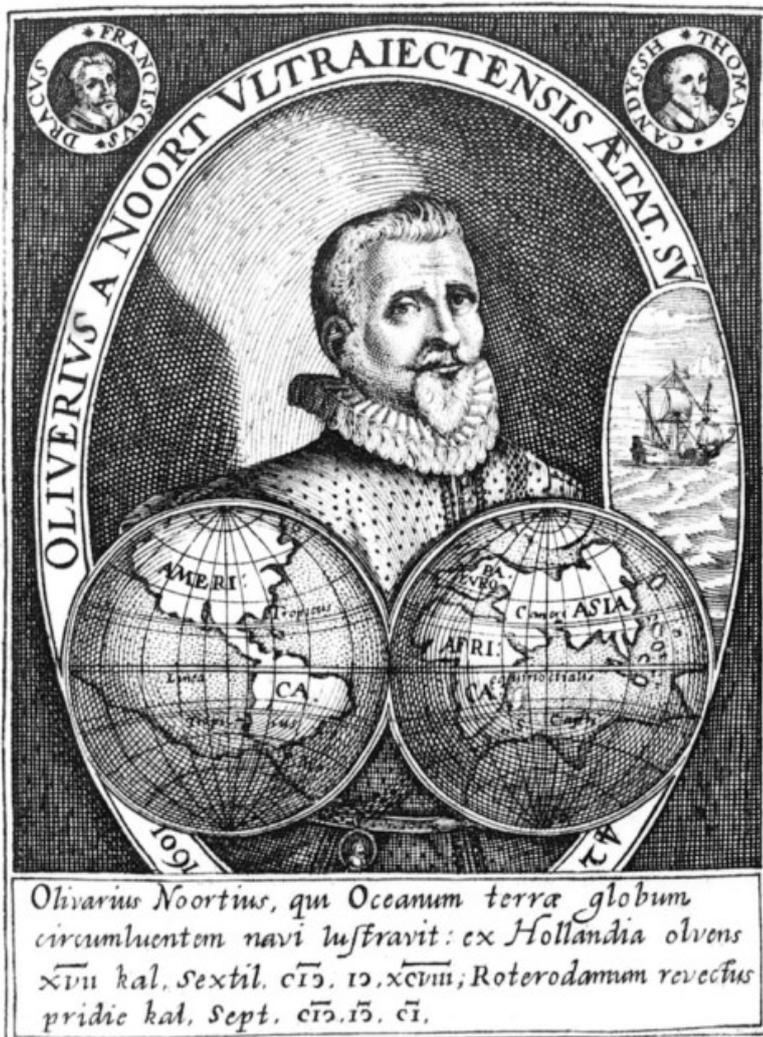
John Powell OBE
Membership Secretary
Rye Harbour Sailing Club
The Point
Rye Harbour
East Sussex
TN31 7TU

(Please note that sending a paper copy is not the fastest method of processing membership applications).

If you have any questions during the process then please contact John Powell at: RHSCMembership@gmail.com

6. Once your application has been processed John Powell (and, if relevant, the Berthing Master, Jeremy Short) will contact you.

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon



Olivier Van Noort (1558-1627) was a Dutch merchant seaman and pirate and the first Dutchman to circumnavigate the world. In 1598 he left Rotterdam with a fleet of four ships. This was during the Eighty Years War between the Netherlands and Spain. His objective was to attack Spanish possessions in the Pacific and to establish trade links with China and the Spice Islands.

Van Noort lost two of his ships in a storm, leaving the ships *Mauritius* and the *Eendracht*. Upon reaching the Philippines, Van Noort engaged in skirmishes with Spanish ships. Following the capture of the *Eendracht* by the Spanish, Van Noort decided to return to Holland. Similar Dutch expeditions to what is now called Indonesia facilitated the operations of the Dutch East India Company. It seems he rescued some slaves held in captivity by the Spanish.

Of the 248 men who left with Van Noort, only 45 returned to Rotterdam.

“Van Noort now reached the southern part of the American continent.

The Strait of Magellan had been discovered in 1530. But even in the year 1598 it was little known. The few mariners who had passed through had all told of the difficulty of navigating these narrows, with their swift currents running from ocean to ocean and their terrible storms, not to speak of the fog.

Crossing from the Atlantic into the Pacific was therefore something which was considered a very difficult feat, and Van Noort did not dare to risk it with his ships in their bad condition. He made for the little Island of Porto Deseado, which Cavendish had discovered only a few years before. There was a sand-bank near the coast, and upon this the ships were anchored at high tide. Then, when the tide fell, the ships were left on the dry sand, and the men had several hours in which to clean, tar, and calk them and generally overhaul everything that needed repairing. On the shore of the island a regular smithy was constructed. For three months everybody worked hard to get the vessels in proper condition for the dangerous voyage.

While they were on the island the captain of the *Hope* died. He was buried with great solemnity, and the former captain of the *Eendracht* was made commander of the *Hope*, which was rebaptized the *Eendracht*. This word means harmony in Dutch, and the Good Lord knows that they needed harmony during the many difficult months which were to follow.

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

On November 5, fourteen months after Van Noort left Holland, and when the number of his men had been reduced to 148, he at last reached the Strait of Magellan. The ship of the admiral entered the strait first, and was followed by the new *Eendracht*. The *Henrick Frederick*, however, commanded by Jacob Claesz, the Vice-admiral, went her own way. Van Noort signalled to this ship to keep close to the *Mauritius*, but he never received an answer. Van Noort then ordered Claesz to come to the admiral's vessel and give an account of himself. The only answer which he received to that message was that Captain Claesz was just as good as Admiral van Noort, and was going to do just exactly what he pleased.

This was a case of open rebellion, but Van Noort was so busy navigating the difficult current that he could not stop to make an investigation. Four times his ship was driven back by the strong wind. At the fifth attempt the ship at last passed the first narrows and anchored well inside the strait. The next day they passed a high mountain which they called Cape Nassau, and where they saw many natives running toward the shore. The natives in the southern part of the continent were not like the ordinary Indian with whom the Hollanders were familiar. They were very strong and brave and caused the Hollanders much difficulty. They handled bows and arrows well, and their coats, made of skin, gave them a general appearance of greater civilization than anybody had expected to find in this distant part of the world. When the Dutch sailors rowed to the shore of the strait, the Indians attacked them at once. It was an unequal battle of arrows against bullets. The natives were driven back into their mountains, where they defended themselves in front of a large hollow rock.



At last, however, all the men had been killed, and then the sailors discovered that the grotto was filled with many women and children. They did not harm these, but captured four small boys and two little girls to take home to Holland. It seems to have been an inveterate habit of early expeditions to distant countries to take home some natives as curiosities. Beginning with Columbus, every explorer had brought a couple of natives with him when he returned home. The poor things usually died of small-pox or consumption or some other civilized disease. In case they kept alive, they became a sort of nondescript town-curiosity. What Van Noort intended to do with little Patagonians in Rotterdam I do not know, but he had half a dozen on board when on November 28 his two ships reached the spot where they expected to find a strong Spanish castle.

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

This fortress, so they knew, had been built after the attack of Drake on the west coast of America. Drake's expedition had caused a panic among the Spanish settlements of Chile and Peru. Orders had come from Madrid to fortify the Strait of Magellan and close the narrows to all foreign vessels. A castle had been built and a garrison had been sent. Then, however, as happened often in Spain, the home government had forgotten all about this isolated spot. No provisions had been forwarded. The country itself, being barren and cold, did not raise anything which a Spaniard could eat. After a few years the castle had been deserted. When Cavendish sailed through the strait he had taken the few remaining cannon out of the ruins. Van Noort did not even find the ruins. Two whole months Van Noort spent in the strait. He took his time in this part of the voyage. He dropped anchor in a bay which he called Olivier's Bay, and there began to build some new life-boats.

After a few days the mutinous *Henrick Frederick* also appeared in this bay. Van Noort asked Claesz to come on board his ship and explain his strange conduct. The Vice-admiral refused to obey. He was taken prisoner, and brought before a court-martial. We do not know the real grounds for the strange conduct of Claesz. He might have known that discipline in those days meant something brutally severe; and yet he disobeyed his admiral's positive orders, and when he was brought before the court-martial he could not or would not defend himself. He was found guilty, and he was condemned to be put on shore. He was given some bread and some wine, and when the fleet sailed away he was left behind all alone. There was of course a chance that another ship would pick him up. A few weeks before other Dutch ships had been in the strait. But this chance was a very small one, and the sailors of Van Noort knew it. They said a prayer for the soul of their former captain who was condemned to die a miserable death far away from home. Yet no one objected to this punishment. Navigation to the Indies in the sixteenth century was as dangerous as war, and insubordination could not be tolerated, not even when the man who refused to obey orders was one of the original investors of the expedition and second in command.



Dutch galleon off Mauritius

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

On the twenty-ninth of February Van Noort reached the Pacific. The last mile from the strait into the open sea took him four weeks. He now sailed northward along the coast of South America. Two weeks later, during a storm, the *Henrick Frederick* disappeared. Such an occurrence had been foreseen. Van Noort had told his captains to meet him near the island of Santa Maria in case they should become separated from him during the night or in a fog. Therefore he did not worry about the fate of the ship, but sailed for the coast of Chile.

After a short visit and a meeting with some natives, who told him that they hated the Spaniards and welcomed the Hollanders as their defenders against the Spanish oppressors, Van Noort reached the island of Santa Maria. In the distance he saw a ship. Of course he thought that this must be his own lost vessel waiting for him; but when he came near, the strange ship hoisted her sails and fled. It was a Spaniard called the *Buen Jesus*. The Dutch admiral could not allow this ship to escape. It might have warned the Spanish admiral in Lima, and then Van Noort would have been obliged to fight the entire Spanish Pacific fleet. The *Eendracht* was ordered to catch the *Buen Jesus*. This she did, for the Dutch ships could sail faster than the Spanish ones, though they were smaller. Van Noort had done wisely. The Spaniard was one of a large fleet detailed to watch the arrival of the Dutch vessels. The year before another Dutch fleet had reached the Pacific. It suffered a defeat at the hands of the Spaniards. This had served as a warning. The Hollanders did not have the reputation of giving up an enterprise when once they had started upon it, and the Spanish fleet was kept cruising in the southern part of the Pacific to destroy whatever Dutch ships might try to enter the private domains of Spain.



From that moment Van Noort's voyage and his ships in the Pacific were as safe as a man smoking a pipe in a powder-magazine. They might be destroyed at any moment. As a best means of defence, the Hollanders decided to make a great show of strength. They did not wait for the assistance of the *Henrick Frederick*, but sailed at once to Valparaiso, took several Spanish ships anchored in the roads, and burned all of the others except one, which was added to the Dutch fleet. From the captain of the *Buen Jesus* Van Noort had heard that a number of Hollanders were imprisoned in the castle of Valparaiso. He sent ashore, asking for information, and he received letters from a Dutchman, asking for help.

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon

Van Noort, however, was too weak to attack the town, but he thought that something might be done in this case through kindness. So he set all the crew of the *Buen Jesus* except the mate free, and him he kept as an hostage, and sent the men to the Spanish commander with his compliments. Thereupon he continued his voyage, but was careful to stay away from Lima, where he knew there were three large Spanish vessels waiting for him. “

WARNING!!

Perhaps rather late now but this article contains content which those of a nervous and sensitive disposition might find upsetting. The extracts reflect attitudes prevalent at the time it was written including attitudes towards crew employed upon pirate ships, of the Dutch towards the Spanish, the Spanish towards the Dutch and the inhabitants of various islands towards the Dutch and the Spanish. The editor wishes to make it clear that he wishes to disassociate himself from, and does not endorse, such attitudes. In particular, he supports the proper treatment of crew on board pirate ships and deplores the absence of proper risk assessments on board such ships. He would also support a fund to mount claims against the Dutch East India Company for compensation for the descendants of the crew employed by Admiral Van Noort in the following sums for each descendant:

Loss of life: 1000 Guilders

Loss of an eye: 700 Guilders

Loss of a leg; 500 Guilders

Loss of an arm: 400 Guilders

Loss of a hand: 300 Guilders

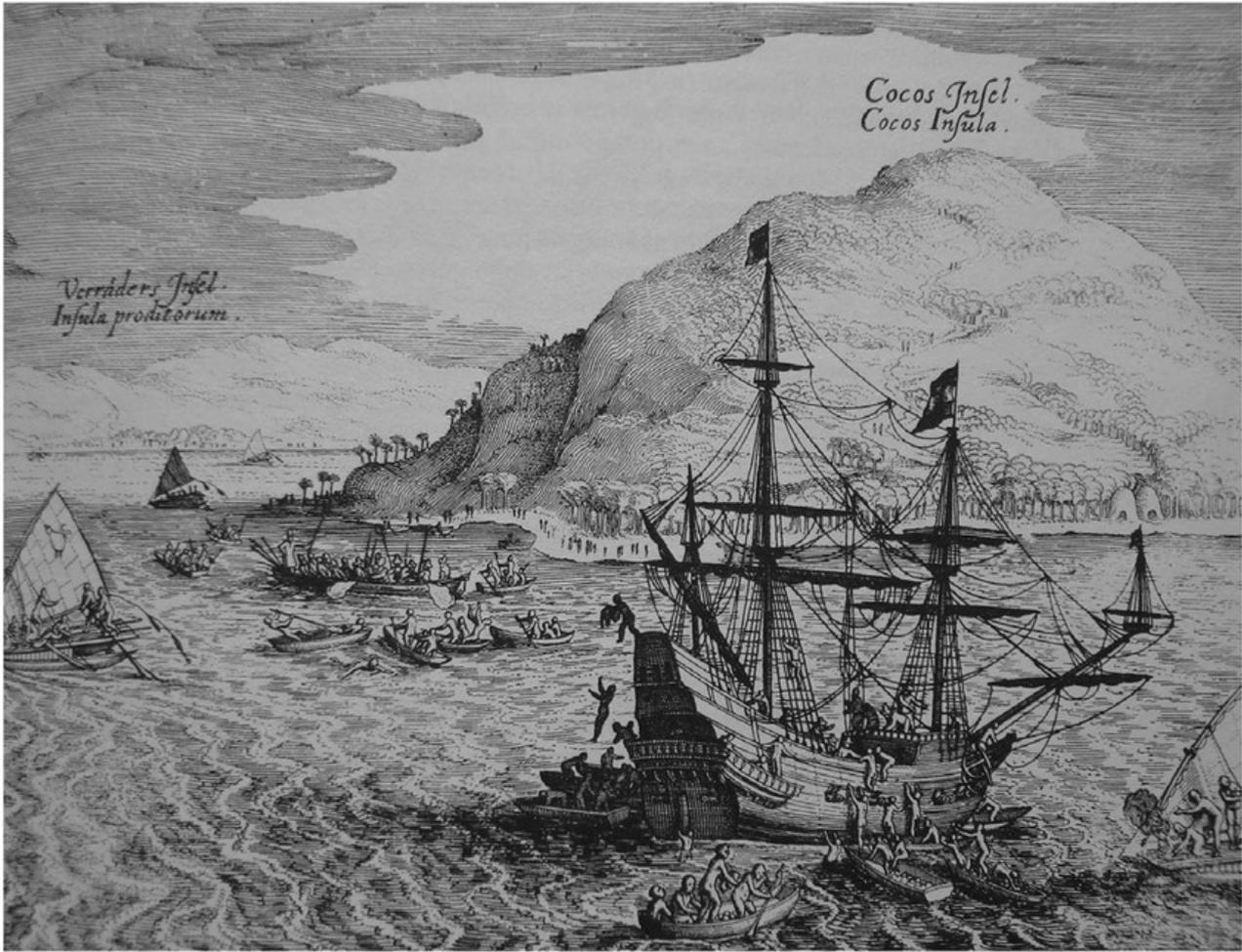
Loss of some other important part

Of the body: 950 Guilders



“Instead of that, he made for the Cape of San Francisco, where he hoped to capture the Peruvian silver fleet. Quite accidentally, however, he discovered that he was about to run into another trap. Some slaves who had been on board the *Buen Jesus*, and who were now with Van Noort, spread the rumour that more than fifty thousand pounds of gold which had been on the *Buen Jesus* had been thrown overboard just before the Hollanders captured the vessel. The mate of the ship was still on the Mauritius, and he was asked if this was true. He denied it, but he denied it in such a fashion that it was hard to believe him. Therefore he was tortured. Not very much, but just enough to make him desirous of telling the truth. He then told that the gold had actually been on board the *Buen Jesus* and since he was once confessing, he volunteered further information, and now told Van Noort that the captain of the *Buen Jesus* and he had arranged to warn the Spanish fleet to await the Hollanders near Cape San Francisco and to attack them there while the Hollanders were watching the coast of Peru for the Peruvian silver fleet. No further information was wanted, and the Spaniard was released. He might have taken this episode as a warning to be on his good behaviour. Thus far he had been well treated. He slept and took his meals in Van Noort's own cabin. But soon afterward he tried to start a mutiny among the slaves who had served with him on the Spanish man-of-war. Without further trial he was then thrown overboard.

An account of Admiral Olivier Van Noort's circumnavigation of the World by Hendrik Willem Van Loon



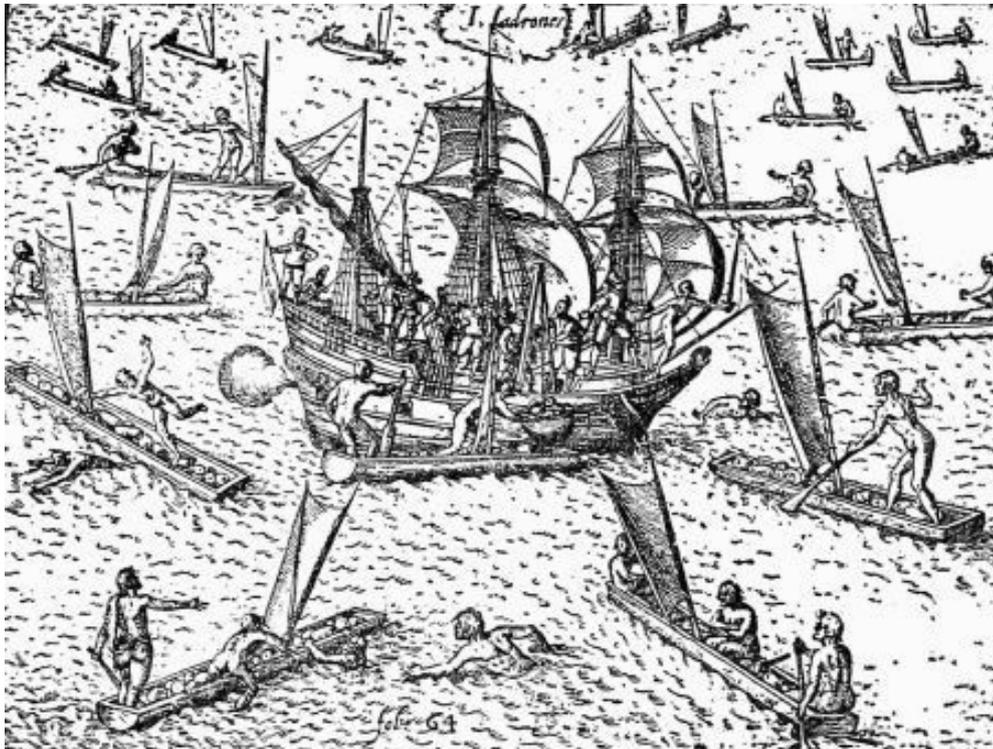
Arrival of the *Eendracht* on 'Kokoseiland' ('Cocos Island')

The expedition against the silver fleet, however, had to be given up. It would have been too dangerous. It became necessary to leave the eastern part of the Pacific and to cross to the Indies as fast as possible. The Spanish ship which had been captured in Valparaiso proved to be a bad sailor and was burned. The two Dutch ships, with a crew of about a hundred men, sailed alone for the Marianne Islands. Some travellers have called these islands the Ladrões. That means the islands of the Thieves, and the natives who came flocking out to the ships showed that they deserved this designation. They were very nimble-fingered, and they stole whatever they could find. They would climb on board the ships of Van Noort, take some knives or merely a piece of old iron, and before anybody could prevent them they had dived overboard and had disappeared under water. All day long their little canoes swarmed around the Dutch ships. They offered many things for sale, but they were very dishonest in trade, and the rice they sold was full of stones, and the bottoms of their rice baskets were filled with coconuts. Two days were spent getting fresh water and buying food, and then Van Noort sailed for the Philippine Islands. On the fourteenth of October of the year 1600 he landed on the eastern coast of Luzon. By this time the Dutch ships were in the heart of the Spanish colonies, and it was necessary to be very careful not to be detected as Hollanders. The natives on shore, who had seen them in the distance, warned the Spanish authorities, and early in the morning a sloop rowed by natives brought a Spanish officer.

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Van Noort arranged a fine little comedy for his benefit. He hoisted the Spanish flag and he dressed a number of his men in cowls, so that they would look like monks. These peeped over the bulwarks when the Spaniard came near, mumbling their prayers with great devotion.

Van Noort himself, with the courtesy of the professional innkeeper, received his guest, and in fluent French told him that his ship was French and that he was trading in this part of the Indies with the special permission of his Majesty the Spanish king. He regretted to inform his visitor that his first mate had just died and that he did not know exactly in which part of the Indies his ship had landed. Furthermore he told the Spaniard that he was sadly in need of provisions and this excellent boarding officer was completely taken in by the comedy and at once gave Van Noort rice and a number of live pigs. The next day a higher officer made his appearance. Again that story of being a French ship was told, and, what is more, was believed. Van Noort was allowed to buy what he wanted and to drop anchor on the coast. To expedite his work, he sent one of his sailors who spoke Spanish fluently to the shore. This man reported that the Spaniards never even considered the possibility of an attack by

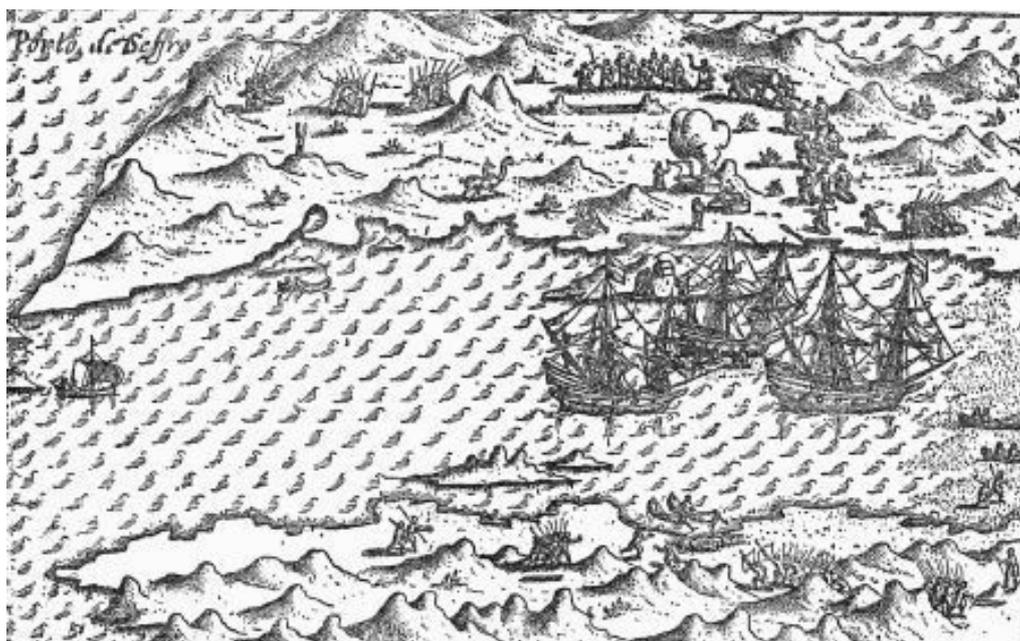


But at last the Spaniards, who had heard a lot about the wonderful commission given to this strange captain by the King of France and the King of Spain, but who had never seen it, became curious. Quite suddenly they sent a captain accompanied by a learned priest who could verify the documents. It was a difficult case for the Dutch admiral. His official letters were all signed by the man with whom Spain was in open warfare, Prince Maurice of Nassau. When this name was found at the bottom of Van Noort's documents, his little comedy was over. Nobody thereafter was allowed to leave the ship, and the natives were forbidden to trade with the Hollander. Van Noort, however, had obtained the supplies he needed. He had an abundance of fresh provisions, and two natives had been hired to act as pilot in the straits between the different Philippine Islands.

The next few weeks Van Noort actually spent among those islands, and with his two ships terribly battered after a voyage of more than two years of travel he spread terror among the Spaniards. Many ships were taken, and landing parties destroyed villages and houses.

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Finally he even dared to sail into the Bay of Manila. Under the guns of the Spanish fleet he set fire to a number of native ships, and then spent several days in front of the harbour taking the cargo out of the ships which came to the Spanish capital to pay tribute. As a last insult, he sent a message to the Spanish governor to tell him that he intended to visit his capital shortly, and then got ready to depart for further conquest. He had waited just a few hours too long and he had been just a trifle too brave, for before he could get ready for battle his ships were attacked by two large Spanish men-of-war. The *Mauritius* was captured. That is to say, the Spaniards drove all the Hollanders from her deck and jumped on board. But the crew fought so bravely from below with guns and spears and small cannon that the Spaniards were driven back to their own ship. It was a desperate fight. If the Hollanders had been taken prisoner, they would have been hanged without trial. Van Noort encouraged his men, and told them that he would blow up the ship before he would surrender. Even those who were wounded fought like angry cats. At last a lucky shot from the *Mauritius* hit the largest Spaniard beneath the water-line. It was the ship of the admiral of Manila, and at once began to sink. There was no hope for any one on board her. In the distance Van Noort could see that the *Eendracht*, which had only twenty-five men, had just been taken by the other Spanish ship. With his own wounded crew he could not go to her assistance. To save his own vessel, he was obliged to escape as fast as possible. He hoisted his sails as well as he could with the few sailors who had been left unharmed.



Of fifty-odd men five were dead and twenty-six were badly wounded. Right through the quiet sea, strewn with pieces of wreckage and scores of men clinging to masts and boxes and tables, the *Mauritius* made her way. With cannon and guns and spears the survivors on the *Mauritius* killed as many Spaniards as possible. The others were left to drown. Then the ship was cleaned, the dead Spaniards were thrown overboard, and piloted by two Chinese traders who were picked up during the voyage, Van Noort safely reached the coast of Borneo. Here the natives almost succeeded in killing the rest of his men. In the middle of the night they tried to cut the cables of the last remaining anchor. The *Mauritius* would have been driven on shore, and the natives could have plundered her at leisure; but their plan was discovered by the Hollanders. A second attempt to hide eighty well-armed men in a large canoe which was pretending to bring a gift of several oxen came to nothing when the natives saw that Van Noort's men made ready to fire their cannon."



INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE RYA?

The Royal Yachting Association (RYA) is the national governing body for dinghy, yacht and motor cruising, all forms of sail racing, RIBs and sports boats, windsurfing and personal watercraft.

The RYA is the leading representative for those involved in boating and helps protect and advance the interests of sailors at both national and local levels. With more than 1500 affiliated clubs the RYA sets and maintains recognised standards for training for both leisure and commercial boating through a network of more than 2,400 RYA Recognised Training Centres across 58 countries. The RYA is also responsible for one of the UK's most successful Olympic medal winning sports and its coaching and development schemes actively support 800 of our country's top sailors, from talented juniors to Olympic and World champions.

Although Rye Harbour Sailing Club is an RYA affiliated club this does not mean that you are automatically a member of the RYA! The benefits of being an RYA member include access to:

specialist cruising, legal and technical boating advice from RYA in-house experts;

exclusive offers and discounts from over 80 member reward partners, from clothing, personal and boat equipment, to the latest technology, holidays and travel, insurance, magazine subscriptions and boat show tickets, helping you keep down the cost of your boating;

all the latest news and information via the RYA Magazine, website or direct to your inbox with a host of eNewsletters.

Our club is now a joining point for the RYA. If you join through us the Club will receive a financial benefit by way of commission. You can join through the Club by one of the following methods:

By completing an RYA Application form which will shortly be available at the Clubhouse and returning it to the RYA;

By Phone – by calling the RYA's Member Services team on 023 8060 4159 who will happily talk through the benefits of becoming an RYA Member. Don't forget you will need to quote the Club's Joining Point number (008101027) to ensure the Club benefits from your application.

Online at www.rya.org.uk/go/join by selecting your reason for joining as 'Joining Point' and you will then be prompted to enter the Club's joining point number.