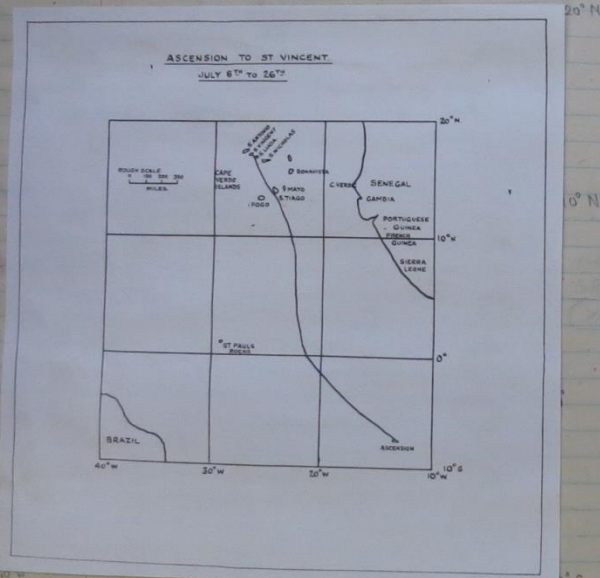


John Rusher Diary

Volume Four



ASCENSION TO ST. VINCENT



20° N

10° N

10° S

July 9th - 16th.

We held the south east trade until the 16th, and though it was not very steady, we made splendid going, running 1048 miles in the eight days.

9th.

9th July Sunday. The steady trade still blowing and typical trade wind cloud everywhere but some ominous banks of stratus appeared middle day. The wife to get the ship looking smart for his arrival has taken hold of us and I spent as hour this morning sandpapering the masts in preparation for varnishing. Later I fixed up the old ladder to the Bush' nabo and secured it to the after cross beam. This a great success and the Palmers can bear it as well as those below. We're getting good reception of the BBC dust at last, what a joy.

10th.

10th July Monday. In spite of ominous signs of change in the weather, we still averaging over 5 knots. There has been a little rain and the sky is $\frac{9}{10}$ the covered with all sorts of clouds - the wind has backed a couple of points too. I suppose this is some sort of a disturbance about, but so little seem to be known about these minor disturbances in the tropics.

I have finished off the sandpapering on the masts this morning and the Pete and of 8/11 the varnishing. The ship was rolling fairly heavily and it was by no means easy, however the good practice for how painting - I gather one has to do all these sorts of jobs for oneself in England and.

This side of Africa the conditions have been quite noticeably different from those we met to the eastward, thanks to that we had the difficult part past. Already we are north of the latitude of the Seychelles and we should cross the line within 2 days. Altogether we've done 10,150 and it's about 4800 to go. At last we've a the North Atlantic chart, which will take us all the way home. Originally we imagined that the journey would be about 12000 miles - now it's going to be 15000 so no wonder we're a bit late for we intended to be.

11th.

11th July Tuesday. I had the last dog which is one again a pleasant watch and not likely for us to go north towards the sun the sunbeams are light and

All Plain and
Some Fancy - 13th July.

Light Main sail
1st Genoa to port
2d - boomed to starboard
Raffle



July 11th.

were enough for us all to have our tot on the upper deck, a friendly little habit which we have had, to abandon since April 10th.

We went on under the raffer rig until this forenoon but the wind had backed considerably which forced us to change to the light main sail and no genoa after breakfast. All the familiar constellations are appearing again, the bear Cassiopeia and the Pleiades. I wonder who will be the first to see Polaris.

12th.

Wednesday 12th. As we are going so steadily, and as I am now released from the prospect of having to write anything for publication, I have embarked on my own little journal, which is likely to become neglected. Anyhow I think, unless I make haste, that journal will be pretty dull from now onwards! We are going fast and well, 580 miles to noon today (4 days 2 hours) and must be getting a good push from the Benguelle/Equatorial current on top of the 4½ or 5 we are sailing, of course we must expect setbacks and some difficulties, but it is unlikely they will be as interesting as our earlier ones. Anyhow I sincerely hope not.

13th.

Thursday 13th. Across the line between 9 and half past this morning - that's grand progress! Yesterday we hoisted the second genoa boomed out, this morning we capped it with the little spritsail and so we had an maximum spread of canvas; then we ~~had~~ put the dinghy in the water and Pete and I were in towed in it to take photographs. This was ~~at~~ at the time when we were crossing the line, so one of us crossed the line in a ~~small~~ dinghy 400 miles from the main land! We had a rum cocktail to celebrate the occasion, and ~~offered~~ offered a small libation to Neptune, I slept on the upper for a short time after lunch and since then have been working at the book, which is proving great fun. I only hope other people will be half as amused by it as I am!

* An Analysis of a Hundred Voyages.

AN ANALYSIS
OF
ONE HUNDRED VOYAGES
TO AND FROM
INDIA, CHINA &c.
PERFORMED BY
SHIPS IN THE HON^{BLE} EAST INDIA COMPANY'S SERVICE
with remarks on the advantages of steam power
APPLIED
AS AN AUXILIARY AID TO SHIPPING
AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING THEREBY THE COMMUNICATION
WITH INDIA, VIA THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE
TO WHICH IS ADDED
AN APPENDIX
CONTAINING
A DESCRIPTION OF MELVILLE'S PATENT PROPELLORS
WITH PLANS OF THE ENGINES, MACHINERY, &c.

BY HENRY WISE

Late Chief Officer of the Honourable Company's ship Edinborough

LONDON

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR

BY J. W. NORIE & Co., 157, LEADENHALL STREET

AND

MR. ALLEN & Co., 7, LEADENHALL STREET

1839

Rohi found this diverting but useful book in Raffles library at Singapore. It was originally produced as an advertisement and so is full of eulogies of Mr. Mc. beatty's popallon. The log of each voyage is summarised, and in each case there appear such statements as - NOTE The Tonnant Castle was 21 sea logs (? days) running through Malacca and Singapore Straits which, by steam assistance at 4 knots on Rohi, might be performed in 4 days. Another - total period of 33 days 2 hours, during which the occasional application of steam power, as an auxiliary aid, would have been advantageous.

July 13th

'The wind is right back to south now, a good fair 4, and we have just baled up the main and are under 'raffie' rig again. Another 129 miles to noon today and if this breeze holds it will be 140 tomorrow. This is terrific.

This evening the wind still holds and the ship is going beautifully but I wonder what the cruiser means. The chart shows a likelihood of continuing trade tomorrow, and a possibility the next day, but any we get after that is pure loss.

The radio was going better than ever this evening and we listened to the second part of a thriller serial called 'how far Saffron Walked'. When it was over there was a rush for the log to put in a memo not to listen to it next Thursday - the box is in a fearful jam and we can hardly wait. - Afterward there was $\frac{1}{4}$ hour of Mozart - lovely.

14th - 15th - 16th

'Friday 14th. Saturday 15th. Sunday morning 16th.' I have been working all the time at the book and so have neglected journal. Our progress really has been grand. Working on '100 Voyages' we reached the centre of the cone, where the clippers lost the S.E. trade yesterday noon, on 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ North; any South evidently we get after that can be considered as 'extra', and it is still blowing now. That tribute to Neptune on Thursday must have been appreciated.

Yesterday we transferred half the sum of water to the tank. It appears to have used 18 gallons in seven days on this occasion; throughout the trip our consumption has stayed between 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ and 3 gallons per day. I have worked it out with cheap and this is how it goes

	Port	
Breakfast coffee	4	
Porridge	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Forenoon squab (2 people)	1	Sometimes more
With gin at 1130	1	" "
Drink during afternoon watch (mainly by the watchkeepers)	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Tea	4	
With whisky at 1815	2	" "
Beer for the night	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	
Water drunk during the night	1	" "
	17 $\frac{1}{2}$	+

plus cooking.
2 to 6 large bottles of beer per day 7
Total water consumed

A Hundred Voyages (cont.)

Apart from its entertainment value its worth to us was in the summary of the logs because the dates and positions at which each steady wind was found and lost, are given. A much better book 'guide-book' for the voyage would have been 'Hutchings' Directory', which was the standard sailing directions for the Hon. Company's ships, written by their Hydrographer, after whom many schools etc. in the Far East are named, and who was made an F.R.S. for his work.

~~The~~ ~~book~~ ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~valuable~~ ~~reference~~ ~~work~~ ~~—~~

Dedication to John Melville Esq. —

Dear Sir:

Your invention — will doubtless form a new era in the maritime annals of our country —

Preface —

I have — much pleasure in communicating the mass of useful information derivable from an analysis of ONE HUNDRED VOYAGES —

Remarks — The calm which frequently succeeds a heavy squalling will neither prevent fair winds from manoeuvring nor suspend the result of a long chase.

— our communication with India via the Cape of Good Hope. I anticipate but little opposition in asserting that route must continue to be Great Britain's high road —

Then come the summaries of the logs of the H.C.'s ships on passages to and from India & China, and detailed abstracts to show how much time would be saved by the use of the Meddell's propellers, &c. and at the end of the book are the appendices.

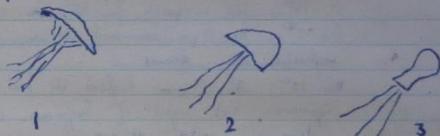
One of them is a re-issuance of the instructions to the Captain and Engineer of ships fitted with M's. P. P's.

The — under your command, bound to Bombay, being ready for sea, we request your attention to our instructions respecting the management of the steam-power, — promote and encourage among your people a knowledge of the machinery, which is really very simple.

15th
July 16th.

The really warm noon and we can bask on the upper again without any discomfort. Last night I kept the fire in a stove only for the first time in 3 months — my shirt was already glowing from the sun it had soaked in during the afternoon. I suppose it's because I'm getting old and leathery but something must have changed in my skin for a few years ago it would have been burnt and very sore.

Last night I saw phosphorescence of a kind I have never seen before, it came in flashes which lit up the water in patches a foot or so across and at times the whole sea around the ship seemed to be shimmering with them. I can only think that it was caused by schools of jelly fish which shone only as they 'puffed' (jelly fish very much jet propulsion a hundred million years before Whittle).



We have been busy scraping, sandpapering, varnishing and painting in the cabin which is beginning to look very nice and I have at last got around to changing the slinging arrangements on the outboard side of my bunk so that I don't get pushed under the shelf when I'm on the leeward side — a great improvement for which Peter provided the inspiration.

1700. Birds looking cloud banks began to appear at lunch time and it is now apparent that we have lost the trade. The wind has gone right up round to the west and we have hoisted the reef and set the light main sail and genna.

1730 Now the wind has gone altogether and we're motoring.

We have at last run a ship; it was a large cargo ship of about 9000 tons, hull down away to the westward and but took no notice of us at all.

A Hundred Voyages (cont.)

Engineers instructions.

Blow out the boiler occasionally to get rid of the concentrated salt water; put in some potatoes frequently to prevent incrustation - labor using the engine always have a proper supply of water in the boiler. Keep sober, and be carefully attentive to your duty.

But alas Mr. Mc. P. P. were not a success, perhaps as much owing to human failings as to anything else. They were tried first (and only?) in the sailing ship Maria of 460 tons which left the West India dock for December 13th 1836, and abstracts from her log are stuck in at the very end of the book -

Dec 31st. W. How, Engineer, suspended for abusive conduct

Jan 9th. Broke bolt of forcing pump

16th. Lost a paddle, from the masts coming off

Feb 12th. At 2 pm commenced steaming; found engine neglected and inefficient

Mar 17th. At 3 a.m. lighted the fire but, owing to the ignorance and neglect of Engineers, did not get the steam up until 9 a.m.

Mar 26th - both Engineers ignorant of their duty - could not start the laboring engine

Mar 26th - the Engineer having damaged the safety valve -

Mar 31st. - Force pump out of order. Captain's aid.

Apr 1st. Engineer J. Clark for theft and drunkenness
J. Clark confessed he had boached a cork of beer

Apr 2nd. Several of the crew refractory
(this statement appeared in Polak's log on more than one occasion -)

Apr 6th. At noon the wheel shaft broke close to the crank

Apr 10th. Legate making a (new) wheel shaft. How evidently quite at a loss!

I forget how it cropped up but I know that in the course of conversation on the 16th Polak said he supposed that poor Truay and Anthony would be made to read this tome and I captured it; then we agreed that it might be good for them to have to write sections in decent English....

We were reading an old copy of the Times which gave an account of Lord Stanhope's course of motion on Lord Viscount's anti-Communist speech and noticed especially the Home of Lords standing order which was read at the beginning of the debate - number 28 I think. This was directed against the giving a taking of offices in speeches in the House, and we felt that we felt it to be a perfect rule of conduct for the crew of little ships

Polak painted the port side of the cockpit this afternoon. Poor Polak has not had luck with his painting that we are bound to get rain.

July 17th - 23rd

17th.

18th.

19th.

And of course we did! We ~~definitely~~ lost the trade on the 16th and had a week of very variable winds and had daily runs

Monday 17th. Two spells of motoring between squalls last night, but since a very heavy westerly squall at midnight it has blown steadily until now (1230). The ship has been moving most uncomfortably and all down a slightly upset, but we are doing better than we hoped.

Tuesday 18th. We have been motoring again but have not (1230) got a fair south-easter

Wednesday 19th. The wind had died by 2000 and we started the motor but it packed up at 01.00 - a fault in the driving shaft coupling - so we lay idly rocking in the oily swell for the rest of the night. Some (waking had for his pain) had the fault mended early and we have been motoring all day since.

James was so hopeful that we should be able to keep up our good progress that he had induced Robin to lay his odds to a point that we should not average 100 miles a day all the way home, and Robin had given him five to one I wrote, much earlier on, that ~~the~~ ~~success~~ ~~speculation~~ bets, or even too much speculation about ~~speculation~~ passage times and arrival days seemed to be undeniable and this bet certainly proved it. Late on, after we left St Vincent I tried to work out our day of arrival in England - was this was premature and a pity. Peter very sensibly and rightly being the navigator skills (its August 22nd) refuses to be committed.

July 20th.

Thursday 20th. Of course we cannot complain because we're in the two doldrums now and must expect hurricane weather. The wind is still very changey and there's a silly little pebble which stops the ship's way badly when we try to use the motor. It's about 300 miles to go to St Vincent and we cannot very well hope for the NE trade for another 150 miles. Now sweeping and painting this morning -

Trying to exercise a little economy I had decided ~~that~~ to do without beer at sea from St Helena onwards and ~~as~~ I sometimes felt I should like a second gin before lunch. When there was an excuse for a celebration ~~we~~ Robin gave and I used all to have one (Peter never took either gin or beer) but one or twice I wanted one with no excuse. Then I would ask Robin if I might ~~have one~~ and always he said but John don't ask me - just tell Chang to give it you ~~one~~ - but I refused to do this and on one I was right. ~~Robin~~ Robin has said in his book that our regular bet did a great deal to make us both more tolerable and more tolerant to each other. ~~but~~ ~~and~~ ~~but~~ and the assumption that he absolutely controlled its issue was I am sure useful on a small reminder of his authority both to him and to us.



Swedish M.V.

21st July

July 21st

'Friday 21st. I had a miserable 'middle' with a succession of storms and calms but about 0300 it started to blow from NNE and now (AM) we have shifted to the heavy nor'easter and are full and by on the starboard tack, this probably going to mean St Vincent. Great excitement as I was writing this, we sighted a ship which would obviously pass close. It turned out to be Swedish, mixed cargo and passengers about 6000 tons. No passengers to be seen. I suppose they were at Breakfast. We had a decent blow till 1400. Then it began to die and we started the motor at 1600.

22nd

'Saturday 22nd. We have motored almost continuously since yesterday afternoon - was about a couple of hundred miles from St Vincent and shall now probably go there because we have got very short of lubricating oil and the Catering department has run out of rations. We did some painting today this morning - getting very short of both sandpaper and paint - another reason for going to St. V. This evening there was a very large school of porpoise about and three sharks right in the middle of them. I had always heard that they were never seen together.

23rd

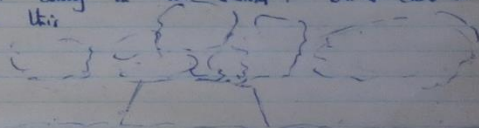
'Sunday 23rd. We went on ~~with~~ the motor till 0200 but have had a north westerly breeze since. Unfortunately there is a little popple with it and was down to less than 3. Really I had quite forgotten how slow she is to underway with a head sea.

We had to start the motor again later but the ~~great~~ amount of work it had been doing fairly fully since the Cape had begun to tell, and in the evening the drive started making a very expensive gear. Dave stopped it down the next morning and found ~~that~~ the after bearing of the propeller shaft belted right out and the so called high tensile steel shaft (fitted in the Sigschiller) scored to pieces and ~~was~~ badly needed. He did another remarkable piece of fitting work, and carving the whole scored part of the shaft in a brass sleeve which he made from a tube which is part of Robin's bunk (he certainly has the Englishman's ~~number~~ 9/15

July 23rd - 24th.

for improvisation) but unfortunately it had to be made too thin and only lasted a short time. There was another reason for going to St Vincent.

We pulled along on Sunday and Monday using the motor when we could see. All day on Monday we were under the lee of the island of San Tiago, southernmost of the Cape Verde, and gradually working round the south and west of the island, a barren desolate place like them all. We decided that the only reason the Portuguese had managed to hold on there was that nobody else could possibly want them. While we were sitting on the upper bearing a glass in the evening Robin suddenly jumped up and said 'My God that must be Fogo and then away to the west. Between a patch of low haze and the clouds above we saw that amazing island thirty miles away in the sunset. All we could see looked like this



Robin and I were ~~not~~ reminded of Fujiyama. This island rises sheer for 1500 fathoms of water, 9000 feet up to the air, and I am sure that if it were on a more open and trade route it would be famous - it certainly is an outstanding sight.

24th - 25th.

We spent the night of the 24th/25th making heads into so tangle in San Tiago, but the next morning after a little conference decided not to visit it after all, but wished to make for St Vincent.

We had one of our very few real rows about this. I don't mean we fought and clamed on anything, said like that, but there was a good deal of 'umbrage' all round since the 21st - on a day or two before that - we had had the chance of bearing away to the westward and missing out the Cape Verde altogether, on punching and scraping and hoping we might get to one of the islands to upland with potatoes, manna, lubricating oil and anything else we could get, on using the engine a great deal ~~and~~ in the determination to reach St Vincent.

There were arguments for all three courses of action and the relative importance of each changed every day so it became an extremely difficult problem. We all had ~~irreconcilable~~ arguments for one course of action or another, and all of them were unrefutable. Anyhow in the end we ~~decided to~~ got to St Vincent, and we didn't get to Flores.

July 25th

'25th I'm reading Donby and Son and about bloody well time too'.

Rohi had Donby and Son, little Donit, and Barnaby Rudge and Markie Humphrey; clocks in one volume, all of them of the same edition as our set of Dickens at home and I determined to work through them all. Unlike me I had only read a Christmas carol (many times), David Copperfield, and Oliver Twist and was thoroughly ashamed of it. Anyhow I did read them, and love them, and was very sorry when they were done, but not too sorry, since another 9 volumes as soon as I get home, and then I can start at the beginning again.

After the 'cag' was over we set course for St Vincent and at lunch time saw the first sailing ship of the voyage. At first we thought it might be a yacht, but it was only one of the Cutters which trade in the islands.

We had a grand breeze all day and made good progress towards St Vincent; it would ~~all~~ have been good for but we were all still ~~slightly seasick~~ after the morning's argument. Full of wreckage

26th

'26th Wednesday A good breeze since 01.00 has brought us up to within striking distance of St Vincent, but we are a bit down to leeward and have got to beat up through the channel south east of the island between St. V. and St Lucia, so we don't make it tonight. Every body still 'upset' - not a very happy situation.

I have neglected to mention that for the

July 26th.

past ten days the sun must have been partly obscured by dust clouds in the upper air, for it has appeared very watery nearly all the time and especially at rising and setting.

I wrote the above this afternoon. We kept the first dog and the current, which had been taking us out of our course to the south west, suddenly appeared to be dividing, and we stood across it to the starboard leg and were swept up through the channel very fast and against the wind. Once we had got through the very lumpy narrow part of the channel we paddled gently on round the coast and were in harbor, anchored and having a night cap by ten. A pilot boat had met us and taken us to a berth - everybody seemed to be on the ball, unusual in the Portuguese. We were warned that the locals were liable to steal anything left lying about on the upper deck. ~~Robin lay there for the night~~ ~~Robin slept~~ In fact this was not entirely effective because one bucket went - what awful mortality on poor buckets do suffer!

July 27th.

Thursday 27th. Having got the clock organized (we were 1 1/2 hours ahead of local time) we had a damned good night in and were 'brakfasted and cleared' when the doctor arrived at half past seven (he had been reported to be coming at six but we couldn't believe that). At breakfast I had lost a stopping out of a bolt so had the prospect of going to the dentist before me.

Tom and I went ashore to the shop where we took the wine and put it on ice. Then I went with Geoffrey here's wife and take a little beer. Then to the toothright who was not only useful and efficient but also refused to accept any payment - then back a board in time to embark the water. Peter went off to play golf - the rest of us after a sleep took our time to get ready for the going and for one avoided a last minute panic. He stayed on board as late as we could manage to listen to the kind installment of 'Love

DR. A. LOPES DA SILVA
MÉDICO ESPECIALISTA
BOCA E DENTES
R. VICENTE - CARO 19310



St Vincent
C.V.I.



1886 1888

from Saffron Walden which we followed every
with and couldn't bear to miss.

Then ashore to a cocktail party given by
one Mr Wyndham a funny old boy who has
lived in this horrible little place for years but
seems to thrive on it. He had sent out a thin
line whip and the whole British community was
there to meet us. They were all very much dressed
up and I felt even more tatty than usual
because ~~so by the~~ ~~time~~ I had sent my few good
clothes home from Swinestown and what was left
of the remainder looked like a dog's dinner.

Then Jane and I went afterwards to an evening
supper party ~~at~~ at the Thompsons and later were
shown round the town by our male hosts. A pretty
dingy little dump.

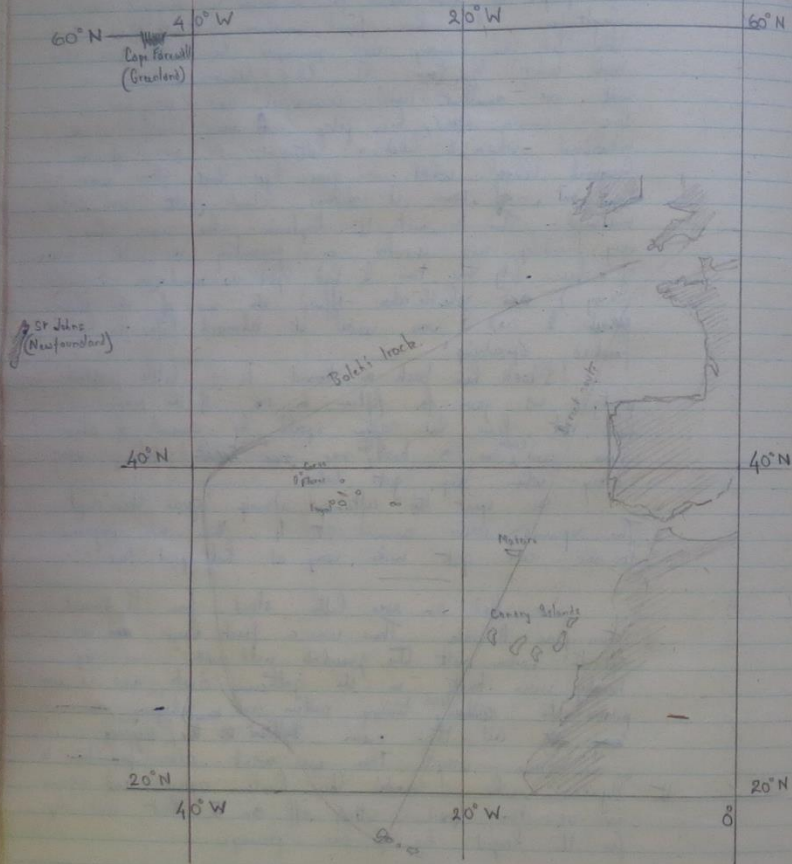
St Vincent certainly is a dreary little dump.
The island is so completely barren that even the
water has to be fetched from another island in
a flat of tank lighters. It would be virtually
uninhabited but in the early days of steam it
was developed by Wilson and Coy's two British
firms as a coaling station and later
the cable companies (also British) found it ~~convenient~~
well placed for a relay station. Later still
I shall put in an ~~intention~~ ^{company} for bunkering oil
business.

In recent years however the ~~amount~~ ^{company} of ships
with larger endurance, and the reduction of the
South American trade, has hit St Vincent very hard
and now there are 30,000 inhabitants, with work
for only two or three thousand. The result labour is
very cheap indeed - you can get a good cook for
30/- a month and the girls ~~cheap~~ - but conditions
are ~~very bad~~ ^{very bad} indeed, and are likely to get worse
as the Portuguese government pursues a thoroughly
dog in the manger policy of preventing further foreign
development, yet refusing to ~~even~~ ^{even} do any itself.

July 28th.

Friday 28th I early to the Tanka Myrconia (Captain
Robinson) of the Anglo Baltic Trading Company, on charter
to Esso. The mate gave me breakfast but I
could not do justice to the fruit, porridge, curry
and rice, eggs, ham and potatoes and marmalade
etc that appeared in ~~building~~ ^{building} succession as I had

ST VINCENT TO SALCOMBE

July 29th.

29th. A trizon night getting odd ideas and draughts over the islands, but by 0700 we were well away and making 310° (true) at 5 knots full and by. Next stop Salcombe, we could do it but may call at Flores a lower.

The navigational problem for this long leg was as interesting as any we had had, ~~historically~~. From 'SV' we must head ~~west~~ ~~away~~ to the north west for two reasons. First, that we were bound to have several days of north east trade, and second, that roughly north west at least for several days, because of the north east trade and beyond the area of the trade lay the 'Azores high' a permanent region of high pressure which lay roughly south of the Azores at this time, and the old sailing ships had to go out beyond this ~~area~~ but we had no motor and could not have to pass through at least the edge of its light winds and calms. ~~First~~ ~~was~~ ~~for~~ ~~us~~ ~~as~~ ~~we~~ ~~could~~ ~~the~~ ~~whole~~ ~~problem~~ ~~because~~ Below we could decide on late movements because we had to see how far we could hold the trade, and when we should be when we lost it.

29th - Aug. 7th.

In fact we 'held the trade', until the 7th of August and lost it in about 315° to 375° west. It was variable in belt strength and direction, and there was a little ~~more~~ more of 'north' in it than we had expected, so we were forced a good way out, but we did some good runs during this time and averaged well over 100 miles a day.

30th. A very uncomfortable night but although it looks as if we shall have to go a long way round we have been doing 4+ steadily. The sun went 'over the top' today - it is surprisingly cold for night, 'under the sun'. What else goes on. Really very little. If even this part of the voyage hasn't got to the

sustained interest of the earlier legs and beside, one cannot help spreading a good deal of the time out of the present and in the future. I'm not in the least worried about the Korea show - in fact quite the reverse - its in sharp contrast to our earlier efforts at collective security and a most healthy sign.

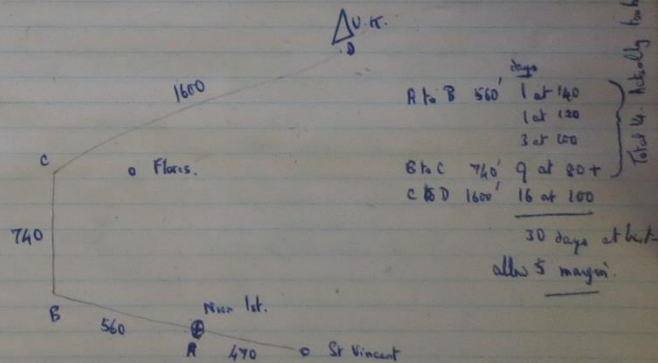
July 31st.

31st. Being a well under the sea my fall and legs, the wind staying fairly steady in direction but varying a lot in strength.

August 1st.

1st. It began to blow up during the afternoon yesterday and has been force 5+ for 24 hours NE-E-NE. - present very considerable discomfort but high speed. Unfortunately there is quite a sea running so we are only averaging 3.10' true which means we shall have to go a very long way round and out to the west. I should think we bound to miss Flores now.

I had not studied the navigation further by this time and for the first time allowed myself to speculate on the passage. Foolish but very interesting! This is how I saw the air movements -



Thus I reckoned we had about 1900 miles to go, and I guessed that we should do it at but a 30 days and I felt that we should be unlucky if we did not cross before within 5 days later, so I made an ETA August 31st to September 5th inclusive.



Dolphin
jumping

This is the
whole of lot July
just coming alongside -
all you can see
is his tail!



Aug. 2nd

2nd. I had a rotten night's sleep again because of the drip from the skylight on to my nose and the awful jitters Sir Ben was giving which is filled with badly made porridge.
Adam had a bad night too - he was pushed right out of his bunk nearly on top of Cheng.
The 2 to 5 was great fun, 'sailing' her all the time and doing a good bit. It has cleared this morning and the wind has gone down a lot.

3rd

3rd It has gone on clearing and there has been a little improvement in the motion but I still cannot concentrate on 'the book'. Instead I'm reading Little Donut and loving it - I think Mr D is one of the most despicable people Sir ever met.
A lot of sandpapering and scraping this morning in preparation for painting and varnishing when the weather improves. Cheng taking a spite of the motion, a very 'fine effort'.
I was feeling rather queasy when I wrote the above, then everything got slowly better. I had the afternoon watch and there was a good breeze from the E.N.E. (at last it has veered so we can point now to the north) and the sun was bright and hot. The motion got quickly less, and I was able to get down to the book in the first dog. Then we were again able to sit on the upper for an evening too. There was only one snag, we could not pick up the weekly installment of the Robert Beatty serial.

4th

4th We have been going steadily but not fast and the upper deck has been dry enough to do a lot of cleaning and painting. Peter and I cleared and then cleared and sandpapered the coach roof ready for painting. I have found a splendid mixture for scumming paint and wood, Turpal and powdered kelystone.

From at 1730 and I listened to Balthazar's no 2 concert (B flat) right through.
1800 We appear to be losing the trade, there are strakes and cumms coming from the east and seeming to clear away the little puff back wind cumulus which are all shedding away over the western horizon.
(Written the next day) It was a grand evening.



Chang in the
steepened free patch

August 4th (cont)
(Friday before
Bank Holiday -
continue)

Everything seemed to be particularly well. The motion was much less, and we put the clocks back half an hour and so Robb allowed himself to get twitched into giving us no less than four (4) whiskies. (We told him it was very right and proper as being double time payment for working on this Bank Holiday week end). When I went to bed I could sleep the proper way round ~~and~~ without getting drops on my nose and (even more important) could read in bed. (The light over my bed is at the after end).

5th.

During the night the wind went down and down, and I thought that we had lost the trade for certain, but by this morning it had got up again and was blowing force 3 from E.N.E.; we have curved well to the northward and are now steering almost due north. We got a bit more work done this morning -

6th.

Another pleasant evening yesterday, but again it looked as if the trade was leaving us; we shall reach the average position, at which the ships in '100 voyages' lost this trade, very soon now. However, it has kept on, and now (1600) it looks as if it was going to blow for ever.

A quiet period this morning allowed us to paint the coach roof canvas and varnish the trough, and later Jane shifted the radio to a new position at the end of the sunning table and I ran an aerial lead to it. A great success then, we can all hear it much better.

For supper this evening we had a bottle of the St Vincent red inferior with the mackerel stew and it went very well. It was much better than I expected (and '1/6 a bottle only too!') very like the Cambes and the Five French may used to get from Portugal during the war.

7th.

Still going gently, the galeous weather and the north-easterly is still holding though it has faded a little. The radio is good in the new position, we're getting the West Indies transmission of the BBC and this afternoon listened to the West Indies match at Swansea.



Pete had scrounged an American 45 gallon drum when we were at Ascension, and we had filled it with water and lashed it between the masts as a reserve supply. On the 7th we punched a hole in the water and threw it overboard, but just before I wrote a note and tucked it in the inside of the plug in a watertight cover; I wonder if we shall ever hear of it again.

Aug. 7th (cont.)

There was a small school of whales around this morning, two of them evidently getting very amorous. It must be the warm water.

We work this morning, mostly labor as there was some spray coming over the upper.

August 8th - 17th.

Although the wind remained easterly nearly the whole of the next ten days it was ~~caused by the Azores high~~ and was no longer the ~~Western~~ faithful trade but was caused by the 'Azores high' and so was mostly light and variable and interspersed with calms.

[In the northern hemisphere the wind blows clockwise round an area of high pressure.]

We used the motor a great deal of course, but still made very slow progress. However we did progress, our best days run being 35 miles a very different story from the two bad patches north of the Seychelles and between the Seychelles and Mauritius. It was glorious weather with the brightest sunshine and bluest sea one could wish for and it lasted just long enough for us to get the ship looking very smart.

We had expected this sort of weather and were quite happy about it until towards the end when it became apparent that the high pressure area was retreating further north west than we had expected, and we began to wonder just how far it would blanket us, but as soon as we got to the place where we felt it expected the weather really ~~started~~ to start, they ~~appeared~~ did.



Portuguese M.V.
10th August



James washing
ships side
11/8

(8th/9th 11th)
'Blomb'

August 10th

My journal for these few days is rather a dreary repetition of short news, too much west and not enough north in the course, light variable winds, and speculation about the extent of the Abyss high: Every day too there is something about the work we had achieved. There was very little of interest to write about although this period was one of the pleasantest of most pleasant of the trip. A few bits are worth quoting —

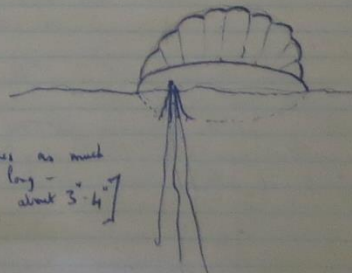
10th. A smart and well looking Portuguese diesel cargo ship of about 4000 tons, outward bound, came to have a look at us but did not call us up.

11th

11th. Our dinghy in the evening, Robie repainted the eyes forward, James washed the ship's side and did some touching up. Then Pike took photographs. The sort of evening I thought we had had.

There was a bit of fishy life about today; the sea was thick with plankton, a cat-scuttle part and sea spiders which both jumped and died. We also saw a small school of (?) grampus, including one albino and one shearwater. One of them was jumping very high out of the water, as they went away. He must have been getting up 15 or 20 feet and made a terrific splash as he fell.

Portuguese men of war were still numerous and Robie and I ~~had~~ evoked opposing theories about them. Obviously they must always head within certain latitudes, yet they sail all the time and must surely make some way! I think the answer must be that they ~~will~~ go to windward at about the same speed as the surface drift, though I can't explain how their sideways movement is compensated for, because they always stay on one tack. Robie maintains that they sail and drift in a circle and get back to where they started before they head. The fact they sail on is decided by the position of the baroclinic axis — this one would



[Biggest one as much as 6" long - usually about 3-4"]

always be on the starboard tack - I wish I had noticed whether they all had their arms on one side or not - a white all these in one hemisphere had them on the same side.



Pete away in
dinghy.



14th Aug -
Javier donade a
second before the
gaff broke -
evidently because
he had got the
hook caught in
the guardrail.

August 12th.

12th. - I don't want to go to Flores at all -
hope it will turn out to be off our track!
Life is being very satisfactory, the weather
is glorious and we are getting on well with
smattering up the ship though it was very arduous. I
with I know more about the theory and practice of
varnishing and painting - Pete very good at it and
I'm learning a lot from him.
'We're having 'hore d'œuvre (after some soup) for
supper tonight, a bit of a lark up but I hope it
will go down all right.'

(13th
Nothing to report)

(It did - better than it deserved)

It was absolutely flat calm that evening and I
went away in the dinghy with Pete to look at
the ship. It ~~the~~ looked very fine in the light
of the afternoon sun, gently in the air, small
and sometimes going full down behind the waves,
but I ~~soon~~ felt suddenly an almost overwhelming
sense of loneliness, the feeling I suppose of a man
marooned, which is ~~just~~ all the more poignant by
reason of its contrast with the comradeship of life on
board.

14th.

14th. As the ship gets closer we get distress
because it is more and more difficult to find a place to
halt. For Chang it is especially tiresome because he won't
squat down in the stem as he can't swim and
is frightened of falling in the ocean.

This morning the dinghy ~~dropped~~ though its
pump and was left behind. If it was falling
independent and did ~~it~~ it on purpose I am quite sure
it was sorry for it looked terribly lonely.

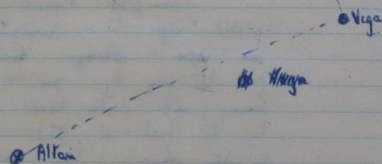
Very pleasant evening drinking whisky on the boat.
There was a fine donade alongside this
afternoon and dawn went for it with the gaff. We
not only hoisted it but got it right out of the
water than the gaff broke. What rather luck he
does have with donades. will he never succeed in
landing one.

15th.

15th. 'Dinghy inboard again'
We saw a very large turtle bumbling about
in the evening, it was of the 'Decemio' type
(green turtle) with as regular as opposed to a
smaller curved shell.

9 Jan 17/8

CYGNUS



another one appeared for the same Duichai and
 sailed two or three times and Robin held up a
 board with BOLEH painted on it to show who
 we were. The aircraft banked away, and flew
 back to the north east, and Robin was
 determined that they had missed the boat to
 be DOCTOR and that any minute we must
 expect doctors, nurses, operating tables, drainage and
 medicines to rain from the air hanging on
 parachutes and to be followed by at least a
 detachment if not a cruise in a day or two.
 However, an hour later the aircraft returned
 reappeared a few miles away to the southward,
 evidently searching for something, presumably an
 aircraft in the dark.

August 18th - 27th

(I have set the pen to 27th because I am
 writing this on that day) —

At last on the 18th we got away from
 the influence of the Azores high and for two days we
 thought we had got winds which would carry
 us fast all the way. Then our spirits went
 down again because the 20th and 21st
 could only produce light air, and mostly North
 easterly at that. However, the north easterly backed
 and upward and from the 22nd night up to this
 moment (at least on 27th) we have had northerly
 and north westerly winds and good strong breezes with hardly
 a lull. Our footstep across the chart the
 succession of new positions, which had been such
 plodding little things, have become great strides
 of 120 and 140 miles a day, and we are already
 only 600 miles from Palcazu. We all wonder so
 much when we shall arrive, but don't speculate
 about it.

18th.

August 18th. We got a little breeze last night
 and although we had just reached the 40th parallel
 we were not too hopeful, as it appeared that the
 big bulge in the Azores high was still covering us.
 Then at 23:00 the barometer started to ~~go down~~ fall
 with a bump, by 02:00 it had gone down 5
 millibars, and now (10:00) we are backing along
 as we haven't done for weeks with the main and
 genna with the second genna broomed out to port. This
 is the stuff —



North Atlantic

August 18th.
(cont.)

This morning I have washed a pair of blue shorts and a shirt, and have also finished off all my upper deck varnishing, so feel very virtuous, snug and self-satisfied. I have just finished reading Marko Humphrey's clock, one of the stories in it, of a murder, in one of them I can see the most gruesome tale I have ever read, far surpassing in its simple horror anything, even of Poe's.

Lawe is having a violent spasm of carving mania. He has cut a name board for the dinghy, a built-in name board for the ship, and a shield with all our names on it and decorated with a fearsome dragon, commemorating this voyage, all of them beautifully done.

19th

August 19th. The wind has veered round to north and we can only make about 070° (true).

Chang and I spent the forenoon clearing bins from forward and returning them under the cabin settees. Had use as gradually getting rid of a lot of barang and general clutter which is no longer needed and every part of the ship is much tidier, especially the upper wharf deck ~~which~~ ~~the~~ ~~bins~~ ~~now~~ all the petrol cans have been cleared away.

Robin is drawing us all for the book and did me this evening, very flattering so I like it a lot.

We saw the northern lights brightly and distinctly last night - latitude only 43° N.

20th

August 20th. The wind fell gradually last night and it was flat calm by noon, but this gave me a chance to put a third and last coat of varnish on my covering board.

Getting nowhere slowly - - -

A school of 25 or more Doves around the ship this afternoon swimming in tight formation with that funny 'fany' motion that is so typical of them. There were many ~~birds~~ ~~birds~~ ~~birds~~ but no success.

21st

~~Later~~ in the next afternoon we saw the biggest school of 'whales' / grampus any of us had seen. It spread over a front certainly longer than 3 miles, and was ~~very~~ ~~the~~ ~~going~~ ~~fast~~ to the south west. Many, but not all, had a mark



North Atlantic



distinctive high and very pointed dorsal fin, as they curved up over the surface to breathe. This was the impression we got —



August 21st

'21st. Light rain all the forenoon but the wind has increased now (1600), though its from ENE which is not much good to us.
'Goodness its cold.'

22nd.

'22nd. Steady northerly backing a little since yesterday afternoon, wind doing 3 to 4, which is fair enough but had hoped to go ~~to~~ faster.
'We found ourselves listening to a Thursday social this morning from the BBC. It was called The African Queen and was all about a very brave girl called Rose who seemed to be taking on most of the workmaster (sic. 1915) single handed. At first it seemed to be a school's broadcast, but later it turned out the Rose was not alone in her boat as she tore down through the rapids sideways clinging to the tides — and then the story suddenly became even more entertaining but not a tale for schools.

23rd - 24th

'23rd - 24th. Bit boomed out again and are going very well — its uncomfortable but a great relief to be going fast after so many slow days (only one run over 100 in the last 17 days).
'1800 Carnival, right through. gorgeous.
'Great attention to the radio to her about poor Rose'

25th.

'25th. It blew up last night and was force 6 when at 02.00 the upper battery broke so it was 'all out' and we hanked the main. Frankly we had come down to the no 2 work forward so we stayed on that alone for the rest of the night, rolling like a drunken old sow. All the water bottles were shiving about and making a hell of a row — everything was wet — a bloody night.'

August 25th (cont.)

This morning the wind had gone down a lot but there was still a heavy sea running. We looked the gears loomed out to port and went well under that way but now (1600) were pointing too far to the Southward so went to something about it soon.

26th.

26th We hoisted the mainmast left on reef in it after supper last night now we have shaken out the reef and are doing 5 knots plus.
A dull looking cargo ship 'Lak Balau' (? American) overtook us slowly this morning but (Peter wrote in the log) made 'no comment'. I don't think its exaggerating our own impatience to be surprised that they took no notice of us at all.

There were two extremely interesting developments in the Far East reported today. The Chinese Communists are reported to be more or less openly helping the North Koreans - that was of course bound to occur but I wonder how far it will go. The other - the Americans have more or less admitted that they have now got forces in Formosa, which they are excusing by (at least) pointing out that Formosa is not part of China. Of course this is correct, but then bloody silly foreign policy since we just say we allowed them to say it before, that is why I have wanted so much for the last two years for Formosa to be made an responsibility. Its possession to us in a future war is vital, denial to the enemy (which is, and still is as far as I know, the American conception) is NOT ENOUGH.

26th - evening. Still going well on the fall mainmast and gears wind NNE to force 3, 120 miles to north today, about 740' to go at 16.00.

27th.

27th. Wind still blowing between N and NW, 139' to north, 640' to go. Rain-storms and sunshin.

That is as far as I am going to write while we are still at sea. I hope that we shall have a quiet and uneventful passage to Palau. That during the party will meet us - and about a score of other things. We shall see.

THE DAILY MAIL, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1950

The good ship Can Do did 15,000 MILES TO HOME

By Daily Mail Reporter

INTO the picturesque harbour at Salcombe, Devon, yesterday, among trim racing yachts and ocean-going cruisers, came a vessel out of the Arabian Nights. She has a great, circular, junk-type sail, the eyes of a Chinese boat painted on her bows, an open, Arab-style, high stern, and a four-sided mast. She is the Boleh.

Boleh is Malay for "Can Do," and the five men on board had proved her name.

For in this boat, a mere 18 tons and barely 40ft long, they travelled 15,000 miles, half-way round the world through storms and calm, without mishap.

Boleh was designed by Commander Roy Kilroy while serving in Singapore at the end of the war. He combined in her the best features of the Chinese junk, the Arab dhow, and the British cutter. And he decided that, when his dream ship was built, he would sail her home to his native town of Salcombe.

Four Malay workmen built her under the supervision of Mr. George Jarvis, chairman of shipwrights in Singapore dockyard.

WAITED A YEAR

Commander Kilroy thought it would cost £1,200 and take four months to build. Instead he had to spend £3,000 and wait a year. Boaties in Malaya's shipping and yachting circles laughed at the Boleh, and told her owner-designer she would not last an hour in bad weather.

But Commander Kilroy had faith. So had Mr. James and two other naval officers—Lieut-Commander John Rusher, of Cheltenham, and Lieut-Commander Peter Aglin, of Palenion.

They wanted to join the maiden voyage of the Boleh, and they did. To the trio was added one paid hand, a Chinese cook called Chan Hai-son.

They left Singapore on January 18, and for 194 days sailed across four oceans. For weeks on end they saw nothing but sea and sky, with perhaps a fan or two to break the monotony.

"We sailed alone in the world," Commander Rusher told me. "Just waves by day and stars by night. But we were never bored."

FISH SCARCE

They played chess, read, worked menus. Their radio receiving set kept them in touch with the news. Two of them slept in the main cabin, which was also the living room and the galley. Two had bunk in the stern.

One man was always on watch, so four beds served five people.

There was no refrigeration, and only when they were in port—at Colombo, Seychelles, Mauritius, Capetown, St. Helena, Ascension, and St. Vincent—were they able to have fresh meat or vegetables.

"But we lived like lords," said Commander Kilroy.

Cooking was done on a spinning oil lamp. This had 18 different kinds of tinned meats and, very occasionally, they caught fish. The fish were rather scarce but covered seven ways of cooking tinned, and there was always plenty of variety in our menus," said Commander Rusher.

Their greatest thrill? "To drop anchor in Salcombe and know that we had done it," said Commander Kilroy.

'Mongrel' from Malaya



THE BOLEH.—"Combines the best features of junk, dhow, and cutter."

Much later

I must close up the story quickly. We had an easy run from 27th and made our landfall a.m. 1st Sept. after sighting Queen Elizabeth outward bound early in the morning—a wonderful sight and of course the first time I had seen her in peace time paint. No friends or relations were at Salcombe to meet us—was I wish so much I had had the courage of my convictions, overruled Robin and Peter, and sent cables to say we hoped to arrive about this time (the date I had given everybody in Ceylon, S. Africa and St. Vincent)—that we got a grand welcome from scores of little boats in the lovely harbour.

We couldn't get ashore for a couple of hours (11.30-12.30) because the doctor failed to turn up, and by the time we eventually arrived in the Salcombe hotel we were ~~still~~ firing on all 16 cylinders—a terrific session this and then it was announced that the BBC was had agreed to make a recording for Radio Cornwall. That was some ordeal.

Peter and Lynn arrived the next morning and I went off with them for the night—and on home the next day—and this is one other thing I must mention here. ~~It was not~~ I went ashore with P and L for the last time & that I suddenly realised that it was all over. The single simple aim which I had been devoted to for all those months had gone—and I was leaving Boleh for the last time. On top of this I had had far too much gin—we all had—and I have to confess now that I went unaccountably. This fearful reaction lasted for some days and made me in afraid of a very difficult individual to have around—quite apart from the transient physical reactions of facts; but I couldn't stand up—didn't like to wear paper clothes and so on.

Round-world Craft 'Wouldn't Last an Hour'

BUT LOCAL NAVAL OFFICER MADE 15,000 MILE TRIP

BACK in England after a 15,000-mile Odyssey from Singapore is Lieut.-Commander John Rusher, R.N., of Cintra, Battle-down-approach, Cheltenham.

With three co-navigators and a Chinese cook, he yesterday completed 194 days aboard the "Boleh" (a craft with a mixture of an Arab dhow, a Chinese junk and an English cutter) on his homeward trip round the Cape of Good Hope to Salcombe, Devon.

The "Boleh" (Malayan for "can do") was expected home on August 12, but was delayed by storm-tossed seas on the last lap.

Mrs. Rusher received a telegram yesterday evening saying that her husband was in England and would be back in Cheltenham on Sunday.

"WON'T LAST AN HOUR"

Lieut.-Commander Rusher and his three naval companions were on seven months' special leave when they left Singapore on January 18 in this strange craft, which Malayan yachting circles asserted had would not last an hour in bad weather.

The ship was designed by another member of the party, Commander Roy Kilroy, while serving in Singapore.

He was determined to sail his dream boat home to England once it was built, by the four Malay "ship-builders" he engaged.

The "Boleh" was to cost £1,200 and take four months to build—eventually, however, it took over a year and cost £3,000.

DID 1,000 CROSSWORDS

When at last the "mariners" set off they saw nothing but the sea and sky for weeks on end, and whiled away the long

hours by playing chess, reading and working out more than a thousand crossword puzzles.

Their radio kept them in touch with the world. Since one man was always on duty, the four Britons and the Chinese cook, Chang Hai-Kun, slept in turns in the four available bunks.

With no refrigerator on board, they lived entirely off a diet of 38 different varieties of canned food, delivered occasionally by a stray fish landed from the ocean. Only when in port, whether at Colombo, Mauritius or St. Helena, were they able to have fresh meat and vegetables.



LT.-CMDR. JOHN RUSHER

Value of Music to Reli



The yacht Boleh, seen in the waters off Mauritius, in which Lieut.-Commander Rusher sailed on his marathon journey.

15,000-Mile Trip Was First Taste of Yachting

—BUT I WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED IT SAYS LOCAL NAVAL OFFICER

HIS 15,000-mile trip from Singapore to Salcombe (reported in Saturday's "Echo"), was Lieut.-Commander John Rusher's first taste of yachting.

His small craft, the "Boleh", sailed into Salcombe Harbour, Devon on Saturday, with a crew of five, after an epic storm-tossed passage from Malaya, round the Cape of Good Hope.

Back in his home at Cintra, Battle-down-approach, Cheltenham, for the first time since 1947, Commander Rusher told an "Echo" reporter that he had never been a yachtman, since for us it was rather like a "burman's holiday" — it was not a fashionable occupation in the Navy!

A sense of adventure combined with friendship with Commander Robin Kilroy, the yacht's designer and owner, and the proudest ending of his spell of Far Eastern duty, persuaded Commander Rusher to join the adventurous party.

SHARED WATCHES

With three qualified men already in charge of the navigational and other main duties, he took over the vitalizing task with which he was well acquainted.

Stocks were taken on board for 70 days at a time, and replenished at Empire ports where unrated naval stores were easily procured. Commander Rusher shared watch spells with the others, as well as cooking duties.

"well," he said of his colleagues, who included Chang the Chinese cook, "which was pretty lucky on a trip of this sort."

—200 DAYS CRAMPED
"I can't stand up for more than a half-an-hour without feeling tired though." Almost 200 days enforced sitting in cramped quarters produced unexpected results.

"I wouldn't have missed it for all the tea in China," he said, "but I've had my fill for the time being."

If future posting makes it practicable, Commander Rusher hopes to continue making his family "base" in Cheltenham.



Nearly home - Jaws and Bolt Tail.



Chang - wondering what it will be like.
England - ?



Robin furling sail for the last time



Peter Parker - Lynn - and young Peter whom
I saw for the first time —



Daily Telegraph

SEPTEMBER 2, 1950

and Morning Post

Printed in LONDON and MANCHESTER

DAILY

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 2 1950

EXPRESS

CONTROLLING SHAREHOLDER
JORD BEAVERBROOK

Weather: Dull; better later

CAN DO COULD
Three-gun salute—and
14,000-mile voyage ends



A SALUTE of three guns was fired by the Salcombe Sailing Club, Devon, last night as the 16-ton *Boleh* (Maly for *Can-Do*)—an Arab dhow—anchored in the harbour.

She had completed a 14,000-mile voyage from Singapore by way of Seylon, the Seychelles, Madagascar, South Africa, and the Cape Verde Islands. It took her seven months, 12 days.



SKIPPER of the *Can Do* is 76-year-old Commander Robert Kilroy, of Salcombe. With him in the little craft were Lieut-Commander John Ruher, of Cheltenham; Lieut-Commander Peter Apin, of Falgout; Mr. George Jarvis, of Salcombe, and Chang Hai Kun, Chinese cook.

FIVE SAIL
12,000 MILES
IN "JUNK"

8½-Month Voyage
From Singapore

DEVON HARBOUR
WELCOME

From Our SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

SALCOMBE, Friday.

Cmdr. Robin Kilroy, R.N., with a crew of four, sailed into this sunlit Devon harbour this afternoon in his yacht, the *Boleh*, at the end of a 12,000-mile voyage from Singapore. It had taken eight and a half months.

The yacht—the name *Boleh* is Malay for "Can Do"—was designed by Cmdr. Kilroy. It is a combination of Chinese junk and Arab dhow, 16 tons, with a girt draught and 38ft overall.

The last leg of the voyage was 2,300 miles in 36 days from St. Vincent, Cape Verde Islands. A wide detour was made to avoid rough weather in the Bay of Biscay.

Cmdr. Kilroy, who comes from Salcombe, told me that they had encountered about half a dozen bad storms on the voyage. The *Boleh* had bumped a little, but had behaved splendidly.

The crew comprised Lt. Cmdr. C. P. D'Apin, navigator, of Falgout; Lt. Cmdr. J. J. S. Ruher, electrician and odd job man, of Cheltenham; Mr. George Jarvis, of Salcombe, who helped to build the yacht; and Chang Hai Kun, Chinese cook.

SHORE WELCOME

When the yacht sailed into Salcombe harbour, the foreshore was crowded with sightseers. Although she had not radiated her time of arrival, fishing boats off Bull Head had made contact and signalled the shore.

The unusual design of the craft attracted much attention. The first to go alongside to congratulate Cmdr. Kilroy and his crew was Mr. Ernest Cove, chairman of Salcombe Urban Council.

Cmdr. Kilroy said he built the vessel while he was boom defence officer at Singapore. The building and fitting out took 18 months. The work was all done by himself, Mr. Jarvis and three local craftsmen. Malayan wood was used.

The unusual feature is the mast, which has four legs set on instead of through the deck, to give uninterrupted accommodation. There is one central cabin for sleeping, cooking and eating.

The voyage was by way of Sabang, Cochin, Mauritius, Simonstown, St. Helena, Ascension and St. Vincent.

"It has been a long and wearying trip but we have all enjoyed it," said Cmdr. Kilroy. "The *Boleh* is a comfortable boat and I am pleased with her performance on this long voyage."

9.30 hrs
Wed.

BLUE NETWORK.
Wednesday, 11th January, 1960.
10.0 pm

"TALKING OF"

Journey Under Sail in "Bolek" from
Singapore to U.K.

by

Lt. Commander Rusher

How did it all begin? Well, although I had been amongst ships and sailing for many years, I didn't really take sailing seriously until I came to Singapore - about eighteen months ago. I started sailing dinghies, and only then did I realise how interested I was. Then I discovered that Commander Kilroy was building a boat at Loyang to sail from Singapore to England, and wondered if it might be possible to go with him. When I went to see him, I found he had already got three members of the crew, and wanted more - certainly one more, and said I could be that one.

That made the crew: Robin as owner and Skipper and Sailing Master, Peter Aplin ^{who is a} qualified navigator, and ^{as pilot} John bo'sun, George Jarvis who comes from Devon and was brought up as a boat builder. ^{He was born in Salcombe and lived there for many many years, and is very interested in boats and ships and has done a great deal of inshore sailing. He is an Admiralty civilian, and it looks as though the well-known co-operation between Navy and Admiralty civilians is going to be maintained on our trip.}

That left me as cook, bottle-washer, provision expert and Master of the Bottoms, which is seeing that the stowage is clear at the bottom of the boat; and all odd jobs; also electrician, but I ref to have anything to do with the radio, which incidentally, is for receiving only, not transmitting. It is a small R.A.F. type, works off a twelve volt battery, and is supposed to have a world-wide range. ^{Cheng, Mr. Kilroy's cook, may be coming with us too, but it is not certain if he can make it. He is a good seaman and all the work is very valuable so I hope he can.}

There is the crew, and their jobs, what about the boat?

Commander Kilroy ^{has built} was building it to an idea he had in his mind for a good many years. ^{The main idea is that he} wanted a boat that was like a Junk.

The Chinese

- 2 -

The Chinese have been evolving ^{their} junks for thousands of years, and they are the supreme fore and aft sailors in the world ^(that is) (sailors of ships with a fore and aft rig as opposed to a square rig). They build ships not very different in shape from the old ships with the low bow and very high stern - like the Golden Hind. Their sails are ^{out} in many sections, and ^{these of the} multiple sheets are excellent for ^{work in windward while leaving rolling, reaching and running} sailing on a wind and ^{making up more knots.} Commander Kilroy happens to be very fond of that sort of ship, and ^{has} designed ^{and fitted} Bolek ^{out} by building ^{and fitting} models, and then making full-scale drawings.

He tried to do away with the great disadvantage of the large junk mainsail. While on one tack ^{with the} wind on one side it is wonderful, but with the wind on the other side, ^{the forward part of the mainsail is the} ~~the forward part of the mainsail is the~~ ^{the} against the mast. His answer to this disadvantage was to have a quadropod perched on the upper deck. This quadropod has been criticized from every angle - mostly because it is "different", and sailors are conservative people. I don't know how high it is - about thirty-two feet I should think. ^{It consists of four legs and looks} ^{well, looks like} ^{four legs, I can't think of a simile} ^{like an inverted sickle.} The two forward legs are ^{stepped} ^{will} outboard on the upper deck, and the two aft ones are further inboard. The legs on ^{the} other side are arranged at such an angle to the fore and aft line of the ship, that when one is sailing close-hauled, the wind is not interrupted by the two legs on the windward side, but goes round them with ^{very} little ^{as possible} eddying, and so into the sail - it is a very heavy contraption, but has the incidental advantage that it is set on the upper deck, so there is no mast going ^{down} through ~~the upper deck~~ and interfering with the accommodation ~~down~~ below.

The quadropod is made of a fairly light wood - Douglas Fir from Canada, which we got in Singapore - and the legs themselves are slightly streamlined so as to ^{reduce the eddies I mentioned} allow reasonable wind-play around them.

After trying out his models whilst on leave about eighteen months ago, Commander Kilroy got down to the design of the ship herself, and in August last year he started to make full-scale designs. Four Malayan carpenters came down from Tregannu to do the building, and ^{together}

together with them, Jarvis and Commander Kilroy laid the keel.

The materials used are entirely Malayan. ^{Chengai} ~~Chengai~~ and teak are the two main woods - they are awfully heavy but extremely strong - the whole ^{boat} ~~hull~~ is built like a battleship.

You know, it is always said that any decently built boat can stand up to much more than its crew ever can.

It took from August last year to October 23rd this year to get the hull ready for launching, and we had a grand launching party at Loyang at the Boom Defence Depot. Since then, it has been flat out - fitting out the hull and fitting the rigging. Talking of fittings; we have four compasses, so we shan't lose our way. There is a standard compass, and one for steering, a special little hand-held one for taking bearings, and as well as that, the skipper ~~intends~~ to have a Tell-Tale over his bunk to see that we are steering a decent course at night and not going to sleep on the job!

We were ready for a trial trip just before Christmas, and went off for four days to try the thing out. The major worry was the quadropod mast - an awful lot of wiseacres had scratched their heads over it, but it got two pretty strong tests:-

Just off the ^{Harbour} ~~Harbour~~ Light, we were rolling about for two hours, with no wind and a nasty lop. 'Boleh' was rolling continuously and sharply either way, conditions which gave the mast a pretty fair test of ^{its} ~~the~~ strength when being swung from side to side very rapidly.

The other time was running into a Sumatra in Johore Straits ^{which held a} ~~which held a~~ ^{small} ~~small~~ ^{one} ~~one~~ ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{more} ~~more~~ ^{was} ~~was~~ ^{than} ~~than ^{we} ~~we ^{expected} ~~expected. She held ^{very} ~~very~~ ^{firmly} ~~firmly and ^{quietly} ~~quietly held ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{gunwale} ~~gunwale~~ just awash, and going full ahead - about seven knots - in thirty seconds it felt like to me. We only had one small breakage - a shackle, ^{which} ~~which~~ ^{would} ~~would have gone anyway ^{but} ~~but~~ it had ^{an} ~~an~~ ^{unfair} ~~unfair~~ ^{strain} ~~strain~~. It won't go again.~~~~~~~~~~~~

Below deck, the 'Boleh' has sleeping accommodation strictly speaking for five. But it looks as though on the trip, one of the bunks will have to be used ^{up} ~~up~~ for sail stowage, but ^{we} ~~we~~ can't be certain yet as we haven't tried to stow all the sails.

There is electric light which I fitted - It doesn't work at the moment, because I've got a short, but I'm hoping to cure that.

An auxiliary motor produces electricity for the batteries, and when and if it will be necessary, can drive the boat along at just under four knots. We hope to carry enough petrol for 250 miles, which should be useful for going through belts of calms on the way home.

Cooking fittings come into my side of the house. Commander Kilroy designed them. The cook sits on a motor-bicycle saddle amidships, the cooking stove ^{consists of} ~~consists of~~ a sort of trough which is placed on gimbals, ^{and has} ~~and has~~ three ^{sections for} ~~sections for~~ ^{pancakes} ~~pancakes~~ ^{which get} ~~which get~~ a small oven ^{and from where I sit on the motor-bicycle saddle,} ~~and from where I sit on the motor-bicycle saddle,~~ with ^{my} ~~my~~ feet ^{on} ~~on~~ foot-rests, I can reach almost anything - cutlery, china and food, and it shouldn't be necessary to move about off that saddle even if I wanted to produce a five-course dinner! ^{Oh} ~~Oh~~ ^{shouldn't be, but it is!} ~~shouldn't be, but it is!~~ On our Christmas trip we had a try-out. Luckily we had fine weather. Chang (Commander Kilroy's cook) came with us ^{as I saw} ~~as I saw~~ ^{can} ~~can come on the voyage. He and I cooked turkey and plum pudding for Christmas lunch. I also cooked fried rice and Foo Yong Hai. It worked out very well. Chang had to cook the Christmas supper, I had eaten too much lunch, and it ^{got} ~~got~~ ^{so} ~~so~~ rough, so I handed over to him.~~

Food storage is a problem. ^{It's not easy to} ~~It's not easy to~~ ^{stow} ~~stow~~ six week's provisions for the four or five of us - to get it in - the stuff which has to go below the bottom boards has to be waterproofed for instance. The labels on the tins have to be taken off, because if we don't, the ^{labels} ~~labels will ^{and the} ~~and the ^{labels} ~~labels ^{will} ~~will ^{get} ~~get~~ ^{so} ~~so~~ ^{soiled} ~~soiled~~. Every tin has got some distinctive mark, and I have got a list of them - in fact, two lists; I've been very worried as to whether I will lose them. I've also got a chart of where everything is so that I can pick it out - providing I've got my list!~~~~~~~~

We have a certain amount of burgundy and claret. Red wine is a good thing because you drink it at room - or boat - temperature and it's very useful for cooking too. We have a certain quantity of beer, gin and whiskey, but bottles are difficult to stow in case they fall about. But we have got hold of Japanese ammunition

les ~~uns~~ ^{uns} ou les autres, vous devez per-
 que nous nous surveillons souvent ?

Eh bien non! il est Evidemment que
 nous avons des différences ^{de} d'opinion, de
 et l'atmosphère d'un aussi petit bébé
 qui celle-ci ^{est} pourrait être la cause
 de fipentes qu'elle, mais ~~est~~ ^{est} fin
 et comme des qu'elle. ~~est~~
 rend ~~est~~ ^{avant} la ~~vie~~ ^{vie} impossible
 nous nous gardons bien de les
 provoquer. ©

Eh bien c'est à peu près tout
 mais il est une chose intéressante
 dont je voudrais vous parler -
 mon fils aîné, qui est fait ses
 études en Angleterre, rinkt | a |
 bien je pourrais y passer ses
 vacances, l'été dernier
 par un avion "contellation" qui
 fit le voyage, autant à l'aller

Qu'au retour en deux jours tandis que
 son père qui ~~devrait~~ ^{devrait} ~~se~~ ^{se} ~~voir~~ ^{voir} davantage,
 prendra 8 mois pour faire le même
 trajet. ©
 Nous espérons mettre à la voile
 dans un ou deux jours à destination
 de Durban, puis de Cape Town
 de là nous partirons pour Cape Town
 St. Helen, l'Ascension et après
 j'espère nous retourner en Angleterre. ©
 Mais je puis vous donner
 l'assurance que partout où nous irons
 nous nous souviendrons avec émotion
 de cette charmante petite île
 et de ses habitants qui nous
 ont tant témoigné tant de sollicitude

BBC - 'Anything to Declare'
 14th Oct 1950.

LT. COMMANDER JOHN RUSHER, R.N. H.M.S. Excellent, Portsmouth.

and an Admiralty employee

ANNOUNCER:

three.
 In the headlines recently were ~~xxxx~~ Naval officers who have just sailed a Chinese junk from Singapore to Britain - 15,000 miles in 7 1/2 months. Here is Lieutenant Commander John Bushery one of the officers concerned.

HASTINGS:

of H.M.S. Excellent
 That was a very hefty job of work, Commander. Was it a real junk?

RUSHER:

Well, ~~xxxx~~ not quite. It was specially designed and built by Commander Robin Wilroy, who was ~~C.O.~~ ^{his US name of the ship} the trip, but it was based on the junk, which ~~is a~~ ^{is a} first class sailing craft. She ~~was~~ ^{is} called 'Boleh' which is Malay for 'Can Do'. She's ~~over~~ ^{over} 40 feet overall, 12' 6" ~~xxxx~~ in the beam (or wide, if you like!) and ~~she's~~ ^{she's} 16 tons displacement.

HASTINGS:

It sounds a pretty small craft for a voyage like that. Did you have any hectic moments?

RUSHER:

Well, I don't know that we were ever in dreadful peril, if that's what you mean, but we had some nasty weather ~~at~~ ^{right from} the beginning in the Straits of Malacca ~~and then~~ ^{and then} I think that after the excitement of getting away ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~main~~ ^{main} ~~reason~~ ^{reason} was of being lost to the world. For the first part of the

most unpleasant feeling was of being away from

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voyage our radio didn't work so we were rather out of it. And with five of us cooped up in a small vessel it was a wonderful lesson in ~~tolerance~~ ^{tolerance!}

HASTINGS:

Who were the five?

RUSHER:

There were Wilroy, as I said; Lt. Commander Peter Aplin, ~~was~~ ^{an Army} ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~signal~~ ^{signal} ~~calls~~ ^{calls} ~~George~~ ^{George} ~~Jarvis~~ ^{Jarvis} and Charles, a Chinese ~~man~~ ^{man} who offered to come with us at the last moment.

HASTINGS:

In some ways I imagine your experiences must have been a bit like those of the Kon-Tiki raft expedition.

RUSHER:

They were, ~~really~~ ^{in many ways}, except that we had more room and were able to get along faster. But we saw many strange fish, as they did, and we were followed for several days by shoals of tunny. We caught dolphins which we cooked ~~in~~ ⁱⁿ ~~seven~~ ^{seven} different ways, and I remember that on Easter Saturday and Sunday we saw hundreds of flying fish which were being chased by tunny. Once - it was off St. Helena - a whale longer than

an Admiralty shipwright

in many ways

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long small

the ship scraped along our side. But speaking for myself, I think my oddest experience was seeing ~~the~~ Bolsh from Minikoi Lighthouse, ^{of} South West India. It looked so ~~small and tiny~~ ^{very small} that it made me realise what a speck on the ocean we were.

HASTINGS:

Not a very comforting thought. You put in at various ports, of course?

RUSHER:

Colombo The Seychelles Mauritius
 Port Elizabeth Swaziland St Helena
 Accra and St Vincent the
 Cape Verde Islands

This was

Oh yes. (Names main ports) And I can't ~~begin to~~ ^{begin to} tell you what a fiasco was made of us. ~~People were nearly~~ ^{People were nearly} ~~to us everywhere we went~~ ^{to us everywhere we went} ~~with kindness all the way. But~~ ^{with kindness all the way. But} ~~it was hard to make people understand~~ ^{it was hard to make people understand} that with a ~~little~~ ^{one snag} sailing ship you can't make a schedule and stick to it, as you can with a steamer. If we were a day or two overdue anywhere ~~that~~ ^{people} ~~we~~ ^{began to flap} ~~we~~ ^{beginning of sailing services.} Still, it was a ~~lot~~ ^{great} fun and an ~~fine~~ ^{interesting} experience. ^{which I shall always remember} ^{Ret} Kilroy's writing a book about it which will be out in a month or so.

HASTINGS:

And which we must certainly read. Well, congratulations, Commander, on a fine achievement - it's been a privilege to meet you and hear about it.

TELEPHONES
2374 & 2325HMS EXCELLENT
PORTSMOUTH.

25-10-50

Have thoroughly enjoyed
 your book and wish
 there was more of it.

Thanks very much.

Your truly

AB Lister

S. 13206.

GV427 W. 1076 1950. L1002 P. 1. G. S. U. S. R. 141-14111

NAVAL MESSAGE.

For use in Signal Department only		Originator's Instructions (Indication of Priority, Exempt Group, etc.)		Circles/Plainness		No. of Groups	
TO: U.C. & R. & L. & S.				FROM: C. Conroy			
W	10	WIT for more interesting					
O	15	top. I am afraid					
U	20	that whole family involved					
E	25	in staying up it					
M	30	So to have her at					
T	35	so long					
E	40	Under Conroy					
S	45						
	50						
System	E/L Code or Cypher	Time of Receipt	Time of Dispatch	Operator	P.O.W.	Date	

