

Lone Voyagers

"MODERN SINBAD" AND HIS DOG WEATHERED HURRICANE IN LEAKING 28-FT. SLOOP

Epic Voyage From New York To Bermuda

By BETTY SMITH
(Royal Gazette Weekly reporter)

It was more a matter of necessity than choice that brought about the sailing from New York to Bermuda of the 28-foot sloop "Gauntlet" in 1918.

Captain Alward Dingle, an Englishman living in New York, decided to bring his family to Bermuda to settle. Travel was difficult during those war days and the only available transportation was an old steamer badly in need of repair. Captain Dingle booked passage on the steamer for his wife and children, the furniture was sold, and arrangements were made for the family to stay with neighbours until their ship was ready to sail. Captain Dingle himself decided to sail his little sloop on ahead as there was no room for it on the steamer.

Captain Dingle authored many books and stories of the sea. In his autobiography, called "A Modern Sinbad," which was published in 1933, he recounts his experiences on his voyage to Bermuda. He said he had tried to get a man to sail with him, but all suitable men were wanted in the Army and Navy and could get no passports. The passage from New York to Bermuda had never

before been made single-handed. The hurricane season was approaching and if he were to get he must do so at once. He decided to sail alone, taking with him his Airedale dog and his books.

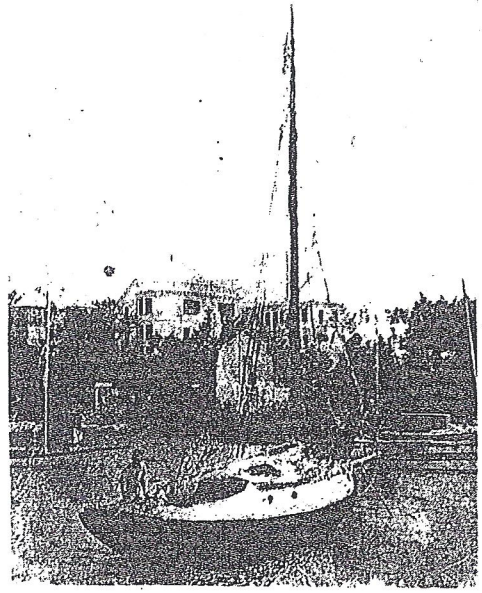
On August 13, 1918, the captain set sail, the dog barking in response to his daughters' waving. The Navy Office instructed him to follow the coast to Cape Look-out, south of Hatteras, before sailing east; to run without lights and to answer no whistle signals, because of enemy submarine operations.

Grounded On Bar

Captain Dingle disobeyed instructions. He decided not to land the coast without lights because of the danger of being run down by coastwise steamers, themselves running without lights. He decided that his course lay offshore. The first night he was grounded on a bar. In the morning, as soon as the tide made it possible for him to cross the bar, he got under way again.

At first the weather was hot with little breeze but soon a small breeze which split the mizzen and ran under the mizzen. The dog got sick. On August 17 the log records that it was very hot. A mass of wreckage was passed, alive with sharks, who were fighting and tearing bodies among the wreckage. At that time the boat was 168 miles from Sandy Hook.

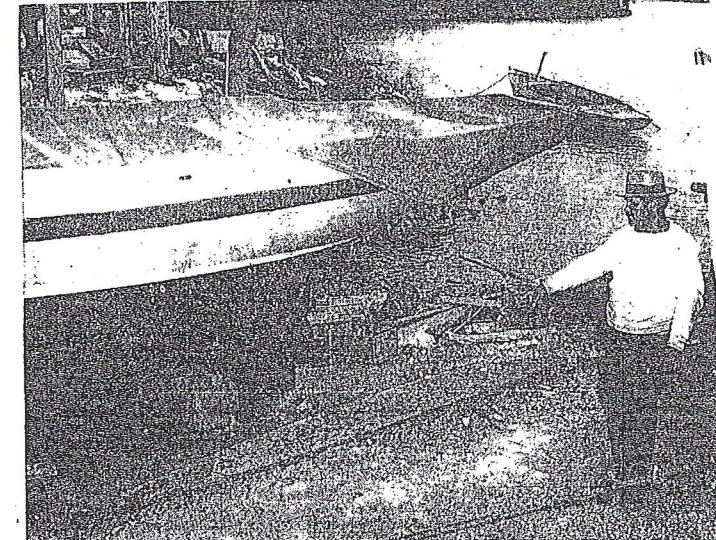
The captain had intended sleeping during daytime but had been unable to do so, though he dozed at the wheel. The dog was still sick. The sloop pitched heavily. The sixty-gallon water tank got stove in. All the water got into the bilges except two gallons in bottles for emergency use. The sextant was broken in a fall; the captain was injured; a lurch of the boat jolted the chronometer off the shelf into the water. The boat leaked and the leak was gaining.



Captain Dingle arrives in Pitt's Bay aboard his sloop the Gauntlet. Man and boat show the effects of the hazardous voyage.



Captain Dingle at the end of his voyage from New York to Bermuda in 1918. Note the skipper's emotion and his weary face.



Keel of the Gauntlet at Minor's boat-slip on St. David's Island. All that is left of the sloop is three tons of keel buried in the sand. Thurston Minors, who dismantled the boat in 1949, points to all that is above ground. Her last owner, an American stationed at Kindley, wanted to sail her to the United States with his family aboard, but the boat was in such bad shape that he abandoned her.

COINCIDENCE

Captain Dingle's sloop, which was named the Gauntlet, took on a new meaning years later when the captain's daughter married Mr. Ernest Gauntlet of Bermuda.

Patched Mainsail

The captain patched the mainsail. It began to rain and he began to run under the mizzen alone. The log was not registering and was after a while withered. Latitude was uncertain and it was impossible to get longitude after the captain's watch was flung into the water on the cabin floor. At last an American armed merchant steamer spotted an answer to the signal and proceeded when the captain showed his empty water-jugs. He tried for another observer but could not find one. The log was broken in a fall; the captain was injured; a lurch of the boat jolted the chronometer off the shelf into the water. The boat leaked and the leak was gaining.

Acting Solicitor General To Take Butler's Role

From real-life acting Solicitor General in the daytime to make-believe butter in the evening is the transition that Captain John Cowie will be making every day during the weeks when he plays one of the key roles in the Bermudian Theatre production "Simon and Laura."

Struck By Hurricane

In the afternoon of September 5 a hurricane hit. The sloop was pitched head first down the cabin and was hit on the beam by a heavy paper-weight. This was the dog was buried under the boat wreckage. The mainmast was broken off four feet from the mast. "Very bad outlook," says the log; a mass of under-estimation.

A minor tragedy was the loss of the captain's treasured books, most a mass of pulp, paper and glue. The dog continued to suffer. She was given the liquid from a can of peas while her master ate the peas. He was very thirsty but could not find time himself to take liquid from the dog which he knew would cause her death. He began to dream of long drinks of water. He threw his pistol overboard to avoid the temptation to shoot the dog.

At last, when all hope seemed gone, a steamer arrived. The American patrol vessel "Niagara" stopped and asked the trouble. They gave the captain water, a tow line, and a bone for the dog. Into Grass Bay went the sloop in tow. "Powerful" shouted "Whar dat dog?" and the crew gave her three cheers. There had been little hope that the captain would arrive. Big ships had foundered in the hurricane.

"MURDER" JOKE NEARLY LANDED HIM IN JAIL

ROME, Oct. 22 (Reuter). — Sergio Solfarelli today was a free man after narrowly escaping a jail term for faking the unsolved murder of the year.

As a joke, he told a friend he had killed a woman, dropped her head in a volcanic lake and the police still hadn't a clue to the crime.

Fined £5 For Careless Driving

John Doughty Zell Simmons, of the United States Naval Station, was fined £5 with licence endorsement by the Wor. E. W. P. Vesey in Hamilton magistrates' court on Saturday morning.

Simmons was charged as a result of a collision on the Harbour Road, in Paget, on September 7 involving his private car and another.

Novel Brain Coral

Robert E. Bircher, fishing guide, spends half his time here and half in Nassau. Recently, while on a trip to the northwest of Bermuda, he found an unusual coral formation. It is a brain coral but, unlike the usual convolutions, there are ridged patterns in straight lines interspersed with the normal "wiggles." A small piece of coral was entirely straight-ridged.

Mr. Bircher says he has dived up thousands of brain coral, winning prizes with some of them at exhibitions, but never before has he seen one like the fancy example he brought into the office of The Royal Gazette Weekly. The coral was found at a depth of 28 feet, about three miles from shore, he said.

CHURCH NAMES VERMON SNORERS

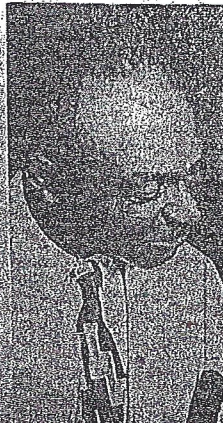
CHESHAM BOIS, Bucks.—The congregation at Chesham Bois parish church can now listen to the Sunday evening sermon without embarrassment. For The Snorer has been found.

The Parish Magazine reports: Members of the congregation who sit in the back half of the church have come under a cloud, for every Sunday evening a rhythmic, stereotyped sound as of someone sleeping has been heard regularly during the sermon.

This has caused everybody to regard everybody else with suspicion.

A complete family.

But the culprit—or rather the culprits, for they are a complete family—have been found, and will be dealt with.



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