Chapter I
INTRODUCTORY

BRITISH yachting, properly so called, dates from the Restoration, and is of Dutch parentage. There is a tendency to try to find the origin of the sport by chronological research, but this method seems to be unsatisfactory. At best it might be possible, in this way, to discover one or two bare mentions of yachts earlier than the first of the instances which have hitherto been collected[1] - the name 'yacht,' indeed, occurs in French at least as early as 1551[2] - but in any case it is certain that the labour entailed by such a search would be out of all proportion to any possible result. For practical purposes it seems to be clear enough that this method has been carried to its logical conclusion. It cannot be maintained, however, that the result is altogether satisfactory. It is interesting indeed to learn that the practice of sailing small vessels exclusively for pleasure sprang up in Holland during the first half of the seventeenth century, and it is important to know, as has long been known, that the first English yachts, properly so-called, were of Dutch origin. But it is impossible to reflect upon even the scanty array of facts here available without coming to the conclusion that there are various questions of importance to which answers must be found before the origin and meaning of the movement can be satisfactorily explained. We were a seafaring nation many centuries before the Dutch had any separate existence: why, then, did not the movement begin with us? And why was it delayed till the seventeenth century?

The fact is that no seed can bear good fruit unless it falls upon good ground. The germs of yachting may have existed before the Stuart era, but the ground was not yet prepared to receive the seed. In order to appreciate the difficulties that lay in the way of the establishment and growth of such a sport, it is necessary, in the first place, to take a general view of the conditions which prevailed at sea down to the time when Charles came to his own again.

Before pleasure-sailing of any kind can exist, certain conditions must be fulfilled. The peace of the sea must be so far established that reasonable security is offered to life and property, and a suitable type of craft must be evolved. It is also important to remember that yachting, like all other costly pleasures, can only flourish in a country which has acquired the necessary means and leisure. It is far from the present purpose to back this proposition with solid arguments drawn from writers on economics; let it suffice to advise the reader, should he wish to sound the depths of this matter, to take counsel with Dr. Cunningham. In brief, enjoyment goes hand in hand with prosperity, not with the struggle for life; and if, in opposition to this view, it should be urged that English yachting took its origin at the Restoration, as indeed it did, and passed through its infancy during a period which was far - very far - from being one of prosperity, the true answer seems to be that Stuart yachting, like the much-vaunted 'golden days' which it accompanied, was, after all, but a false dawn.

Under Charles II the sport was not taken up by the nation. It first came into existence as a hobby of an extravagant Court, which took no thought for the morrow. For a brief period, while money came readily to Charles's hand, it was the talk of the town; but it languished with the languishing fortunes of the Court, until, long before the

[1] Arthur H. Clark, ' The History of Yachting,' 1904.
[2] Bourel de la Ronciere, 'Histoire de la Marine Française,' ii., 461.

end of the reign, the fleet of yachts had gone to swell the Navy List, and there was no royal yachting to speak of save for purposes of State. Only an occasional small pleasure-craft remained here and there in private hands to keep the sacred fire burning. The King had, so to speak, squandered capital. The boom in yachting was as fictitious and as transitory as was the splendour of his Court, and there was much leeway to be made good before the sport could be established upon its only sound basis, the taste and opportunity of the nation. It is easy to give too much credit to Charles. The most that is his due is to say that he saw the pleasure of the path, and would fain have followed it; but that by his folly he strewed the path with obstacles which effectively prevented it from becoming a highway for many years to come.

The reason why the dawn of yachting, false dawn though it was destined to be, was so long delayed is to be sought in the fact that the fulfilment of the necessary conditions was a slow matter. To-day, when the dominating factor of life afloat in every quarter of the globe is that *Pax Britannica* which is founded upon the omnipresence of naval force, it is not quite easy to remember that, even two and a half centuries ago, there was practically no peace even in home waters. The corsairs of Dunkirk gave constant trouble, in peace scarcely less than in war. And abroad the conditions were still more unfavourable. Beyond European waters there was scarcely a pretence at law and order till long after this date; and what the state of affairs was within reach of the Barbary ports will readily be called to mind by all who have any acquaintance with early romances. In the seventeenth, and until well into the eighteenth, century the Christian who had been taken by a Sallee rover and sold into slavery is a stock character in fiction.

It is a fair enough jest for a 'Prehistoric Peeps' artist to represent a game of ping-pong in the Stone Age as interrupted by the advent of a Plesiosaurus. But the historic fact would be that primitive man, in the days when such-like fearful wildfowl roamed at large, would stick severely to his hunting, and would entertain no thought of any less utilitarian pastime. So it was with our seafaring ancestors of the Middle Ages, and even of the Tudor period. There were four reasons which might take a man to sea, but they were all strictly businesslike. It might be necessary to cross the sea on a journey; trading voyages were, of course, common - so, too, were piratical cruises. Least common of all were what we would look on as orthodox employments of naval force. But the net result was clear enough. When a man went to sea he took his life in his hand. Therefore, unless he had a taste for the fiercer kinds of sport, he went as little as might be. And, obviously, anything in the way of pleasure-sailing in unarmed vessels would have been out of place.

It should also be remembered that the law of the land did not run beyond low-water mark, and that the law of nations was still all but undreamt of. The natural result was that fighting afloat was universal and chronic. Piracy for many centuries was as much the profession of a gentleman as knight-errantry; and if the victims did at times gain the ear of their Prince, their usual satisfaction lay in a scarce-needed permission to make reprisals on the fellow-countrymen of the wrongdoer. The resulting state of affairs is illustrated by the true and tragic history of Sir Andrew Barton. Barton was a Scotch captain who had a grievance, and consequently took out letters of marque, against certain Portingalls. So he went to sea to find some Portingalls from whom to recoup his losses; but, owing, as he put it, to the difficulty of telling one ship from another, or - what is more likely - owing to a wilful purblindness, it so happened that he preyed upon English shipping. The consequence was that a neat little expedition was sent afloat, commanded by two adventurous English noblemen, and Andrew Barton (the 'Sir' appears to be a

matter of poetic courtesy) ended his life as the ideal pirate should. Here we have two sides of the question, both of them decidedly sporting. In plundering English ships in the narrow seas, Barton must have known that he was backing his luck with the odds against him; in going out to catch him, the Howards were looking for excitement, in the absence of any other interesting occupation, and were also seeking, no doubt, the bubble reputation.

Long lists might be made of the names of sportsmen of this class, both gentle and simple, both great and small. Prégent de Bidoux, *Anglice* 'Prior John,' and 'Arripay,' whose countrymen called him Harry Page, are but later representatives of the industry which existed in our waters even before the advent of the mythical Hengist and Horsa. It would be more pleasant could we dwell only on the vagaries of these legitimate pirates, if we may call them by such a strange-sounding name; but, unfortunately, a difference of nationality was by no means necessary in the thirteenth century to make man, or at least man afloat, a wolf to man. The spirit of nationality was as yet far from fully developed. Ships, for the most part, sailed under the banner of their town, or, where they were owned by a man of blood, under the device of their owner. So family feuds and town feuds and jealousies were regularly fought out at sea whenever occasion offered, and complaints by the West against the men of the East Coast, or by the Isle of Wight and Southampton against the Cinque Ports, were just as common, and every whit as difficult to deal with, as national complaints made on behalf of the Venetian galleys or of the Hanseatic League. Obviously, there was here no room for quiet pleasure-sailing; and though throughout the Middle Ages we constantly meet with instances of vessels which it has become customary to call yachts, belonging to royal persons, yet for the present purpose such craft can be dismissed as being of no interest.

There was no spice of pleasure about the famous trip that Edgar made on the Dee in a boat rowed by eight Kings. The event, if not a monkish parable, was purely political, and, as has been well said, the same end would have been gained if Edgar had paid eight watermen to row the boat, and had stowed the Kings handcuffed in the stern-sheets. At all events, the boat used was doubtless a waterman's boat hired for the occasion. And throughout this long, dark period, whenever the ship of the King or chieftain differed from the ordinary run of ship, it did so in being either bigger if intended for war, or more profusely decorated if intended also as a passenger vessel. It is needless to seek for details in the matter, for there is absolutely no trace whatever of evidence that any medieval Prince or King ever had a ship differing in type from the ordinary ships of the age. We know exceedingly little of the details of the dromons, of the esneccae, of the cogs, or of the hundred and one other medieval types whose names survive, but we know enough to be sure that none of them were yachts properly so-called. Some, of course, were faster than others, esneccae perhaps being among the fastest, and one or two of this type have been spoken of as yachts. But there is no doubt that they were merely fast galleys used in the packet service between England and Normandy; and that a King should own one is no more strange than that he should have his own horse to ride.

In the case of the celebrated *White Ship*, whose unusual colour has perhaps combined with her unhappy fate to perpetuate her memory, there seems to have been some notion of sport or pleasure. The sporting element lay in the intention to race across Channel with her consort; but unfortunately the pleasure was looked for not in any appreciation of wind and sea, but at the bottom of the wine-flask. As to the ship herself, there is no reason to suppose that in essentials she differed from her contemporaries any

more than did the purple-sailed and gilded galley in which, more than eleven centuries before, Cleopatra went to meet Antony.

During the later medieval period the prevailing conditions continued to be quite unfavourable to the prospects of pleasure-sailing. England stepped out of war into war; the long struggle with France was barely ended when the whole of the attentions of the leisured class in England were absorbed by the Wars of the Roses. Obviously, it would be quite futile to look for yachting here; men were occupied almost exclusively ashore, and such maritime activity as is recorded is limited to occasional mentions of the raiding expeditions of the Earl of Warwick[3], then Governor of Calais. The war ended at last in a profound peace, but it resulted also in the extinction of those wealthy and leisured classes with whom alone sport could take its origin. The effect was that, all through the Tudor period, the spirit of adventure proposed to itself more solid endeavours[4] than the gratification of a taste which did not indeed exist. Opportunity was to create the taste for yachting; for a century and a half at least men found employment enough in creating the opportunity.

The conditions to be fulfilled before anything like yachting in the modern sense of the term could come into being were threefold. National prosperity must be established, a suitable rig must be evolved, and the taste for such a pastime must be created. We may dismiss the third consideration briefly. The taste for yachting is but a modern manifestation of the adventurous spirit which, we are accustomed to believe, is inherent in the English race. It is perhaps beside the point to aver that during a considerable part of the Middle Ages the spirit of adventure, if it did not sleep, at least did not take men to sea. But one of the clearest and most obvious things in our national history is that, during the later Tudor period, the spirit was increasingly in evidence. The spirit necessarily varies with the age. The Northmen in their time - more especially if we accept the story of their voyage to America - were truer yachtsmen than was Edgar with his boat's crew of kinglets or Athelstan with his gilded barge; and similarly, under the Tudors, the true spirit is to be sought less in the owners of the gilded barges which graced the pageants of Thames than in the daring which led the Earl of Cumberland, John Oxenham, or even Francis Drake, to cruise with irregular commissions, or prompted Martin Frobisher, John Davys, or Henry Hudson to devote their lives to the search for new lands or new sea routes.

As to the national prosperity, it is in great measure true to say that its foundations were laid by that adventurous spirit which we have been describing. Without that spirit the Levant Company or the later East India Company would not have been formed, nor would Virginia have been settled and the American seaboard explored. But the great returns from these great undertakings did not come in a day, and, while we were engaged with them and with the Spanish war, our neighbours the Dutch were revelling in their new-found freedom and rising to fortune by a ladder which at that time, and for long after, we were sadly prone to neglect. This was the maritime, but essentially prosaic, occupation of fishing. Everyone has heard that Amsterdam is founded upon herrings; comparatively few, perhaps, have realized the full import of the saying. Yet at the beginning of the seventeenth century England was full of reports of the marvellous

[3] *Vide* the Paston Letters, *passim*.

[4] The State Papers are full of complaints of piracy by men of all nations. *Vide*, e.g., Letters and Papers, Henry VIII., 1532, No. 906, which gives a good account of the perils attendant upon a voyage from London to Bordeaux in that year.

prosperity which the Netherlanders were drawing from the sea. John Keymor wrote about the year 1601 a very celebrated pamphlet[5] in which he supported the thesis that 'there is more wealth raised out of herrings and other fish in Her Majesty's seas by the neighbouring nations in one year than the King of Spain hath from the Indies in four, and that there are 20,000 ships and other vessels, and about 400,000 people, set to work by both sea and land, and maintained only by fishing upon the coasts of England, Scotland, and Ireland.' It is possible that his figures are somewhat exaggerated, but he undoubtedly proved his contention; and the fact is well established that practically the whole of the North Sea fishing industry was in the hands of the Dutch or of the mariners of the Baltic ports. On the Banks of Newfoundland there were many English fishermen, but in home waters scarcely any.

The result, as far as yachting is concerned, is sufficiently well marked. The Dutch became speedily a nation of sailors, and gained wealth and leisure long before we did. A maritime nation in which every man looked to the sea for his daily bread; a prosperity far in advance of the general standard of the age; a territory peculiarly gifted with inland waters - such were the essentials in which the Netherlands of 1600 differed from England; such, too, are the causes which naturally predispose to yachting.

These considerations and one other, the evolution of a suitable rig, are common to both Dutch and English yachting, and it has already been shown how the tide of events gave the Dutch a decided advance. Before considering the important question of rig, there is one more very serious matter to be taken into account - the peace of the seas. In this respect also fortune favoured the Dutch, for their yachting was in great measure free from fear of interference, thanks to their coast, well protected by sandbanks, among which no stranger dare venture, thanks also to their splendid inland waters, of which no counterpart is to be found in England.

Dunkirk was at this time in the hands of England's enemy Spain, and had a very high reputation for maritime skill and energy. In war this was well enough, but it did not confine itself to war; in peace Dunkirk as a neighbour was at least as undesirable as during active hostilities, and, with one excuse or another, or often with no excuse whatever, the Dunkirk privateers continued to prey on the shipping of the narrow seas. Of course, a part of this loss fell upon the Dutch, but England was the greater sufferer, both because her coast offered less shelter and because her shipping, being less in volume, was not so well able to stand the strain. The effect, as far as the English Channel and East Coast were concerned, was that things went from bad to worse. When the great Spanish Armada had come and gone, men began, as will presently be seen,[6] to hope that they might safely show themselves at sea without protection. But if this hope was falsified even in Elizabeth's reign, still more was this the case when 'Queen Jamie' succeeded her, a King of much learning but small understanding; and least of all was the hope justified under the utterly inefficient government of Charles. The history, or rather the lack of history, of British yachting is at this time bound up with the story of the Dunkirkers and other pirates; it is a study of cause and effect. He who would appreciate the cause must read of the inefficiency of the naval administration of the early Stuarts[7], and the effect will lie patent before him. The adventures of that madcap John Taylor, 'the Water Poet,' will

[5]John Keymor's Observation Made Upon the Dutch Fishing about the Year 1601. First printed in London 1664; often reprinted.

[6]Below, p. 9 et seq.

[7]Oppenheim, 'Administration of the Royal Navy,' 1896, pp. 184 et seq.

be given presently[8] as picturesque testimony on behalf of this opinion. And during Taylor's latter years, when his coasting journeys were well nigh over, the state of home waters became rapidly worse for a time, owing to the incursion into the Channel of the Mahomedan pirates of Sallee. It is pleasant, from a national standpoint, to reflect that the heyday of these infidels was of brief duration, for the keen naval enterprise, which was to the budding Commonwealth as the breath of life, speedily set a period to their maraudings. The Cromwellian navy was great and efficient. It struck a most serious blow at the maritime prosperity of the Dutch, it left the seas comparatively clear of evil-doers, and it raised the prestige of a sea-life in a very marked degree. In all of these respects it advanced the cause of yachting.

A detailed narrative of sea-fights would be out of place in a history of yachting, it will be admissible to give only one of many important battles which took place with pirates in home waters during the earlier Stuart period. The whole history of the time testifies to an increase of daring on the part of 'the Turks'. From the Mediterranean they extended their operations to the Atlantic seaboard, founding the port of Sallee on that coast; and with that as a base they spread gradually northward, scourging English commerce heavily and defying any protection which the King's navy could give even in the English seas. The State Papers of the time are full of complaints from merchants and dwellers on the coast, and not without cause. In 1631 Baltimore in Ireland was sacked by these pirates, and the whole of the inhabitants carried into slavery. The natural result of this state of things was that there was no sailing for pleasure in the Channel; there was opportunity in plenty for the fiercer kinds of sport, for a stout seafaring man could take his choice of sides in the game. If the duties of patriotism sat lightly upon him, he could throw in his lot with the pirates, who would gladly receive him; if he preferred allegiance to his country, his due share of fighting would probably be forced upon him.

Here is a narrative of one of these encounters, taken from the examination of John Whiddon, gunner of the ship *Elizabeth* of Plymouth. On June 17, 1640, the *Elizabeth*, Captain Doves, coming from Virginia, fell in with three Turkish men-of-war off the Lizard. Each of these was bigger than the English ship, and among them they mounted fifty-six guns, while the *Elizabeth* had only ten; the pirates also were full of men, stated to amount to 500 in all, while of Englishmen there were but thirty all told. However, there was no choice in the matter, for the pirates were the more weatherly and headed the *Elizabeth* off from the shore. The details of the fight, as they appear in the examination, are meagre, but it is established there that the pirates came aboard, did very great damage, and were eventually beaten off after about eight hours' hard fighting. Those who love the picturesque must turn to Taylor's narrative[9], which, as far as it can be tested, seems genuine enough. 'At last the Master (Capt. Doves) was slaine, ending his dayes Nobly, likewise the Masters-mate and the Pilot, and quarter-Master were kil'd outright, and having done as much as men could do against so strong an enemy, kept Master Doves company, both in life and death, and in heavenly happinesse. In this terrible turmoyle there were two of the Turkes had got themselves up into the Top, and one of the passengers with a Musquet kil'd them both: one was a man of an extraordinary great stature; he being kil'd, the English did cleave his head, and then they divided it from his

[8]Below, pp. 11 et seq.

[9]John Taylor, 'A Valorous and perillous sea-fight,' 1640.[– referred to in various publications relating to 'Othello' but I have not found access to text.]

carkasse, they showed the head and corps to the Turkes, and with renewed courages and unwearied Valour they haled to the enemy, and in braving manner said, come aboord you Dogges if you dare, and fetch your countryman; but the Turkes finding the businesse so hot, and the men so resolute, that their damnable courages were quel'd, that they had no more mind to assault the English ship any more. So they in deriding and showting to the Turkes, cast the dead body overboard, on the one side of the ship, and the Cloven head into the Sea on the other.' That was the end of the fight; and, as the remnant of the *Elizabeth's* crew worked their battered ship homewards, they 'discovered eleven small vessels floating on the streame, without sayles, or any men in them at all, which the Gunner of the Shippe doth very certainly believe were taken by the said Turkish men of Warre, and their company carried away by them' to be sold for slaves.

Such was the state of affairs in the Channel in 1640. It leads us to excuse Richard Ferris[10] for his dodging round the Runnell Stone fifty years earlier, and it even speaks a word in favour of the constables of Cromer.[11] And it is obvious that as long as this state of things continued there could be no yachting. If it is any consolation to him, the British sportsman may reflect that the 'Turkish' pirates learnt the best of their seamanship from an Englishman, Ward,[12] and during their palmy days numbered among their 'admirals' and captains many adventurers from these islands.

Before proceeding to discuss the evolution of the fore and aft rig, which must needs form an integral part of yachting history, we will offer an account of some early coasting trips which seem to be little known nowadays. They were scarcely 'yachting' trips, for the yachts in which to make them did not as yet exist; but they were very certainly sporting adventures, and of much more importance to our history than were the gay pageants which attended great occasions of state. Of the pageants it is not necessary to say much. A very full account of one of the finest, and fortunately also the earliest, has been preserved, and is to be read in more than one printed collection.[13] This took place in October, 1501, to celebrate the arrival of the unfortunate Catharine of Aragon, then betrothed to Arthur, Prince of Wales. Catharine came by water to Gravesend, and was there received and escorted by great numbers of boats and barges filled with the officers of state, with the lords and ladies of the Court, with bands of music - in fact, with all ceremony proper to the occasion. The piece is interesting no doubt 'as a curious specimen of state ceremony during the times when the pomp, order, and magnificence of the Courts were kept up to the height.' But it is not of much importance to yachting history, for it adds nothing to our knowledge of the type of boat used. The later pageant of 1638, of which Mr. Clark is able to give an illustration,[14] is more interesting, for the reception was made by yachts under sail, not by row-boats. Socially it yielded in importance to many of the Tudor functions, but for our purpose it has far greater merit. Yet it has withal one insuperable disadvantage. It was not English; it marks, in fact, the advance of a rival.

It is to be doubted whether many boat voyages such as are here described were made. To begin with, they depended one and all for their origin upon bets or other hope of lucre, and this being so, the success of one would naturally spoil the market for the

[10]Vide below, p. 10
[11]Vide below, p. 13
[12]Vide Corbett, 'England in the Mediterranean,' vol. i., pp. 10-20.
[13]E.g., in Miscellaneous State Papers, vol. i., No.1.
[14]Arthur H. Clark, ' The History of Yachting,' 1904 p. 20

next bold adventurer. Again, the principals seem to have been sufficiently proud of themselves, as is reasonable, to write accounts of their experiences, and the fact that very few of these narratives exist goes far to show that not many such adventures were undertaken.

There were, indeed, long passages made up and down the Thames as far back as we can trace in what we would now consider most unsuitable craft. Henry VIII., for instance, in October, 1532,[15] went in an open boat to Sheppey; but the boat was a bigger one than he usually employed, her crew being eighteen men, compared with the ten rowers that he was wont to employ for shorter distances, and there is a separate entry for a sail, an anchor, and a cable which were bought for the occasion, at a cost of five shillings. But though most kings would prefer something with a deck on it for a passage down Sea Reach and past the Nore, yet there is no comparison between such a passage as King Hal's and that of Richard Ferris nearly sixty years later.

The Spanish Armada had been accounted for, and now at last men felt that they could breathe. There would appear to have been a good deal of boasting at the Court that now of a truth Britannia ruled the waves, and to prove it our adventurer,[16] one of five ordinary messengers of Her Majesty's Chamber, undertook in a small wherry-boat to row by sea to the city of Bristow.'

Possibly the enterprise was determined on when the wine was in and the wit was out; at any rate, it is certain that on second thoughts Ferris was not enamoured of the job, and owns that it was 'rashly determined.' However, he persuaded a friend named Andrew Hill to go with him, and then 'in respect that I never was trained up on the water . . . I thought it convenient to seek out some one expert pilot, to direct me and my companion by his skill the better to pass the dangers, whereof I was foretold.' In pursuance of this sane resolve, he found one W. Thomas, a man of sufficient skill and approved experience, 'by whom, he modestly says, I was content to be advised.'

The wherry was new and was painted green, a favourite Tudor colour, and had a sail which was presumably a spritsail. She was also well furnished with flags, a St. George's Cross, the Royal Arms, and a pennant for the stern. They sailed from Tower Wharf on June 24, 1590, and made their first stop at Greenwich, where they were entertained by the Court. 'And having obtained leave before of the Rt. Hon. the Lord Chamberlain, the Lord Admiral, and Master Vice-Chamberlain for my departure: I took my leave and so departed.' Glad, possibly, to be clear of the atmosphere of red-tape. 'Setting up our sails (sic) and taking to our oars we departed towards this our doubtful course.' The passage to Margate is scarcely touched upon, and thence 'we wan the Foreland with some high billows,' after which they had reasonable weather all the way down to the Solent, a slice of fortune which may be set down to beginner's luck. In the Solent they had 'a great storm,' but got safely through it, and so on to St. Alban's race, where 'we were in a great fret.' Portland naturally treated them in the same way, but by the good direction of our pilot and master we sought and strove by great labour to take the advantage of the tide and weather; whereby we passed through it in an hour. Here did the billows rise very high so that we were in great danger: yet God be thanked! we escaped them without any damage.' And the experience of high billows was renewed off the Start.

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[15] Letters and Papers, Privy Purse Expenses, 1532.

[16] 'The most Dangerous and Memorable Adventure of Richard Ferris,' 1590

At Plymouth ‘we met with Her Majesty's ships, where Master Captain Fenner and Master Captain Wilkinson gave us great entertainment, especially for that they saw that we had leave given us from the Rt. Hon. Her Majestie’s Council for our quiet and safe passage. And for that I was Her Majesty's messenger they gave us the greater entertainment.' The Lizard ‘we passed in the current of the tide, with great swiftness but with wonderful danger: where, had it not been well looked unto, of the master, we had been all cast away.' The next event to stir their pulses came on July 20, when, standing a long way off shore to get a good tide round the Land's End, ‘our master descried a pirate having a vessel of four tons; who made towards us amain meaning doubtless to have robbed us. But doubting [i.e., fearing] such a matter we rowed so near the shore as we might. And by that time, as he was almost come at us, we were near to a rock standing in the sea,’ which, under its guise of the Raynalde Stones, is to be identified with the Runnell Stone. Here, fortunately, it fell calm, and the wherry had the advantage. But, thinking that they would feel more comfortable if they could put something more solid than sea-water between themselves and the pirate,’ as we rowed to come about by this rock, suddenly we espied a very plain and easy way to pass on the inner side of the said rock, where we went through very pleasantly: and by reason thereof he could not follow us. Thus we escaped safely; but he was soon after taken and brought into Bristow.’

This was an exciting day, for no sooner were they quit of the pirate than the wind freshened against them, meeting the tide, which, it will be remembered, runs to the northward for nine hours off the Land's End, thus giving plenty of opportunity to rude Boreas to indulge them with a further succession of ‘high billows.’ However, they had good sea stomachs by this time, and, ‘for we wanted victuals, our master was constrained to go climb the great cliff at Godrevy, which is at least forty fathoms high and wonderful steep; which none of us durst venture to do.’ Then to Bottrick's Castle, where they were weather-bound, until, ‘on the 18th day, the foul weather ceasing, we did again put to sea, through the race of Hartland, alias Harty Point, which is as ill as the race at Portland.'

But their adventures were not yet at an end, for ‘between Harty Point and Clevelly, Andrew Hill in taking down our sail fell overboard into the sea: where, by great good-hap, and by means that he held fast to a piece of our sail, we recovered him, although he were a very weighty man.’ On Saturday, August 1, they were at Ilford Coume, and Ferris, thinking possibly that the journey was lasting too long, with some difficulty persuaded his mates to make a night passage. But the wind came off the land 'very sore ' - and an off-shore wind at the Hangmans is no joke - so that ‘I myself was constrained to row four hours alone on the larboard side; and my fellow rower was compelled to lade forth water (so fast as it came into the boat) which beat upon me very sore.’ Following this, they passed ‘Mynette’ (Minehead), and came to Bristol without further difficulty. Then all was feasting and junketing, with ‘trumpets, drums, fifes and ensigns to go before the boat.’ Also, needless to state, once was enough, and they returned home by the overland route. After the fashion of the period the booklet contains plenty of bad verses made in honour of the occasion; but we forbear to quote from them, preferring to reserve as much of the reader's patience as may be for the excerpts from the ‘Water Poet’ which follow very shortly.

The next sportsman who claims attention is John Taylor, ‘the Water Poet, whose Pegasus was a wherry, and whose Helicon the Thames,’ certainly an exceptional character. This man, who was born of humble parents in 1580, was sent to the Grammar School at Gloucester, but, as he got ‘mired’ in his Latin accidence, he was taken from

school and apprenticed to a London waterman. From that occupation he was pressed into the Royal Navy, and served the Queen for seven years, having a share in some of the most notable adventures of the time, such as the expedition under Essex to Cadiz in 1596 and the Islands Voyage of the following year. In the course of this service he must have become a thorough seaman, but he also picked up a 'lame leg,' which induced him to quit the navy and again turn waterman. He had a ready wit and a fluent tongue, which made him a marked man among watermen, so that, when any business of importance was toward, he was put forward as their spokesman. This no doubt cultivated his 'literary' faculty, with the result that when, in the middle of James's reign, he found competition upon the water growing severe, he determined to trust to his pen for a living. As the event proved, he combined the callings of waterman and author to some extent, the method being to make a more or less fantastic voyage, by water or by land, and to sell an account of it to subscribers who had been induced to promise their support in advance. His output was very great, but the quality is not superlative. He was, in fact, a 'literary bargee,' and his written vocabulary included such terms as we are accustomed to associate with his calling. Also, he applied them very freely to those who had the misfortune to incur his wrath, as, for instance, in his 'Kicksey Winsey,' a tirade directed against 800 defaulters who had promised to subscribe their sixpences for the account of one of his boat journeys, yet paid not. 'As literature his books are contemptible; but his pieces accurately mirror his age, and are of great value to the historian and antiquary.'[17] It is because they mirror, if not the practice of the age with respect to yachting, at least its potentialities, that they are of considerable importance in this inquiry.

Taylor's best-known voyage was made in 1622, and is described in a preposterous poem bearing the equally preposterous title, 'A Verry Merry Wherry-Ferry Voyage, or Yorke for my Money.' A few lines from it may, or may not, tempt the reader to explore the whole:

'Our Wherry somewhat old, or struck in age,
That had endured near four years' Pilgrimage,
And now at last it was her lot to be
Th' adventurous bonny bark to carry me.
* * * * * * * * *
Thus ,being furnished with good wine and beer,
And bread and meat (to banish hunger's fear),
With Sails, with Anchor, Cables, Sculls and Oars,
With Card and Compass, to know seas and shores,'…

being, in fact, very well found, they dropped down river to Gravesend, where they slept

'Whilst Zephyrus and Auster, mix'd together,
Breath'd gently, as foreboding pleasant weather.
* * * * * *
I rous'd my men, who, scrubbing, stretching, yawning,
Arose, left Gravesend, rowing down the stream,
And near to Lee, we to an anchor came.
Because the sands were bare and water low,
We rested there till it two hours did flow.'

[17]'Dictionary of National Biography'

And then they weighed and ran over the Maplins in 2 feet of water, till they passed Foulness, when, seemingly taking no account of the Buxey, they squared away, or, as Taylor puts it,

'I made out straight for Frinton and the Nass.
But being three leagues then from any land,
And holding of our main-sheet in my hand,
We did espy a coal-black cloud to rise,'

which behaved after the usual manner of thunder squalls. However, it seems to have come up astern, and it did not last long, so that they made Harwich that night. Gravesend to Harwich is by no means a bad day's work, even allowing for the fact that they got away at three, and did not reach Harwich until

'Illustrious Titan gan to steep
His chariot in the Western Ocean deep:

The next day they reached Yarmouth, and Taylor says pretty things of everybody concerned, including the red herrings. Next day they went on with fair weather

'Till drawing towards night, we did perceive
The wind at East, and seas began to heave:
The rolling billows all in fury roars
And tumbled us, we scarce could use our oars:

Thus on a lee-shore darkness began to come,
The sea grew high, the winds gan hiss and hum.
At last to row to shore I thought it best,
'Mongst many evils thinking that the least.'

So they landed, safe enough but very wet, and found that they were at Cromer.

'But we, supposing all was safe and well,
In shunning Scylla on Charybdis fell:
For why, some women, and some children there
That saw us land, were all possessed with fear:
And much amazed ran crying up and down,
That enemies were come to take the town.
Some said that we were Pirates, some said Thieves,
And what the women says the men believes,
With that four Constables did quickly call,
Your aid! To Arms your men of Cromer all!
And straightway forty men with rusty bills,
Some armed in Ale,'

took charge of them. There they remained with very scant entertainment, for the constables could by no means be persuaded that they were harmless. Perhaps the officers could not read, for Taylor seems to have been armed with letters of introduction which should have proved his identity. Meanwhile, the natives were not idle. They drank beer, and said that mine host could take the reckoning out of the pirates, and they ransacked the boat, knocking a big hole in her. In the morning a Justice of the Peace was brought, and he, knowing Taylor by repute, contented himself with making him and his companions take the oath of allegiance, and let them go after entertaining them.

The rest of their voyage north is much more humdrum. They discovered the Eager - or, as they termed it, the Higer - in the Wash, and, not having met it before, were duly impressed. And they had an adventure with a fresh east wind meeting the ebb in the Humber,

'And as against the wind we madly venture,
The waves like Pirates board our boat and enter;
But though they came in fury and amain,
Like Thieves we cast them overboard again.'

The rest of his merry adventures on this voyage need not concern us, for he sold the boat at York, and returned home in a conventional manner. But conventionality and Taylor were by no means good friends, if we may judge by the account of another of his adventuresome journeys, undertaken in 1619.[18] He, with a friend named Roger Bird, a vintner by trade, and, on Taylor's evidence, 'a man whom Fortune never yet could tame,' undertook to row from London to Queenborough in a boat made of paper with a pair of oars made of 'stock fishes unbeaten, bound fast to two canes with pack-thread.' Needless to say,

'In one half-hour our boat began to rot:
In which extremity I thought it fit
To put in use a stratagem of wit,
Which was, eight Bullocks' bladders we had bought
Puft stifly full with wind, bound fast and tought,
Which on our boat within the Tide we ty'de,
On each side foore, upon the outward side.
The water still rose higher by degrees.
In three miles going almost to our knees,
Our rotten bottome all to tatters fell,
And left our boat as bottomless as Hell.'

The bladders did their part; indeed, Taylor's pretty wit had taken the additional precaution of having them blown up by eight of the most unmitigated scoundrels he could find, on the principle that 'such breaths as those . . end with hanging, but with drowning never.' The rest of the voyage was miserable in the extreme, but they drove down with the tide, and did in due course fetch Queenborough. There the town turned out and made much of them, and in return they proposed to present their noble craft to the Mayor as a souvenir. But the country people tore it up

'In mammocks peecemeale in a thousand scraps,
Wearing the reliques in their hats and caps.'

And so the Mayor got none - a loss which he seems to have borne very philosophically.

It is scarcely to be wondered at that, after this adventure, Taylor indulged in good resolves. 'Many,' he wrote,[19] 'either out of pride, malice, or ignorance, do speak harshly and hardly of me and divers others, who have attempted and gone dangerous voyages by sea with small wherries or boats, . . . that we do tempt God by undertaking such perilous

[18]John Taylor, ' The Praise of Hempseed,' 1619.
[19]'Kicksey Winsey,' 1619.

courses (which indeed I cannot deny to be true).' But he proceeds to console himself by arguing that all men, whether they desire it or not, are of necessity adventurers, yet ends none the less with the resolve, 'but as concerning adventuring any more voyages to sea with wherries, or any extraordinary means, I have done my last.' But the resolution lasted little longer than if it had been made on New Year's Day.

It will be noticed that in the above passage he refers to wherry journeys undertaken at sea before 1619, also to 'others' who offended in the same respect as himself. Of these earlier voyages there seems to be no record - not that it is needed - while as to the 'others,' they were no doubt the crews of his wherries. The frontispiece to one of his books shows a very rough woodcut of a wherry running before the wind, with two men rowing, and Taylor, in a fine hat and cloak, at the helm. The boat is rigged with a small spritsail, and the mast is stepped right forward, differing in this respect from the spritsail boats of which illustrations are given.[20]

Of the rest of Taylor's coasting voyages it will suffice to speak very briefly. The most considerable of them, and, indeed, the most risky of them all, was from London to Salisbury.[21] On this occasion, as before, he had four companions, and went away flying. It was easy enough for the wherry to run down the river with a fair wind, but after they got round the North Foreland their troubles began. To begin with, they stood too far into Pegwell Bay, and got hopelessly lost among the flats. Eventually they found a shrimper shoving his net along, and to him Taylor spoke, if the poem is to be believed, in very high-falutin strain. However, the shrimper understood him, and undertook to lead the boat 'from out these dangerous shallowes to the deepe.' So indeed he did, leading her 'by the nose' to deep water, and they rewarded him profusely with two groats (eightpence), a sum which would scarcely satisfy his modern counterpart. From that point they had a stiff peg through the Downs to Dover, and from Dover they got, after sundry adventures, to Dungeness, thence to Hastings, and eventually to Christchurch. The rest of the journey was child's play, but, considering that

'For ten long weekes e'er that, 'tis manifest,
The wind had blown at South, or west South-west,
And rais'd the seas: to show each other's power,
And all this space (calme weather) not one hower;'

we may hold that they did very well to struggle through with their self-imposed task. Taylor's evidence of the behaviour of the eastern part of the English Channel is interesting. It made a decided impression on him, though he considered the weather to be abnormal. A present-day writer who is able to form an opinion from a much wider experience, personal and secondhand, of small-boat sailing in those waters can only conclude that Taylor did not know what to expect, for a dusting on the way down to the Wight is very far indeed from being an exceptional experience.

As late as 1641, when he was as much as sixty-one years of age, Taylor made a laborious if less perilous voyage up the Thames, down the Severn, up the Wye, and eventually to the Thames again at Burford after many portages of the wherry. He wrote an account of this entitled his 'Last Voyage,' but, as a matter of fact, he undertook a somewhat similar voyage in 1650, within three years of his death. He may be assumed to have made a modest competence out of his adventures, for, like many sailors before and

[20]Drawings B and C (DrawingsABC.jpg)
[21]John Taylor, 'A New Discovery by Sea,' 1623.

since his time, he spent his latter years as landlord of a public-house. Such was John Taylor, a man surely of some interest to British yachtsmen.

The next yachtsman to claim attention, if less daring, was of far higher rank, and had a more disinterested attachment to the sea. This was Charles II., then an exiled Prince. During the flight after the ruin of the Stuart fortunes at Naseby, Charles sheltered for a few weeks in the Scilly Islands.[22] The period was not long, but there was absolutely nothing to do, and it is more than probable that the Prince picked up the elements of his nautical education at this time. This at least is known, that when the time came to leave that Royalist stronghold for one that was still more secure in Jersey, Charles took the helm of the *Proud Black Eagle* for a considerable part of the voyage. This was in the early spring of 1646. His tastes were well known, and a sympathizer proceeded to put the indulgence of them within his reach. 'On June 8 a beautifully appointed yacht arrived, which was built for him at St. Malo; she had twelve pairs of oars and two masts.' Not a very precise description, but exact enough to let us see that she was not a yacht as the term came shortly to be understood. It is indeed very unlikely that the term was ever applied to her; she was in all likelihood merely a large open boat with a couple of spritsails. A fore staysail had by this time been introduced, but it is more likely than not that this boat had none. Two spritsails without any head-sail was a common rig in England for large open boats until very long after this date. But, whatever the details of the equipment of the boat, the fact is certain that Charles had ample opportunities of acquiring a taste for yachting during his sojourn in the Channel Islands; and when the march of events made it advisable for him to take refuge in Holland, the country where yachting properly so-called was already in a high state of development, he took thither a natural aptitude for the sport, as well as a considerable fund of experience. With these advantages it is not to be wondered at that he should have made the attempt to introduce yachting into England, as soon as the wheel of fortune turned; nor yet that the Dutch, who were very well acquainted with his pursuits, should seek to gain favour with the new monarch by the presentation of a yacht. Further considerations of this vessel and of the acclamation with which her arrival was greeted in England do not properly belong to the pre-Restoration period.

What is assuredly the greatest difficulty of the whole inquiry lies in wait for him who seeks to illustrate the steps by which the type of vessel known as the yacht was evolved. This much we may reasonably allow without any quoting of chapter and verse, that a private yacht must be capable of being handled easily by very few men. It was probably largely because this condition was so long awaiting fulfilment that some fitful attempts at pleasure-sailing were not made far earlier than they were. If Henry VIII. had possessed a fore and aft rigged boat in 1532, he would not have paid eighteen men to row him to Sheppey; if Ferris or Taylor had been able to come by any such craft, we may be certain that they would not have made their adventurous journeys chiefly under oars. The pastime of sailing, as has been insisted upon above, could not have become popular while pirates infested the Channel, but a weatherly sailing-boat would have been at a considerable advantage against a pirate who was probably square rigged. The inclination is strong to decide that if a suitable rig had been in existence something would have been heard of it; and conversely that, as we have no direct evidence of its existence, we may assume that it had not yet come into being.

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[22]Osmund Airy, 'Charles II,' pp. 26, 27, written 'from contemporary authorities.'

Very little indeed is known of any type of medieval ship. A large number of writers - it would be invidious to mention them - have written what purport to be complete historical treatises on the evolution of shipping; but all these books fail lamentably. The great majority of the authors have been, and continue to be, content to copy from their predecessors, and inasmuch as too often they do not know which of these predecessors may be regarded as an authority and which not, they have for the most part gone very far astray. Some comparatively modern writers, such as John Charnock, have done well for recent centuries; two - Sir N. H. Nicolas and that learned Frenchman M. Jal - devoted a large share of their lives to the elucidation of the mysteries of early medieval shipping. Their success, however, was, unfortunately, only partial. They collected vast numbers of new facts, but not enough to enable them to arrive at definite conclusions, and they did not extend their inquiries far into the fifteenth century. The result is that the period directly before the accession of Henry VII., the most interesting period imaginable in the history of the ship, is all but a total blank. We know that during this period the ship gradually took upon herself a rig of her own: she became three-masted, or in the case of great ships four-masted, the topsail was introduced,[23] and, what is more valuable here, the lateen was imported to serve as a mizen.

No one has yet shown when the lateen mizen came into use in England. The matter is one of considerable importance, for the lateen was almost without a doubt the first fore and aft sail to be used in England. It is known to be of Southern origin, and for present purposes it will suffice to say that it has been a native of the Mediterranean since long before England was England. Many opportunities have offered of introducing it into England. The Crusaders of the eleventh and twelfth centuries must have known it, but they did not adopt it. It was frequently seen in English waters during the continual fighting of the fourteenth century, for Genoese and other Mediterranean galleys were constantly employed by our enemies. And again, in the same century, the Venetian galleys had a regular trade with Southampton, coming thither yearly in a small squadron during the latter part of the century. It is possible that these Mediterranean galleys were not without their influence, but the thesis which is in favour at present among naval historians is that we adopted the lateen mizen when we took into the navy the great Spanish carracks which figured among the prizes won from the French during the hard fighting of 1416 and the following year. It is a very probable theory, and it agrees with known facts; but it must be remembered that the adoption of the lateen for great ships by no means proves that it ever became popular for small craft, and there is no evidence that such was the case. Towards 1500 the reputation of the 'deliver sailing' of the Portuguese caravel[24] had reached England, and during the next century a much modified copy of the type had something of a vogue. This was the 'carvell' of Newcastle, a collier which 'went with mizens,' 'whose sails stood like a pair of tailor's shears.' Ralegh[25] thought that the weatherliness of these carvells might be turned to account in war; but Sir Henry Manwayring, practically his contemporary, and a far higher authority on matters maritime, wrote, 'we have little use of them.' They seem, in fact, to have quite died out. Possibly the full form of hull imposed by the rough waters of the North was unfitted to that shape of sail. However, what we do know with approximate certainty, from the

[23]Topsails were used in the Mediterranean during the classical period, but there is no trace of them in Northern waters till near the close of the fifteenth century.

[24]Vide illustration (Illxiandx.jpg)

[25]Ralegh 'The First Invention of Shipping.'

drawings of John Rous, is that the lateen mizen found a place in English ships at the middle of the fifteenth century. And it may have been introduced perhaps half a century earlier. So much for the germ of the fore and aft rig.

The fifteenth century ends with the lateen mizen well established, great ships on both sides of the Channel[26] having two lateens, a main mizen, and a bonaventure mizen. But in our waters it was never used save as a mizen, and in the carvells. It was seemingly never even tried as a boat sail. A curious illustration of this is given by the manner in which the 'great boat,' or launch, of the famous *Henri Grace de Dieu* was rigged in 1514. There was no distinctive small boat rig beyond, perhaps, a single square sail, so the determination was taken to rig the boat as a model of the great ship. Accordingly, she was rigged with four masts and a main topmast, and must have presented much such an appearance as is shown by the conjectural drawing here given.[27] The details of her equipment, the number of shrouds to each mast, and the like, are known,[28] and it is clear that the whole lot of masts, spars, rigging, and sails, had to be put into her every time she was to be used. The long-boat was towed astern, never hoisted aboard at this date, and she was never towed with her spars standing. Of course, this cumbersome rig must have been very much in the nature of an experiment, just as was that of the parent ship. We know, from the same inventory, that the *Henri Grace de Dieu* really possessed the grotesque sails which appear in the popular descriptions of her; but it is in the last degree unlikely that she ever used them on service. The inventory belongs to a date before she was commissioned, and included topgallant sails, amongst other things. The idea of the topgallant was even older, but the use of it was not yet. For various reasons, which need not be entered upon here, it was found impossible to take them into anything like general use for more than 100 years to come. Thus the rig of the *Great Harry* was incontinently cut down, and was not repeated. Similarly, we might suppose her boat's rig to have been reduced, even if we did not know that at or about this time a fore and aft sail of special type was coming into favour among Northern nations. This was the spritsail, and its advent marks an enormous advance. The earliest illustration of it which the writer has been able hitherto to trace is taken from an English map of 1527. How long it existed before this date it is impossible to say.

It is a matter for regret that maps earlier than 1515 are not adorned with ships, even allowing for the fact that cartographers had a decided preference for drawing ships of strongly conventional - i.e., obsolete - types. The 1527 map, however, seems to be fairly up-to-date in its types. It shows only one spritsail boat,[29] having one sail only, and one man in her, and she is planted in the South Atlantic, midway between Tierra del Fuego and the Cape of Good Hope. The next illustrations[30] of importance belong to 1558, and show very many spritsail boats in Dutch waters, one of them[31] being obviously decked with a coach-house roof amidships. But as yet the day of foresails had not come. It must have been soon after this date, however, for it appears first in a drawing of about 1568,[32]

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[26]Navy Records Society, 'Inventories of Henry VII.,' 1896; 'The War with France, 1512,' 1897.
[27]Vide illustration (Drawing ABC.jpg)
[28]Oppenheim, 'A History of the Administration of the Royal Navy,' Appendix A.
[29]Vide illustration.
[30]Vide Photographs 1 and 2 (Illiandii.jpg)
[31]Vide Drawing C. (Drawing ABC.jpg).
[32]Braun and Hohenberg, "Civitates Orbis Terrarum," a collection of drawings made from 1563 to the beginning of the next century.

in a boat having no bowsprit and rigged simply with sprit mainsail and forestay-sail; and by 1583-1585, for which dates many illustrations[33] are available, the forestay-sail had become universal in conjunction with the sprit mainsail. It will, no doubt, look curious to modern eyes to consider these galliots and hoys of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The earlier type of hoy had no mizen, the galliot-hoy had a lateen mizen; both alike had a sprit mainsail, a forestay-sail, and a square spritsail under the bowsprit. The jib was not yet invented. If further evidence of this fact were necessary, it might be found in the snaking on the double topmast forestays,[34] which occurs fairly frequently.

Curious as it may seem, the lugsail had hardly come into existence at this date, if we may judge by the pictures available. There is one[35] belonging to this period, 1583, but none of earlier date, and the name, as distinct from the thing, does not occur till the eighteenth century. It has been suggested that the doggers of the Middle Ages had lugsails, but the suggestion does .not admit of proof. Indeed, it is one of the main difficulties of these early inquiries that clues whereby names may be fitted to the types that occur are few and far between. There are names enough and to spare, and there are occasional nameless illustrations which ought to absorb some of them; but, pending further information, the names and the things remain apart. In brief, we know ships,[36] barks,[37] hoys,[38] galliot-hoys,[39] caravels,[40] galleys, busses,[41] and a few more, but as to what crayers, doggers, evers, and very many other types looked like, we have little or no certain information.

A further unsatisfactory thing is that it is impossible hitherto to say in what country the fore and aft spritsail or the forestay-sail originated. We know that they were of Northern origin, and we know very approximately their date. But whether the credit of them is to be given to the English or the Dutch we do not know. The leeboard appears to be characteristically Dutch, though when it had its beginning is very far from clear. But a very interesting point occurs here. In 1531 Pizarro discovered the Peruvian balsa,[42] having an undoubted centre-board. The fact seems to have become fairly well known, but the idea slept unused, and we do not hear of it again for nearly half a century, when the following interesting description of it occurs.[43] What does not appear is whence Bourne drew his inspiration. He was an ingenious man, and may have evolved it out of his inner consciousness, but it is much more likely that the germ, at least, of the idea came to him from a conversation with some seafaring friend who had heard of the balsa. However that may be, Bourne's 'devise' is manifestly a very great improvement on the balsa.

'For to make a ship to draw or goe but little into the water, and to hold a good winde, and to sail well both by and large, were very necessarie, and especially in these our

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[33]Vide Photographs 3 to 6 (Illiiiandiv.jpg and Illvandvi.jpg)
[34]Vide Photographs 3 and 5(Illiiiandiv.jpg and Illvandvi.jpg)
[35]Vide Photograph 7(Illviiandviii.jpg)
[36]Vide Photographs 1 and 8 (Illiandii.jpg and Illviiandviii.jpg)
[37]Vide Photograph 10 (Illixandx.jpg)
[38]Vide Photograph 3 (Illiiiandiv.jpg)
[39]Vide Photographs 4, 5, and Perhaps 6 (Illiiiandiv.jpg and Illvandvi.jpg)
[40]Vide Photograph 9 (Illixandx.jpg)
[41]Vide Photograph 8 (Illviiandviii.jpg)
[42]This is illustrated in John Charnock's 'Marine Architecture,' i., pp. 12-14.
[43]William Bourne, 'Inventions and Devises,' 1578, Devise 17

shallow seas, amongst such a number of sands and Banckes. Wherefore if you would have a Shippe to drawe but a little water, and to saile well by the winde, then doe this, she must have a flat bottome, like as the Binelanders and Plaites have on the other side of the sea in Flanders, and as I have shewed in the 9 Chap. in my Booke before mentioned, that all ships that be slatie, will saile well with the winde: but now to make it to saile well by the winde, then doo this. That place where as the Keele should stande, must be open into the Shippe, and made tight on both the sides, as high or deepe as the Ship doth goe into the water when shee is loden, and in that there must be made a thing to be letten downe, and to be wound up againe neede shall require, which thing must be in this manner, to bee as long as almost the length of the Keel; and to be well plancked and made strong, according unto the bignesse of the Shippe, and to be beaten downe into the water 4 or 5 foote, according unto the quantitie of the Ship, and then when you would have it to hold a good wind, cause that to bee let downe into the water, and then that will not suffer the Ship to fall to Leewardes and then when the winde is large, and that you are to passe any shallowe water, it may be wound up againe, and by this meanes you make a Ship of 100 Tunnes not to drawe 5 foote water, having length and breadth correspondent to beare the tonnage.'

The thing is in almost every respect identical with the modern centre-board, and, considering that Bourne's book in which the above passage occurs was perfectly well known, both during his lifetime and after, it is not a little remarkable that the adoption of the centre-board was so long delayed.

It is satisfactory to be able to trace the origin of the centre-board even thus approximately. But, unfortunately, we have very little precise knowledge of how, when, or where the leeboard took its rise. It is, seemingly, such a very obvious device that we might almost have expected to find traces of it in the dark ages; but this is far from being the case. Perhaps it is not unfair to infer from Bourne's suggestion for a centre-board that no corresponding 'devise' of any kind existed in his day. It is at least certain that, had the leeboard been in use, his remarks would have had far less point. The flat-bottomed bilanders and plates which he mentions occur often enough in sixteenth-century writings, but no one of earlier date than Bourne seems to have thought that it might be possible to make them more weatherly. And not only is there an utter absence of the leeboard from the written page, but it is equally absent from all drawings of small craft till some time after Bourne wrote. In the illustrations of hoys and so forth which are given in this chapter there is no trace of any leeboard, and, indeed, none is to be found at an earlier date than 1585, the year to which the latest of these illustrations belong. They appear first in a plan, or bird's-eye view, of the town of Gouda,[44] drawn in 1585; but, unfortunately, the drawing is not distinct enough to be worthy of reproduction, though, on the other hand, it is clear enough to establish the fact with reasonable certainty. But it is worth notice that, in the very many illustrations of shipping which occur in this book for the period between 1574 and 1585, there is no other trace of the leeboard; and it is also noteworthy that there seems to be no early written record of its use.

That this is so is due in part, perhaps, to the fact that we do not know too well how to look for such a record. The term 'lee-board' certainly was not introduced until very long after the thing, and what name was applied to the thing in its early days we cannot

[44]Braun and Hoh(g)enberg, 'Civitates Orbis Terrarum,' vol. iv., plate 14 [– Gouda not listed on site:historic-cities.huji.ac.il/mapmakers/braun_hogenberg.html]

say for certain. Perhaps it was called a 'plate,' after the flat-bottomed craft to which it was first fitted; it is at least certain that this was its French name early in the seventeenth century.

'Heus (i.e., hoys) du Havre de Grace, Flandres, et Angleterre, du port au plus de trois cens tonneaux sont equipez d'autre façon que les Navires communs . . .' and then, after giving a description of their rig, which corresponds exactly with that shown in the illustrations of 1585, with studding-sails added, the author[45] concludes thus: 'A chaque bord ou coste, ils ont des grands bois en forme d'ailes ou nageoires de poisson nommés Plates, affichez par des chevilles de fer.' The nature of the description, which is more minute than he gives to well-known things, would seem to show that even in 1634 the leeboard was by no means universal.

Perhaps some future inquirer may succeed in tracking the leeboard to its origin; at present it is only possible to say with certainty that it was beginning to be used in Holland in 1585, and that it was well established in Northern Europe half a century later. Whether it was invented in Holland or in England is quite uncertain, though at first sight such evidence as there is would appear to favour the Dutch. The suggestion that it was introduced into Holland during the Spanish occupation by men who knew the secret of the balsa may be discounted, for if Spaniards had had anything to do with introducing it into the Low Countries, we would at least expect to find it in use in Spain also. But we do not do so.

The earliest instance of yachts with leeboards belongs to 1638. In that year Queen Mary of France visited Amsterdam, where a review of yachts was held in her honour. Mr. Clark[46] gives a most interesting reproduction of a contemporary illustration of the event, showing that these yachts had not only adopted the leeboard, which, as we have seen, was by now in common use among hoys, but that the gaff and boom were already popular, and that the principle of two fore and aft rigged masts was being tested even at this early date. It is true that another illustration[47] shows a similar yacht ostensibly belonging to 1600; but, unfortunately, there is no statement of the evidence on which the claim to such an early date rests, and a great ship which appears in the background of the same picture clearly belongs to a later date. The internal evidence tends to show that the picture is approximately contemporary with that of 1638. It is unfortunate that the dates assigned to others of Mr. Clark's most interesting pictures do not seem to be above suspicion. Thus, a yacht said to have been owned by Maurice of Nassau[48] shows a mainsail with a long gaff, but no boom, a square topsail such as hoys carried in 1585, a forestay-sail, and a bowsprit on which a jib may have been set. There is nothing intrinsically improbable in the suggestion that such a yacht was in use in 1625, but the statement needs confirmation, especially as the square-rigged ships in the background show improvements of rig which had not then been introduced, and as Maurice, who was born in 1604, was in 1625 either at the university or in the camp. Similarly an illustration[49] assigned to 1630 can hardly be accepted, although the rig of the yacht shown - spritsail,

[45] Etienne Cleirac, 'Us et Coustumes de la Mer,' 1661. The part quoted was written in 1634.
[46] 'History of Yachting' p. 20
[47] Ibid., p. 14
[48] Ibid., p.18
[49] 'History of Yachting', p.30

staysail, and bowsprit without a jib set - is quite probable for that date; but the author of the original picture was Carel Allard,[50] and he flourished half a century later.

But although the whole of Mr. Clark's illustrations for the pre-Restoration period cannot be accepted, yet it may be granted at once that the net effect of them is to show conclusively that the gaff and boom were introduced in the early part of the century. They illustrate also the adoption of the jib, though on this score there is some uncertainty; and they show that the square topsail was used at an early date in yachts, while the fore and aft or gaff topsail did not exist either then or, indeed, until long afterwards.

Nevertheless, although these pictures are of undoubted interest as illustrating the development of a convenient rig for pleasure craft, it must be admitted that they have little or nothing to do with the rise of the sport in England. All the yachts represented during the pre-Restoration period are Dutch, for English yachts did not as yet exist. It is, indeed, often loosely stated that in 1604 Phineas Pett built a 'yacht' for Henry, Prince of Wales. In actual fact the little vessel was far from being a 'yacht' or pleasure craft; she was an instructional model built with the express purpose of giving the young Prince 'instruction in the business of shipping.' The Lord High Admiral, to whose order she was built, was the Earl of Nottingham, who, as Lord Howard of Effingham, had commanded in chief against the Armada with his flag in the *Ark Royal*. What more natural, therefore, than that this famous old ship, which was still on the active list of the navy, should be chosen for reproduction in miniature? The model, duly finished in March, 1604, was 28 feet by the keel with a beam of 12 feet, and was estimated to be of 30 tons burden[51]. She was 'baptized' with proper ceremony, receiving the name of *Disdain*, but to what extent she was used after the inaugural ceremonies is a matter for conjecture. It is certain, however, that the nautical tastes of the Prince did not decline. In 1608, being then fourteen years old he paid a visit of inspection to Woolwich Dockyard, where he was especially interested in the first beginnings of the *Prince Royal*, the great ship which was launched in September, 1610, and was nominally presented to him by the King. Such a presentation justified biographers in speaking of the Prince Royal as the Prince's own ship, but it was in reality no more than a formal compliment. However, in June, 1612,[52] Pett began to build a small new ship which was to serve as a pinnace to the great ship. A pinnace at that date, it should be remembered, was not a ship's boat, but a sea-going tender and ship-rigged. The pinnace in which Prince Henry proposed to sail the narrow seas was of 250 tons burden, being 72 feet long by 24 feet beam. But *dis aliter visum*, and she was never used for that purpose. The Prince died on November 12 of that year, before she was finished. The mention of this model ship brings us in touch with the square rig of the period, and although this branch of the naval art does not, strictly speaking, fall within our province, some short mention of it may be justified. There is a prevalent misconception about the state of development which had been reached, and even serious historians appear to believe that the topgallant sail was in common use at this date. As a matter of fact, the *Ark Royal*,[53] the flagship in 1588, had one topgallant sail, and seemingly

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[50] Bryan, 'Dictionary of Painters and Engravers' (Only vol.5 available online – vol.1 required to follow this reference.

[51] Dr. Thomas Birch, D.D., ' Life of Henry, Prince of Wales,' pp. 38, 39.

[52] Dr. Thomas Birch, D.D., Life of Henry, Prince of Wales,' p. 282.

[53] Inventories in State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth, vol. ccxx.[– papers available on microfiche from Truman State University, USA]

did not use it; the *Victory* had two; other ships had none. The use of these sails came in very slowly, and they were not carried for winter cruising, strange as the assertion may seem, till the eighteenth century. In Elizabeth's and James I's reign great ships were what we should call barque-rigged, with one or two lateen mizens, but no topsail, with courses and topsails on fore and main, and a spritsail on the bowsprit. The mizen topsail, the spritsail-topsail, and - in the case of small craft - staysails were gradually introduced during the reign of Charles I. It is at least sufficiently remarkable that the clumsy and inefficient spritsail-topsail was being invented and introduced for big ships at the exact period when the jib began to be used in small craft. Obvious as the jib may seem to modern eyes, it should be remembered that it was long in forcing itself into favour. Van der Velde's pictures show that even during the reign of Charles II. it was not often set, even by the small craft which were rigged to carry it, and a century was destined to pass by before it succeeded in ousting the square spritsail -topsail from square-rigged ships. The seventeenth-century idea was that it was 'very prejudicial' to sailing on a wind.