



Zingara was a Buzzard's Bay 30-footer, and though built in 1902 she made her debut as an ocean-going vessel in 1920.

To Nova Scotia and Back in a Thirty-Footer

The Composite Composition of Her Incomparable Complement

ZINGARA was a debutante as an ocean going vessel in 1920, having been built in 1902, a Herreshoff Buzzard's Bay thirty-footer, forty-six and a half feet long over all. Since 1919 her home port has been Port Washington. As a mere matter of principle, *Zingara* never promises any particular schedule for her cruises; she makes no positive commitments but always exceeds expectations. A cruise should not be planned, it should be hoped; Nova Scotia was our 1920 hope.

It was after dark on Friday, July 2nd, when the extra equipment was put aboard and only the eight pound lead lost its way to the ship. Saturday morning we filled the water tank and two five-gallon bottles—about fifty gallons all told, plenty (of water) for two weeks for five men—put the "lee boards" on the bunks so that we could sleep to windward, set up the seagoing stove on pivots so as to cook at any angle, took the supplies aboard, and put things to rights.

The extra equipment included a hundred fathoms of sounding wire on a reel with an indicator, a sextant, a watch whose rate had been observed for several days, a Bowditch, a nautical almanac, a spare

half coil of new manila of the size of the running rigging, an extra spare (new and heavy) anchor cable, a taffrail log, a barometer and thermometer which we never found useful, and more charts than we thought we would ever use but which we found too few before we were long away.

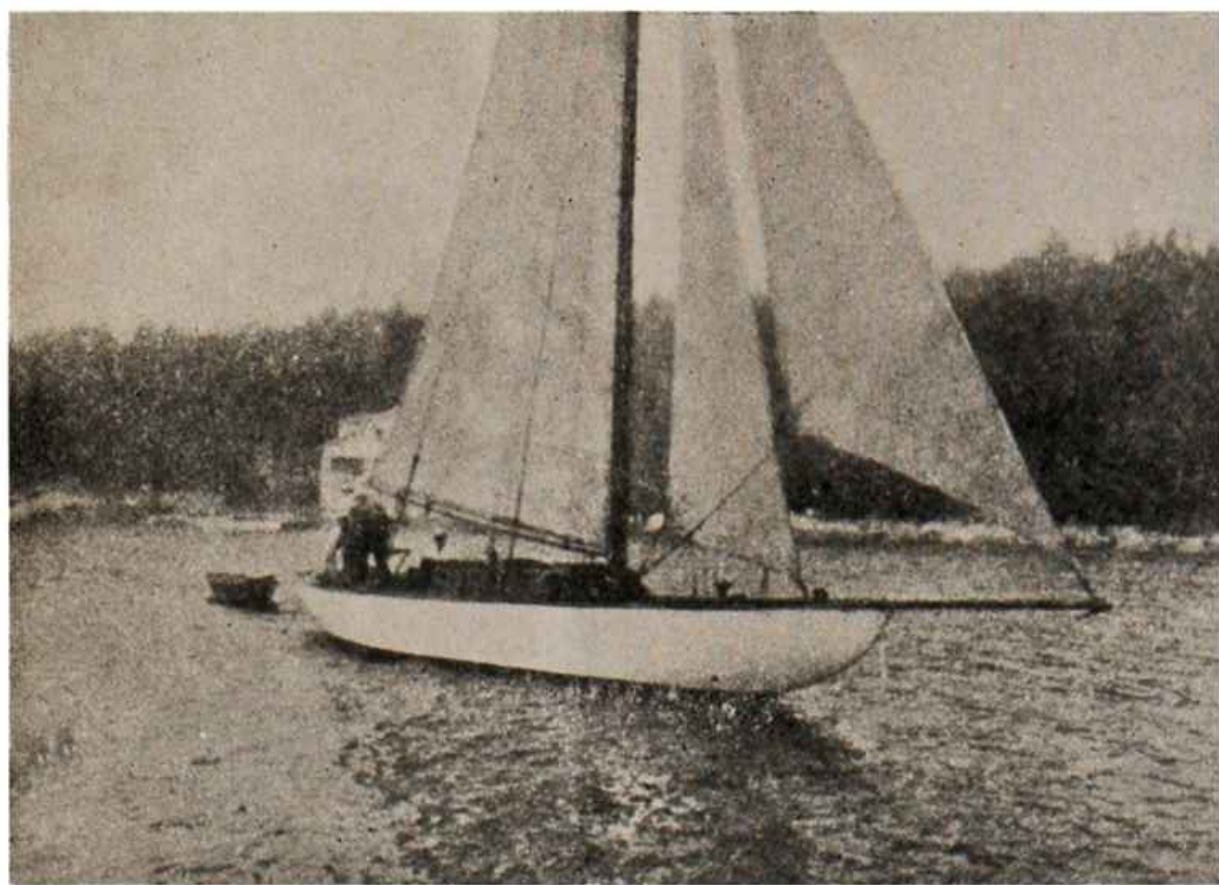
All we did Saturday afternoon was to run from Port Washington over to Larchmont where we waited for the fifth officer, a colonel. He came aboard about 10 P. M. in a flat calm. With the barest breath of air, we declared independence from land at midnight. The lightning and booming to the northward suggested the possibility of wind, but it was daylight before the *Zingara* began to pick up speed with a west-sou'west breeze. By afternoon there were times when the spinnaker became over jubilant. At early twilight Sunday evening we were half way from Point Judith to the Vineyard light vessel, and took in the mainsail to reef it for a gust from the northwest. In the process the lazy-jacks parted, dropping the colonel into the briny. He had been leaning on the boom. Cotton rope is not reliable. Some comment occurred on the leisurely way in which his body was hauled back on deck. He took part in the

comment. The comment part of him was dry.

The boom was wrestled into its crotch and we ran into Vineyard Haven under jib and staysail much more handily than if we had been a yawl under jib and jigger; because, had *Zing* carried the lethargic yawl rig, the wind would have been a whole gale, which it wasn't. Yawls are such weather breeders! Did you ever converse with a proud "yawler" when he neglected to mention hurricanes? We are not unanimous on this paragraph; our seasick member (*infra*) likes yawls. As the colonel went below at midnight he said to the watch, "if you feel like leaning on anything, call somebody."

The sun rose soon after the anchor sank. After breakfast work began on rigging some substantial quarter lifts while two of the crew went ashore to telegraph home and to increase our supply of shackles, fish lines and ice. We had found that in running before the wind the tender jerked hard on its painter so we stowed it upside down on the forward deck. Launching it from there was a twisting toss and a spanking splash.

At 4:40 P. M. we were away again from the Vineyard. This was Monday, July 5th. Off East Chop the spinnaker was hoisted.



Leaving East Blue Hill, Maine, in the early morning.



Zing's crew after the Colonel had left.

At either Hedge Fence or Cross Rip we had a running conversation with a hand on the light vessel.

"Where are you bound?"

"Yarmouth."

"Yarmouth is up there," pointing northward.

"Yarmouth, Nova Scotia."

The answer was uplifted hands.

Shortly thereafter the spinnaker fouled one of the jib snap hooks and began to tear. The place where it caught was 30 feet up the stay and just out of reach from the mast head. The man at the helm, alone on deck, sang out for help. The crew crawled up, all except the skipper who was frying the supper. Council of war. "Slack off the sheet." The sail tore 6 inches more and staid foul. "Haul in the sheet." The sail tore some more and was still foul. "Shucks! Damn!" etc.

Annoyed by the remarks on deck, the skipper lashed the frying pan and came up to investigate. With a stare of deep concern at the tearing sail and a brief glance of contempt at the crew, he shed his boots, swarmed up the wire stay, cleared away the sail, slid down again, rubbed his hands on his breeches and declined four simultaneous offers of a job in the circus. We took turns mending the torn sail and it was not ready for use again till the next morning.

Stone Horse Light Vessel puzzled us. Our chart showed a fixed white light. Again a conversation with the watch on the light vessel: "How long has your light been flashing?" to which the answer came, a drawl of utter disgust at ignorance, "Two months."

The watch changed near Pollock Rip Slue Light Vessel at midnight. Theoretically we had three shifts, four on, four off and four on call. Practically, the crew, even though we were all officers, had not yet

learned to sleep in daylight, so those of the middle watch, 12-4 A. M., left the deck to darkness and to a single hand. It's the best watch of all—solitude and expanse with the scend and slide of the sea.

The wind that night was W.N.W. and the course N.E. by E. As a precaution a double reef had been tucked in before dark; nobody waked when it was shaken out at dawn.

Once the spinnaker was up again later in the morning, it stayed up for over twenty-four hours. That second night in the open with the spinnaker drawing well was the very best of all. Of course the helmsman couldn't see the pennant and we had had doubts whether the compass alone would prove a sure means of preventing jibes; moreover the binnacle light was temperamental. But there was no trouble in practice, the feel of the wind on the helmsman's cheek was accurate enough, and for long spells a star dead astern was a perfect course protractor. Later, we found sailing to windward in the dark much more troublesome.

The Gulf of Maine does not need traffic cops yet. Only two vessels were sighted in our forty-hour run across. Why does the crowd prefer Fifth Avenue? The weather, though, was cool enough so that at night the watch wrapped himself as for a sleigh ride.

If you wish to keep informed of what is going on above when you are below while under way, choose a bunk in the forecabin. The mast and the stays telegraph all news to that part of the ship. The trouble is that the messages are not only amplified tenfold below deck, but are also in code. The rubbing of the snap hooks on the headstay is reported in terms of a chain cable passing through the chocks; the

chafing of the gaff jaws on the mast sounds as though the tender were being shunted across the deck. Until you have deciphered these messages you cannot get over the edge of the purple down, but must "go back with Policeman Day, back from the City of Sleep."

The Bellman's navigating methods in the Hunting of the Snark are not so fantastic after all. You will remember that "he had bought a large map representing the sea, without the least vestige of land." Our course was plotted on such a map (supplied by the government) as we went along. The plan was to make for a point fifty miles due west of Yarmouth and then run at the coast on a parallel of latitude. We chose a north and south coast line for our first landfall because we felt surer that we could determine latitude by observation than longitude. Outlying ledges and fog seemed simple if approached latitudinally. Besides there was Lurcher Shoal light vessel—what more could we want?

Our Wednesday noon "fix" by sextant chronometer and mathematics put us just twenty miles north of the Yarmouth latitude, where we should have been by dead reckoning. According to this we had overshot and our log had under registered about one mile in ten, which might be accounted for by the following sea.

But the tide was setting us south that afternoon at the rate of $3\frac{1}{2}$ knots per hour and might compensate for the error.

Not having that confidence in the navigator which we afterwards developed, we were no bolder than to assume we were *somewhere* between the dead reckoning and the observed position. We headed east, anyhow, with the wind shifting into the south east. Land by four

The sound of the breakers on Long Island preceded sight of the land; in fact we never did see the top of the cliffs. Three or four boat lengths from the shore, as soon as we could see the rocks, we changed our course to parallel the coast line. The pilot guaranteed there was no bottom and no protruding ledge. After a mile or two the current became swift; it runs seven knots an hour in the passage. We passed some fishermen in launches, but still saw only one shore. The fog continued thick till we were well through Petite Passage and out in the open Bay of Fundy. Then came bright sunshine, and our bedding decorated decks, stays, reef points and mast hoops.

As sun worshipers we put our last New York beefsteak on the fire and prepared lunch in elaborate style. Politely appreciative comment was looked for from our pilot. His words were, "Anything goes when I'm to sea." And yet Judge Hough says seamen are not truthful.

It was late afternoon when we anchored at Digby. A swim; then a gaze at the natural charm of Annapolis Basin stretching away to the north, followed by dinner and a bowling contest ashore; a climb in the dark down a ladder, twenty-seven feet of which was slimy; sleep—and the anchor on deck at dawn.

This was Friday morning, July 9th, and the tide was with us at the start of our 500 mile beat homeward. When you have said the wind was southwest, you have described it with a very fair degree of accuracy for the entire homeward voyage. Even the calms had a southwest slant and the bumps there was no doubt about.

Friends and relatives in Frenchman's and Blue Hill Bays, on the Maine coast, threw us delightfully behind schedule and robbed us of the colonel. In return we shanghaied a good sailor at Castine for one night only, but that one the best of black-night sailing among the islands from Castine to Rockland, beating down the East side of Islesboro where there are ledges but no lights. There we learned how surely you can pick your way by watching the log and keeping accurate track of courses and distances on the chart.

Another transient came aboard at Tenant's Harbor. He had been a sailor from his cat boat days; but machine guns must have disturbed the little organs in his ears which used to keep his insides level, de-

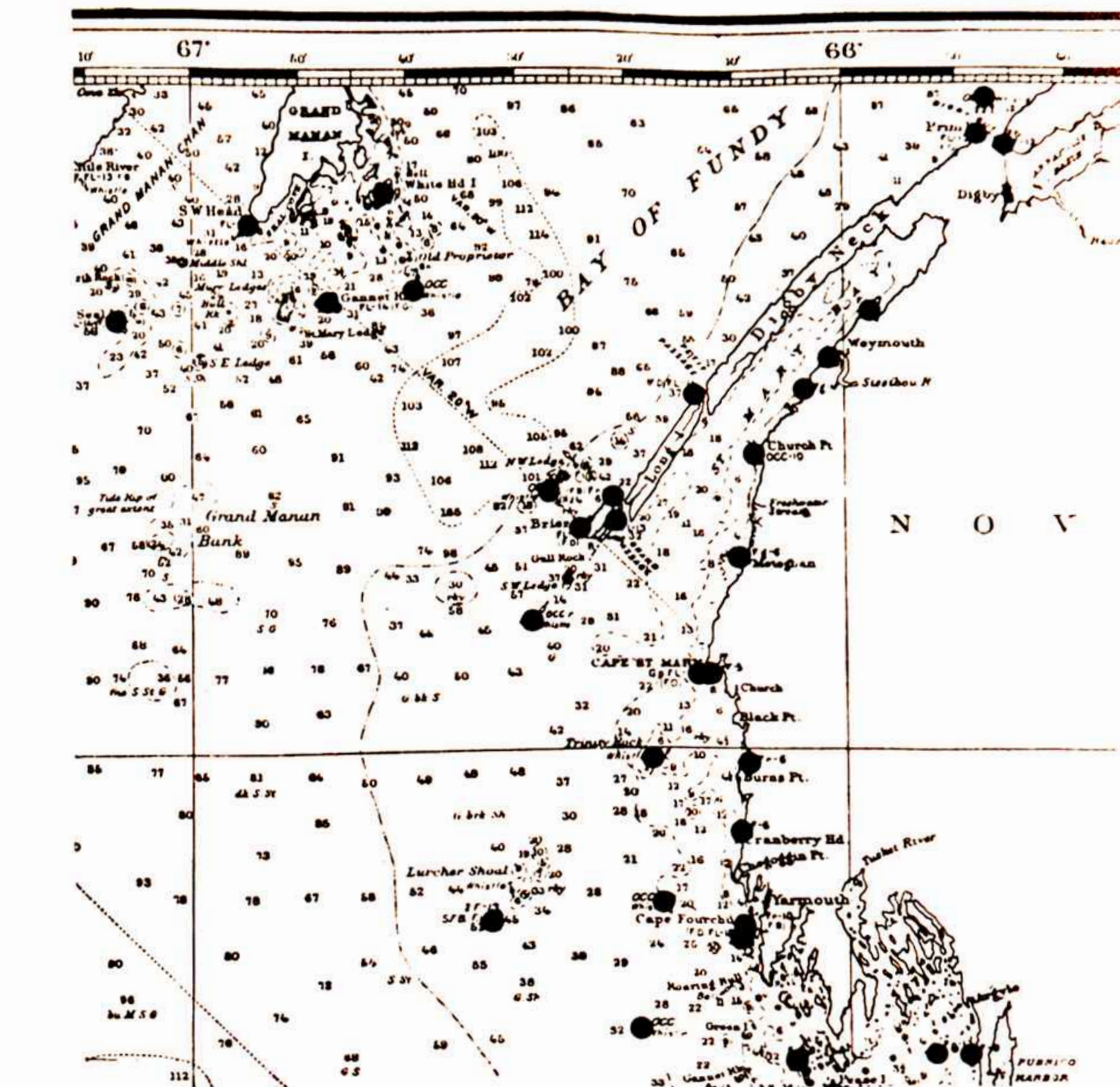


Chart of the entrance of the Bay of Fundy, showing where *Zingara* made her landfall.

spite bounding billows. At any rate he was soon seasick and lost everything but his humor. We were debating whether to push on straight for Cape Cod or to put in for the night; it was foggy, thundering, raining and *Zing* carried a double reef. The ill one's contribution to the debate was, "Do as you think best, but if you stay out here you will have the novel experience of a burial at sea." That settled it. Sheets were eased, and after groping through the murk a mile farther than our calculated position warranted we picked up Burnt Island again, ran in to George's Harbor and were soon moored and boiling lobsters.

It was again Friday, and a quiet morning, as we left the lobstermen's huts slowly astern. We did not put in port again till Sunday night in Vineyard Haven. Friday night we did one foolish thing. Just after dark we were off Cape Elizabeth. We knew there were messages for us in Portland. One man rowed ashore alone to the life saving station to telephone while *Zing* tacked back and forth a mile off shore, keeping the two lights in line. The night was pitch dark and quite a surf was breaking on the rough coast. The oarsman returned within the time allowance and we ceased to repent for having let him go.

The wind was very light that

night and Saturday. During Saturday night we made our landfall on Cape Cod, perfectly. Sunday morning found us drifting off the Nauset lights on the outside of the Cape where, with the generous help of some real fishermen who supplied the bait, we caught a fine mess of codfish.

Sunday evening, in Nantucket Sound, the wind began to climb the Beaufort Scale. Just before dark we tucked in a double reef, and shortly the mainsail was lowered altogether. Temporarily it blew from a point or two east of south; then a wave licked over the weather rail into the cockpit, as if it had lost its way in the dark. We were due in New York Monday but we anchored in Vineyard Haven, and thereby spoiled our chance to make the round trip in two weeks.

The next morning the wind was equally strong but southwest again. Consider the strain on a modern boat going to windward! In *Zing's* case there was a forty-foot lever twisting her to leeward in one part of her structure; five tons of torsion to windward in another part; and added to these the jerk caused when her blunt bow bumped each buffeting billow. No wonder many boats squeeze their putty and wrinkle their canvas decks! The queer thing is the fatigue and reinvigoration of material. Steady

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cruising will soften up many a modern boat; but give her a week at a quiet mooring and she is often as sound as ever.

The only signs *Zing* showed of her pounding were faint cracks in the many coats of paint forward along a few of her formerly invisible seams. Still, it might have been cruel to her to drive her out again in that wind and sea. So we tacked to the head of the harbor and inside the breakwater with staysail alone, and went for a horseback ride ashore, the mere mention of which still creates chortling glee.

We had stayed in port to spare the *Zing*. When is caution dangerous? Had it not been for the watchful kindness of neighbors on the schooner *Surprise* and the cat boat *Victory* we might have found *Zing* mugged up on the jetty when we returned from our ride. Her cable had been left too short; she had dragged, but fortunately by fouling another boat was delayed in her career toward the rough stones long enough to be rescued.

Tuesday morning, and away again not to stop till the eye splice of the home mooring surrounded *Zing's* samson post. Not to stop? There was some very light weather—so light Tuesday night that we could not get off the steamer track and the whole procession of a dozen passenger boats had to swerve for us. They did not seem to see our running lights, but a wave of a white light would make them veer at once. An electric flash light to show off the sail would have been handy that night.

The last night, July 21-22, in Long Island Sound, there was a neat little breeze—sou'west, of course. Every now and then *Zing* would be put in irons. When the first man did it relations were somewhat strained; when the last man did it he could fairly feel the satisfaction exuding from the cabin. Alone on deck with a lively wind and double headsail sheets and back stays to manage, there is time for a wide play of emotions before you return from irons to your course and speed.

We reached Port Washington at 4 P. M., July 22nd, everything dry and sweet below, scrubbed, manicured and ready to start on another cruise if there were only another vacation. A table, compiled by the navigator, showed us that we had been under way for 258 hours and 35 minutes in the 18 days of the cruise. We had covered 1,067

nautical miles on the shortest distance from port to port and had made an average speed of 4.13 knots, "on our course," and much better than that in total distance sailed.

Designers and builders of honest boats are a blessing to mankind. May the makers of *Zingara* live long, prosper, and when their turns come, enjoy the great adventure as we enjoyed the little one they made possible for us.
