



Streaking it up the Jersey beach in a snappy beam wind.



Going to sea is not always a hard life.



Bowling along through a smooth sea, headed for Sandy Hook.

A June Cruise in *Senta*

By SAMUEL WETHERILL

THE little sloop *Senta*, born and bred in the Herreshoff shops at Bristol, and raised on the blue waters of Narragansett and Buzzard's Bays, had strayed far from home in the fall of 1919, and hibernated unhappily in a Philadelphia yacht yard. But her owner, finding that a somewhat larger boat, with a motor, was better suited to trips on the Delaware River and Chesapeake Bay, broadcasted a signal which was promptly answered by John Alden up in Boston, and *Senta* rejoiced at the prospect of returning to her native waters once more.

As the new owner could not find time to sail *Senta* up to Newport himself, and as I was just hankering after a trip of this sort, I calmed John's worries and made hasty preparations for the trip. Getting a crew together was easy and a few 'phone calls were all that was necessary to sign up three more windjammers, two of whom had commanded sub-chasers in the late argument with Fritz, while the third had made himself particularly obnoxious to the Huns as a Squadron Commander in the air forces at the front.

And so it was that on a fine morning early in June, first mate Nooch Kurtz drew up at my front door in his trusty Hupp, accompanied by "Bill" Latta and an enormous amount of dunnage. At a nearby grocery store and meat market we loaded up the Hupp still further, until the tonneau was full and the mudguards groaned under a cargo of suitcases and blanket rolls, stowed Flivver fashion.

Getting under way again, we picked up "Bart" Hirst at his house, and were about to proceed upon duty assigned, when "Bart" suddenly declared he was ill, and must see his favorite doctor imme-

diately. Emerging from the Doc's office shortly after, "Bart" looked better already, but asserted that he must get a prescription filled. So we made a quick dash to the nearest drug store, from which our ship mate presently emerged, looking completely cured, so we went our way rejoicing, secure in the knowledge that "Bart's" prescription was the kind which would cure all hands of anything, from snake bite to a broken leg.

With cargo bulging from the hatches and all sail drawing, the old Hupp responded nobly to the driving, and in short order we drew up at the Corinthian Yacht Club at Essington. While Nooch moored the Hupp in a shed, the rest of us lugged a ton or so of luggage and supplies aboard the club launch, and we were off to *Senta*, anchored out in the stream. Chucking all the truck below, to be stowed later, we hoisted sail quickly and stood down the Delaware, with a head wind, but fortunately a fair tide, bound on our 380-mile jaunt to Newport.

What kind of a craft was *Senta*? Well, she was a short ended Herreshoff sloop, 32 feet on deck, 25 feet on the water, 9 feet beam, and a good chunk of lead some 5 feet below the surface. Below decks she had a typical Herreshoff layout, with two quarter berths and two Pullman type berths in the main cabin. Forward of this was a fine thwartships galley, which sported a two-burner blue flame kerosene stove, sink and dresser, plenty of lockers, etc.—and last, but not least, full headroom for the cook and a galley hatch to let out the heat, smoke and smell. Still farther forward was a small forecabin with pipe berth and toilet, so that *Senta* could easily accommodate five, each with a berth of his own and no doubling up. I think that most cruising men

will agree that when they get a boat only 32 feet long with as much room as this that they have *some* boat.

The breeze was a good one as we stood down the Delaware, with just enough heft to it to put *Senta* down to her best sailing lines and make the ex-subchasers realize that they were aboard a windjammer once more. We certainly had a lot of duff to stow, and apparently not half enough space to stow it in, but, as usual in such cases, we finally found a home for everything and all hands turned to and enjoyed our first sail of the season as we made good time down the river, with the tide giving us a welcome boost in the right direction.

Off Marcus Hook came a slight diversion when the port shrouds came out of the spreader. With a silent curse on the head of the man who had done the sloppy rigging job, I grabbed a piece of marline and shinned up the stick to make repairs. In the excitement of getting under way I had forgotten to change my nose glasses for "specs," and I had just about completed my job aloft when a sudden heave and a gust of wind came and *bingo*—the goggles departed for Davy Jones's locker. With another curse on the head of the careless squarehead—out loud this time—I slid down the stick, dived below and pawed around in my suit case, to come up for air clutching an empty spectacle case.

I didn't know whether to cuss the squarehead or myself this time, so gave each a choice selection. All I could do now was to borrow a spare pair of Bill's, which I did, and although they were not a perfect 36, still I could tell a spar buoy from a steamer's stack, and they would have to do until I could get a better fit later on.

For quite a while we had pleasant sailing, considering the muddy, oily waters we were traversing, but about six o'clock the wind dropped and the tide turned against us. As it was poor business bucking a Delaware River tide and a dying head wind, we anchored behind Finn's Point jetty and after an enjoyable meal all hands turned in for a bit of a snooze.

The tide turned fair about midnight so we got under way again, with a mild northerly air behind us. At breakfast time we were down around Ship John Light, and although the tide was once more against us the breeze had increased a bit and hauled dead aft. With spinnaker set we made fair headway so that at noon we were off Brandywine Light, where the wind died out entirely and we were in the clutches of a three-knot tide, which fortunately was favorable.

A few miles past Brandywine in a flat calm, with a hot sun beating down on us, swimming was declared in order while *Senta* drifted broadside toward Cape May shoals. We devoutly hoped that we would get a real breeze before the tide changed against us again, so that we could get well clear of the shoals and not have to anchor to keep from going ashore. But luck was against us; and although a faint air from the southeast finally did put in an appearance it gave us just enough headway to stem tide, and no more. Pretty soon a flush deck destroyer came rushing down the river, and for some inexplicable reason anchored just to the westward of Overfalls Shoal, evidently enjoying a locality which was quite distasteful to us, to say the least. We raced that destroyer all afternoon, sometimes gaining a bit, only to drop back again later, until finally about five-thirty the breeze freshened and we gradually worked away from our consort. Standing out on the port tack until well clear of the shoals we tacked ship and stood for the jetties at the entrance of Cold Spring Inlet, which we made just as the pesky tide turned against us once more, and we had to crack on spinnaker again to buck the strong ebb current that was rushing out of the inlet.

Once through the jetties we made fast time to the head of the harbor and dropped the hook in hard bottom that had felt the jab of many a patrol boat anchor in the days when we were all engaged in sub hunting.

A quick shift into liberty clothes and we were soon ashore at Skilinger's Landing. Hunting for a

jitney, which we quickly found and which deposited us at "Pop" Zilinger's well-remembered dump, where we were delighted to find that not only was "Pop" still on the job, but that he had lost none of his old time skill in dishing up a meal which would have made any Broadway chef envious. After doing full justice to "Pop's" cooking, it was only natural that we renew our war-time acquaintance with the one and only vaudeville-movie house which Cape May supported (more or less). We found the show fully as punk as it had ever been, and the movies even worse. An hour of this was all we could stand, so we hiked back to *Senta* and pretty soon all hands were "caulking off" like true sailors.

—for some gigantic fish traps loomed up through the haze, huge affairs supported by wire cables and telegraph poles, stretching for two or three miles offshore. About on the port tack again and we stood well out this time before we went back to starboard. When we did, the hoped for shift had put in an appearance and we could easily lay a course well clear of the nets. One must give this beach a wide berth practically all the way to the Shrewsbury Rocks in coasting along it.

With sheets eased a bit we made good time although the wind was not as strong as it might have been. Bill and Bart, being honest-to-goodness sailors, decided that a lead line



Senta is a chunky little Herreshoff sloop, 33 feet long over all.

A strong nor'-east wind greeted us as we poked our heads out of the hatch next morning and after a council of war, we decided that it was foolish to go out and batter around against a hard head wind. One and all voted to stick where we were until the weather showed a more kindly disposition. There was little change in it during the day, but next morning the wind moderated and there was every indication that it would swing around to the southward. So, although it was a bit hazy, we heaved up the hook and stood out of the jetties with a wholesail northeast breeze, feeling sure that the sun would burn off the fog before long. After standing out a bit on the port tack we swung over to the starboard, to find that we could almost lay our course down the beach. But no such luck

was a necessary adjunct to deep sea (?) sailing, and this article of equipment being a minus quantity they proceeded to make one out of light line and an old, rusty monkey wrench which had done its bit as ballast for some time. They heaved this to their hearts' content, getting around eight or nine fathoms, which put us about where we figured we should be, although the makeshift affair could not be "armed" to bring up cinders, the sure sign to all coastwise veterans that they are on the steamer track.

The wind finally increased to a fair sailing breeze and continued hauling to the south'ard, so that we soon set a reaching jib and estimated our speed to be about six knots. This proved to be a modest guess, for soon we caught sight through the dissipating haze of

YACHTING

A June Cruise in Senta

(Continued from page 63)

a marvelous clip. Not only did she come close to us, but obligingly circled around us, so that the kodaks clicked merrily away, supplying us with unexpected souvenirs of our cruise.

It was just 2 P.M. when we let go the hook off the Larchmont Yacht Club. We wasted no time in getting ashore and making ourselves known to the steward, and in getting under a welcome shower, after which we made tracks to the station, and soon were treading the hot pavements of the Great White Way. Here Bill and "Bart" jumped ship and took the owl train back to Quakertown, foolishly allowing business to interfere with pleasure. Nooch and I went to a hotel, so that in the morning I could find an oculist and get a new pair of windshields.

After getting the new goggles next day, we went back to Larchmont, got under way at 2 P.M. and were off on the last leg of our trip, a fair southwest wind giving us a fine chance for a fast run to Newport. It was a beautiful afternoon, with a fine whole-sail breeze on the quarter, and once the sheets were trimmed there was little else to do but steer and enjoy an afternoon's sail under conditions which were practically ideal.

The wind held true but towards nightfall it increased until we had the lee rail under and it looked as though we would have to tuck in a reef. However, it proved to be no more than a long, hard puff, and soon dropped back to the whole-sail pace, so we continued to boil along at a splendid clip, with the chances still good for a fast run to the eastward.

The wind forsook us at Cornfield Lightship, although we had a fair tide under us, so that with what wind there was left we still made fair speed up towards Little Gull. Approaching the Race I was a bit nervous, as by this time it was a flat calm, and the tide had complete control. As we got nearer and nearer Little Gull I took careful bearings of the latter, to see if we were being set directly towards the rocks or whether the current would set us out and around the Gull and through the Race. For a time our bearing never changed and I was

YACHTING

on the point of calling the watch below and preparing to anchor, when the bearing slowly but surely began to shift. Consulting the chart I found that there was plenty of water right up to the light, so, dropping ten fathoms of our improvised lead line over the side, and with the anchor all ready to let go, we drifted rapidly past Little Gull and into the Race.

About half way between Race Rock and Point Jude a heavy fog set in. This didn't worry us a whole lot as we were sure of our compass, had a good line on our speed and, besides, we were in familiar waters and the bellow of the Point Jude fog signal was a familiar tune to our ears. Just as we picked up the signal off the port bow the fog lifted and we found we were just where we belonged.

Rounding Point Jude about 9 A.M. the freshening sou-wester sent us scudding before it on the last leg of our trip. An hour or so later I trained the glasses on Brenton's Reef Lightship, and hailed Nooch at the stick: "Hi there, ease her over towards the lightship; something going on there." And there sure was. For there were the two big single-stickers, *Resolute* and *Vanatie* jockeying for the start of one of the trial races to determine which would have the honor of defending the America's Cup against *Shamrock*.

Squaring away on our course once more *Senta* took the bit in her teeth, tore past Castle Hill and, rounding Fort Adams breakwater, we dropped the hook in the soft mud of Newport Harbor at exactly noon—a run of 135 miles in just 22 hours, which is not at all bad for a boat only 32 feet on deck, especially considering the two or three hours calm during the night.

Sails were quickly furled, the ship tidied up, and after sowing the last of our Quaker Oats we rowed reluctantly ashore, leaving *Senta* in the capable hands of Williams and Manchester until Alden should arrive to take possession. Then aboard Fall River boat, bound back to the City of Brotherly Love, with pleasant recollections of a wonderful trip, and hopes for another one as good in the not too distant future.