

Around The World

BUILT in 1899 and still running like a greyhound, Athene, Tay Garnett's 102-foot diesel auxiliary yawl, has just completed the last leg of a round-the-world cruise, after more than a year's buffeting by every kind of sea and weather. She sailed from San Pedro Harbor, November 24, 1935, on a combined honeymoon cruise and filming expedition. Besides the fourteen passengers and crew aboard when Athene left San Pedro she was loaded with underwater cameras, regular filming cameras,



Top: Mr. and Mrs. Tay Garnett just before sailing. The author is seen at the right. . . . Above right: Athene under full sail. Originally a cup boat, her rig was shortened for ocean cruising

batteries, camera dollies, and all kinds of fishing paraphernalia. The excess load she was carrying tended to make her ride deep below her designed lines and made the ship wetter in rough water than she normally would have been.

The crew was under the command of Captain Asa Harris, owner of the Lottie Bennett, last of the four-masted sugar-carriers and one of the last of its type still in use on the Pacific Coast. Captain Harris has a salty background. His father is the oldest active skipper on the Coast, at present in command of an Admiral liner. Erwin Katzer was the chief engineer and George Ong the wireless operator. The three members of the steward's department were colored, under Oliver, the chief. Two professional sailors, Kurt Plotz and Emil Jacobsen, were forward. Both of these men had had a great deal of experience in every kind of sailing vessel, although the rest of the crew were all amateurs. Bob Kerr served as ordinary seaman at sea and ashore became the assistant to our cameraman, James Shackelford. The remainder of the crew included Sidney Burnap, amateur yachtsman and writer, and the author, former All-American from the University of Washington, sailing as ordinary seaman and Mr. Garnett's assistant on filming forays. Mrs. Garnett shares the owner's

In A CUP BOAT

Part One

PAUL SCHWEGLER

A glimpse of native life in Saigon, French Indo-China



enthusiasm for yachting. Were it not for the demands of studio work they would probably spend all of their time on extended cruises of this kind in their own boat.

Athene was originally built in Bristol by Herreshoff as a candidate for the America's Cup defense. Columbia, her sister ship, won the preliminary trials and the right to defend the Cup against Sir Thomas Lipton's first Shamrock. Columbia, of course, was a successful defender; Athene went on to a less spectacular, but perhaps more adventurous, career. She was the first privately owned vessel to clear the Panama Canal from east to west. Later she was registered out of San Pedro, California. After another change of ownership she became the pride of the California Yacht Club and was entered in the trans-Pacific races. During the years between 1928 and 1932 Athene competed in three of these races to Honolulu and finished no worse than third in each. In 1932 she was well out ahead of the rest of the fleet but was unable to maintain her lead to the finish due to the failure of weakened gear. According to present plans she will probably be rigged again for racing in order to compete in 1938.

Measuring 102 feet overall and 75 feet on the waterline, Athene has a beam of 19 feet. The draft

is 13 feet and a 35-ton lead keel keeps her well in the water. In some of the ports the heavy draft was a handicap, making it necessary to anchor far out in the harbor. In many of the foreign ports harbor facilities are not what we are accustomed to here in America. Typical of the Herreshoff racing hulls of the late nineties, Athene has a long overhang fore and aft. Her substantial construction has stood the test of time as there are no signs of strain or working anywhere in the boat, although she had been specially braced before sailing on her round-the-world cruise. The extra strengthening proved a wise precaution as later developments in the Pacific and Mediterranean were to show.

Construction is fairly flexible with a strong steel framework over which the hull is planked and decked. Covering boards and strakes form a continuous steel girder from stem to stern. Through these are riveted steel angle frames and deck beams and, in addition, angle straps are riveted cross-wise along the sides and across the deck beams. This results in a framework so substantial that the decks

never opened during any of the pounding she took at sea; even the paint on the undersides of the deck planks didn't show a crack. The ship's log shows that Athene hit some very heavy weather, in some cases lasting for twenty days at a stretch.

Accommodations, of course, are necessarily not what they could have been had the ship been built originally with the idea of going on world cruises. Her limited beam made it rather difficult to work in a great deal of cabin space. The owner's cabin was located aft, according to customary practice.

Athene is equipped with a three-cylinder diesel engine of about 50 horsepower. She also carries an electric auxiliary installed in the engine room. The engine is installed forward of the main saloon and drives a three-bladed propeller 275 revolutions per minute which gives her an approximate speed under engine alone of five knots.

Her cruising rig is that of a jib-headed ketch, much as Endeavor, Yankee and Shamrock V have been rigged for their Atlantic crossings. The hollow mainmast at one time towered 140 feet in the air but this was shortened down to 100 feet from deck to truck for the cruise. Being under-canvased she could not be expected to make any exceptionally fast passages; on the other hand, the short rig tended to make her steadier and easier to handle in heavy weather. Once on a return trip from Honolulu in a friendly match race, Athene averaged 15 knots for 48 hours which conveys an idea of how fast a boat she can be. In cutting down the canvas the difficulty encountered was that when the wind was strong enough to give her any speed the sea



Left: Mr. and Mrs. Garnett with the head of the Indo-Chinese government

Above: Athene ready for departure on her round-the-world cruise



would be too heavy; in light breezes she had insufficient canvas to drive her well. Captain Harris believes that she could easily have carried her original mast. With that rig she probably would have made some fast passages.

The cruise itself was one of the most unusual expeditions ever to set forth from Hollywood. Tay Garnett is as salty a yachtsman as there is on the Pacific Coast; for years he has had a yen to sail around the world in his own boat and he is probably the first of the movie industry to accomplish it. Ocean cruising is fast becoming one of the most fascinating sports in the movie colony and several actors and directors had racing yawls entered in the 1936 trans-Pacific race. The last of these was the most successful ever staged on the Coast and no little of this success was due to the fact that the movie people are adopting this pastime. On this belated honey-

moon cruise the owner and his wife planned to shoot backgrounds for future film productions in many out-of-the-way corners of the world. Naturally it was an expensive venture, running into something over a quarter of a million dollars, but this necessarily included a great many expenditures that would not be encountered on an ordinary cruise. Mr. Garnett at the present time is laying plans for a 150-foot square-rigged yacht with diesel or diesel-electric power sufficient for a speed of 10 knots, yet with all the earmarks of a typical square-rigger. His next venture is planned for 1938, taking in many of the places missed on the last cruise.

With so small a crew practically everyone had to do double duty. Mrs. Garnett had the thankless job of stocking the ship with provisions and caring for all the supplies that came aboard. Bob Kerr, Sidney Burnap and the writer all had watches at sea. The ship was not large enough to take on a full crew and at the same time carry the technical crew as well. Watches during the voyage were arranged in two six-hour and three four-hour tricks. The first began at 12:00 noon and ended at 6:00 P.M. with two-hour tricks at the wheel and two hours of deck work or lookout duty divided between the two who had the watch. At 6:00 another watch of two took over the duties of handling the ship from 6:00 at night till 12:00 midnight. The time from then on was divided into four-hour watches till 12:00 noon when the six-hour watches were picked up again.

On November 24, 1935, the little ship weighed anchor and left San Pedro Harbor bound for Honolulu, her first destination. Athene was

escorted by more than a hundred craft of all sizes out past the breakwater, carrying scores of friends wishing Mr. Garnett and his party *bon voyage*. It was a momentous occasion and all members of the expedition set about preparations for the long voyage which was to last anywhere from one-and-a-half to two years. Less than an hour after the last of the escorting fleet had passed out of sight, one of the members of the crew had occasion to enter the lazarette for some gear. To his astonishment he found a young Russian stowaway who had presumably gotten below sometime during the excitement of loading. Lack of fresh air in the lazarette and the motion of the

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Below: Anam, another interesting spot in Indo-China



Below: Singapore is known as the crossroads of the world. Shipping from all points meets here



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