

sea spray

Incorporating the New Zealand Yachtsman

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Cover:
Scamper, the first Flying Dutchman completed locally. She was built by Donald and Robert Brooke of Auckland from an imported shell moulded in Holland and is here seen sailing off Narrow Neck in a strong breeze the day she was launched. Having a turn at the tiller is the boys' father John Brooke, first chairman of the class in New Zealand. (See story on P. 25).

Sea Spray Photo

In this issue of Sea Spray there appears a copy of the newly gazetted Motor Launch Regulations, 1958. In recent years there have been many complaints about the behaviour of power boats and water skiers in anchorages and near crowded beaches. Dire warnings have been issued of compulsory registrations, water speed-cops and crippling restrictions that might be imposed.

Fortunately the attitude of the Marine Department has always been sympathetic towards the boat owner, and through the good work of the New Zealand Water Ski Association and those few local bodies who have cooperated and given them the very modest facilities they have asked for, the new regulations do little more than officially recognise the sport of water skiing and make provision for its legal operation on the lines already asked for and tried and proved in certain areas.

No one has attempted to deny that new legislation was necessary to cope with the problems of this ever-growing sport and the appearance of more and more high speed runabouts. No one can deny either that the new regulations are most fair and reasonable and will make things more pleasant for boat owners, water skiers and swimmers alike by clearly defining areas of operation as much as is practicably possible on the water.

No one would claim either that regulations are the cure for all evils — traffic laws don't stop car accidents — it is only the strict enforcement of the law that can hope to keep the accident rate down.

That is a state of affairs that we don't want to reach in boating and water skiing, and it can only be avoided by strict observance of the regulations. The responsibility is with the boat owners and skiers themselves and if they are wise they will keep it that way.

Paragraph 11 of the new regulations is one of the most important of all and recognises that there are many possibilities not covered by the use of lanes, speed limits close to the shore, and other specific clauses.

Outside these the normal Rule of the Road at sea or the local Harbour Traffic Regulations make provision. These are framed with one object in view — safety afloat — and are based on common sense, courtesy and consideration for others. If these three are always exercised, the rest is easy.

*Ex-Tasman Race Winner
Crosses Pacific . . .*

EAST AND NORTH IN TAIHOA

by Robert Fenton

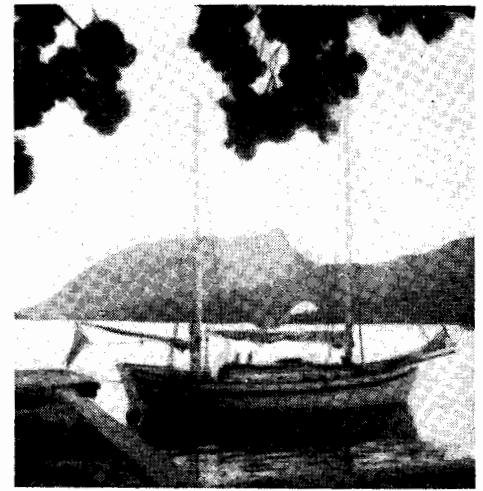
Two young men from the opposite sides of the world set out to sail the Pacific Ocean in a 30 foot yacht. Their destination—San Francisco—a distance of over six and a half thousand miles. They are Gunnars Dambe of Latvia and Robert A. Fenton, of Tasmania. They left Auckland two years ago in the Tasman race winner Taihoa and Bob Fenton wrote this account of their trip as they went.

It is hard to say just when the idea of a cruise across the Pacific was born but it was three or four years ago at least. We had read many of the books on cruising around the islands and had seen many yachts departing for and arriving from the various groups in Polynesia. By 1955 we had saved almost enough money for the venture and began our search for a suitable cruising boat. Our quest for a vessel was very comprehensive and included studying prices from England, Holland, Australia and New Zealand. After months of enquiries and many inspections of various yachts, we heard of the *Taihoa* for sale in Lyttelton. *Taihoa*, as many of you will remember, was successful in winning the 1954 ocean race from Auckland to Hobart, Tasmania, under the competent command of Mr Neill Arrow, one of Canterbury's better known yachtsmen. *Taihoa* (meaning wait a while) is an American designed yacht called a Tahiti ketch and the principal measurements are 30ft by 10ft by 4ft 6in. She is the result of seven years painstaking labour by Mr T. W. Stringer of Upper Riccarton, Christchurch. As soon as we saw her we realised that here was the answer to what we had been looking for, a fine heavily built deep sea cruiser of proven ability and one that could stand up to any conditions likely to be met with on the sea. The deal was soon made and we had our boat, all that remained now was to learn to sail it as neither of us had any experience whatsoever of sailing. We had a couple of weeks sailing around Lyttelton under Neill's guidance learning the ropes and during spare time

studying navigation before attempting to sail back to Auckland. The method of navigation chosen was the United States Naval one known as H.O.214 which we find is simple, concise and accurate. We left Lyttelton in the middle of November and arrived in Auckland early December making only one short stop on the way up and that was at Hicks Bay. After arrival in Auckland we had *Taihoa* slipped at Okahu Bay and began to get her ready for the trip across the Pacific to San Francisco.

The trip from Lyttelton proved to be a wonderful experience for us, as we got to know the qualities of our boat under all conditions from a dead clam to a howling gale. We found her slow to windward but quite capable of holding her own with most when off the wind. Being slow to windward is only to be expected for such a heavy type of hull. She will not answer to a sea anchor but will ride out a gale quite comfortably under mizzen alone or even under bare poles. The only trouble with bare poles is that the occasional wave breaks on board and when that happens one feels that the boat has been rammed by a ten ton truck.

Money as usual was still our major problem as by this time we were getting very low on funds and still had to get enough to replace running gear and purchase a year's supply of tinned food. Well back to work we went and by June we were ready to go. We had on board almost 600 tins of provisions and the capacity of the water tanks is 70 gallons which will allow us to stay at sea almost three months if necessary. The sailing date was



Taihoa in Huahine.

finally set for Tuesday June 5 and by 4 p.m. on that date we were off on the great adventure. First stop Rarotonga.

The day of our departure was dead calm so we motored out to Waiheke Island and dropped the pick off Oneroa to wait for something to come along. Nothing happened until Friday when a wind came along from the N.W. which meant progress at last. In two days we were through Coromandel Channel and 200 miles east of Cuvier Is. when the wind really started to blow. We had been reefing down all day until by nightfall we were forced to heave to under mizzen. The glass was very low and the weather forecasts all contained gale warnings so into our bunks we crept to catch up on some sleep as there was nothing else we could do. This blow lasted for four and a half days so we spent the time reading and playing chess on a pocket set. Fortunately we had plenty of reading matter and I really consider this as an important part of the equipment of a cruising boat. These periods of forced inactivity would be terrible without something to occupy one's mind. By June 14 the gale had abated and we were off again before a fresh westerly. Our plan was to keep below latitude 30S until reaching a longitude of approx. 160W which is due south of Rarotonga, then heading northwards through the trades to the island.

The reason for keeping so far down was to get the benefit of the prevailing westerly weather for this time of the year. On Sunday June 17 we crossed the 180° date line

and as we were travelling westwards this made the next day another Sunday.

The second Sunday, however, was not very pleasant as the wind was blowing hard all day and on the increase until by 6 a.m. Monday, we were once more unable to continue because of a gale. This was just as hard as the previous one and lasted five days and was followed by a flat calm. It was during this calm that we saw and managed to catch our first fish. We were unable to identify it and were not sure whether or not it was edible. It was 18in long, brown in colour with white spots. It looked like a fish that lived around the rocks but we were 200 miles off land and had about a mile of water below us. To test it we tried it out on an albatross which ate the offal greedily so we decided after observing the bird for a while that it was good enough for us so we had fresh fish for lunch that day. We continued on our way eastwards with only two more short 24 hour blows until we turned northwards. The further north we went the warmer the weather, so we increased our watches from three hours on, three hours off, to four on, four off. At 4 p.m. July 11, after five and a half weeks at sea, we sighted the high peaks of Raro. on the horizon. After sailing all night in light airs we were about five miles off the south coast of the island by dawn. By 10 a.m. we

were becalmed 200 yards off the reef so started the motor and went around to the north coast and Avarua. We were most impressed by the rugged mountainous beauty of the surroundings, it was far better than we expected. We were welcomed to the island by the Resident Commissioner and presented with some fresh fruit which was indeed very welcome. We enjoyed to the full the hospitality and sightseeing while preparing for the next leg of the trip—to Aitutaki, a distance of 140 miles further northwards.

Our stay in Raro. lasted for two and a half weeks during which time we covered most of the island by bicycle and on foot. It was marvellous to be able to eat all the fruit you wanted and if you wanted a coconut it was only a matter of asking any of the boys to get one. The weather was ideal with warm sunny days and cool nights that made one blanket a necessity. As all good things come to an end it was decided to sail on July 30 for Aitutaki.

We got away around noon and ran before a fresh S.E. trade wind. Our progress was swift and we estimated we had covered over 110 miles in the first 20 hours when our bad luck turned up once again. The wind switched around to the N.W. and blew just too strongly for us to be able to make any headway into it. These conditions lasted for two days then it changed back to the south, very light and full of calm

patches. We finally sighted Aitutaki late in the afternoon of August 2nd and as it was a clear night, sailed up to within three miles of the land during darkness then stopped and drifted for nine hours to await daylight. Early in the morning we sailed the last few miles to the entrance in the reef. The reef at this point lies half a mile off shore and a channel runs from the reef right to the shore. As this channel is only fifteen yards wide and is twisty and contains strong currents, we decided to wait outside hoping a pilot would come out to us. After drifting around outside for half an hour a whaleboat came out full of local lads and a pilot. The run in was something to remember as we charged in with the engine roaring and doing a full seven knots only to find when we reached the pass that the rush of water coming out held us almost at a standstill. For the first couple of hundred yards in the outgoing stream must have been $6\frac{1}{2}$ knots, as we went in at such a slow rate that I think there were moments when we made no progress whatsoever.

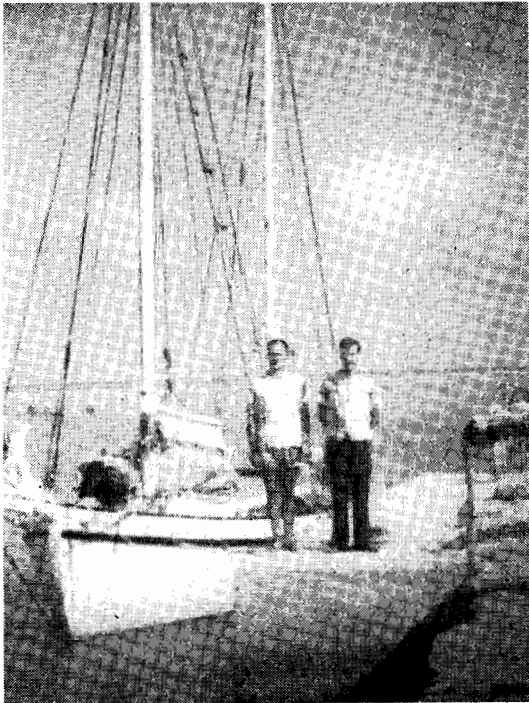
To make things more interesting the motor gave a cough for some unknown reason but luckily for us kept going. Had it stopped I don't know what would have happened to us as both sides of the channel are lined with jagged coral formations rising right to the surface. The further we went in the less was the effect of the current, until on reaching the boat haven, which is a man-made basin dug by the Americans during the war, the water was quite still. This basin is an ideal haven for yachts as it is almost completely land-locked and entirely free of swell. The channel, however, is not navigable to craft drawing more than six feet.

Aitutaki is a low lying island with a maximum elevation of 410 feet and has a large lagoon over five miles in diameter with 13 small islands or motus around the barrier reef. It is in this lagoon that the TEAL flying boats stop to refuel en route to Tahiti. Although Aitutaki has not the rugged grandeur of Rarotonga it has the beautiful blue lagoon with the small islands and their dazzling bright coral sand beaches and fish galore for the catching. The people of Aitutaki are more friendly than Raro, which



Taihoa, left centre, alongside in the basin at Aitutaki, Cook Is.

is due probably to less of the European influence. We had great fun on the lagoon in the sailing canoes of which there is a large fleet. They are extremely fast with an amazing performance in light airs. They make *Taihoa's* pace seem snail-like in comparison. After three weeks of this island paradise it was again



On the dockside at Aitutaki, Gunars Dambe left and Bob Fenton; *Taihoa* alongside. In the background is the vast lagoon where outrigger sailing canoes put up fantastic speeds in steady winds and relatively calm water.

time to say goodbye to our new friends and once more put to sea. Our departure date was set for August 23rd—next stop Tahiti. *Taihoa* looked like a Chinese fruit shop on departure as we were presented with three cases of oranges, one and a half cases of tomatoes, four bunches of bananas, a sack of tarua and a whole cockpit full of coconuts.

Going out the pass was much easier than coming in although the entrance was very rough due to a northerly swell meeting the outgoing current from the lagoon. We pitched violently for a while digging our bowsprit in and lifting our propeller clear of the water at times. However, we were soon clear of the island and squared away for Tahiti under a light northerly. The first week of progress was slow but sure, and our best day's run was 90 miles. By the eighth day we had passed half-way and hopes were running high of making a reasonably fast passage but the wind vanished and left us sitting on a mirror-like sea for two whole days. The second week was full of calms and we made only 150 miles for the seven days.

By dawn on the fifteenth day we sighted the island of Tubuai Manu which lies 40 west of Moorea. As we were passing close by we decided to go in and have a look. We motored in close to the reef on the lee side then sailed round the west coast to the north before getting back on course. The island looks very much like a hat from a distance

with a high hill in the centre surrounded by a flat plain which is covered in an abundance of coconut palms. Although the pilot book refers to the place as uninhabited we noticed a few people on the beach, also some canoes and a motor boat in the lagoon. It was on this island that the yacht *La Paloma* had the misfortune to run aground.

By this time the weather was deteriorating with a lot of rain and wind from south to south east and visibility was getting bad. Although Tahiti and Moorea are visible for almost 100 miles they remained invisible until about 15 miles off, late on the afternoon of the 15th day. We carried on into the night heading for the north coast of Moorea and by 11 p.m. could vaguely make out a dark shape ahead so we have to await daylight. At daybreak we were 3 miles off and becalmed so started the engine up and set a course along the north coast of Moorea to Papeete. Moorea is really something as regards picturesque scenery with gigantic precipices and needle sharp basalt peaks. The highest peak is Mount Tohivea, 3,975ft. which dominates the southern part of the island, whilst in the north the land slopes down to the sea and forms two beautiful bays namely, Baie PaoPao and Baie Papetoai which from the sea appear to be really magnificent.

After six hours of motoring our position was half a mile off the pass

Continued on P. 41

"Clot"

Trous'!!



these craft and I trust it will not be too long before I am afloat in my own ship.
J. E. BRUTON.

All enquiries re any class matters at all should be addressed to the Hon. Secretary, Flying Dutchman Committee, Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, Parliament Street, Auckland. C.I. Plans and class rules are available from Sea Spray at 35/- a set. In addition drawings showing two new recommended methods of finishing the shells and suggested scantlings have been received recently from the I.F.D.C.A. in Holland. These are also available from Sea Spray at 5/- each.

East & North in Taihoa

Continued from P. 15

of Papeete. The government pilot came out immediately and we were soon heading in through the reef to the yacht mooring. The French officials were most helpful and entirely different from what we had been led to believe by a lot of wild stories in Auckland. They all spoke some English and all forms etc. are printed in French and English so our inability to speak French was no handicap whatsoever. In one hour we were tied up and free to set foot on French soil.

Papeete is a large sprawling township with a population of over 16,000 of which approximately 12,000 are Tahitians. Most business houses are run by Chinese of whom there are quite a few on the island. There are numerous bars and cabarets which never seem to close and at night fill the air with wild Tahitian music. Money as usual is our major worry and rather limits our activities. While there is plenty of variety about in the way of food, we are forced to live on bully beef the same as when at sea.

However, one can't have everything and we must consider ourselves lucky to be here. After a week of looking around the town we decided it was time to get out in the country so hired a cycle at a weekly rate of 200 francs and set off on September 14 to cover the 150 miles of road on the island. The first day we covered 60 kilometres to the village of Faaone and visited Point Venus, the landing

place of Captain Cook as well as the resting place of King Pomare V. In Faaone we were invited to spend the night in the house of the local policeman. Next day we carried on to the end of the road on the northern coastline then around to the southern extremity where we were invited to spend the night in the village of Teahupoo. From here we started back and got as far as the next village, Vairao, where there was a party in progress at the chief's house. He invited us in and we stayed for two days and nights living on native foods including octopus which is really delicious when prepared Tahitian style and eaten with coconut sauce.

To be continued.

Letters to the Editor

Continued from P. 29

They must have made up their minds before the trials who they were going to pick.

I would like to point out that I am voicing the opinion of many others as well as my own. I am not the only person who thinks that John Lasher got a raw deal. His performance was the best in spite of the fact that in one race he was forced to reef the mainsail of the boat he was sailing by the boat's owner. He wasn't permitted to use his own judgment and had to watch someone else win with full sail.

I would now like to ask the selection committee for an explanation.

Yours sincerely,


J. SHARPS.

Auckland.

Oldest Driver?

Dear Sir

In your June issue of Sea Spray, your



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EAST AND NORTH IN TAIHOA

by Robert Fenton

Conclusion.

Continuing the story of the Pacific crossing made by Bob Fenton of Tasmania and Gunars Dambé of Latvia who sailed the ex-Tasman race winner Taihoa from New Zealand to San Francisco. In this chapter they reach the Hawaiian Islands which is as far as Bob Fenton's story goes.

The chief was also the proprietor of the local picture show so on Sunday night he invited us to go along and see the show. Our entire party went along complete with demijohns of vin rouge which were consumed as the evening progressed. The film was a French one with a French dialogue but for the benefit of the villagers a running commentary was given in Tahitian by a Chinaman, while the youth of the town shouted out rude comments much to the amusement of the audience.

On Monday we went out spear fishing on the lagoon in an outrigger canoe equipped with an outboard motor. A rather unusual combination of the old and the new but quite a common sight over here. While swimming underwater in the lagoon I almost died of fright when I observed two large sharks swimming nearby. The island boys took no notice of them however so I tried hard to feign indifference, but did not enjoy the fishing nearly as much after seeing them. The sharks around these parts apparently never attack swimmers but after my acquaintance with them in Australian waters I wouldn't trust them anywhere. We caught a bag of fish after a couple of hours spearing and set off back to the village for yet another feast. These tropical fish are all highly coloured and some have quite fantastic shapes. When swimming among them it is like being in a gigantic aquarium with the fish, the coloured coral formations and the beautiful crystal clear water. The water is so clear that on a moonlight night one can clearly see the bottom in twelve feet.

On the following day we set off on the return trip to Papeete, a distance of sixty kilometres which was just a comfortable day's ride as there were no hills and a nice sealed surface all the way. Little can be

said of the return trip except that there are a lot of coconuts in Tahiti. One thing noticeable in comparison with the Cook Islands is the number of fences in Tahiti. In Rarotonga and Aitutaki all land is unfenced except in a few odd cases, whereas here all land is fenced and covered with tabu signs—you see them all around the island. Any fruit that we required must be purchased from the central market in Papeete.

During the second fortnight we made another trip around the island and started to get the yacht in shape again for sea, and by Saturday the sixth of October were all set to go. We obtained the necessary clearances and at 11.30 a.m. on that day set off for Moorea. The wind was fair and the passage uneventful and three hours after leaving Papeete we dropped the pick in PaoPao Bay. The pass, known as Passe Ava Roa, through the reef to PaoPao is very easy to identify and is wide and deep offering no difficulty whatsoever in entering. As usual we dropped our 75lb fisherman type anchor equipped with twenty fathoms of chain and it hung on quite satisfactorily, then as a precaution against the wilie wars that come down off the mountains we took the 35lb Danforth out in the praam attached to 150 feet of line, but although we were in only twenty feet of water the thing would not dig in even after four attempts. The Pilot Book refers to the bay as being a good holding ground with a bottom of sand and mud, but we found it as hard as stone and as smooth as a billiard table. We have noticed a few mistakes in the Pilot Book, one of the most valuable being the description of Ille Tubuai Manu where it stated that the barrier reef extended about a mile off shore on the northern coast. We found it extended no more than 100 yards at

the most and was steep too from there out. If you don't put too much faith in the Book it is a good guide however.

We have been around the island on bicycles and find it very rugged with magnificent mountain scenery not many people and much more friendly than Tahiti. Bay PaoPao is very beautiful but is subject to wind squalls off the mountains so the yacht must be securely moored to avoid the possibility of dragging. As usual the Asiatics have all the shops and run the local picture shows. The Tahitians are not at all business-like and seem as though they never worry about tomorrow as they can always fall back on a diet of fish and coconuts if the worst comes. Fish are very plentiful around Moorea and we have had a bit of success with a spear gun that we manufactured on board as well as line fishing. The fish are very hard to get with a hook however as they seem to be too well fed and will only nibble at the bait until it falls off. They take anything in the way of bait and particularly like banana and young coconut.

We had intended staying only a few days in Moorea as there was not a great deal to see but I had the misfortune to develop a huge boil on my left forearm which more or less made me unseaworthy as I couldn't do much with one arm. We had to wait for an extra week before it started to get better and finally got under way at 10 a.m. on the seventeenth after a stay of eleven days.

When raising the pick we found it had not dug in after all but the chain had become jammed under a small coral head fifteen feet from the anchor. It was a terrific struggle getting it free as we had to almost pull the boat under as well as use the motor. All the time we were under the impression we were securely moored! At long last the job was accomplished and we were away, bound for Huahine with a fresh E.N.E. wind. Huahine is the most eastern island of the group known as the Ile Sous Le Vent or the Leeward Islands of French Oceania. It lies about 80 miles N.W. of Moorea. We made good progress, about 5 knots, with the wind over the starboard quarter and ran steadily on all day and night expecting to sight the island shortly after

midnight. There was a full moon and visibility was not too bad although there was a lot of cloud about and a few rain showers. Midnight came and went with no sign of land and as the hours rolled by nothing appeared to break the monotony of the scene. At last dawn broke and there lay our island astern of us and fast disappearing in the haze and cloud. Around we went and it took us four hours of fast progress southwards before we closed with the west coast. After sailing close in by Pass Avamoia and inspecting it, we dropped the sails and motored in through the quarter mile of lagoon to the pier off the village of Fare. When we were safely moored I consulted my watch and found it was 10 a.m., exactly twenty four hours after leaving Paopao Bay, Moorea. We had covered about 120 miles instead of 80 as hoped.

Huahine consists of two large masses separated by a narrow channel and both enclosed within the one barrier reef. The southern island is known as Huahine Iti and the northern and larger one as Huahine Nui. The town of Fare in the northern island is where the French administrator resides. There are only ten miles of road on the island, the circumference of which is approximately twenty miles. The only method of getting around in the country is by foot, so off we went and walked right around the island in one day. The most common means of transport is by small boats equipped with outboard motors, particularly from Huahine Iti where there are no roads at all and all



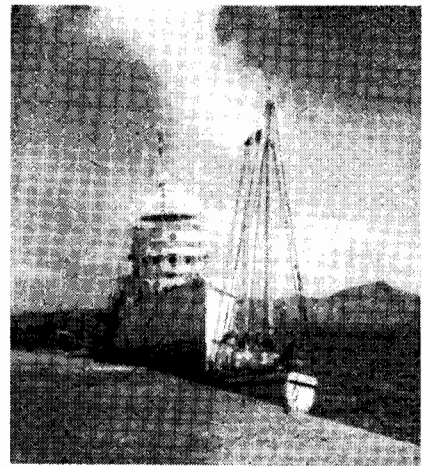
The view from the mountains of Huahine.

copra and other produce is brought into Fare by this method and then shipped to Papeete by schooner.

During the weekend we went to a soccer match between Fare and Maheva held in the village of Maheva in the north of the island. Before the game got under way there were at least eight speeches by leaders from each party. There was very little science displayed in the game but it was certainly rugged football and with the temperature around eighty in the shade. At the conclusion of the match the whole population of Maheva formed a long line down which the visitors passed shaking hands with everyone just to show there were no ill feelings.

On Sunday afternoon we attended another of the local sports which is cock fighting. The arena is a small fenced enclosure ten feet in diameter and eighteen inches high into which two roosters are placed. They fight on sight and the battle lasts about half an hour when usually one of the contestants is chased out of the ring. Large sums of money change hands during these matches as it is the only form of gambling the locals indulge in apart from cards. You see these fighting cocks around almost every house as it is a very popular sport. We, however, found it very dull and uninteresting as one can see the same thing in any farmyard.

After a stay of seven days the time came once more to move on, this time to the island of Raiatea a distance of twenty-two miles westward from Huahine. We left on October 24 and got away early with a nice gentle S.E. trade wind blowing over the port quarter. It was beautiful sailing with fine clear skies and a light swell on the sea. Five hours after leaving Fare we were at the pier in Uturoa, the principal town of Raiatea. Entering the pass this time was a new experience for us as it was on the east coast and open to the wind and swell so we decided to sail in, instead of the usual entrance under power. The mizzen was dropped for better control as we neared the entrance, then we ran on in under genoa and main. Once through the reef it is necessary to alter course 45 degrees to starboard, so out with the main sheet and down with the genoa then a half-mile run down wind along



Taihoa alongside at Raiatea, astern of her is the French survey ship Lotus.

the lagoon where we brought *Taihoa* up into the wind right alongside the wharf. We were very pleased with our effort and for not using the motor. It is always a tense moment when entering these passes through the reefs with the great combers roaring and crashing so close and the coral barrier breaking the surface on either side. I always breathe a sigh of relief when through.

Once again it is a case of two islands within the one reef, Raiatea to the south and Taha'a to the north separated by two miles of deep lagoon. There are ten passes altogether in the reef and all are navigable. We chose Passe Teavapiti on the east coast off Uturoa to save a twenty mile trip around Taha'a to a pass on the lee side. Raiatea is approximately fifteen miles long by seven wide while Taha'a is about six miles across and roughly circular in shape. Both islands are very mountainous and are surrounded by coastal plains where most of the population reside. Two days after our arrival we set out to walk round the island as this is the only means of getting around apart from a boat, as two-thirds of Raiatea is without a road. We had hoped to do the round trip in two days but found the going rather heavy particularly in some of the bays where we had to plough through evil smelling black mud, so it took us three days before getting back on board footsore and weary.

The first night was spent on a small rise overlooking the sea where there was enough wind to keep the mosquitoes at bay and the second

night we were fortunate enough to find an empty copra shed just at sundown so crept in there to rest our weary bodies. You can imagine the surprise it gave the Tahitian owner to find two pakehas asleep there next morning. He insisted on taking us to his house for breakfast, an offer that we lost no time in accepting.

We left Raiatea on November the second and sailed across to Tahaa to a bay known as Hurepiti which is on the east coast of the island facing Pass Paipai, the shortest route to Borabora. We found Tahaa very quiet and the people very friendly. They kept us supplied with heaps of fruit including pineapples and often we received fresh fish which was also most welcome.

On November the tenth we made an uneventful passage across to Borabora a distance of approximately 20 miles N.W. from Pass Paipai. Borabora is by far the most rugged looking of the islands so far visited. It is not very big but rises to a height of 2386 feet. During the last war it was a big American base and still shows signs of their habitation. All around the island are concrete foundations that were once the sites of warehouses and barracks, etc. and up on the ridges are to be seen the barrels of some very big guns. As a result of the occupation most of the population can speak a bit of English, in fact some of them speak it better than they do French. The Americans also constructed two wharfs in the lagoon which can accommodate quite large ships, but now they just lie idle as only one small vessel visits the island twice a week. On one of these piers was painted the name *White Squall*, evidence of a previous visit by a New Zealand boat.

Hospitality was such on Borabora that it was a whole month before we could finally make up our minds to leave and it was with much regret on December the tenth that we said goodbye to all our good friends and set sail for Honolulu. This was to be the longest leg of the whole voyage, 2500 miles direct. The sailing route we chose was to get as much easting as possible before striking the N.E. trade winds which begin around the latitude of five degrees north. Borabora lies approximately 153 degrees west and we intended trying to get as far east as 147 de-

grees west which would have put the N.E. trades on the beam over the last 850 miles. The first week was mostly calm and by the end of the seven days we had covered only 130 miles, the winds being E.N.E. and very light. The next three days the winds was N.E. and fresher and we averaged 60 miles a day due north. Our position on December 20 was lat. 11° 15' S, long. 150° 55' W. For the next seven days the wind was N.N.E. and by December 27 our position was lat. 6° 20' S,

impossible to dry as there was also a lot of spray flying. Until then we had been giving the motor a ten minute run every week to keep it in running order, but as from the 16th it refused to work. This was only the start of our troubles as the radio also decided to go on strike which meant no time signals, and as we were using an ordinary cheap wrist watch which kept erratic time there was no method of determining our longitude apart from guess work. The wind now changed to east which



Bob Fenton left and Gunars Dambe on arrival at Honolulu, 43 days from Bora Bora.

long. 152° 55' W. We had lost two degrees of our easting and were beginning to wonder if there were any such things as S.E. trade winds. However, the wind swung back to N.E. and for the next three days we made due north to latitude 3° S. From here our luck changed and we picked up a nice easterly which lasted seven days and took us to lat. 5° 30' N, long. 149° 40' W. The equator was crossed late on New Year's Day around 2300 hours, so being a dark night we never saw it. From January sixth to the eleventh we got our only S.E. weather, but it was very light so that at the end of the five days the position was lat. 7° 20' N, long. 147° 30' W. From the 11th to 16th January we had the N.E. trades which carried us up to lat. 14° N, long. 149° 30' W. During this period the weather was very overcast and full of rain squalls which made everything wet and

was quite unexpected and as our course was N.W., this gave us the wind over the quarter and fast progress which also meant hard steering. Up to this point, during the past 37 days, *Taihoa* had been steering herself with the tiller lashed and the wind forward of the beam. We had, however, maintained a deck watch of four hours each continuously.

All these breakdowns called for a change of plans as we did not wish to go near the busy port of Honolulu depending entirely on sail and dead-reckoning navigation. We decided on Hilo on the island of Hawaii 200 miles S.E. of Honolulu, and as it was on the weather side of the island hoped to sail straight in. However, the next problem was to find the island as it was still over 400 miles away. For the next three days we carried on N.W. true and covered approximately 300 miles

then headed due north to the latitude of Hilo which again was mostly guess-work as we could not get a good noon sight due to the overcast conditions. All you could see through the sextant was a bright spot in the sky of the sun but no definite shape. The date was now January 20 and our latitude approximately that of Hilo so we began heading due west hoping to see land at any time. At 1100 hours on the 21st I was roused from my slumbers by the shout of "LAND HO" from Gunars and sure enough there it was, the island of Hawaii in sight on our 42nd day out from Borabora. After studying the chart and the land marks we found ourselves about 10 miles too far north so corrected our course and headed for Hilo. We arrived off the mouth of Hilo Bay near sundown so had to head out to sea again for the night as it is not a good policy to be near a strange coastline at night. The wind was now S.E. and getting fresh and for the first time since leaving Aitutaki we were forced to reef down. We spent a miserable night slowly beating eastwards keeping our position by the glow of lights from the city and the lighthouse on Kumukahi Pt. the eastern tip of Hawaii. At dawn we began to run back down wind

to Hilo Bay where we arrived at 1000hrs. The wind had now fallen right off and progress was down to one knot. By 1130hrs we had rounded the breakwater and with a slightly better breeze began a 1½-mile beat up the harbour to the pier. We dropped the pick 50 feet from the pier at 1300hrs. We were soon pulled across to the wharf and tied up, thus ending our 43 day voyage from Borabora. The doctor was soon on board plus the customs and agricultural officials but as Hilo is not a regular port of entry we were confined on board until they could fly an immigration official down from Honolulu.

This proved to be a wait of 24 hours during which time we were not even permitted to land on the wharf. It seems very heartless considering the time we had been on board, but we didn't mind as we were both dead tired and really needed a good sleep. When the official finally arrived we found we had made a big mistake by not obtaining visas for the United States before leaving Auckland. This mistake cost us ten dollars each and we were granted a stay of only 29 days in the islands. Hawaii island is the largest in the group and covers an area of 4030 square miles and has two large volcanoes over 13,500 feet high, one of them still active. Both

mountains are snow-capped even though the islands are in the tropics. The main industry on the island is sugar growing and wherever one looks the countryside is covered in sugar cane.

As our dollar supply was very limited we were not able to do any sightseeing so saw very little of the country. We treated the engine to a new set of plugs and a condenser which put it back in running order again.

On January 30 after a stay of eight days we set off for Honolulu. The route chosen was along the northern side of the group then down the Kaiwi Channel between Molokai and Oahu which gave us the benefit of the prevailing easterly winds. The trip was very rough especially along Molokai and in Kaiwi Channel. We were even pooped off Molokai which was the first time this had happened for many months and of course it had to happen just as we changed watch which meant that both of us got wet!

As we approached Diamond Head we got in the lee of the land and conditions improved greatly. Off famous Waikiki beach we downed sails and motored in to the Ala Wai boat harbour where we tied up 47 hours after leaving Hilo.

The End.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Correspondence is invited from readers on any matter connected with yachting. Letters should be addressed to the Editor, and when a nom-de-plume is used the writer's name and address must be included as evidence of good faith. Readers will realise that any opinions expressed are not necessarily those of SEA SPRAY. Letters must be in our office by the tenth of the month preceding issue. The Editor reserves the right to refuse publication of any letter.

R.Y.A. Membership

Sir,

In perusing the Provincial Notes in your June issue, I notice a paragraph under New Plymouth that conveys a wealth of tragic meaning for yachting in New Zealand generally. The paragraph says, "after searching throughout the country for R.Y.A. rule books without success, the Club has recently sent to the Royal Yachting Association in London for a large supply so there should be no excuse for lack of knowledge of sailing rules in the future."

In the whole of New Zealand there are only seven clubs or associations recognised by the R.Y.A., viz., one in Wellington, one in Petone, four in Auckland and the New Zealand Federation.

There are a total of only twenty-one men in the whole of New Zealand who

are members of the R.Y.A. I think it must be conceded by any thoughtful person that these figures are a disgrace to New Zealand yachting.

Any individual can become an Associate Member of the R.Y.A. for one guinea per year and any club can become a member for from two guineas to five guineas, depending on their subscription income—five guineas is the highest fee payable by any club in New Zealand.

The privileges of membership are that each club or individual member receives the R.Y.A. Year Book each year without any further expense.

The Year Book is printed in four sections—Section 1 is a complete list of membership; Section 2 is the Constitution; Section 3 is the Sailing Rules and Section 4 is a description of appeals which have come before the Council from all

over the British Commonwealth during the past year.

This is the cheapest one guinea worth that any yachtsman can invest in and keeps him up to date with rules and also with the case law as established by the appeal decisions.

No man can be up to date by any other method.

Sambrooke Sturgess' book, "Yacht Racing" will give one a grasp of rules and case law up to 1954* but the rules have been altered since then, and there have been two very important appeal decisions since 1954 which upset the exposition of the points involved as set out in the book "Yacht Racing."

One of these decisions concerns Rule 32 and completely reverses the set-up as expounded by Sambrooke Sturgess*. The other decision is in connection with a combination of circumstances covered by Rules 30 and 31 and again completely upsets ideas held previously.

It will therefore be seen that the only way to be up to date is to join the R.Y.A.

There are other arguments in favour of supporting the R.Y.A. but as this

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