

"The time has come," the Walrus said, "To talk of many things



Of shoes and ships and sealing wax

Of cabbages — and Kings"



ON Monday, February 11, it was announced in the Court Circular that the Duke of Edinburgh is to visit Cherbourg in the Royal Yacht *Britannia* to attend the opening of the new clubhouse of the Yacht Club de Cherbourg. It may be remembered that in August 1957 I published a sketch of the new building as it will be when finished. One of the reasons why the club committee decided to pull down the old wooden building which was known so well was to provide better facilities for visiting yachtsmen.

Every year about 800 foreign yachts visit the port of Cherbourg, nearly all of them British. There can be little doubt therefore that His Royal Highness' decision to attend the opening ceremony is prompted, in his capacity as President of the Royal Yachting Association, by an appreciation of the hospitality extended over the years to British yachtsmen by the Y.C. de Cherbourg. When we go there we are berthed by the Club's harbourmaster, we lie on their moorings, use their landing stage, and tie our dinghies to their pontoon. We rely on the Club servants for service and advice about shopping, and to telephone for taxis while we take a drink in an atmosphere that is unmistakably French.

The Club has now decided to open a foreign membership at the advantageous annual subscription of 1,000 fr. (£1) for British and other overseas yachtsmen; a nice gesture and one that will give us an opportunity of helping to some extent to finance the building of the new clubhouse and to contribute towards the provision of facilities for which we, in the past, have relied entirely upon the French. The Commodore of the Club is Monsieur André Noyon, and the address is Yacht Club de Cherbourg, Quai de l'Ancien Arsenal, Cherbourg.

This is grand news. It will be a tremendous thrill for the members of the Yacht Club de Cherbourg to see the Royal Yacht moored in Le Petit Rade and the town of Cherbourg is certain to give the Duke an enthusiastic welcome.

Models of Portuguese caravels

ON the night of February 9, I took a sleeper to Glasgow because on the following day I had arranged to see our America's Cup challenger at the yard of her builders, Alex. Robertson & Sons, Ltd., Sandbank. Of course, there had been a great deal of snow but by the time I arrived conditions were improving. Monday morning was not exactly ideal weather, but for all that I enjoyed the trip across the Clyde from Gourrock to Dunoon in the little packet. The tops of the snow-clad hills disappeared into the clouds and the whole panorama, as always, was one of great beauty. In the Holy Loch there was the odd steamer or two laid up and a number of tank landing craft, some of which I understand are to be used next summer as car ferries taking a share of the 200,000-odd British motor cars which it is anticipated will visit the Continent during the coming summer.

I was met by David Boyd, *Sceptre's* designer, and by Mr. Robertson. A water-line model of *Sceptre* in the office gave an impression of what the yacht will look like when finished. She will, of course, be extremely beautiful because I don't think David Boyd could design an ugly yacht if he tried. And so over to the building shed.

Sceptre is well forward. She is planked up and down and, on that particular day, the shipwrights were working on the sheer strake.

She is built of mahogany planking and is of semi-composite construction. Her mast, I understand, will be a light alloy spar similar to that of *St. Barbara*, and it will be built-up and is being made by Messrs. Camper & Nicholsons at Gosport. It is at Messrs. Ratsey and Laphorn, also at Gosport, that her Terylene sails are being made. Well, that is all I am going to tell you about *Sceptre* although there was, of course, a lot more to see.

What I can tell you is that although both David Boyd and everyone in the little yard are full of confidence and enthusiasm, they realize that they are up against an extremely tough proposition and that the yacht they are building has to stand or fall by herself whereas the defenders will probably have the choice of four yachts including *Vim* which, although built before the war, is still a formidable vessel judged by any standards. They are convinced that the yacht they have designed, and which, is building, is the best that Britain could produce and every man in the yard is putting his utmost into her.

Speculation is rife as to *Sceptre's* helmsman and crew, but so far no announcement has been made and while the Americans have the choice of a number of available helmsmen with enviable international records in racing keel boats, no one in this country springs readily to the mind as a suitable candidate for the honour of steering *Sceptre* to victory.

Having seen her, although it is difficult to judge by just looking at a yacht, I think it unlikely that we shall be outdesigned in this contest as we were in the last, when *Ranger* proved so decisively that she was a much better yacht than *Endeavour II*.

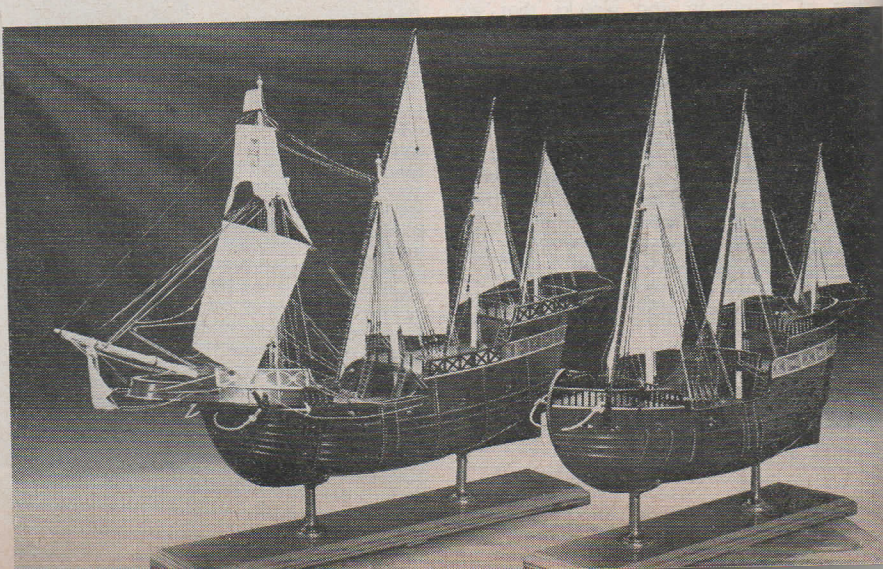
If this is so, the contest is then more likely to be a battle between crews than between yachts. *Sceptre's* crew will probably be the following: Amateurs, Cdr. S. S. (Sam) Brooks, Cdr. J. Brook, Lt.-Cdr. Graham Mann and J. G. (Hamish) Connell; Professionals, Jim Slorance, Keith Musset, Cecil Jupe and A. N. Other.

Sceptre will be launched on April 2, after which she will be sailed to the South Coast.



IN the Presidential Report of the Royal Yachting Association for the past year, the Duke of Edinburgh who is, in fact, now completing his second year of office, remarks that during that time 105 clubs have been recognized and 2,369 members have joined the Association, bringing the total up to 831 and 5,212 respectively.

"At first sight," he remarks, "this increase looks quite satisfactory, but as there are probably 220,000 people who 'mess about in boats'... it means that less than 2.5 per cent are supporting the national authority. Some of the others who are members of recognized clubs are subscribing less than sixpence each by way of their club's R.Y.A. subscription. I am quite convinced that officers of clubs could do much more to enlist new members if they wished to do so. Large numbers of them are in a position to make a start by themselves joining the R.Y.A."



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This is plain speaking. It is what I myself have been preaching for years and I hope that yachtsmen will take heed of what His Royal Highness says. He continues:

"The measure of respect which we now enjoy is a result of ten years of strenuous effort with the Ministries, Local Authorities, Harbour Commissioners and others with similar responsibilities. Without this confidence our recent negotiations regarding the facilities of yachtsmen at Sunderland, the use of Harthill Reservoir and the navigation of Haddiscoe Cut might not have been settled so satisfactorily. Each may be a small and comparatively local problem but failure to achieve a reasonable settlement in any one of these cases would have impaired the enjoyment of a number of present and future yachtsmen."

He also remarks on the progress of the catamaran and the home-built dinghy and he says:

"If ever yachting was solely a rich man's sport, it certainly is nothing of the kind to-day."

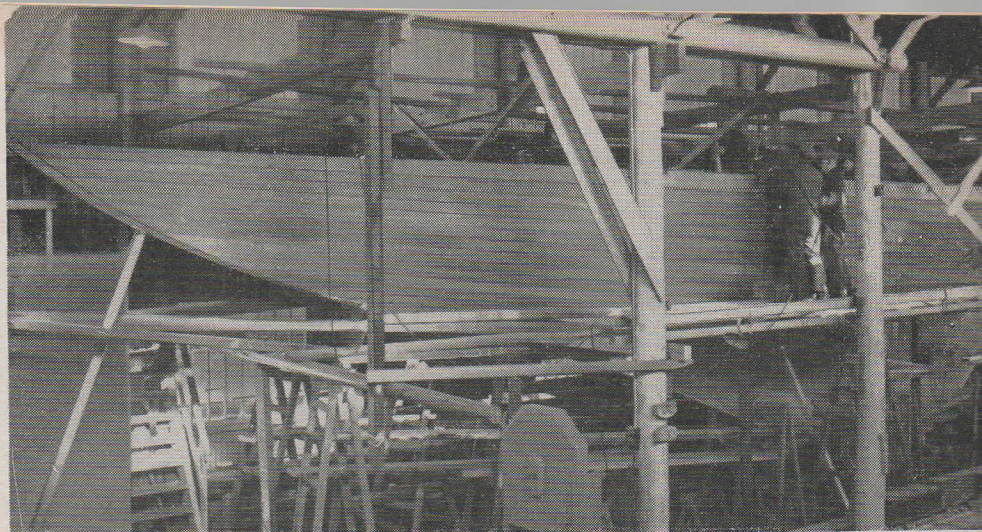
The Honorary Treasurer, H. K. Andreae, reports a satisfactory state of affairs, but he rightly remarks that we have considerable liabilities ahead and it is a continual race to keep income over expenditure and remarks: "It is so easy to slide the other way."*

TWO models of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Portuguese caravels, the gift of Admiral Tomaz, Portuguese Minister of Marine, were recently presented to the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich by the Portuguese Ambassador, Senor Pedro Theotónio Pereira, who said that he had spent many hours of his free time in London looking around the magnificent galleries of the Museum with delight. I, too, have done the same thing. The National Maritime Museum, he said, expresses the spirit of this great country. How right he is!

It was in the caravels that the early Portuguese navigators explored the oceans and learned the art of navigation. Before that time navigation was only a coastal affair. Ships did not lose contact with the shore and their masters had well in mind the rumours and terrors of the ocean. Somewhere to the south or to the west there must be the edge of the globe and a fatal fall into the flames of the equator or into the lethal cold of the north. All this was generally believed a long time after Prince Henry's men had been able to sail over a great part of the Atlantic and had mastered many of the secrets of modern astronomical navigation.

The Ambassador said that at the end of the fifteenth century the world became suddenly much larger, as if a new dimension had been added to it through the finding of vast new oceans and land, and he went on to say that the world will not know a comparable emotion until the day a space ship will return to port saying, as did

* For information about membership write to the Secretary, Royal Yachting Association, 171, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.



Columbus about the Castle of Mina: "There are new inhabitable worlds because we have been there."



COMPLETION of a large-scale model of the Solent and Southampton Water for studying the tidal phenomena and navigational uses of the water way, was recently announced by Southampton University and I was fortunate to be asked to go to the opening ceremony in the morning followed by a luncheon. The model was built by the University and housed in a special building tailored to fit.

It is claimed that, with certainty, in a matter of a few hours answers to problems which otherwise might take, literally, years of observation can be obtained. The need for a model became apparent when the possibilities of constructing a new deep water marine terminal near Warsash for the Caltex group of oil companies came to be discussed. The Harbour Board were worried because there was a possibility that dredging and consequent alteration of the channel might cause the silting up of the main ship channel, the results of which would be a very serious matter for the port of Southampton. The model was therefore put in hand and paid for by Caltex at the cost of about £16,000.

Subsequent tests upon the completed model have shown that the fears of the Harbour Board officials were unfounded and that dredging required for the construction of the projected Caltex oil refinery could safely be undertaken. The model, having achieved its purpose so far as the oil company is concerned, has now been handed over to Southampton University and it will, of course, become a permanent asset to that body's civil engineering de-

partment as well as enabling research into any future project in which the Harbour Board may be interested.

I watched the model working with the greatest interest. It was very easy to follow the direction of the tidal streams because of the dust floating on the water and I was intrigued to find that various eddies, slack waters and the like which I have worked for years when racing in the Solent, could be traced with surprising ease and certainty. Any yachtsman in future who considers racing on the Solent would be wise to try to spend a few hours studying the model in operation; that is, if he can make friends with the University authorities.



ON the morning of New Year's Day, the yawl *Revonoc* sailed from Key West for Miami, a distance of about 160 miles. Under normal conditions the favourable Gulf Stream current would make it a relatively short sail. On board was her owner, Harvey Conover, former commodore of the Cruising Club of America and as competent a blue water yachtsman as you could find anywhere in the world; his wife Dorothy; their son Lawrence and his wife, and a friend William Fluegelman.

The yacht has never been seen again. The sea has swallowed her up and the only trace has been the yacht's dinghy which was washed ashore at Jupiter Inlet, some 65 miles north of Miami on the afternoon of Jan. 6, five days after her departure. Examination of the dinghy has revealed nothing.

When the yacht left Key West, at 0930 on January 1, the weather was fine and forecasts gave no clue as to the bad weather which was later to develop.

That night the wind increased to gale

University of Southampton working model of the Solent and Southampton Water

