

That Bottomless America's Cup

By Captain
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THE AMERICA'S CUP, an old tarnished flagon of silver not un-mixed with pewter, if experts are to be believed, is neither useful nor ornamental.

In the first place it has no bottom, being a hollow cylinder incapable of holding liquid. This is a disqualifying feature, as every seaman must admit. The winner of the America's Cup cannot take a drink out of it. So far as its beauty is concerned, why, it has none. In fact it is an artistic horror.

But there never was an old metal pot in the world's history that has excited such eager competition or caused the expenditure of so many millions as this tarnished flagon. Incidentally it is responsible for a fabric fragile and cranky such as never entered into the most fanciful imaginations of yachtsmen of twenty years ago.

The racing machine of today is a trifle light as air, her rig is gossamer and spidery. Her hull is a shell so far as thickness is concerned, but it is nevertheless strong enough to support a solid bulb of lead weighing in the neighborhood of one hundred tons. No metal is so expensive to find its place in the building of the Cup challengers and Cup defenders. If gold were of use, there is no doubt that before this we should have had a golden boat to compete with us for the old tarnished jug.

Of all the yachtsmen who have challenged for the Cup, Sir Thomas Lipton is easily the most popular with the masses. Since self-made men in their mature years develop pomposity, and that of a peculiarly objectionable kind, Sir Thomas is just as jovial, genial and unassuming as he was on the day he landed in this country with a light heart and a thin pair of breeches as his sole capital.

His enterprise is displayed in remarkable ways. One day you read about him entertaining royalty aboard Erin, or on one of his Shamrocks. Another day you are informed about his corner in Western pork. Next, you are surprised to hear of his looping the loop at Coney Island.

His visitors' book on Erin is filled with the illustrious and distinguished names of men and women who have enjoyed his hospitality. King Edward of England, with his bold and distinctive signature, figures more than once. Sir Thomas tried his sweetest to persuade his royal friend to go a-sailing with him on Shamrock III, but the king remembered an exciting period aboard Shamrock II, when it was dismantled and the top hamper came whizzing deckward in dangerous proximity to his royal and imperial ears. For that reason his majesty found that affairs of state prevented him from enjoying a sail in the new challenger.

Lipton went aboard Shamrock II when it was anchored in Cowes Roads, and was greeted at the gangway by a young shaver of a boy of 7.

"Do you know who I am?" asked the Scotch-Irish knight (the blood-red hand of baronetage came later).

"Of course I do," was the youngster's answer. "You're the man who sails as a passenger with my father on his yacht."

"Eh, but you're canny, bonny bairn. Here's sixpence for you," was Lipton's reply.

The youngster was Skipper Sycamore's little son.

Sycamore is no longer on the Lipton payroll. He was at the tiller of the Shamrock when it was dismantled with the king aboard.

The schooner-yacht America, the day after it won the cup in 1851, also had a royal visitor in the shape of Queen Victoria.

The great speed of America surprised the old seadogs of the Isle of Wight, so much that it became a general belief that the Yankee yacht had a propeller worked by machinery artfully concealed.

The old marquis of Anglesey, the father of English yachting, went out for a sail in his cutter Pearl (which, although built in 1820, was one of the fastest English yachts), anxious to have a speed trial with America. Mr. Steers, one of the America's crew, a brother of its designer, went with him.

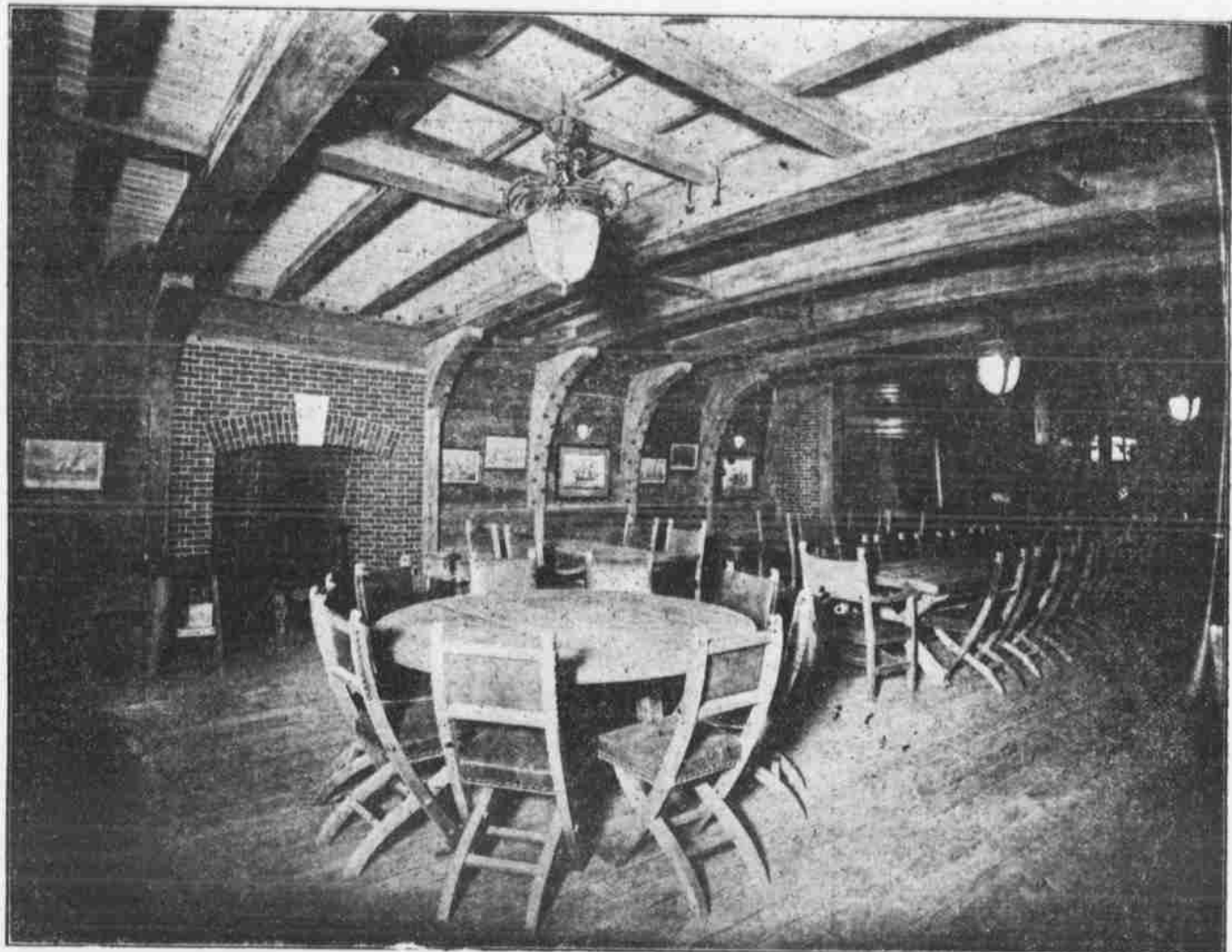
America, with only its jib and mainsail set, passed Pearl without difficulty. The master of Pearl said to the marquis: "Your lordship knows that no vessel with sails alone could do that."

When America went slowly he said, "Now it is stopped." When it went on, "It's going again."

Steers said nothing; he was enjoying the joke. When the yacht anchored the marquis went aboard America and, going aft, leaned so far over the counter that Commodore Stevens took hold of his wooden leg (he had lost his leg at the battle of Waterloo) to keep him from falling overboard. The old gentleman was looking most eagerly for that propeller.

The illusion was dispelled a few days later when America was drydocked at Portsmouth and close scrutiny failed to find the propeller.

Commodore John C. Stevens, founder of the New York Yacht club, and chief owner and director of the destinies of the schooner America, was partial to a glass of fine old Madeira. He happened to have in his cel-



COZY DINING ROOM OF THE NEW YORK YACHT

lar a couple of dozen bottles of rare vintage more than half a century old. These he stowed away in his own private locker in his stateroom on America.

Before the vessel sailed his wife went aboard America to straighten out the commodore's cabin, as was the custom of the wives and sweethearts of sailors in the wide world over in those primitive days. She happened to come across the wine and just for fun ordered the carpenter to nail the bottles up in a part of the yacht where they could not be detected easily.

On the day when America won the cup, Commodore Stevens sang out to the steward to open a certain locker and bring out a bottle of the priceless Madeira which had come to precious maturity in the cellars of Mr. Bingham, an oenophile of fame and father-in-law of Lord Ashburton, once British minister to the United States. It was the intention of all hands to drink the health of the queen in a glass of this superb vintage.

The steward failed to find the wine, and the commodore was much perplexed.

Before he returned to America he sold the schooner to Lord de Blaquiere, and it was not till his return that he found out the trick his wife had played on him. Then he wrote to Lord de Blaquiere, informing him of the secret cranny where the wine was concealed and making him a present of it. He added that had he known that the Madeira was aboard he would have made the purchaser pay ten thousand pounds for craft and cargo instead of the paltry five thousand pounds for which he sacrificed it. And those who knew the commodore were convinced that what he wrote he meant.

Colonel Hamilton, to whom the commodore confided the loss of the wine in his private diary of the doings of America (now, alas! inaccessible to the curious and prying eyes of contemporary yachtsmen) hints that the commodore suspected some of the members of the crew of broaching the cargo and "getting away" with this nectar of which a drop could not have been bought for a dollar. This, too, when grog was served out every four hours to each of the crew of thirteen (the commodore was not a wee bit superstitious), who liked to take a nip, or rather a tot, as it was called in those brave old days.

During the Dauntless-Coronet ocean race the water tank of Dauntless sprung a leak and the only mild beverage available for drinking was an extremely fine claret of the celebrated Chateau Margaux brand, the pride of Commodore Colt's cellars.

He was a man who had a proper discrimination about wines. He told the writer of calling all hands aft and talking to them like a Dutch uncle somewhat after this fashion:

"Now, my boys, be of good cheer. For the Irish land is drawing near. And in an hour we'll see Gene Clair. And then for a jolly glass of beer!"

"Meanwhile, my hearties, you must drink this!"

"Rayther winegary, ain't it, commydore?" answered a hairy old sea dog, "but we would drink kerosene, sir, if you was so good as to tell us so!"

This story is authentic. Commodore Bennett was really angry with his correspondent in Ireland who failed to cable over the

fact that Dauntless' sailors had been compelled to assuage their thirst on claret that Mr. Bennett, in spite of his wealth, couldn't buy—for the reason that the vintage was exhausted.

The famous schooner-yacht America cost \$20,000. The condition under which she was contracted for was that unless she proved "faster than any vessel in the United States brought to compete with her," she might be returned on her builders' hands.

The designer of a modern racing machine binds himself to nothing so far as speed is concerned. He promises in a general way to do his best, but guarantees nothing. A yachtsman or a syndicate of yachtsmen is bound to accept a racing craft even if it should not be fast enough

amount incurred by Mr. Lawson for building and racing the Independence was \$206,034.08. This includes every item, even the expense of breaking up the vessel after its brief career of three months.

The cost to the syndicate of the New York Yacht club of Vigilant, Defender and Constitution has been variously estimated at amounts ranging from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Judging from the experience of Mr. Lawson, who used his money lavishly, extravagant ideas prevail concerning the cost of defending the America's cup. At any rate, the syndicate of great capitalists organized to build the Reliance can afford easily to apportion the cost among them. Never before were so many opulent men banded together for a sporting event.

Formerly the yachtsmen of New York and Boston bore all the cost of defending America's cup. In this year the moneyed interests of the whole country, including bankers, railway magnates, Standard Oil, Steel trust and other magnates have entered into a powerful combination to prevent Sir Thomas from "lifting" the cup. But still, in spite of all, they bear so much good will and regard for the challenger that they would rather he would win it than anybody else.

Pointed Paragraphs

The moth exhibits much taste in dress. An old soaker is usually a great sponge. Some girls never flirt—but perhaps it isn't their fault.

It is better to know little than to know a lot that isn't true.

Promises may get friends, but it requires performances to keep them.

If fame came only after death, no man would kill himself striving for it.

One glance at a political orator proves that all are not geysers that spout.

It isn't necessary to spend money in advertising your troubles; simply tell them to a gossip.

Often it happens that a man isn't known by the company he keeps until after he mysteriously disappears.

Somehow the sun doesn't seem to shine half so hot on the base ball grounds as it does on the harvest field.

Women talk about their clothes being uncomfortable, but there are lots of men who envy them every time they see a peck-a-boo shirt waist.—Chicago News.

It Makes a Difference

"Here," said the charity official, "is a poor little girl who has lost both father and mother, and I am looking for some one to take charge of her."

"I can't think of adopting her," returned the influential citizen, shortly.

"We thought of having some responsible person named as her guardian."

"I have no time to act as guardian to a waif."

"Although she is alone in the world, she has had about \$50,000 left her, and"

"What's that? Fifty thousand dollars! Well, a poor child ought not to be without friends. I think, perhaps, I can undertake this trust."—Chicago Post.



SIR THOMAS LIPTON ON BOARD ERIN, WATCHING TRIAL RACES BETWEEN HIS YACHTS.

to get out of its own way.

The first cost of the America was \$20,000. The expense incurred in sailing it across and racing it was \$3,750. It was sold for \$25,000 to Lord de Blaquiere. As it won \$500 in a match race against the Utania, the owners of the America actually made a profit of \$1,750 in their venture.

In contrast with these figures, take the case of the Boston ninety-foot Independence, built by Thomas W. Lawson, as a candidate for cup defense. Mr. Lawson made public an itemized account of the cost of the Independence. As it was built regardless of expense, the cost of other cup defenders may be estimated from the figures given.

Stories of the fabulous expense attached to the building and running of a ninety-foot yacht have been published, and erroneous conclusions reached as a result.

It is interesting to note that the total