

"H E R I D A"

MAR. 1944.

GEORGE RIMER

NORMAN FORD

MORACE BURFORD

GEORGE OLELAND - SCRIBE (BOSCH)

It has been an extraordinary season, one of the worst droughts the State and back country have ever had, tremendous dust storms all through the North, Broken Hill, the River, half the Mallee has been blown away and the dust has even been so bad as to necessitate lighting the street lights in Adelaide in the middle of the day.

On the other hand the Monsoons starting in November are several months early and have brought some good rains in the North and rest of the State and have also brought a good many headaches for Skipper Rimer, the glass keeping low and a brand new change every day, this is rather disconcerting for a skipper who prides himself on a quiet snug anchorage every night and means at Ford for several days for anchoring too far out at Hog Bay necessitating an early move into smooth water in the morning so that breakfast could be eaten in comfort.

There was some doubt as to whether we would have a cruise this Xmas as the old mainsail is still very ripe and the new one has not been put in hand yet further more, Herida had not been put into commission, however as Norman had only Morace Burford with him the Georges could have reduced weight and joined the Anyda. Big George however persuaded the owner that this arrangement would be over-crowding and rather than let us slum it in this fashion, he kindly consented to let us take the "Herida" old sail notwithstanding.

A goodly supply of liquid restoratives having been placed aboard in case of emergency, the Georges finished the bulk of the stowing on Friday night, so that should the weather be favourable a good get away might be made as soon as our labours for the year ceased on Saturday.

The change which had come in a day or so before, had not yet settled so we had lunch at the Club and an odd beer or two with some of the members and Morace was there waiting for us. Having picked up the meat, ice and other perishables we pick up Norman at his home at Large where he insists we should have a drop of good Scotch and take the opportunity of wishing Mrs. Ford "Felicitations and Yuletide Greetings" as well as inspect the grandchild and meet the proud and charming young Mother Rene again.

It is decided to make an early start in the morning to a light Northerly and Bob Godsell gets the latest weather report stating that the Northerly would hold about 20 hours, leave the Pool at 7.30 with Dug Verco in his Nantilas an hour or so ahead of us. Have a very pleasant quiet run down the Coast, Glenelg, Halletts Cove, Port Nearlunga, Carrackalinga to Rapid Head. Expecting the Northerly to hold, George does not push Norida, so when the change arrives off Rapid Head we have a stiff beat across the Passage and anchor at Hog Bay at midnight, by which time we are all tired and wet. Dug Verco having his wife with him had evidently used the power freely and managed to reach American River just as the change arrived.

Christmas Day and felicitations are flying in all directions except from Horace who has not yet settled down from Saturday nights leave taking. A walk ashore is suggested and Fordy sets the pace (being a pedestrian of long standing) leading us several miles up hill and down, the view from the top of the hill looking across the Passage to Cape Jarvis and the Hills at the back being very fine on this bright sunny day, further on a very fine view of Eastern Cove is had, these almost compensate us sailor folk for the shin soreness.

After lunch we beat out round Kangaroo Head against a strong Westerly breeze and steep sea and then have a long lead across Eastern Cove into American River. George Eimer puts on a most excellent roast duck and apple sauce for dinner and while he is preparing same Norm and Horace go after cockles, finding quite a good supply in Jack Linnets dinghy.

Tuesday morning glass still low and blowing fresh Westerly we make up the River under Stay sail and power anchoring at the old spot and G. E. gets windy when we are followed by a small craft, thinking it is Alby Swanson, the fishing inspector, he is disappointed however as it turns out to be Jim Burford.

Run back to Ballast Head for the night still under Stay sail and Power and G. C. roasts the turkey kindly presented by Baby Sowter (God bless her) while Norman and Horace again have a walk ashore to the A R Settlement.

AMERICAN RIVER
Having filled our crops to repletion with the turkey, vegs, followed by peaches (without cream) and Coffee and Liqueur. Horace and Norman are left to clean up the debris while the Georges gather in the net together with 3 doz. nice fat tomnies, a couple of Whiting and a sizable flat head.

Wednesday. Fillets of tommy a la Eimer make a very delectable breakfast and we set off for Kingscote, the weather still being too unsettled for the North coast.

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Have some difficulty in reaching Point Morrison, but the wind freshens somewhat and Kingscote is reached in time to have a couple with Charlie Anderson before 6 p.m. but its too late to get the meat and the fish aren't biting and tomorrow, the 28th all shops are closed. What shall we do? Go and see Arthur Harry at the ice works. Yes, the butcher left some meat there, so we'll be back in the morning for meat and ice not before 5 a.m. though.

Thursday. Having anchored for the night close to the town the morning toilet cannot be executed as usual and after breakfast we repair to the Ozone while Norman and G.E. telephone the family. Horace and G. C. rectify the omission and G.C. gets a hot bath, we then discuss a few long beers with Fred Wood who tells us to take half a sheep when we go to the ice works, needless to say this is most acceptable and G. E. saws it off in real butcher-boy fashion.

Ice and meat in hand, go aboard again and make over to Beatrice Island, the wind is back in the North again and looks like doing the daily round of the compass. Spend a very pleasant noontide inspecting the black crested tern nesting, there are thousands of them here, and they rise in a beautiful white cloud when disturbed by Norman. Thousands of Shags also breed on Beatrice but at the present time are not nesting, there are also many penguins in their burrows in the ground and in October when here, we saw several Pacific Ocean gulls nests. During this interesting inspection the Georges added a nice warm glow to their upper torso.

It looks like a change coming in so make back and anchor at the Stone Jetty and the morning toilet can be done with a certain amount of privacy. Friday is too bolsterous to move off so G.E. does some sail repairs while G.C. and Horace go ashore for fresh bread and stores.

Saturday. Very nice sail back to A.R. and the crew pay calls on Curly Dempster and Jim Burford; Charlie Kreiger, Coombs, Jim Burford and Dug Verec had all called on the Nerida. In the meanwhile, G.C. roasts the leg of Mutton and makes a curry against our trip home. Back to Ballast Head for the night and set the net, just manage a feed of flathead, 2 tommies and 2 catfish for breakfast.

Sunday. Set off at 8 a.m. with westerly breeze for Troubridge and Port Vincent, find a fairly big sea running outside Ballast Head and when clear of the Spit, the wind increases considerably and ominous tears appear in the sail, till it starts to go altogether.

Get the engine going and take the sail off, things are only middling for a while, G.E. nearly goes overboard taking the jib off, Norman gets a nasty crack in the guts with the boom and has probably cracked a rib.

Eventually the tripsail is set and with the Stay sail we fetch up a couple of miles to Leeward of Troubridge with Norman at the helm for 4 hours, the seas are very large and steep and occasionally one lands aboard much to every ones annoyance. All these exertions upset G.E. and he is very loth to part with an excellent breakfast.

It is now 4 p.m. so carry on in the calmer water in the lee of the land and Troubridge eventually pick up the Stansbury beacon and make straight in shore to a very pleasant anchorage. There should have been enough curry for two meals, but we have to fall back on bacon and eggs for breakfast.

New Year's Day felicitations and New Year's Greetings to all a good solid South Wester to drive us home, off come the remnants of the old mainsail, the trysails bent on and with the staysail and No. 2 Caloon foresail the Merida is making good time with this following wind for the Harbour, its a pity we didn't have a good strong sail yesterday, it would have been a very fast exhilarating trip.

In conclusion there is nothing we can say much about these hoary old (Yachtsmen) which is not already known by anyone likely to peruse this short account, they have all run true to form and despite the weather it has been a very beneficial as well as enjoyable few days thanks to the foresight of the skipper in preparing a very fair working roster.

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