

The Cruise of the *Alice*

Part IV — Homeward Bound from Martinique, Over a Course Along the North Coast of Porto Rico and Haiti, and to the Bahamas

By HENRY HOWARD



AFTER a full week at Fort de France, we reluctantly took down our awnings, removed our sail covers and started on our return voyage to the United States, stopping first at Dominica to bid goodbye to our many friends there, and then at the Les Saintes Islands. After passing Guadeloupe we changed our course to Antigua.

To return again to the question of hurricanes, we had ocular proof of the limited nature of the path which is covered by one of these storms. In Martinique, for the first time on our cruise, we were able to get fruits of all kinds since Martinique had not been touched by the real hurricane; it had a bad gale but nothing more. Dominica suffered considerable damage, but Guadeloupe was devastated. On the other hand, Antigua, 50 or 60 miles to the northward, was practically undamaged. This is impressive proof of the importance of following the directions given on many West Indies charts as to the proper course to steer when a hurricane is believed to be approaching. There is apparently always a reasonable warning, sometimes two or three days, and it would appear that 100 miles to one side or the other of the track of the approaching storm, is sufficient in many cases to remove one entirely from the danger zone.

Antigua, a British island, is exceedingly attractive and would, I believe, make an excellent winter resort. There are beautiful hills, some of them quite high but there are no really high mountains, so that one does not suffer from the continual tropical rains which are found when the trade winds encounter the more mountainous islands. There is a delightful bathing beach. The island is about 15 miles in diameter and has many beautiful harbors along the coast line, the chief of which is St. John's Harbor, where the steamers land. Next to this, English Harbor, a much better anchorage, and the place chosen by Lord Nelson to refit his fleet when he was in the West Indies. While the scenery is not comparable in beauty and grandeur to that of Martinique, it is most charming, and the island is blest with many good roads. It is an excellent place for horseback riding and there is good fishing around the coast.

Antigua is the government seat of the Leeward Islands and we found Governor Fiennes and Lady

Fiennes most hospitable. His Excellency urged us to visit the island of Barbuda at which Fenger also touched in the *Diabliesse*.

Barbuda has no port of entry, and foreigners must obtain permission to land there from the government of the Leeward Islands. The Governor arranged for one of his staff, Mr. Pereira, to go with us and spare no pains to see that we should find both the fish and game for which the island of Barbuda is noted. A local pilot took us inside of a dangerous looking reef and we dropped anchor in a well protected, although slightly rough harbor. The village of Codrington, on Barbuda, is about

four miles from the landing place, so we were obliged to leave the *Alice* in the custody of the crew. During the night it blew half a gale which made me anxious for the safety of the *Alice*, but everything turned out to be all right; the anchorage had not proved a rough one. Barbuda is a low-lying island with a long treacherous reef on the windward side on which rest the remains of some 50 or more wrecks, one of them a steamer that went ashore only about a year ago. It seems criminal that there should be no light to warn mariners from these dangers.

After two or three days we were again under way,

this time headed for St. Bartholomew, or St. Barts, as it is generally called. We were underway at 5:30 P.M. and anchored the next morning at 7:30 A.M. in Gustavia Harbor. This is put down as a French Island and I had not realized that it was in reality a Swedish Island, that is, it formerly belonged to Sweden and most of the people there are of Swedish descent, at least among the whites. The anchorage is good and it is an interesting place to spend a day. Life is exceedingly primitive and seems far away from the rest of the world. We were under way again, headed for the Virgin Islands and Round Rock Passage which we had left nearly a month before.

We delayed starting from St. Barts until 4:45 P.M. so as not to approach Round Rock until after daylight, but the wind increased in strength and we found we were in for one of the very strong trade wind breezes. In one two-hour period we made 17 8/10 knots, our best run under sail alone. This, however, was putting us ahead of our schedule, so at 4:30 A.M. we hove to and waited for daylight. We found that the strong wind, combined with the current through Anegada Passage, had put us to leeward of our course and it was 8 A.M. before we actually passed through Round Rock Passage.



At English Harbor, Antigua, in the Leeward Islands.



Landing at Royal Island Harbor, Bahamas.

This involved quite a thrash to windward in a very rough sea, with the engine to help us. From Round Rock it was a straight run to Road Harbor in Tortola Island with smooth water and the wind well abaft the beam. We were at anchor and ashore by 10 A.M. and after a delightful day we were under way at 4 P.M., hoping to get to St. Thomas that evening. But we were hardly outside Road Harbor when we ran into a heavy squall with a terrific downpour of rain, with additional squalls appearing to windward. As I had no desire to try to get into St. Thomas in thick weather and heavy wind after dark, we immediately changed our destination to Hurricane Hole in the island of St. John, which has already been described, and were safe at anchor there before dark. This was the first night's sleep we had had at anchor since leaving Barbuda.

The next morning we ran under the engine until clear of the mountains, then hoisted sail and found a splendid breeze outside. With engine stopped, we had a glorious run to St. Thomas. The morning and afternoon were spent ashore getting papers, Diesel engine oil and drinking water, and at 10 P.M. we were under way for San Juan, Porto Rico. The wind was very moderate all night, but we ran without the engine, and by daylight were through Virgin Passage and well past the northern end of Porto Rico.

As the day advanced, the trade wind increased and by the time we arrived at San Juan it was again a strong trade with the huge rollers for which this part of the ocean is noted. With the wind nearly dead astern, however, it was great fun, but it would have been quite a different story for any boat beating to windward. About noon we anchored in San Juan harbor.

On leaving St. Thomas we had debated at some length as to whether we should go along the south side of Porto Rico and then the south side of Santo Domingo and Haiti. This would have brought us way down by Jamaica and a long distance to leeward of Cape Maisi, Cuba. We decided that it would probably involve returning to Florida *via* the south coast of Cuba around Cape San Antonio to Havana, and then to Key West. This would make a visit to Nassau impossible for want of time so that we finally decided on a course along the north coast of Porto Rico and then from San Juan directly to Sosua, a small port ten miles east of Port Plata where an old Boston friend was living. This was about 270 miles west of San Juan, and we had a glorious run, all under sail, with the trade wind always a fair wind. We sailed out of San Juan harbor at 5 o'clock Sunday afternoon and anchored in Sosua about 11 A.M. Tuesday. This is an excellent anchorage, free from

mosquitoes but with very limited supplies on shore. We spent the night there and the next morning sailed to Port Plata where we spent a very pleasant day, but were under way before dark. The next morning, shortly after daylight, we were heading in for Cape Haitien harbor, where we anchored early in the forenoon. This had been another glorious run with trade winds abaft the beam and no engine needed.

Cape Haitien is a most peculiar harbor. The protection is due to a series of reefs lying a short distance offshore which completely break the sea, yet when you see it from a distance of four or five miles, ocean steamers at anchor appear to be anchored in the open sea on the windward side of the island because no sign of the reef is visible, or, at least, was not visible in the smooth sea as we approached the harbor. In spite of this, the anchorage at the head of the harbor is as smooth as could be desired; there is absolutely no roll coming in and some exceedingly shallow spots inside the outlying reef prevent even a heavy chop. How it may be in a gale, I do not know, but it was entirely satisfactory in the fresh trade wind we had in the afternoon.

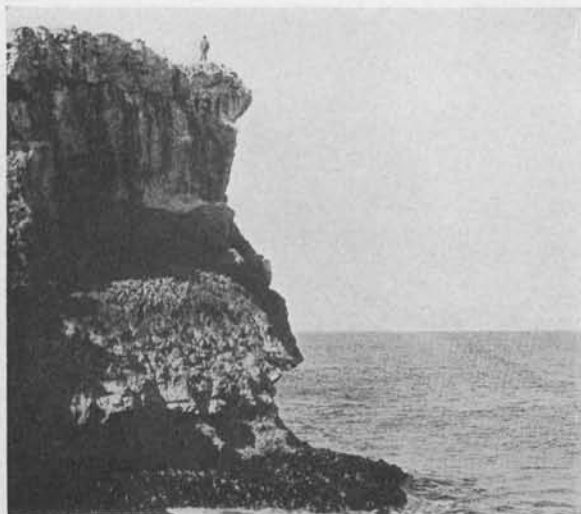
There is little left in Cape Haitien as a reminder of its glories in the days of the French occupation before the Revolution. Judging from the few ruins and the remains of old stone gates and walls surrounding the large estates, it must have been a delightful place. While we were there, the climate was perfect. It is on the windward side of the island with a fresh trade wind blowing in from the sea.

The sharks in this neighborhood are particularly bad and for the benefit of those who strongly believe that sharks never attack human beings, the American Consul, Mr. Currie F. Wood, has many facts and cases which have come to his personal attention.

Haiti is a fascinating country, with mountains up to 10,000 feet in height, very precipitous and of volcanic origin. There are excellent automobile roads and the trip of about 75 miles we took from Cape Haitien to Gonnaives on the other side of the western end of the island is beautiful. Cape Haitien is also the starting point for the most interesting trip in the whole West



Great Inagua Light. Note the clouds. This picture was taken looking east, at 7 a.m. Later in the day there were very heavy trade winds.



Our "lee shore." At the "glass window," on the north-eastern coast of Eleuthera.

Indies, to the citadel or fortress built by Emperor Christophe on the top of a mountain, 3,000 feet high, about 12 or 15 miles back of Cape Haitien. This is also an excellent place to lay in supplies of all kinds; everything is exceedingly cheap, including the best French wines and champagnes.

Our next run was to Mathew Town, Great Inagua, where we stopped for two or three hours to see the flamingos which are there in great quantities. Our plan was to continue on from Inagua and land at San Salvador. The next morning at 4 A.M. we passed Castle Island Light at the entrance of Crooked Island Passage and had a delightful sail all day, with a light, fair wind in the smooth waters of the passage. This made us realize that we were getting out of the trade wind district; in fact, the breeze was continually growing lighter and lighter and beginning to change its direction.

About 4 P.M. we were abreast of Bird Rock Light from which point we laid our course for San Salvador. By this time, however, the wind was hauling to the southward which made us fear that a norther was approaching. The breeze continued exceedingly light all night, but we kept on, hoping to get to San Salvador in time for at least a short look around, but by the time we arrived at the anchorage on the westerly side of the island, it was already beginning to be a lee shore with the wind about southwest and steadily increasing in strength. So we simply sailed close in to the beach and with one good look ashore laid our course for Cat Island. By this time, the wind was so far to the westward that we could not weather the southerly end of Cat Island, but did get into the lee of the land about ten miles to the northward of the southerly end. Here the water was quite smooth and we made good time through the night. By noon the next day we were pretty well abreast the middle of Eleuthera Island and we thought we could get around its northern end and into New Providence Channel before dark and before the wind actually came out of the north.

At about 4 P.M., however, the norther struck in good earnest, with a terrific down-pour of rain and a rapidly increasing wind from the northeast which made Eleuthera Island a lee shore. Just at this critical time I was obliged to stop the engine because I found that the circulating water pump had become

air bound by air getting into the water intake owing to the very rough sea and this had caused the cylinder of the engine to overheat to such a degree that I did not dare to start the pump drawing again until the cylinder had had time to cool off. After a wait of perhaps half an hour, I started the engine again but after 15 or 20 minutes the relief valve blew on the cylinder jacket, indicating a stoppage in the piping due to scale which had been dislodged by the overheating of the cylinder. This meant a final shut down as the thorough cleaning out of this scale was more of a job than I cared to undertake under the conditions then existing.

This is the point where my friend, Mr. Wetherill, one of the editors of YACHTING, will have a laugh at my expense, as this is exactly what he predicted would happen, but I can also laugh at him a little because in spite of these conditions, with a gale of about 40 or 45 miles blowing on a lee shore, the *Alice*, with the aid of her centerboard, was able to work off with sail alone with the greatest ease, although I admit that I was pretty nervous until I was perfectly sure that she was making good progress to windward. Before the engine stopped we had shortened sail to a storm jib and a double-reefed mizzen, but with the engine permanently stopped we also hoisted the mainsail and rolled in three reefs. With this sail she handled beautifully and made good progress with the centerboard, of course, well down.

We were within one and a half miles of the shore when the wind changed to northeast and for a 20-minute period or thereabouts we were able still to use our engine so that we did get a slight offing before we were dependent upon sail alone. However, the storm continued pretty much through the entire night, and as soon as signs of dawn began to appear I bore away, headed southwest and was obliged to run 25 miles dead to leeward by the log before we again sighted Eleuthera Island. This is a good indication of the progress we made to windward through the night under sail alone. Moreover, as soon as I was satisfied that we were actually working to windward in good shape I gave instructions to the helmsman on each watch to sail her very bare of wind and just jog along slowly so as not to get too far offshore.

We finally passed Eleuthera into New Providence Channel, then by Egg Island Light to our old and well loved anchorage in Royal Island Harbor where we spent that afternoon and the whole of the next day, the writer cleaning scale loosened by the overheating of the cylinder out of the engine and piping, while the other

(Continued on page 100)

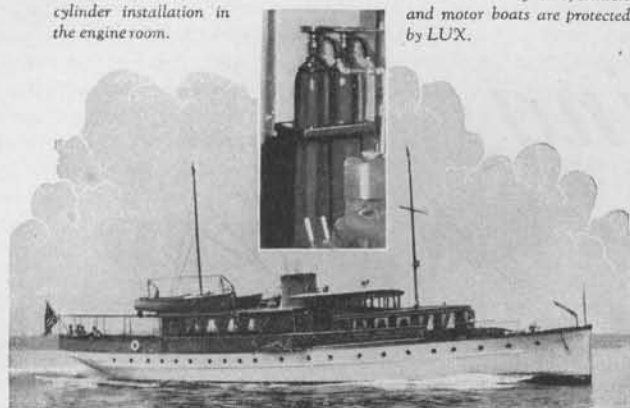


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The Cruise of the *Alice*

(Continued from page 61)

members of the crew cleaned, painted, varnished and did everything possible to make the *Alice* look well when we should sail into Nassau after our long voyage in the West Indies.

The next morning, with the engine running perfectly, we passed through Current Cut and after an all-day sail over the Bahama Banks anchored in Nassau about 5 P.M.

This I consider the end of our West Indies cruise. Vincent Gilpin and Luis Pelaez, who had each contributed so much to its success, left here and in their place arrived my wife and daughter, Katharine, who have been with me so much before in Cuba and the Bahamas. They helped take the *Alice* to Florida and up the coast to Elizabeth City, where we laid up on March 21st, just 112 days after sailing.

At the present time I have an improvement which I believe will absolutely prevent a repetition of the trouble with the circulating water on the Bolinder, but I shall say nothing about the details until it has been tried out this winter.

Notes on Food Supplies

The question of food on an ocean voyage is a matter of the very first importance — again I would refer to the valuable advice given in "Deep Water Cruising," by Martin who, so far as my reading has gone, is almost alone in getting down to actual quantities required. When I began to make my list of supplies I found that even the data given by Martin, while most useful, was by no means complete. I hesitate to take the space, yet when I remember the time required to work out my list I believe that the following data will be found helpful to anyone who has had no previous experience in this matter.

My starting point was to consider the cruise as divided into periods of one week and prepare a menu with quantities required for six for each meal in the week, the idea being that the menu could be the same for respective days in the following weeks. In actual practice we did not follow these menus exactly, but they at least gave a basis for determining the minimum quantities of food required over a given period, and while these menus may not appeal to anyone else, they do at least give a starting point and changes can easily be made without overlooking essentials.

The food list which is made up largely from these menus is based on the entire absence of ice as we wished to be free from the necessity of planning our cruise with any reference to ports where ice was obtainable. Having reached this decision, we decided we would not even start out with ice so that our entire ice chest could be used for supplies, such as potatoes, onions, carrots, etc. Temporary slats were installed across the openings so that the doors could be kept open for ventilation. This proved most successful and our fresh vegetables remained in good condition until they were all consumed, the potatoes lasting some six or seven weeks after they were stowed away. Of course, if artificial refrigeration were available, a very different selection of food would be desirable.

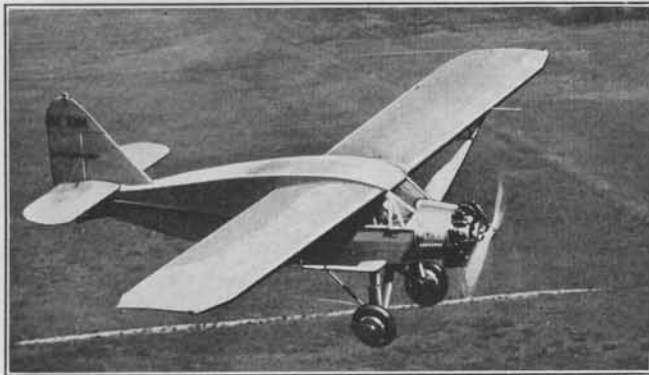
With this list as a starting point, a bill of supplies was prepared. This was carefully checked by Mr. Robert Jordan, who was largely responsible for the work of provisioning the *Nina* in the Spanish Ocean Race. Mr. Jordan's advice was most valuable. All supplies except fresh fruits, vegetables, eggs and meats were ordered from William H. Swan & Sons, 44 South Street, New York City, whose business is "ships stores" and "steam-



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ship supplies." We chose this firm because of satisfactory service in supplying Captain Hammond's *Nina* in the Spanish Ocean Race and Captain Iselin's *Atlantis* in her two months' cruise to Arctic waters. Many of the supplies were specially packed in tin boxes to protect them from moisture and the various detailed directions given by me were carried out without a single mistake.

The following is a complete list of the supplies which we took for six persons for one month.

GROCERIES

10 5-lb. pkgs. granulated sugar	3 1-lb. pkgs. Swedish bread
1000 lumps Domino sugar, 6 2-lb. pkgs.	20 1-lb. cans Maxwell House coffee
6 1-lb. pkgs. light brown sugar	3 lbs. English Breakfast tea, ½-lb. tins.
24½ lbs. Gold Medal flour in cans	10 ½-lb. cans Whiteman's chocolates, 2 doz.
16 1-lb. pkgs. unpolished rice	2 doz. bottles Cliquot Club ginger ale
4 pkgs. yellow corn meal	28 lbs. Star bacon
4 pkgs. A. J. pancake flour	5 2-lb. cans pure lard, 10 lbs.
4 1-lb. pkgs. macaroni R. S.	7 lbs. fancy prunes, 30/40
5 lbs. black beans in 3 cans	15 lbs. cooking prunes
4 lbs. yellow split peas in 2 cans	4 pkgs. raisins
8 lbs. white beans in 4 cans	6 15-oz. jars figs, ½ doz.
4 pkgs. shredded wheat	4 Edam cheeses
2 pkgs. cream of wheat	4 boxes milk chocolate
6 pkgs. Quaker rolled oats	1 1-pint bottle vinegar
10 cartons pilot bread, 40¾ lbs.	1 qt. bottle of powdered malted milk
4 cartons graham crackers, 39 lbs.	

CANNED GOODS

8 cans Campbell's chicken soup	⅓ doz. cans fancy strawberries
16 cans pea soup	⅓ doz. cans fancy pineapple
16 cans vegetable soup	⅓ doz. cans fancy grapefruit
16 cans tomato soup	⅓ doz. cans fancy pears
20 cans mock turtle soup	4 canned hams, 27 15/16 lbs.
1 doz. cans No. 3 tomatoes, fancy	3 doz. cans Libby's corned beef hash 2's
1⅓ doz. cans green peas, fancy	24 lb. cans R & R boneless chicken 2 doz.
1⅓ doz. cans stringless beans	2 jars chipped beef ⅓ doz.
1 doz. cans Friend's baked beans	4 cans crab meat
⅔ doz. cans lima beans	4 cans lobster RS 12 oz.
½ doz. cans asparagus tips	16 cans Portugal oil sardines 1 ⅓ doz.
1 doz. cans Friend's brown bread	1 doz. cans English kippered herring
4 1-qt. cans pure maple syrup	4 cans shrimp
1 1-qt. molasses	⅓ doz. cans Royal baking powder
16 1-lb. cans cabin butter	½ doz. cans Vienna sausages
9 doz. cans tall evap. milk	½ doz. cans Frankfurter sausages
⅓ doz. cans sweetened rhubarb	
⅓ doz. cans fancy cherries	

PRESERVES AND PICKLES

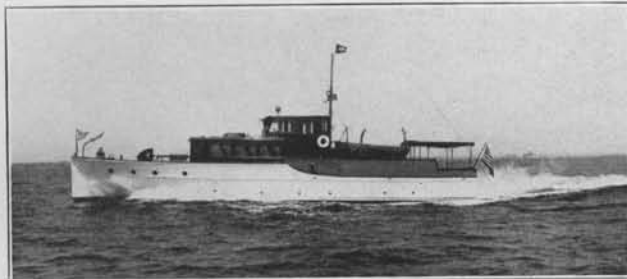
½ doz. jars Dundee marmalade	1 small bottle chutney
¼ doz. fancy raspberry jam	2 16-oz. bottles sweet mixed pickles
¼ doz. fancy strawberry jam	
2 16-oz. bottles chow chow	

CONDIMENTS

2 pkgs. table salt	2 1-qt. tins pure olive oil
½ lb. black pepper	1 small bottle kitchen bouquet
¼ lb. paprika	1 bottle Lee & Perrin's Worcestershire
¼ lb. Coleman's English mustard	1 bottle Heinz's tomato catsup
½ lb. currie powder	⅓ doz. tins magic yeast
2 2-oz. tins French's cinnamon	2 jars mayonnaise

CLEANING COMPOUNDS

12 cakes Ivory soap	5 pkgs. Brillo
4 cakes Sapolio	4 pkgs. Old Dutch cleanser
⅓ doz. large pkgs. Gold Dust	2 qts. Solarine
1 pkg. washing soda, 2½ lbs.	12 cakes "Grandpa's Wonder Soap" for salt water



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In addition, we purchased at Elizabeth City, N. C., where we fitted out, the following lists, including fresh meat sufficient for three days, which we believed would keep out of doors for that length of time (and it did). No allowance was made for the meats in ordering our main supplies.

FRESH MEATS, EGGS, ETC.

36 doz. fresh eggs	1 side of lamb
3 lbs. fresh table butter	2 fowl
5 lbs. salted cooking butter	4 lbs. sirloin steak

FRESH VEGETABLES

100 lbs. potatoes	6 carrots
20 lbs. onions	2 small squashes
30 lbs. beets	2 large turnips
	2 heads cabbage

FRESH FRUIT

2 crates of grape fruit	8 lemons
2 crates of oranges	3 doz. bananas

MISCELLANEOUS

4 cartons of safety matches
5 lbs. cotton waste
25 lbs. fine salt for packing eggs
2 gals. denatured alcohol
25 gals. kerosene
300 gals. Diesel engine oil 28°-32° Be.
300 gals. fresh water
100 lbs. Ford Charcoal Briquettes

The crates of grape fruit and oranges can be lashed on deck and protected from rain and spray by tying on covers of enamelled cloth. It is a good idea to put one crate of oranges within reach of the helmsman.

Among the best canned food is canned ham — a whole ham with bone removed, boiled and ready to eat as it is, or to fry. Another excellent standby is Libby's Corned Beef Hash. A can of this nicely browned in a frying pan makes a good meal at any time.

The following data has been gathered from various sources.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS PER MAN PER DAY

		Source
Water	1 gal.	British Board of Trade
Bacon	¼ lb.	Howard
Eggs	2	Martin
Butter	¼ lb.	Martin
Sugar granulated	¼ lb.	Martin
Sugar lump	6 lumps	Howard
Coffee	⅛ lb.	Martin
Sea biscuit	½ lb.	Howard
Evaporated milk	¾ tall can	Howard

The eggs can be preserved according to the plan described by E. G. Martin, first coating them with lard and then packing in salt in any suitable receptacle, such as a wooden box or a glass or earthenware jar. In this way an enormous number of eggs may be stored in a very small space.

