

Take a Left at the Howard Johnson's

A personal journal of crossing the Atlantic by sail

By Nils Bruzelius

DAY 1, Saturday, July 2, 1983

Leaving astern the slight feeling of ambivalence that had leavened my excitement over our impending departure, I and the other crew of *Felicity* set sail from the Hinckley & Sons boatyard dock at Southwest Harbor, Maine, at 9:32 a.m. — two minutes behind schedule. There was a curious feeling of anti-climax about casting off. The routine was no different than if we had been setting off for a leisurely day sail. The only clue to a passerby that something a bit unusual was afoot was the crowd of about 20 people who waved us off from the Hinckley float. And anyone who came aboard would have found another clue in *Felicity's* storage lockers and her forepeak, all jammed with food and supplies that clearly weren't meant for just a short jaunt.



There was a thick haze as we pulled away from the dock, and by the time we had been underway for an hour it had closed in to become a typically dense Maine fog. We hoisted sail within a few hundred yards

of the dock, and within that hour, too, *Felicity's* bow began to rise and fall on the first gentle ocean swells as we pushed our way seaward toward the Bay of Fundy.

As we set out on a southeasterly course (145° magnetic) the wind slowly faded almost to a calm, and we considered setting the MPS (multi-purpose sail) instead of the working jib and staysail. Probably as a result of the excitement and nervousness of departure, I found myself for several minutes fumbling over how to tie a bowline with a doubled-up line and the bight toward me, the less familiar position. Privately embarrassed, I then spent

several minutes quietly practicing doing bowlines at non-standard angles.

Before long, however, the wind began to rise again, and soon everyone was climbing into foul weather boots and pants and/or jackets. A little spray began to cross the foredeck, but even more compelling was the chilling bite of the foggy breeze that kept picking up as the morning wore on.



Finally, about 18 hours behind schedule, we convened our postponed meeting to discuss emergency procedures and safeguards. It had been planned for the afternoon before but never got organized because the two doctors aboard, Pete Coggins and Colin Brown, had been preoccupied with preparing and stowing the medical gear. The one thing we had managed to test ashore was getting into the bright orange survival suits that the entire crew had rented. They were cumbersome to put on and hilarious to look at, giving the wearer the appearance of an incandescent walrus. Donning them under emergency conditions would undoubtedly be difficult, but the motivation to succeed would surely be powerful. As for the medical kit, a real treasure trove it was. It looked to be enough to medicate a herd of dyspeptic elephants.

Finally, now at sea, we convened the emergency procedures meeting — at which Bill reviewed man-overboard procedures, how to keep the fresh water tanks from spilling, guidelines on wearing safety harnesses (always at night and during daylight in bad weather). Before long the meeting was interrupted when Pete became the first to get seasick. He was followed a little later by Bill. Both felt better after a minute or two of hanging over the side in seamanlike fashion, but Pete tried to go below for a rest a

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short while later and got sick again. Eventually, both were able to go below and sleep it off.

I'll be on watch in 15 minutes and I'll have to break off. I should mention, though, that Colin and Torpey have rigged the cockpit speakers and we've been listening to a Mozart symphony — not sure which one, I'll have to check later. With that for atmosphere and the sun struggling to break through the fog overhead, I settled down to a short doze on the cockpit cushions.

It's hard to believe that this is the first day of what will be three weeks of living on this 42-foot vessel. It will take a few days before it settles into a routine. Maybe by then the nature of the voyage will take on reality. Right now, the foul weather gear is clean and stiff, and even my fingers feel stiff holding the pen. But that's probably due more to the clammy air than anything else.

It just occurred to me that Pete and I will be standing watch shortly and we're the only two crew members who haven't had the full boat tour yet. We don't know where most of the mechanical controls below decks are. No matter how long in advance you prepare for something like this voyage, there are always frantic last-minute things to do and a few things that don't get done. And that's why I don't yet know how the head works.

(Day's run 146 miles, to 43° 05' N, 65 °32' W)

DAY 2, Sunday, July 3

Yesterday I found a convenient little niche just inside the hatch where I can stick my notebook when I pause from writing. I never actually decided to end yesterday's entry. I just broke off to go on watch and never got back to it.

As of 9:30 a.m. this morning we had been underway for 24 hours, all but a tiny bit of it in dense fog. It's grey and dank now (3:15 p.m.), but the fog is much lighter; I would guess visibility is 1-to-2 miles. The Mozart work we were listening to yesterday was a concerto, not a symphony, and it was #14 or #17.

Torpey, with his blue Hinckley cap, blue shorts, brighter blue vest and old Topsiders, is at the helm, conducting the Strauss waltzes now on the tape player.

The tape machine really is decadent. I can't decide whether I like it or not. The music is marvelous, but it does put us at a slight remove from the ocean, the wind and the sea birds. I suppose we'll have a bellyful of those in the next 3-to-4 weeks and we should be glad for the distraction and entertainment of the tapes.



Pete and I stood watch yesterday from 2 to 5 p.m. and again from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m. It was dense fog the whole time, and we dressed warmly, especially at night. Long underwear, trousers, turtleneck, wool sweater pile jackets, two pairs of polypropylene socks, with sea boots and foul weather gear over the lot. And, of course, a black wool watch cap and rubber gloves.

We had a good breeze of 10-to-15 knots most of the day and reefed down for a while during the afternoon. We carried both jib and staysail and both set well. We averaged 8 knots for long periods and by this morning had covered more than 150 nautical miles. The wind dropped way off this morning and we're only up to 175 nautical miles now.

On our 11 p.m.-2 a.m. watch last night we crossed German Bank southwest of Cape Sable, Nova Scotia. A month ago, on that same stretch of water, Bill and Torpey had sailed through a fishing fleet that stretched as far as he could see. For all we knew, they may have been out there again last night, but without radar we had no way of telling. We charged through the area at 8 knots in the fog, keeping a close eye out but well aware that by the time we saw anything it might well be too late to do anything but brace for a collision. Just to figure out the direction in which a passing vessel was heading would probably take too long. But I didn't feel as much tension as I have in the past when sailing in the fog. Maybe in the face of a trans-oceanic voyage, worrying about fog seems less important. It's only one of a hundred sources

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of tension and fear we might encounter, and you can't live with your belly in a knot.

I didn't feel especially talkative on the midnight watch. I hope Pete didn't mind. We did talk some about jobs and other sailing trips, but it was perfunctory.

The boat seems to sail very well. We're doing 6.3 knots, more or less, on only 7–10 knots of apparent wind on roughly a beam reach. Very easy point of sail.

Torpey spotted a couple of dolphins going by in the other direction, but I never caught sight of them.



I rigged a makeshift clip for the missing part of my camera harness this morning and have been taking a few photos. The fog and grey weather don't encourage photography, however. I plan now to keep the camera at the ready as much as possible.

Jeff and I are starting out as the readers in the crew, both now deeply immersed. He's reading *The Illearth War* a science-fiction work by Stephen Donaldson, and I have launched into Ken Follett's latest, *The Man from St. Petersburg*.

It's pleasant to be writing again. I hope that doing a lot of reading at the same time will serve to inspire and improve my writing. Torpey teases me about planning to fill the entire Sunday section of *The Globe*. Some of his teasing is so subtle I don't even realize right away that I'm being baited.

It does seem a good crew. Today everyone has been perhaps a little subdued — perhaps still working on settling in. Everyone does a lot of sleeping — a sign, perhaps, of an experienced crew. We know there will be a lot of fatigue sooner or later. I slept from 7 to 11 p.m. last night, and again from 2 to 8 a.m. I was awakened from time to time by noises from the crew, but it seemed to be good sleep all the same.

Bill went up the mast earlier today to install some more baggywrinkle to keep the shrouds from chafing the mainsail. The wind was light, and Colin and I hauled him up in the bos'n's chair. We put the helm on autopilot for the duration. Quite a gadget, the autopilot. It's not the wind vane type but instead has its own compass. You dial in a compass heading on the control panel, turn it on and it then takes over. It does a better job of steering, I think, than most of us human helmsmen. It runs on electric power, however, so we'll use it only when the engine has been turned on to maintain refrigeration and charge the batteries. Bill says we should also use it to give ourselves time to eat, piss, etc.

Enough for now.

(Day's run 58 miles, cumulative 204 miles, to 42° 30' N, 64° 29' W)

DAY 3, Monday, July 4

Two hundred twenty miles under the keel so far, and we're about 100 miles south of Halifax. Still foggy, although it started to lift in the last hour. It's now 2 p.m. It's our third straight day of fog, and for the last 36 hours there's been almost no wind. Shortly after dinner last night we took all the sails down because there was no wind at all and the swells, at 2–3 feet or so, were large enough to set the sails slatting noisily back and forth, which tends to chafe them. We essentially drifted all night, with just enough way on from the zephyrs of air to keep the boat on the right heading. We travelled only 2–3 miles in six hours.

When a little breeze came up at around 5 a.m., Pete and I set the sails and slowly began to move. Then it died again not too long afterward.

It's July 4, and in honor of the occasion, and since the lack of wind made it feasible, we barbecued half of our steak supply for lunch. Along with wild rice, lettuce-and-onion salad and sautéed onions, it made for a presentable lunch. My turn to cook today.

Bill broke out a patriotic bottle of champagne to mark the occasion, and we toasted independence, the Queen, Lady Di and assorted other worthies. It made for a lot of dirty dishes, which Pete washed as I took over the helm.

Just got off watch a half hour ago, and the entire crew is

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sitting around the cockpit. Bill is making more baggywrinkle, painstakingly cutting an old heavy manila line into five-inch lengths, then weaving them into a double strand of heavy brown waxed twine. Pete, having tried to take a sun sight but finding too much fog obscuring the horizon, has pulled up a bucket of water and found the water temperature to be 63°F. That's 10° warmer than it was a day ago. And, in fact, the air feels a lot warmer, too. Everyone but Torpey was wearing long pants, even polypro underwear, turtlenecks and sweaters yesterday, but now I and several others are in T-shirts and shorts.



Colin's at the helm in shorts and a yellow wind-shell, a pipe clenched in his teeth, a tan bill cap tied on his head. Jeff is reading his sci-fi book. Torpey was sitting on the afterdeck listening to the

Rolling Stones "Tattoo You" album on his Sony Walkman until I put a Peter Tosh tape on *Felicity's* stereo. He then rejoined the party, but in the last few minutes all but Jeff, Colin and I have disappeared below.

The wind is now picking up and we're doing more than 6 knots on 8–9 knots of apparent wind. The breeze picking up makes it feel chillier.

Backing up a bit: We had a large departure dinner for 20 people on Friday night on the eve of setting sail. Colin read a lengthy passage from *The Wind in the Willows* about the mole and the rat going boating. He then presented Bill with a framed inscription from Sir Edmund Hillary, which read: "All adventures, whatever they may be, must follow certain basic guidelines if they are to be successful. There must be imagination and enthusiasm, good planning and equipment, fitness and endurance, and an

acceptance of fear as a stimulating factor — 1979." It fit the occasion perfectly.

Bill toasted the crew and others who helped make the trip possible. It was a good meal, sitting in a dining room overlooking Southwest Harbor's anchorage and the Hinckley docks, and afterward we went down to the boat to drop off a few last items.

Bill's toast mentioned the work I'd done planning the stores, work that is now being put to the test. So far, so good. I'll probably try one of the pre-packaged meal combinations tonight.

When dawn came up this morning in the dense fog between 4 and 4:30 a.m., Pete and I searched for a metaphor to describe the paling of the night from black to very dark grey and then to progressively lighter shades of all-enveloping grey. We finally settled on: "The dawn came up like wet cotton batting." Accurate, but not inspiring.

I'm very satisfied with the three-hours-on, six-hours-off watch schedule. You experience a slightly different sensation of the day each me, and there's still plenty of time to catch up on sleep.

(Day's run 124 miles, cumulative 320 miles, to 41° 44' N, 61° 56' W)

Day 4, Tuesday, July 5

Spectacular! We broke out of the fog for good at around 7–8 a.m. this morning after more than 72 hours of clammy gloom. It's 11 a.m., the sun is lazing and we are a dot of white sail and blue hull floating between the blue above and the blue below. The wind is blowing at 12–15 knots out of the southwest and we rise and fall gently on a mostly regular parade of swells marching with us out of the southwest. The biggest are 4–to–5 feet from crest to trough, the average 2–to–3 feet.

Felicity drives ahead, her bow springing up on each wave, pausing at the crest, then sliding gracefully down to pounce on the next wave. The ripples from the breeze pattern the surface of the swells, which in yesterday's airless conditions were often nearly glassy.

Now and again a few pieces of Sargasso weed drift by, but otherwise we're alone. We think we might see some shipping

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today or tomorrow because we are crossing the inbound and outbound shipping lanes to New York. Today that would be fun; last night and for the last several days, we tensed at the thought of encountering steamers or other shipping in the impenetrable fog. On our 8–11 p.m. watch last night we heard the deep, hoarse moan of a foghorn from what we guessed to be a large steamer, which first became audible only directly ahead and then moved off to westward. It was probably several miles away, but the sound of that immensely powerful bass horn kept us on edge until we were sure it was fading safely astern.

A friend's sister is shipping out on the QE2 from New York, I think today. If so, there's at least a tiny chance that we'll see the QE2. Although on this vast expanse of ocean it would be an extraordinary coincidence.

We turned on the pump to the forward deck nozzle this morning and took turns showering under salt spray from the deck hose, then rinsing off with a tiny bit of fresh water in a sauce pan with the aid of a facecloth. One by one each of the crew marched forward, stripped, sat on the foredeck (to stand was too precarious — even in these gentle swells you risk losing your balance to a sudden motion of the boat) and washed up.

An occasional whitecap sparkles on the wave tops, but otherwise there is nothing to catch the eye. Everyone is loving this weather, and Torpey and Colin in particular spend a lot of time teasing and insulting each other and the rest of the crew.

When I came on watch at 5 a.m. this morning we were greeted by several small porpoises, which played in the waves ahead, astern and alongside us for about 10 minutes before disappearing. Not the most spectacular display I've ever seen, but it was fun. I'm sure we'll see more. Shortly afterward we saw two large areas of water that had been calmed and flattened as if by an oily film, and we wondered whether a whale had surfaced and blown there a minute or two earlier.

Colin persuaded Torpey to replace the working jib with the genoa after breakfast, and with the new sail combination — along with the staysail and main — we've been doing about 7.5 knots. I voted against putting up the new sail, being peacefully ensconced

with my book, but Torpey and Colin and Jeff decided to go ahead. I just felt we were comfortable and moving well and was uninclined to put in the extra effort, but I didn't mind. I took the helm for a while as Bill helped the other three with the sail change. Jeff said an extra two-tenths of a knot would get us to England a day earlier, and I guess he's right.



I had the cook's duty yesterday and followed up barbecued steaks for lunch with a shrimp stew-and-rice combination for dinner. It was passable.

More and more whitecaps are showing, and it may start to get wet where I'm sitting on top of the doghouse. Can't have the journal get soggy.

During the early watch this morning I swabbed down the cockpit, which was littered with several days' debris, crumbs, and especially small pieces of old rope from the baggywrinkle-making session

yesterday afternoon.

I just moved down to leeward to get out of the sun. It's a perfect day for a nasty burn.

Enough for now.

(Day's run 164 miles, cumulative 492 miles, to 41° 04' N, 58° 20' W)

DAY 5, Wednesday, July 6

After just one day of brilliant sunshine and half of another, is it possible that I was combing the sky this morning, looking for a cloud to provide some cooling shadow? Three days of fog, and now a day and a half of baking, skin-frying sunshine. The wind off the starboard beam averages 15 knots, and *Felicity* is boiling

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along through swells of 7–8 feet, topped by whitecaps. The water temperature is 72°, the air is about 80°.

This is the dreaded North Atlantic? It doesn't seem possible, although none of us is so foolish as to forget how quickly this scene could turn to sullen skies, grey, growling seas and harsh, chilling spray. But at the moment, it's anything but. It's now 4:20 p.m., and for much of the afternoon all but Torpey and Jeff, who are on watch, have been napping or reading below decks to stay out of the sun. Even below it's warm, but not too bad if we stay still. We can't open the forepeak or main cabin hatches because of the spray thrown up by the bow wave.



Several of us slept poorly last night, probably in part because of the heat and in part because the night was noisy. There were at least two cockpit conversations that seemed annoyingly loud as I lay below, and then Torpey fired up the engine at 7 a.m. to charge the battery. No one said anything at the time, but it turned out later that at least three of us, still trying to catch up on our sleep, were angry. The result was a new rule that the engine gets turned on at the 8 a.m. watch change or later, not before.

Our own 11 p.m.–2 a.m. watch itself was glorious, with a canopy of stars for most of the three hours. We picked out a few constellations, saw a handful of shooting stars. It was the first night dry enough to stand watch without foul weather gear, though I wore sea boots because water bubbles up through the leeward scupper when the boat heels well over. They should have been designed with crossover hoses to avoid that. A slip-up on the part of the Hinckley people who built *Felicity*.

Last night's sailing made me think of our family's childhood voyages on freighters, and Pete and I traded stories of our

childhood experiences on ships. He went to and from China on troop ships as a boy when his father was a naval officer stationed there just after the war.

Good natured complaints this morning about the fumble-fingered deck hands who took 10–15 minutes to put in a simple reef. When we needed to reef again this afternoon, I did it again to try to polish my technique.

(Day's run 161 miles, cumulative 653 miles, to 40° 52' N, 54° 49' W)

DAY 6, Thursday, July 7

In between journal entries, it gets increasingly difficult to remember what day of the week it is. I notice a few other signs that the tensions of work and day-to-day life are slipping away. The soreness in the stiff muscle on the left side of my neck and shoulder that's been bothering me for weeks has all but disappeared. I haven't been thinking about work at all, but now that I mention it, I hope everything is going smoothly there.

Pete and I had the "dawn patrol" this morning, the 2–5 a.m. watch, for the first time since the weather cleared. I like that watch. The waning moon, only a sliver, rose just off the port bow. Actually, it seemed to jump into the sky — one minute nothing, the next it was all there, hanging low over the horizon. With a star chart in hand, Pete or I, whoever wasn't on the helm, took turns trying to figure out constellations. I did well looking north with the Big and Little Dippers as reference points, but looking to the south was tougher. I finally got bored and gave up. Our watch rations were two granny smith apples, a cup of coffee and a small juice.

We went off watch before the sun rose, but the east was growing light by 4 a.m. As the light in the east gradually brightened, it gradually defined a line of low clouds that marched around the horizon to the north and east.

Bill woke up and came topside at about 4:40 a.m. without our waking him. I think he's been having trouble sleeping. It doesn't help that he continues to suffer from a paroxysmal bronchial cough. It's getting better, but whenever he has a spasm it's painful

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to hear. Undoubtedly it's been more painful to experience.

Just back from a break to fix lunch.

Did I mention that it's another spectacular sunny day? Did I note that the only clouds in sight are on the distant horizon? Did I record that the air temperature is 87° in the shade and the water is still 72°. Right — the cruel sea again. Visors, caps and suntan lotion are in evidence everywhere.

Our taffrail log and the ship's log indicate we had travelled 700 miles as of about 10 a.m. this morning. The loran and our celestial navigation suggest we won't really be 700 miles from Southwest Harbor for another 30 miles, but in any case that will happen this afternoon. That puts us one quarter of the way to England in a little over five days, and that includes one day of near-total calm. At this rate, we'll get to Falmouth in very good time, but who knows what the next two weeks will bring?

All sorts of new wrinkles today. Torpey made delicious Bisquick pancakes for breakfast. Later he started trolling for fish, but that was cut short when the fishing line fouled and became hopelessly tangled in the 75-foot line of the Walker log. Then Colin went below for a nap, and Torpey discovered a pair of Colin's undershorts in a very smart red-and-white checked pattern. He labored to sew them onto the burgee staff and then ran them up the flag halyard, where they have joined the ensign as the ship's colors. Bill swears that no matter what else happens, the shorts are coming down before we reach Falmouth. Colin will probably need them before then anyway. One must hope they won't be too tattered.

Bill dug deep into the sail locker and came up with a red, green, blue and yellow beach umbrella. He's now manning the helm, steering with his right hand while he holds the umbrella overhead with his left to shield himself from the sun. He looks a bit like a Persian pasha out for a ride on an elephant.

Almost every surface on the deck has a film of evaporated salt on it. It feels gritty and almost greasy to the touch. It'll be a lot thicker before the boat gets a freshwater washing in Falmouth,

unless we get some heavy rain.

A bit about Torpey before I pack it in. He works for a firm, in which he's a partner, that does audio-visual production, sets up audio-visual facilities, produces commercials, etc. His most recent project has been setting up a children's museum in Caracas, but the government there has been slow paying its bills so he hasn't been down there lately.

Three or four times a year, he takes time off and gets paid to ferry a sailboat somewhere, usually to or from the Caribbean. He's been doing that for 18 or 19 years, I think he said, and thereby is our expert on sails, rigging and boat handling. Jeff has been doing a lot of competitive racing in a Cal 40 in San Francisco Bay and likes to patrol the foredeck, checking and adjusting the set of the sails, looking for that extra fraction of a knot that can win a race and in this case, shave some hours or maybe a day or two off our passage to England.



It's interesting that although everyone is here voluntarily, there seems to be a common unspoken desire to make the crossing as fast as possible. A few of us have explicit time pressures, but that doesn't seem to be the primary motivation. No one, I think, is unhappy to be here, but everyone wants a swift journey. Hot fresh-water showers and baths do have their appeal, as does a bed with room to stretch out and roll over that doesn't bob and weave underneath you. Is there some old saying about sailors always being in a hurry to get the present voyage over with and then in a hurry to get the next one started? If not, there ought to be.

Back to Torpey. Asked what his worst scrape was in his years of passage making, he told of crewing for a couple from Boston who were taking their 36-foot ketch from Moorhead City, N.C.,

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to St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. They had waited three weeks for a series of hurricanes and tropical storms to pass through, then set out when the outlook seemed clear. But another hurricane developed and caught them and four or five other boats that had left Moorhead City at the same time. They had been running downwind under bare poles for some time, Torpey said, when at one point he opened the hatch to relieve the owner at the helm. He was standing with his hands on the companionway ladder when he looked up to see a monstrous wave about to crash down into the cockpit. The next thing he knew, he was in the forepeak still holding the ladder, having been driven up there by the force of the wave.

He fought his way back aft over loose floorboards that had been thrown out of place when the ballast shifted under the force of the water and reached the cockpit to find the owner nowhere in sight. The owner's wife was behind him, screaming, and he slapped her to shut her up and shoved her below.

He grabbed the wheel and regained control of the boat, and as it began to slide down the face of another huge wave he glanced left and saw, to his astonishment, the owner surfing along on the same wave. The owner had not been wearing either a safety harness or a life jacket, but there he was, surfing alongside the boat. Torpey said he grabbed the taffrail log, coiled it and threw it toward the owner. He managed to drape it over him on the first throw, the owner grabbed the line and Torpey was able to haul him back into the cockpit.

They then sailed the rest of the way to St. Thomas, arriving there some 41 days later in what should have been a 14-day trip. By then they were almost out of food, and Torpey said he refused food for five days to leave enough for the owner and his wife.

He had meanwhile decided the owner was a fool and had barely been able to speak to him for several days. The owner, in turn, has never spoken to Torpey since the trip ended, and the one time Torpey ran into him in a bar years later, the owner turned and walked out of the room without saying a word.

That's Torpey's tale. He does so much kidding you have to wonder whether to believe every word, but I guess I do.

Bill went up the mast in the bosn's chair today to attach some more baggywrinkle to the shrouds and spreaders. We hove to under backed main and staysail, which kept him very stable, and used the electric windlass to haul him up because the backed staysail blocked the only available winch on the mast. All went smoothly, and after 10–15 minutes we were underway again.

I must remember later to copy down our daily position fixes.

We saw our first flying fish today, a few very small ones darting over the waves astern of us. No fish on the line yet.

4:40 p.m. — We just passed a ship, about 300 feet long, headed the other way. Her name was the *Bruse Jarl*, but we could not make out her home port. The ship's line sign on the funnel showed a blue star inside a blue circle on a white flag. We contacted her on the radio and she described herself as from "northern Europe," bound for Mobile, Ala. Her hull was painted

a dull orange and there were bright orange horizontal tanks, four of them, mounted on her deck. Her radioman asked us if we were having a good sail, and we assured them we were.

(Day's run 125 miles, cumulative 778 to 49°49' N, 51° 49' W)

Day 7, Friday, July 8

Colin took 12 hours off today. In return, he has to cook tomorrow. In fact, today's a big day. It's change-watch-partners time, which means Colin and I become watch mates, while Pete joins Torpey and Jeff joins Bill.

Because of this rearrangement, Colin gets a 12-hour holiday from watch duty. Jeff and Pete lose 3 hours of time off. Presumably it will all even out in the end.

Pete announced that we've completed 28 percent of the distance to England. At this average rate of speed, we would get



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there in 21½ days, which would be very good time indeed.

I digress. It's time to note that it is, once gain, a disgustingly sunny, hot day. Everyone is slathering on suntan lotion and looking for a spot of shade.

Took another salt-water hose shower on the foredeck this morning, armed with Joy soap in one hand and a towel in the other. It felt terrific. I'm going to try to avoid suntan lotion today because I think it leaves you sticky.

We've been gradually turning our course from southeast (130°) to east (now 90°) in 10 degree increments over the last two days, but until we made the final turn from 105° to 90° this morning we always ended up on a beam or slightly close reach. Today, however, we ended up with the wind well abaft the beam, and with the breeze only blowing at about 10–12 knots, that meant it was time to break out the MPS again — the multi-purpose sail. It's a cross between a spinnaker and a large genoa, but more spinnaker-like than a blooper. It also lends a bit of color to the operation since it's sewn from lightweight strips of sailcloth in bright red, orange, yellow, green and dark and light blues. It took a while to get it set right, but once we had it drawing correctly we picked up nearly two knots of speed.

When the sun comes around a little more I intend to take some pictures of the sail. Pete's at the helm now and we're surging through 4–5 foot seas at about 6–7 knots. Early this morning we were riding swells as large as 9–to–11 feet, but they were gentle and we slid gracefully down each big one before settling down to be picked up by the one behind. It's always striking to see a big swell come marching up behind, looking as if it intends to spill right into the cockpit, only to have the stern lift gently up at what seems like the last second to let the wave pass harmlessly underneath. It's easy to see how, in a storm, steeper and larger following seas would break into the cockpit over the helmsman's head.

I didn't see it, but Torpey reports that before we came on watch this morning at 5 a.m. we sailed very close by an orange 50 gallon drum in the water. Had we hit it, it would have made, at the very least, a nasty noise and a gouge in the hull. It's ironic, but

the part of the ocean one can see least well from the helmsman's position is what lies directly ahead.

Massive cleanup and reorganization of the stores this morning. We were trying to move weight aft to lighten the bow and to identify moldering fresh produce and rusting canned goods so as to consume quickly anything that looked likely to spoil soon. We had to throw out about a dozen lemons. We brought about a dozen aboard but haven't had any use for them yet. Colin is demanding I record that it was my slovenliness forced the skipper to order the general cleanup so he wouldn't have to single me out. This is a calumny and a lie. We have an astonishing supply of soup. We'll have to start consuming it morning, noon and night in order not to leave the Beans awash in canned and dry soups as they tour Europe after the crossing.

I'm feeling terribly sleepy. I'll break off. Hopefully more later.

(Day's run 163 miles, cumulative 951 miles, to 41°30' N, 48°21' W)

Day 8, Saturday, July 9

In 25 minutes we shall have been underway for exactly a week. It's 9:05 a.m. Until a few minutes ago, however, plans for any sort of celebration were in abeyance, as only Colin and I were up. Now Bill and Pete are up, and Pete's working on his navigation. Bill's just had breakfast and has just come up to join us in the cockpit.

We thought bad weather was closing in last night, but this morning it's still sunny. There are a lot more high cirrus clouds in the atmosphere, however, and it seems as if the unbroken succession of cloudless, balmy days may be changing. It's still warm. I went on watch and took the helm at 8 a.m. and quickly stripped to my shorts. It feels very comfortable.

We ran with the wind on the starboard quarter at 15–20 knots all night with increasingly larger rollers mounting up under the stern. There are a lot of whitecaps this morning. We carried only the mainsail and the working jib all night, with the jib winged out to leeward on the whisker pole. The following seas made helmsmanship a greater challenge than it had been when we were close-reaching for day after day. As each swell rises under the

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stern, you try to poise the boat so that it will ride straight down the wave face and not corkscrew off to one side or the other. Ever so often, however, you don't get it quite right, or a cross-swell catches the stern at the crucial moment, or a sudden puff forces the bow to windward, and then we're suddenly slewing sharply one way or the other as the helmsman fights to bring the boat back on course, and that is a tricky business, too. If you fight too hard, the boat swings back much too far and we end up yawing back and forth. But you begin to get the knack, in each different wind and sea pattern, of spinning the wheel and then easing up at the right moment, so that all the forces of momentum, wind and sea motion balance off and you find yourself back on course, now 90° magnetic.



But getting it right once is just practice for the next one, which will often bring a slightly different wrinkle. Just when you get to the point where you think you can do it perfectly without even paying attention, like walking or riding a bike, it all goes awry and you find the boat swinging wildly and heeling sharply to one side then the other, while anyone on deck or below grabs frantically for a handhold.

It's now almost 1 p.m. and a largish ship is coming up from astern, apparently on a course that will cross ours. Our one-week celebration was modest. The three of us who were awake, Bill, Colin and I sang "Happy Birthday dear ... (voyage, crossing and something unintelligible)" in three varying but simultaneous versions.

We had a little excitement late yesterday when we took down the MPS. Torpey and I were below, he preparing dinner and I reading, when the decision was made to strike sail. All of a

sudden, the boat veered to windward and there were shouts for help. Torpey and I scrambled topsides, where apparently there had been a delay in releasing the sheet when they began to lower the halyard, with the result that the sail dipped into the water before it could be pulled in, filled with a load of water and was partially sucked into the ocean alongside the hull. Torpey went forward immediately to help recover the sail and I took the helm, which Jeff had had to abandon when he ran forward to help. We headed up into the wind to kill our speed, and in a few minutes they had the sail back safely on deck. It was perhaps our first mini-crisis of the trip. Certainly it got everyone's adrenalin pumping.

We then we unfurled the working jib (mounted on the roller-furling gear), but to carry it successfully with the wind as nearly astern as it was we had to rig the whisker pole again. We ran on that sail combination all night, adding bits of leather and a strategically placed snatch blocks to minimize chafing of the lines in what was by then a fairly lively sea.

Well, that ship that was bearing down on us has just provided us with quite a thrill. It turned out to be a Russian vessel, the *Marshall Zhukov*, and either out of curiosity or by coincidence she converged with us on what was exactly a collision course. She was large, I would guess 500–600 feet long and fully laden, probably with grain. Her course appeared to be taking her toward the Mediterranean.

In any case, she bore down on us, moving at fairly slow speed, until we finally headed up by 25–32 degrees to avoid what looked to be a sure collision. Visibility was perfect, with a bright, hot sun. Pushing a massive bow wave, she passed by about 100 yards away as a handful of her crew waved from the after-deck, from a lifeboat that one crewman was painting and from the bridge.

She came needlessly close, and we found ourselves, with Colin at the helm, fighting to control *Felicity* in the massive and steep-sided wake the *Zhukov* put up. One wave washed into the cockpit and doused Bill, who was dressed in long pants, long-sleeved shirt and orange gloves and a hat, all as protection from

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the sun. Pete was unable to get any response on the radio from the Russian ship, which bore a bold hammer and sickle emblem on a red band around her funnel, and we wondered whether she cut so close to be obnoxious or just out of curiosity.

We did raise another ship on the radio, which couldn't see us but said she could see on radar a large ship 34 miles away, presumably the *Zhukov*. The ship on the radio was bound for Halifax.

It's lucky we did not encounter the Russian in a dense fog. God knows how that would have turned out.

Yesterday afternoon we "took a left at the Howard Johnson's," the crew's name for Point C, or Point Charlie, on the Atlantic charts. That's the point where the main commercial shipping lanes between northern Europe and North America break up in different directions for the various East Coast ports. Pete has set our course to pass about 30 miles south of the Howard Johnson's, which is south of the Grand Banks and just south of the predicted southernmost limit for icebergs. He now plans to make straight for England at 90° magnetic on a course that keeps us about 30 miles south of the main shipping traffic.

Torpey, Colin and I, accordingly, have been thinking of writing a drawing room comedy about six characters, modeled after and satirizing ourselves, who set sail to cross the Atlantic. Only it turns out that the navigator secretly wants to get away from civilization forever and sets them to sailing in great circles around and around in the North Atlantic. The name of the play, of course, is Take a Left at the Howard Johnson's. Who knows, it might work.

Bill and I played our second game of Scrabble today, and thanks largely to the timely arrival of some excellent letters, I trounced him. In our first game, a close, hard-fought match, we had to declare a tie when play was suspended to take down our rarely used genoa. We never got back to the game.

Torpey seemed to take yesterday afternoon's sail-in-the-water crisis as a heaven-sent opportunity to break away from his dinner-cooking chores, for which he shows little enthusiasm. That's a relief. I was afraid I was the only one who has no appetite

for cook's duties. The others have been eagerly outdoing one another in crafting delicious meals from our limited and mostly canned inventory of food, and as a result we have been eating freshly baked deserts of gingerbread and brownies, hash-browned potatoes, barbecued hamburger and onions, and other delights that one didn't really expect. To give Torpey his due, however, I should note again the pancakes he produced one morning — his specialty! Oh, and I forgot Pete's pineapple upside-down cake, crafted, without a recipe, from Bisquik and who-knows-what-else.

Yesterday we had the last of our fresh lettuce, and today our fresh milk will be gone. I hope my food planning was adequate.

(Day's run 168 miles, cumulative 1,119 miles, to 42°29' N, 44°52' W)

Day 9, Sunday, July 10

The day started fast. Having come off watch at 3 a.m. and fallen into a good sleep, I awoke to the loud sound of sails flapping and restrained shouts between Bill at the helm and Jeff on the foredeck.



They had tried to set the MPS with only the two of them on deck, but one of the lines was foul and they had to bring it down. No one called for help, but I looked up through the open hatch from my bunk and it looked as if things were getting complicated, so I dashed up the companionway in my undershorts, with Colin close behind, to find Jeff wrestling to get the sail down while Bill steered the boat. Together Jeff and I got it down, half on deck to port and half in the cockpit.

After some disagreement over whether to raise the MPS again,

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we went ahead and hoisted it, and this time all went well. We then carried it most of the day.



During the MPS excitement, a tanker, fairly large, hove into view to the southeast and passed about a half a mile astern of us. She appeared headed northwest, perhaps to someplace in Canada. We didn't have time to give her more than a passing glance.

Right now, Torpey is up the mast in the bosn's chair, extending and improving the rigging of the baggywrinkle. He's up on the port side now, but he spent about 45 minutes up the mast to starboard earlier doing the same thing. We now have a very fashionable two-tone baggywrinkle of alternating patches of tan and white. Torpey is doing all this while we cruise along at 6–7 knots under full sail, main and MPS, on a beam-to-broad reach. The wind is only an apparent 10 knots, however, and the seas have moderated considerably. As a result, the boat is actually a pretty steady platform so long as the helmsman makes course corrections slowly so as not to yaw rapidly from one side to the other.

It's been a busy day in general. Jeff, Pete and I took salt water showers on the foredeck with the deck wash hose. Earlier I took Never Dull and spent over an hour polishing up the "stainless steel" stem fitting, which was, in fact, heavily stained with superficial rust. The salt water out here is immensely corrosive. The same thing has been happening to a lesser degree to the galley sinks, in which we have been using mostly water from the salt water tap. Bill spent a good bit of time policing the galley, and Torpey finished making new baggywrinkle from Dacron rope for his later expeditions up the mast.

Bill also got on the ham radio this morning and reported our position and plans to a fellow who was controlling the North

Atlantic net of ham operators. I believe he operates out of Mobile, Ala. Bill and he chatted for a while and we heard several other reports from sailboats at sea, including two down near the equator.

I prepared sandwiches for lunch. Since it's Sunday and it's his day to cook, Colin is planning to cook the massive beef roast that's been in the freezer since our departure.

We also crossed the 45th meridian this morning, so all wristwatches were advanced one hour. The ship's clock is set at Greenwich Mean Time.

Lunch was prepared and eaten to the strains of Buddy Holly and Diana Ross, but we now appear to be into Tommy Dorsey or Artie Shaw or someone of their ilk.

Torpey is still up the mast and he has twice dropped pieces of laboriously prepared baggywrinkle. Two of them landed on the lee rail and would have been lost for good in an instant, but luckily I was sitting right there and grabbed them.

Then Torpey, who refuses right now to disclose his weight, asked to come down briefly to adjust a strap on the bosn's chair that was biting into his side. Colin cranked him back up while I tailed the halyard, and it just about wore Colin out to do it. Of course, he insisted on cranking the winch in the direction that gives least mechanical advantage. Muy macho, but evidently not too bright.

Colin just grabbed my journal and threatened to tear out this page. So if it turns up missing, we will know whom to blame.

On the other hand, Torpey just dropped yet another piece of baggywrinkle. A severe case of fumbleitis. Lucky he's not dropping monkey wrenches, or there would be large holes in the deck.

Have I said anything about the nighttime watch routine? Part of the trick is remembering where the crew who will replace you sacked out, so you don't go waking the wrong guy and make yourself thoroughly unpopular. Bunking down is a game of musical berths, since we've been using only the four bunks in the main cabin. The crew going off watch necessarily has to take the

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berths of the two men replacing them. So at various times each of us has found himself in every one of the four bunks.

Also, anyone who takes an early sleep during the 8–11 p.m. watch and has to go on duty at 11 p.m., if he's smart, will choose one of the less desirable bunks for the shorter early stretch. That is because the rotation means that he will, of necessity, end up in one of the other, more desirable bunks for the longer 2–8 a.m. snooze. Devious, but effective!

One problem has been that with this hot weather it's often been uncomfortably sticky below decks. I've stood watch the last two nights wearing only light khaki slacks and a T-shirt. Below decks it's often uncomfortably warm, and it doesn't help that the only showers we get are salt water.

It's ironic, but the weather has been so perfect that such little annoyances are about the only challenges we've faced so far, other than the challenge of getting along as a crew — but that has not been difficult at all.

The other curious thing about night watches is a little sea bird that flits around astern of *Felicity* and chirps at us ever so often in a curious, extended call. There are a number of them, actually, but they seem to stay away from the boat during daylight hours. At night we see them flitting about against the background of the sky or the sail. One of them ran into the Loran antenna one night with a thwang, but it apparently recovered and flew off.

It may be so hot tonight after roasting the beef in the oven that we'll want to sleep on deck.

Whew! It's now 9:45 p.m. and we're trying to digest Colin's amazing roast beef dinner. After about four hours in the oven (lord knows what that's done to our propane fuel supply), the roast emerged at 7:30 p.m., accompanied by oven-roasted potatoes, brown gravy with onions, green beans and beets. Bill broke out one of our four bottles of St. Emilion (not so hot; may have been stored upright, the cork was dry) and we crowded around the cockpit table for an unparalleled feast. The proceedings were delayed only by a series of snapshots of the spread Colin had laid out. The meat was superb, cooked to perfection, and everyone had seconds. It's quite unbelievable to be able to eat like that in

the middle of the ocean on a 42-foot boat.

Colin received a round of applause as he emerged from the galley, and we all ate until we could eat no more. Desert was pineapple chunks, after which Bill broke out his Havana cigars and several of us had a smoke. Bill and Jeff gallantly tackled the mountain of dirty dishes and pots the meal produced.

I'll be amazed if we all haven't gained weight by trip's end.

To top off a spectacular day, a whale surfaced alongside just as we finished eating. Everyone scrambled for cameras, and the whale surfaced twice more close by before gradually moving away and disappearing. Not sure what kind of a whale it was. Too big to be a killer whale, but not one of the really big ones. Pete suggested it might be a pilot whale.

We struck the MPS after all that excitement and then settled down to enjoy a spectacular sunset. Not a cloud in the sky and the barometer is rising again.

Bill says tomorrow, Monday, will be a day of rest. Today did seem active, although I did squeeze in a nap this afternoon. Torpey and I keep threatening to start a poker game, but we haven't yet.

Good night. Should be good sleeping. We get off duty in an hour, at 11 p.m.

(Day's run 133 miles, cumulative 1,252 miles, to 43°20' N, 42°02' W)

Day 10, Monday, July 11

6:30 a.m. — Found it hard this morning to get up for the 5 a.m. watch. I wanted desperately to snooze for another 5–10 minutes. I guess life aboard is becoming routine when that happens.

The wind died at nightfall last night and we ghosted through the dark at 3–4 knots most of the night. To keep the sails full the earlier watches had to turn southward somewhat into the wind, and it has now backed so that on our 85° (magnetic) course we are on a close, not a broad reach. Also with us this morning is our old friend the fog. The wind has been fighting to get up some steam, but like an old man it tries to push out of bed, rolls over

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and gets one foot on the floor, then flops back onto the pillow and we're back to 3 knots of speed again.

The sun rose through the fog just off the port bow, turning the water vapor incandescent and then presenting itself as a pale, lime-yellow disc that looked more like the moon than the sun. At one point several thin lines of dark cloud lay across the sun's face, giving it a striped look like Jupiter.

The fog, not the 20-yard visibility stuff we had the first few days, gave us about 100–200 yard visibility at first, and now, with the sun beginning to warm things up, we seem to have a quarter mile



or so around us to inspect. The swells are very gentle, but their surface, almost glassy when we first came on deck, is now dappled with tiny ripples as the wind makes its half-hearted efforts to get out of bed. Colin's lighting his pipe. Maybe that will smoke out a breeze.

With the fog came a heavy, heavy dew, and if it weren't for our "bibbers" we'd have damp fannies as we sit in the cockpit. You wipe it off with a sponge, but in seconds the moisture has beaded up again on every inanimate surface.

A few minutes ago Colin looked aft and saw that we were being followed by the perfect and complete arch of a colorless rainbow, a band of bright light in the fog that seemed to rise from the sea at points equidistant from our port and starboard quarter and arc upward to a pinnacle that all but disappeared directly astern. Where the bases of the arch met the water the fog seemed to glow with almost startling brightness. A form of rainbow, but I wonder why the colors of the spectrum didn't appear.

No signs of bird or marine life so far this morning. Torpey said he heard dolphins splashing alongside earlier but could not see

them in the dark.

Now 8:45 a.m., and Bill and Jeff are on watch. We have just sailed through an entire school of probably a dozen or so small whales, perhaps pilot or even killer whales, although probably too large to be the latter. We now wish we had with us a whale book as well as a bird book for identifying the creatures we keep seeing.

This morning's light airs remind me that we've all been much impressed with *Felicity's* sailing qualities. She can often sail within a knot or two of the apparent wind velocity. In light air she sometimes appears to sail even faster than the apparent wind, an illusion born of the effects of momentum and the sway of the mast on the wind instruments at the masthead, but it's clear all the same that for her size, *Felicity* is a remarkably responsive and easily sailed craft. In many another vessel, I suspect, we would have made many fewer miles on the available wind.

The fog, meanwhile, refuses to burn off, even though the sky is a cloudless blue above. I still think the sun will be strong enough to burn it off eventually, but right now the fog is, if anything, denser than it was a while ago. With the sun higher in the sky, however, our "McDonald's Golden Arches" astern have disappeared.

1 p.m. — Well, a break in the unbelievable streak of good, almost too good, weather we've been having. The fog has burned off, but the sky is now overcast and there are dark grey cloud masses low on the horizon to the east and north. To the south it's cloudy, but not so dark.

Colin and I just attacked Torpey and forced him to leave the helm and go below to make lunch, which it is his turn to do. Given his lack of enthusiasm, the results are in doubt. Odds on we'll be getting roast beef sandwiches, however, since there remains a great slab of the beef Colin cooked last night.

The wind is still light, 4–7 knots, and we're sliding quietly over gentle, small swells. The sea is gun-metal grey, and the only action we've seen was a broken Styrofoam float drifting by.

Everyone has been napping off and on all day. It's a languid sort of day, with gentle breezes, calm seas, no sun and a chance to

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slow down after all of the activity of yesterday.

It's 4:45 p.m. and we've been dead, dead, dead in the water. The wind, which had been borderline all day, began to drop off entirely around the time Colin and I came on watch at 2 p.m. At around that time we started the engine to charge up batteries, however, and so were able to run on power for about 1½ hours. When I took the-helm for my 45-minute stint I simply turned on the autopilot and "let George do it" while I supervised. With batteries charged and the refrigerator cooled, we killed the engine (a 4-cylinder Westerbeke diesel) and found ourselves utterly and completely becalmed. We dropped the sails and five of us decided to go swimming in 16,000 feet of water. We all dove in and I exposed my new waterproof camera to its first test. I swam out from the hull to get a picture of the whole boat. We'll have to see how that worked out.

Most of us then lathered up well with Joy on deck and then dove back in to rinse off. I was the last one to do so and was just getting ready to come back up the boarding ladder when I was nastily stung on both arms by a jellyfish. We had seen a small one float by moments earlier, but it seemed harmless enough. Its cousin found me, however, and as a result I have a small sting area on my right forearm and a large one on my left upper arm. Considering that we were all swimming without benefit of bathing suits, I was glad I wasn't stung elsewhere. It hurts like a moderately bad burn. Colin gave me a salve and I consoled myself with a Heineken. It's beginning to feel better now, an hour later.

A little breeze is rising and we're going to try flying the MPS alone.

(Day's run 48 miles, cumulative 1,300 miles, to 43° 12' N, 41° 0' W)

Day 11, Tuesday, July 12

We knew that our seven days of fair, following breezes couldn't last, and they didn't. Not that our new situation is bad, however.

Yesterday afternoon's dead calm presaged a wind shift to the northeast, an unusual wind direction this time of year in this part of the ocean. It began to blow very lightly from that direction

late yesterday afternoon, and we set sail again just before dinner, moving slowly toward the southeast, well away from our desired course, but at least we were moving. Torpey fixed a jazzed-up Dinty Moore beef stew for dinner according to Maggy's proposed recipe, and it was excellent.

For the first time in our journey the new wind put us on port tack. After a week of depending on heeling to port to keep various things and sleeping bodies in place, we found it necessary to rearrange and store a lot of material that now found itself free to go charging off to the starboard side with great crashing and banging.

That done, we settled into a night of slow sailing on courses that varied from about 90–95° (we wanted 85°) to 175–190°. Colin and I were on from 11 p.m. to 2 a.m., the least pleasant watch, and spent part of it chasing a fluky wind up and down the southeast quadrant of the compass. Finally, things settled down and we made slow headway on a course of about 120°, well to the south of our goal. We were going so slowly, however, that it probably didn't take us too far off course.

The jellyfish sting on my left arm proved to be very painful, and I'm afraid it put me in a sour mood at dinnertime last night. I mean to apologize but haven't found the right way to do it. It's not that big a deal.

Our 8 a.m. watch brought a sharply stronger breeze, freshening to 17–18 knots apparent, and we found ourselves close-hauled thrashing through rapidly building seas on a course of 115° or so, still south of our goal but a vast improvement. Spray quickly started flying and we battened down the hatches (literally), closed open ports and settled into our first day of pounding into a contrary wind and sea. *Felicity* takes it well, however, and it was exhilarating to have the helm of a boat speeding to windward after days and days of downwind running.

Most off-watch crew spent the morning resting. I've bunked down a while to read and write but haven't napped yet. I should try to rest some before our next watch at 5 p.m. Lying below, I can feel and hear the marvelous plunging and leaping of the boat through the waves. She feels alive and excited.

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I understand I am the champion snorer of the crew. I feel new sympathy for Maggy's requests at home that I roll over. I slept well despite the pain in my left arm.



Bill got on the Atlantic maritime ham radio net and succeeded in getting a call patched through to Jeff's wife in San Francisco. I wasn't sure whether Maggy would be able to put her hands easily on the list of other wives' addresses, but Sydney is supposed to call around and pass the word that all is well. I'll be interested to see whether the system worked. It was striking to see how well the net functioned, given that it's an all-volunteer operation.

Colin, and especially Torpey, have evolved into the court jesters and satirists aboard *Felicity*, endlessly poking fun at each other's and everyone else's real and imagined foibles. The rest of us fight back from time to time, but no one can keep it up as long as they.

I took two seasickness pills this morning, in part because of the new conditions and partly in hopes they would make me drowsy and make it easier to nap. I feel fine so far, however, and not sleepy yet.

We had hoped we might be at the halfway point today, but after yesterday's doldrums I suspect we're behind that schedule. On the basis of our average daily speed yesterday and the day before, I had calculated we might reach England in 22 or 21 days if conditions remained the same. They didn't, of course, and all such estimates this early in the game fly in the face of reality.

Despite the brisk wind, the barometer, which had risen again in the last 36 hours, has only dropped a little. A major storm does not appear likely. Wind is holding at 17 knots apparent.

I've been saying we needed tapes of a Wagner opera for a lively day. Bill agrees, and today would have been such a day, but we haven't any.

I hear them taking down the staysail to ease the pounding of the seas and lessen the heel. We have a double reef in the main, which is fine, and tried sailing on the staysail and main alone, but that stopped us dead in the water.

It's 3:30 p.m. A short while ago Pete made radio contact with a passing Greek freighter, which confirmed our calculated position to within 3 miles (three cheers for the navigator) and confirmed also that there is no sign of any storms. Seas must be building, however, because below deck the ride seems to be getting bouncier and bouncier. Our most recent fixes confirm that, if anything, we lost ground yesterday on the course to England.

(Day's run 155 miles, cumulative 1,455 miles, to 43°36' N, 37° 29')

Day 12, Wednesday, July 13

Well now, this seems to be the sort of weather everyone was expecting and was delighted not to have. We've been slogging to windward all night against a north-northeast wind blowing up to 25 knots. It's great fun if you're on the helm, and not much to have anywhere else on the boat.

Sleeping is like trying to sleep in a bottle inside a clothes washer. You hear water sloshing around on all sides in a violent, unpredictable pattern, and periodically some giant picks up the whole washer, lifts it about a foot and drops it back on the floor with a tremendous crash.

Felicity is actually very sea-kindly and does not do a lot of pounding or take much spray compared with other boats I've sailed, but there's always some. Even writing is tricky, because the navigation table where I'm sitting periodically just drops away from under the journal. It's the same sort of thing at the helm when the boat leaps over or off a wave or series of waves. It feels like a bucking bronco, with the boat almost pulling the wheel out

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of your hands at one moment and then throwing you forward against it an instant later as she smashes into a wave.

Preparing and eating food is a major challenge, and usually a mess. The stove is gimbaled, but nothing else is—including the cook. The result is a lot of spills and food sloshing out of saucepans, plates and mugs. Pouring from one container to another is a particular challenge, because you have to account for the sharp angle of heel and then brace yourself against the sudden lurches of the boat. No system is foolproof. When the weather finally settles down, the first order of business will be a general cleanup.

We've discovered a leak around the main cabin hatch, but it's only a problem with the occasional wave that dumps a lot of water right on the cabin top.

Colin and I got off watch at 5 a.m. The light was slow in coming because of the dense overcast. We both went back to sleep after that and I refused an invitation to get up at 8 a.m. for hot Wheatena. In fact, I was a little miffed at the invitation because I had been deep in a complex and murky dream about being invited to dinner by neighbors of my mother's in Redding. I finally got up at 9:30 a.m., had some cold cereal and coffee and then washed the leftover dishes, mostly mugs. I took a couple of seasickness pills after a few burps suggested my stomach might be acting up.

Radio contact with a classic-looking Russian tanker last night resulted in the information that this wind has been stirred up by a low-pressure area off Portugal. The radioman was quite surprised when Pete Coggins, who learned Russian 30 years ago in China, spoke to him in Russian. Unlike our previous encounter with a Russian ship, the radioman on this one was willing to share information on a number of points, including the weather and the fact that he was headed from Cuba to France.

Time to jump into my foul weather gear. A large wave breaking on the cabin top confirms that things are still lively.

(Day's run 124 miles, cumulative 1,579 miles, to 43° 27' N, 34° 39' W)

Day 13, Thursday, July 14

It hasn't been weather for journal writing, or much of anything else. I guess it was inevitable that the law of averages would demand its due. The wind continues to be on the nose, north-northeast, and it quickly grows tedious. It does seem to be gradually slackening, however, so there's a chance that this weather pattern is moving off. It keeps tantalizing us with breaks in the clouds followed by a new procession of dark cloud masses and sometimes rain showers.



There are only two places it's comfortable — at the helm and lying down in a bunk. Either because there is little else to do, or because sailing in these conditions is especially fatiguing, each of us seems to sleep or try to sleep most of the time we're not on watch.

Colin braved the weather last night and successfully attempted to cook and serve a feast of curried chicken. We were afraid the chicken breasts would go bad soon, so he took on the job on a day when most of us would probably have been satisfied with another round of soup and sandwiches. In any case, the result was superb. We also made short work of the only bottle of chutney in the ship's store.

Tonight is my turn to cook and I think I'll try the beef-pepper oriental.

Torpey and Colin are on watch together today for the first time, and, as feared, they are mounting an attack on the rest of the crew. At the moment the victim is me, and they're making fun of everything they can think of.

Bill cleaned the head this morning, a job I would not have attempted or even considered until better weather. More power

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to him.

(Day's run 142 miles, cumulative 1,721 miles, to 44° 08' N, 31° 31' W)

Day 14, Friday, July 15

The end of our second week at sea, and slowly the weather is improving. The seas settled down considerably late yesterday and during the night, and the wind eased. At dusk we hoisted the staysail again, and the overnight watches shook out first one reef and then the other.

The wind has backed so that we are now able to make our course of 80° on a beam reach, but the wind is strong enough that we are still heeled well over. The sky is still cloudy, but it's gradually brightening.

When I came off watch at 8 a.m. I decided to be optimistic and hang up my foul weather pants and put away my boots, rather than taking them off as a unit and leaving them on the floor. The latter arrangement makes it much quicker to get dressed to go on deck, especially at night, and is very handy when you know you'll have to wear the gear on every watch. The only problem is that a half dozen sets of sea-boots with attached foul weather pants take up a lot of space on the cabin sole. My hope is that for the 2 p.m. watch we'll need no wet weather gear.

The effect of several days of running close-hauled into an opposing wind and sea are striking. The amount of fatigue increases exponentially, although it's possible I was affected more by this than the others were. I haven't worn my glasses for several days, and I wonder if that could be a factor. I haven't been wearing them because the inconvenience of constantly cleaning off rain and spray seems to outweigh the improvement in my near-sightedness. Without them I can still read the instruments from the helm, study the sails and scan the horizon for ships, so I think, why bother? Maybe I wouldn't see an approaching vessel quite as quickly, but I would certainly spot it in plenty of time.

The hardest part of beating to windward through heavy seas is the boat's heel. The world of the ship is constantly at an angle, often a severe angle of 25–35 degrees, and as a result one can't

move anywhere without using both arms and legs for support. Gravity, which we hardly notice when its force is directly down from our heads through our legs, is tremendously noticeable when it's pulling you sideways, trying to force you off your feet and into one sharp projection or another. Even when you carefully brace your feet wide apart, the moisture means that sometimes one foot will suddenly slip out from under you.

The task of cooking is aided by a strap that the cook can place behind his rear to hold him in place. Once you've collected all the food and pots and pans, it's not a great deal harder than cooking on an even keel, except that one must be careful to keep in mind the changed and off-center relationships between things above and those below when pouring liquids or serving spoonfuls of food. It's sensible, in fact, to wear foul weather pants when cooking because of the risk of spilling hot liquids.

Rather than eating all together in the cockpit as we did on



the fair weather days, most of our stormy meals are served with the off-watch crew sitting on bunks or the settee and holding their plates on their laps.

Going to the head is also an adventure. At the sharpest angle of heel on port tack,

as we have been for the last few days, it's necessary to brace your feet far apart against the door, unzip while leaning backward against the door and then lean forward and brace oneself with one's shoulder against the bulkhead and both hands in a strategic position just over the bowl. The left hand must simultaneously hold the bowl seat to keep it from flopping shut, while the right hand must be ready to give the pump handle a few quick strokes if the boat's pitching threatens to spill the contents of the bowl. What a way to live!

It's at times like this that one understands why it used to

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be necessary to Shanghai sailors out of bars and carry them unconscious onto ships that needed crew. That was in the days before someone made sailing a luxury sport which otherwise sensible men and women will move heaven and earth to undertake.

In addition to discomfort, the last three days have cost us considerably in progress toward our goal. We pine for the old days of hot, following southwest winds.

The noises below decks make a remarkable catalog. The sound of water rushing past is a constant, sometimes amplified by water rushing over the cabin as well. In addition, one hears the centerboard clanking from side to side in the centerboard trunk, and sometimes a considerable vibration from the centerboard cable. The rigging and sails are the source of a million noises, from the song of wind through the rigging to loud thrumming sounds when a sail luffs or flaps, to strange creaking sounds that no one can identify. It's a wonder we sleep as well as we do, and we must be sleeping better than it feels like or we would be exhausted.

Overnight, I apparently slept through the shaking out of two reefs and the running of the engine to reverse an accidental tack. I don't believe I heard any of it.

I found out on watch this morning that Jeff is also 36 and works as a computer programmer for a San Francisco firm that sets up computerized dispatching systems for police and fire departments. He's lived in San Francisco since 1976, when his wife was transferred from Washington, D.C., to the west coast.

Bill is starting soup for lunch and has just opened a can that was labeled fish chowder when we stripped all the paper labels off before departure. It turned out to be pea soup. So we'll have a two-tone soup for lunch. And Edith Piaf is singing on the tape player. What more could one want, other than a following breeze?

Just looked at the chart, and it turns out that the wind has forced us south of our course to the point where we're only about 240 miles north of the Azores.

(Day's run 161 miles, cumulative 1,882 miles, to 45° 03' N, 28° 20' N)

Day 15, Saturday, July 16

I was all set to write that here was the start of our third week, and nothing but more clouds and headwinds. But in fact, the clouds parted about half an hour ago, and while we're still close hauled, it is, for the moment anyway, bright and cheerful on deck. There's too much spray to go topside without foul weather gear, unless one huddles under the dodger. Even there an occasional sloppy wave sneaks in, leaving the victim with a wet seat. Given our limited inventory of dry clothes, it's generally not worth the risk.

Nevertheless, it turns out that my pessimistic characterization of our progress yesterday was exaggerated. In fact, we've made good speed, and being forced southward has not particularly cost us in terms of total distance to be covered. The great circle distance is quite comparable. As of today, we have gone more than two-thirds the full distance.

Two philosophies of on-board personal cleanliness appear to have emerged this morning. Jeff proposed and Bill agreed to either heave to or turn downwind for a bit to make it more comfortable for those who wished to take salt-water showers on the foredeck. In fact, both of them did so and said they felt much refreshed. The rest of us, however, looked on this proceeding with attitudes that ranged from disinterest to outright scorn. Torpey came on deck as we turned downwind and muttered something like, "I've seen some damn foolishness, but this beats all."

For myself, I was little inclined to brave the now much colder water and chill north wind for the sake of a shower. A rubdown with a dampened face cloth does very well. Colin responded to Torpey's remark by saying something about a "cleanliness fetish," and Pete stayed below and diplomatically offered no comment. In any case, we now appear to have two clean Beans and four other grubby crew, some of them pugnaciously so.

Pete is the only one of those who started clean shaven who has allowed his beard to grow out. I have trimmed mine once and will do so again when we get onto a more level point of sail, and

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all others have been shaving regularly, every day or two.

I woke up this morning with that gnawing uncomfortable feeling in my abdomen that I often used to get at night while sailing, or even at anchor. Until today. I had not experienced it on this trip. Perhaps it had something to do with last night's delicious but gas-inducing chili dinner prepared by Pete.

We're almost at the end of our store-bought bread and will have to try baking today or tomorrow. I have so far done no baking and don't seem to feel the inclination. Perhaps it's just laziness.

Bill's on the ham radio trying to contact the net but seems to be having trouble getting through. He looked for someone to relay his message but no one picked up the call, and he finally gave up. He had trouble hearing and transmitting the last time as well. Bad "atmospherics," apparently.



We advanced our watches one more hour today. Sign of progress.

Also, we have crossed the "fold" on the chart in our plot of our day-to-day position so that we can now "see" England, our destination, on the same fold as our current position. It feels like a psychologically significant milestone. Rather than seeing our marked position advance away from land and toward a vast emptiness, we now look at the chart and see progress toward our goal. If things go according to our pace thus far, we may in fact make it to Falmouth in exactly three weeks. We have a little less than 1,000 miles to go, and Torpey celebrated the start of the third week by cooking pancakes for breakfast again.

It's interesting what foods get used up faster or slower than expected. The cold cereal is all gone, apparently because it is convenient, while hot cereal is almost never prepared, though we have plenty. I made oatmeal this morning for Pete and me, and

Bill has made Wheateana once, but that's it. Convenience isn't the only factor, however. The sterilized milk is fine when we open it but seems to spoil quickly after that. It may be because we've been pouring it into a large plastic gallon jug that held the last of the fresh milk. I think there's so much air and unwashable bacteria in there that it spoils the new milk quickly. We're casting about for a better container.

The two latches that lock the large, bottom-hinged door behind the settee bunk have developed an annoying habit of opening on their own, which means that on port tack the person sleeping in that berth wakes periodically to find he is being sandwiched between the bunk and the settee back, weighted down by dozens of tin cans containing our future meals.

I'm going to try to get a little extra sleep this afternoon. I felt very dozy during last night's 11 p.m.–2 a.m. watch, and then bunked down in the pilot berth only to be woken several times by sail and watch changes and, on one occasion, by a small can of orange juice that got away from Torpey and slid across the shelf under the companionway, all across the cabin and onto my nose. I must have slept some, however, because I recall a strange dream in which the Globe appeared to have become a supermarket and managing editor Matt Storin was asking my opinion of a contract-violating plan to avoid paying overtime wage rates for overtime or unscheduled work hours. I'll have to remember to tell him about the Boston Globe supermarket when I get back.

Bill, who is very industrious on most days and sometimes looked very tired, almost haggard, looks refreshed today. I'm beginning to think that I'm more aggravated than anyone else in the crew by this prolonged beat to windward. Maybe I'm just being self-indulgent.

Torpey pulled a beaut at the 8 p.m. watch change last night. He went forward to drop the staysail because the wind was rising and we were heeling excessively in the stiffening breeze. He calmly released the halyard from the winch and stepped forward through the spray to pull down the sail, only to discover he'd released the halyard for the roller-furled working jib instead. Fortunately it didn't all come down or it might have been a big mess. He was very funny about it, and Colin and I gave him a good razzing.

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Bill was delighted this morning to find his tape of Oklahoma, which had eluded detection for several days, and it's now playing on the tape deck.

(Day's run 146 miles, cumulative 2,028 miles, to 45° 32' N, 25° 26' W)

Day 16, Sunday, July 17

Damn paper boy didn't show up with the Sunday papers. No tip for him this week. As a result, we decided to go sailing. After all, it was hard to resist a rainy, cloudy, cold north-northeast wind from almost exactly the direction toward which we're heading.

What is this, the sixth day of sailing close-hauled on port tack? I almost, think I'm getting used to it.

Jeff and I were on watch 5–8 p.m. last night, then were followed by Torpey and Colin. They decided either to switch headsails or just add the staysail, I forget which. In any case, when the sail went up, the knot attaching the starboard sheet came free. Cursing and swearing, they lowered the sail, re-tied the sheet and raised the sail again, only to find that in the process, the sheet had pulled out of one of the blocks on deck through which it was supposed to be led. Down came the sail a second time amid more cursing and swearing and the incredibly loud sound of sheets slapping against the deck. Loud at least to me, who was in the pilot berth directly below where all the action was happening. Great way to start a night's rest.

As the final indignity, at some point while they were sorting out the staysail, Colin accidentally tacked. They turned on the engine to bring *Felicity* back around on port tack (the cheating but commonly accepted way to do it), and somewhere in that process they fouled the line for the Walker taffrail log under the boat, either in the propeller, rudder or centerboard. More cursing and swearing until Torpey attached a spare line to the log. The old line remains fouled below the waterline and will remain there until we get a calm enough day to send someone into the water in a wetsuit to try to clear things up.

With all that, I don't think those of us below got much sleep during that watch.

Then, with Pete and Bill on duty, the wind died considerably and they, too, made an accidental tack after their speed dropped below three knots and a steep wave stopped the boat dead.

Jeff and I came on watch at 2 a.m. only to discover we were sailing into a fleet of three and eventually four other ships. They refused to answer our radio calls at first, but finally did so when Pete identified us as the American sailing vessel *Felicity*. They turned out to be a unit of the U.S. Navy. The closest of them, which identified herself as the *USS Merrimack* and may have been an oiler, was coming at us bow-on but assured us she saw us. We passed port-to-port about 200 or 300 yards apart. We couldn't make out anything of her hull shape against the bright glow of her range lights, but she didn't seem to be too big. She did not have just a single red light for port, but a whole row of red lights down the port side. No idea why.

The other two of the first three ships passed by much farther away to the north, and then the three of them were trailed at some distance by a fourth ship. We speculated about the possibility that the fourth vessel was a Russian "trawler" shadowing the American ships, but had no way of knowing whether that was true.

At dawn the wind dropped and I went on the foredeck to drop the staysail and deploy the roller-furled jib instead. Today started out sunny and cool, with the wind still against us, but by midday it had deteriorated to grey skies and rain showers again.

Colin fixed a second curry last night with the fixings for our chicken stew. The leftovers turned into soup for lunch today, with the addition of a can of tomato rice soup and another of chicken vegetable. Not bad. The bread Bill baked from hot roll mix turned out to be excellent. I fashioned breakfast this morning from two thick slices slathered with margarine and black currant jam. Delicious!

Colin and Torpey have just come off another active watch. Somehow, the two of them always find more sails to put up and take down than the rest of us can find on the entire boat. So with much cursing and hollering, they spent their three hours on watch tromping up and down, doing God knows what-all.

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Today Colin was on the foredeck working with the sails when a couple of big waves soaked him and everything else. He wasn't wearing full foul weather gear and got thoroughly wet. More cursing and swearing.

We found two battens had dropped out of their pockets in the mainsail this afternoon. Torpey sewed them back in, but one broke the threads and fell out as the sail was being raised again. Our next-to-last batten was installed and stitched in with stronger thread. We've now gone through four battens since the trip started, including one that was missing when we set sail.

Jeff, having noticed that the binnacle light was flickering last night, took it apart and found that electrolysis-fed corrosion had completely eaten away one wire. He did a nice replacement job on that. Now we find that there's trouble with the external shutoff valve for the stove propane. Jeff is working on that problem now. It turns out he is indeed the right person to be engineer. He is right now studying schematic diagrams trying to figure out what to do about the problem, which involves a valve that is electrically controlled.

Meanwhile it's happy hour and one of us is happily writing in his journal and drinking rum and Sprite. I volunteered to assist, of course, but so far the offer has not been taken up.

We had some 880 miles to go as of earlier today, but we've had several delays for repairs, etc. Right now we're hove to while they finish work on the new, improved batten pockets. I hear the mainsail going up now.

Turns out Jeff and I are the youngest in the crew at 36. Bill and Torpey are 40 and Colin 41.

Bill and Jeff engaged me at Scrabble this afternoon and I eked out a last-second win with a 39-point triple word score on the next-to-last word.

(Day's run 121 miles, cumulative 2,139 miles, to 46° 22' N, 22°48' W)

DAY 17 Monday, Jul. 18

Late yesterday Pete had a long radio conversation with the

SS Melton Challenger, a container ship bound from Wilmington, S.C., to London. They passed by slowly at about 9 knots due to problems with one of their turbines.

Pete had spoken to them earlier in the day when calling up another ship passing by, which did not reply. Perhaps another Russian, but it was too far away to tell.

Melton Challenger gave us a fill-in on what the weather charts say, and it was good from a getting-there perspective but not great from the quality-of-life aspect. It appears we're right on the boundary between a large stationary low-pressure system to the south, off the Iberian peninsula, and a similarly stationary high pressure system to the north. As a result, the wind just keeps plowing out of the north and we stay close hauled and heeled over, although in the last 24 hours the wind has backed into the northwest somewhat, so we are riding a little off the wind and somewhat more comfortably.

Jeff and I tried putting in the third reef on the mainsail yesterday as an alternative to sailing on the staysail and double-reefed main, and it worked out very well with those three reefs and the working jib. We were able to carry that combination even in gusts of 25 knots without being overpowered, and we made much better time than we would have on the staysail-main combination. We carried the same sails all night and so far all day today. If we'd tried it earlier it might have saved a lot of switching back and forth from staysail to jib. The only problem is the reef line on the mainsail leech is at a shallow angle, making it impossible to draw the sail close to the boom at that point. As a result the boom droops so low that it barely clears the dodger. The rig can probably be adjusted at some later point.

Now that it seems that we may have this weather indefinitely (this is our sixth day of headwinds), everyone seems to be getting adapted to it. I, for one, feel decidedly more at ease than I did after the first 2–3 days of it. It seems to require everyone to get more rest, but a bunk is a convenient place to be when the boat is heeled over anyway.

I felt exhausted after our 8–11 p.m. and 5–8 a.m. watches last night and so slept for another two hours this morning. I feel

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decidedly livelier now. The repairs to the binnacle light yesterday afternoon were followed by a similar problem of corroded wires that crippled the electric valve to the propane tank feeding the stove. Bill and Jeff traced the problem to a spot under the cockpit and were able to replace the corroded wire. The stove has been cooking along fine ever since.

(Day's run 135 miles, cumulative 2,274 miles, to 47°03' N, 19°40' W)

DAY 18 Tuesday, July 19

The wind eased today and the sun has been shining, but it's not clear whether we've broken out of the weather pattern or not. We're still close-hauled, but there's not so much wind.

I tried my hand at baking bread with the hot roll mix after coming off watch, and the results were spectacular. I'm very proud of myself, though secretly I hoped I'd not have to bother with baking. Pete insisted on taking a picture of me displaying my two loaves of bread afterward.

Yesterday afternoon Bill dug out his new wet suit and, weighted down by about 20 feet of heavy chain and attached to the boat by both a safety line and a signal cord, went over the side to find out what had fouled the original Walker log line. It turned out that it had taken a dozen or so wraps around the propeller shaft. He was unable to untangle the line by diving, since he had no air tank, but he took a knife and cut away most of it. That left a small length wrapped around the shaft, which does not seem to impede the engine. That last bit of line may well throw itself off on its own. We threw overboard the rest of the line after he freed it.

Bill's diving was done in a 4–5 foot sea with a 10–15 knot wind blowing, and it was cold and grey. Bill didn't want to wait for better weather because he feared there might not be anything better before we reach Falmouth, when we'll need the engine to maneuver. We had been running it periodically all along for battery charging and refrigeration, but after the taffrail log fouled the prop we simply left the gearshift in neutral to avoid turning the shaft. It took courage for Bill to dive under the hull, with tons of boat moving up and down unpredictably on the waves over

him each time he dove below. And he looked mighty cold when he came back aboard, despite the wet suit. A job very well done.

Jeff and I stood the 11 p.m.–2 a.m. watch last night. It was uneventful, with the wind dying, but we partially pulled out a grommet on one of the reef points when we tried to shake out the second of two reefs in the sail. Jeff simply started to crank up the halyard with the reef points still tied, and in the dark it took both of us several minutes to figure out what the problem was. It will require a small repair to sew the grommet back in.



The moon is now half full and gave us several dramatic night vistas as it peered in and out of the dark clouds that continue to cover the sky. At one point the moon itself was entirely hidden, but its light seeped out through a rent in the clouds creating an eerie effect, like a door cracked open to a blast furnace or the ads for the movie *Alien*.

The varying night watches require different sleep patterns, and it's curious how each of us sleeps better or worse on different nights under otherwise similar conditions. Although almost everyone hates the 11 p.m.–2 a.m. watch, mostly because it's all in darkness from beginning to end, it may actually offer more sleep time if one goes right to sleep after dinner at 8 p.m. and then sleeps for most of the time from 2 a.m. until you recalled back on watch at 8 a.m. Our practice is to wake the next watch about 20 minutes before they're due on deck. That gives you time to stumble out of your sleeping bag, pull on socks, pants and a warm jacket or sweater, find rubber gloves and watch cap and clamber into foul weather gear and safety harness. The nights are distinctly cooler now than they

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were a week ago, and I'm wearing long underwear top and bottom. By the time I gets all dressed at night, I feel like a knight stuffed into a medieval suit of armor, clumsy and bulky. We all keep our safety harnesses on in the dark but rarely use them in daylight except in the roughest weather.

My Jellyfish stings have resolved into blistery areas that look and itch a bit like poison ivy. I thought they had disappeared entirely, but then this secondary reaction appeared. No big problem however.

Jeff and I saw and tried to photograph some dolphins this morning, but they seem to have a way of making themselves scarce just when you've got the camera ready.

Less than 600 miles to go, says the navigator.

(Day's run 130 miles, cumulative 2,404 miles, to 47° 29' N. 16° 33' W)

DAY 19, Wednesday, July 20

481 miles to go as of this morning, and I'm not the only one who's counting. Not that things aren't still going well, but I think everyone is very ready for landfall, a hot shower and a dry bed that doesn't move.

My guess is we'll dock Sunday, though Bill says Monday. A little depends on getting some help from the wind. Unbelievably, we're still blasting into a northeast wind. That makes eight days in a row in an area where the charts say there is only a 5–10 percent chance of encountering northeast winds at all at this time of year. I suspect that there would be a little less eagerness to see Falmouth if we'd had a few days more of easy following winds.

There's an occasional snappishness creeping into some at the banter and exchanges among the crew, but overall the mood and relationships seem to go astonishingly well. No one is inclined to push or tease anyone else beyond the point when the victim has signaled he's had enough. But those signs of exasperation seem to come a little more quickly than they did at first.

The wind slackened yesterday evening and Torpey, Colin and Jeff collaborated again on rigging the genoa. Bill suggested it

wasn't worth the trouble, but they could go ahead if they chose. Myself, I have yet to see that the genoa gives us any measurable advantage over the working jib and staysail combination. I had exactly the same impression yesterday evening when Jeff and I had the watch for 5–8 p.m. It seemed to me that *Felicity* made less speed for the apparent wind with the genoa and was less responsive to the helm, but mine was a minority view.

I also found myself at the losing end of an argument over whether one or more apparent wind increases were true puffs or just the result of falling off the wind, picking up a little more speed and increasing the apparent wind speed.

Torpey, who once again displayed his reluctance to cook, made an effort to make hash last night that was, amid much hilarity, pronounced unfit for human consumption and tossed over the side. Not without ceremony, however, and not without elaborately staged photographs of Jeff holding his nose as he poured the hash combination over the side. It was replaced with the souped-up Dinty Moore beet stew, which once again was very good.

Bill, Torpey and Colin once again enjoyed cigars in the cockpit after dinner, as they have on most occasions when the weather has been comfortable enough to sit outside without full foul weather gear.

When Jeff and I came on watch again at 2 a.m. the wind was light and stars covered the sky, but it was not to last. Within an hour it had clouded over and by 4 a.m. the wind started to rise. It seemed as if we could see traces of dawn's light as early as 2:30 a.m., before the clouds mounted up again. At about the same time, we passed a ship off to port headed west.

By the time Torpey and Colin came up for the 5 a.m. watch, the wind had risen enough to make us strongly consider striking the genoa entirely and rigging the working jib in its place. The two of them, however, decided they wanted to try a reef first, the second one in the main. I helped put that in and then went below to sleep, but before long they had decided to strike the genoa. Bill went up to take the helm and they got the big sail down. It now lies tied along the port rail. Later on we'll have to flake it down

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on deck so it can be folded to fit into its bag and the sail locker. I'll be just as happy if it stays there the rest of the trip. I gather that the remainder of Colin's and Torpey's watch must have been hectic, with rising winds and the numerous sail changes entailed in replacing the genoa, but I must have fallen asleep because I don't remember hearing most of it.

Colin tore a fair size hole in one leg of his new Line 7 foul weather gear, but Torpey has already repaired it with his repair kit.

We've just woken up Bill to get on the ham radio net.



Yesterday, when he reported in our position, another boat on the net quickly calculated our progress from the day before (they must have kept a record) and exclaimed

something like, "Those lucky bums, they made 120 miles yesterday." Apparently the caller was stuck in calm air near the Azores. In fact, we've only had two days on which we made less than 120 miles, so I guess we've been fortunate. It would still be nice, however if some of that air would come from behind us.

When I climbed into my sleeping bag at 5:30 this morning, I was puzzled to find the boat's boom vang in there, along with its steel and plastic block and 30 feet or so of damp line. I extracted it and returned it to the watch crew, who congratulated me on being so devoted to duty that I would take such gear to bed. Colin suggested that it is clearly the strangest sexual habit to have surfaced so far on the trip.

The boom vang incident was dwarfed a few minutes later,

however, as the boat began to bounce and heel more in the rising wind and sea. Jeff noticed that a large tin of Bremner wafers was about to slide across the counter and onto Pete where he lay asleep in the quarter berth. Before he could stop it, however, the tin was on its way and bonked Pete on the head. And that was only a foretaste.

Jeff, afraid that a plastic tub full of assorted kitchen ware, loaves of bread and paper towel was about to follow the Bremner wafers, grabbed that and the blue metal teapot full of water in order to stow them more securely. Just then we hit a steep wave and Jeff lost his balance completely, with the result that the tub and its contents ended up all over the cabin sole and the teapot disappeared completely. Pete called for some paper towel to help dry of his berth and sleeping bag, which had been doused in the brouhaha, and after drying things off I began to search for the teapot. I found the lid near Pete's berth and, after looking in vain elsewhere, asked if by any chance the teapot was in his bunk. He looked and felt around in the dark and sure enough, there it was, sitting by his knees still mostly full of water. The rest of the water it had contained apparently accounted for the soaking Pete had already received. It was a hell of a way to start the day, but Pete hardly took any notice of it.

Today we switch watches again, back to the first week's set-up, which makes Pete and me watch partners again. I also get an extra three hours off. Very nice. It has given me time for an extra long journal entry. All this scribbling has earned me a new nickname Offshore Writer.

A few signs of a long passage—our four pillows, which have been used communally, are looking truly grungy. Ashore I don't think anyone here would dream of laying their heads on any of them, but out here standards are different.

Bill is having no luck getting through on the ham radio. Propagation has been poor the last few days.

Everyone who has them seems to love their polypropylene long johns and socks. It does seem to feel drier than most other fabrics.

The wind is dying topside, but I hear no calls for putting the

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genoa back up. Enough appears to have been enough.

(Day's run 120 miles, cumulative 2,524 miles, to 47° 34' N, 13°36' W)

Day 20, Thursday, July 21

8:30 p.m. Is it possible that the weather, and more particularly the wind, is about to change?

Late afternoon brought a series of dark cloud masses, a rising wind that reached about 25 knots and a choppy, angry-looking sea with confused waves that never built up except for an occasional series of 10-12 footers that appeared out of nowhere.

Colin and I put the third reef in the main as Pete and I came on watch, and we've been riding out the weather on the reefed main, working jib and forestaysail. The barometer also began dropping rapidly, and it looked for a while as if we might be in for a real storm. Now, however, the wind has moderated a little and backed toward the north, and by the time Pete and I came off watch we were able to make our desired course of 70°, and sometimes above it, at good speeds of 6-7 knots. We've had trouble for about a week with finding ourselves consistently south of our desired course, and yesterday we made almost no progress to the north at all. We're still moving well, however, and we were about 350 miles from Falmouth this morning. Bill is predicting we'll be ashore Sunday or Monday.

I don't know what got into him, but Bill was a whirling dervish this morning. First he baked two loaves of fresh bread and then, using the leftover ham from last night's dinner by Jeff, actually produced a genuine Hollandaise sauce and served up a full-blown eggs Benedict breakfast with home-baked bread, ham and poached eggs. The Hollandaise sauce took two tries, the first one having congealed, but the ultimate result was delicious. There was a lot of sauce left over, so I quickly fried up two more eggs and ate them drowned in Hollandaise. I guess my arteries can't take too much of that.

While on the subject of food, I should note that Jeff last night produced a feast of glazed ham, candied fresh carrots and scalloped potatoes and onions. That was the last of our fresh potatoes. The

Beans and Colin have definitely proven themselves the culinary masters of the crew.

This morning was bright and sunny, and though it was breezy and cool, that didn't stop Torpey from stripping to his shorts and working on his suntan and doing some sit-ups on the afterdeck.

Pete and I saw three ships last night on the 11 p.m.-2 a.m. watch, one of them a westbound freighter headed for New York, which relayed some weather reports. The other two ships were apparently smaller and crossed our stern heading north and northeast. Both moved very slowly, leading us to suspect they were fishermen or that one, the northbound vessel, might be a sailboat on the opposite tack. We could not raise either one on the radio.



It has been consistently striking, as we've been fighting our way to windward, what an astonishing difference it makes to the entire ocean when we briefly turn downwind. We've done this

occasionally to make it easier for Pete to get sun sights or to repair rigging or whatever, and it always seems as if we've been instantly transported into a new part of the sea, one where the wind is gentle instead of fresh, where the seas roll quietly beneath instead of flashing and spraying wildly over the bow, and where the boat just rides easily along instead of leaping and pounding over the seas.

Bill made contact with the radio net and left a message to be relayed through Amanda to Maggy and the other wives. I hope it gets through.

Well, I hope to hell the wind has backed some more by the time Pete and I get up for the 2-5 a.m. watch. It would be lovely

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to ride the last two or three days into Falmouth on a brisk beam reach or quartering breeze. Enough of close-hauled, already.

(Day's run 126 miles, cumulative 2,650 miles, to 48° 00' N, 10° 32' W)

Day 21, Friday, July 22

The last day of the third week, and what should we see? Insects. In books, the first signs of an approaching landfall should be debris, shore (rather than sea) birds, insects. So far, all we've seen is insects. One yellowjacket-like thing that showed up this morning and disappeared, and now a common house fly, who seems determined to stick around. Last night's bad weather petered out. By the time Pete and I came back on watch at 2 a.m. the wind was rapidly dying. We shook two reefs out of the main and shortly afterward the third, but it didn't do any good. By 3:30–4 a.m. we were all but becalmed in a light drizzle, making two knots or less most of the time, three knots in the “gusts”.

It was no better for the next watch, and at 7:45 a.m. Bill ordered the engine on and we powered, for the first time this trip, in order to get there or to find some wind, and not just to charge batteries and cool off the refrigerator. We powered until 11:15 a.m., when a little breeze came up, making it possible to hold our course and to make some progress to the north. As of 11 a.m., Loran and RDF fixes suggested we were 230 miles from Falmouth. We're awaiting sun sights by Pete later in the day for confirmation.

At my suggestion, Pete fixed grilled ham and cheese sandwiches for lunch. Hopefully, it's the last time we'll have cook duty.

In early afternoon, lo and behold, the sun came out, and we found ourselves on a broad reach. That means that after nine days, we were NO LONGER CLOSE-HAULED, no longer up against a northeast wind. Now, if we can only keep a nice northwest wind all the way into to Falmouth — but that's too much to hope for.

Jeff woke me up with a plateful of blueberry pancakes at 9:30 a.m. A treat, but no help for my spreading waistline.

We've been able to fly the MPS again this afternoon, and the

cockpit stereo speakers have resurfaced after being driven below for several days by the wet weather. Colin stripped to his waist, and then several of us followed suit. But it's far from the broiling sun of two weeks ago, and high thin clouds often interrupt what sun there is. Hard to say how things will settle down.

We've opened both the forepeak and main cabin hatches for some badly needed airing out. I then nearly fell through the former while helping to hoist the MPS.

We heard today that Walt, the guy who runs the Atlantic Marine ham radio net, had been unable to reach Amanda Torpey yesterday but will try again tonight. A Sunday arrival in Falmouth still looks possible, but the chances will recede unless we find a little more wind.

Getting in and out of the pilot berth, the quarter berth or the settee berth while heeled—something to describe when I have more energy. At least we're not heeling now. Thank God and Hallelujah!

A large school of dolphins arrived at noon and put on a spectacular show. They swam all about, toyed with the bow, and two or three did some spectacular leaps alongside, flying three or four feet out of the water. They ranged in size from three feet long to six or seven feet long. A large and sociable group.

We have noticed on several occasions that it seems to be the smallest, and presumably youngest, dolphins that come to play right under our bow. They will dart back and forth to within inches of the hull for minutes at a time, and then, as if at a signal from a watching parent further away who's yelled, “Hey, kids. get away from there,” they speed away in a flash — sometimes to return minutes later to start the game all over again.

Time for a nap.

(Day's run 130 miles, cumulative 2,780 miles. to 49° 13' N. 7° 50' W)

Day 22, Saturday, July 23

“Barring the unforeseen,” to quote Bill, this is the next-to-last day of *Felicity's* Atlantic crossing. And as Bill also points out, we

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ought to title this journal Three Thousand Miles Without a Tack. In fact, although we've been on both port and starboard tacks, we've never, at least on purpose, tacked. Each new tack followed a period of calm when he sails were down. Of course, there have been a few of those inadvertent tacks, but we don't discuss those in public.



We sailed from mid-afternoon yesterday until about midnight with only the MPS flying, and after dinner Torpey went up the mast in the bosn's chair to make some final additions and improvements to the baggy-wrinkle. That was our last opportunity to take pictures of someone up the mast.

At about midnight Bill had the watch take down the MPS as the wind picked up. Later it poured rain hard during Bill and Colin's watch. It rained again lightly during the 5-8 a.m. watch, but by 7 a.m. or so it had begun to clear to a bright sunny day. The wind died by mid-morning and we powered until 1:30 p.m. or so.

Last night, just before dark, Colin tried to place a radiotelephone call home. He failed to get through but raised the radio operator on a tender serving two large oil drilling rigs that, it turned out, lay directly on our course for the night. The radio operator was a Yorkshire man, and he and Colin exchanged pleasantries for a while and arranged for radio operator to place a phone call from his ship to Colin's mother-in-law in Devon, who was to relay the word of our impending arrival to Jackie and the others awaiting us in Cornwall.

By 10:30 p.m. we came upon a seismic exploratory ship close

aboard to starboard and then the first oil rig off to port, and later the second massive rig hove into sight to port as well. The radio operator on the tender told us he could see us on radar as we approached and passed the seismic ship, about 10 miles away from the rig and tender.

At 8 a.m. this morning we were 125 miles from Falmouth, and arrival tomorrow morning seems a certainty, barring a sudden storm or a real disaster.

In any case, everyone is doing next-to-the-last-day sorts of things. Bill decreed hot showers with fresh water for all and by 11 a.m. everyone had taken his turn. Luxurious is the only word for the feeling. Clean, dry clothes miraculously appeared from the depths of sea bags, duffels and suitcases, and a decidedly less smelly, less sticky bunch emerged from all this furious activity. Can't say that anyone emerged any prettier, however.



Cushions from the various berths have been hauled out on deck to dry, and the ill-used mattress covers that protected them from this unruly lot are being jettisoned over the side. The deflated bumpers were hauled out of the lazarette, and with the help of Jeff's new foot pedal pump have been re-inflated and lashed on deck in preparation for tying up to terra firma tomorrow. Torpey took a final reading from the Walker log and then pulled it out of the water. Except for a couple of misadventures when it fouled the propeller shaft, a fishing line and, finally last night, the line to the man-overboard pole, it has faithfully spun its way across the ocean, clocking the miles that passed under the keel. It also spurred episodic charges and counter-charges of cheating between the watch crews as each

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vied for the honor of longest distance travelled during a three-hour watch. No one has a clue, I believe, as to who won that trophy.

Pete is busy on deck trying to get a fix with the RDF, and Torpey, cook's duty having fallen to him again on this penultimate day, is holding his nose as he fills requests for peanut butter-and-Jelly sandwiches.



Pete and Colin have reviewed the contents of the medical supplies they will leave with Bill, and Colin has distributed unused

seasick pills to those who asked to take some home.

The sun is out again and the wind is abaft the beam, so Torpey, Colin and I have been trying to reinforce tans that had faded badly in our 10 days of adverse winds and clouds.

With our destination almost in sight, there is, perhaps despite ourselves, a rising tide of anticipation among the crew. I find myself thinking intensely about Maggy and Emilie, hoping that first phone call will find that all is well and generally awfully eager to see them both. My laundry supply has just barely held out. If we were delayed another two days I'd have to do some on-board laundry washing, as almost everyone else has done. I tried to plan things so as to avoid that, and so far it's worked.

I finished *Hotel New Hampshire*. Hilarious book, but a maudlin ending.

(128 miles, cumulative 2,908)

Day 23, Sunday, July 24

Actually, there never was a Day 23. Furthermore, I'm not exactly timely with this last entry, for as I write I sit in seat 21A of a Northwest Orient Airlines Boeing 747 at the terminal at Gatwick Airport, preparing to retrace in about six hours the distance it took *Felicity* 22 days to travel.

Our last day at sea, though remarkably devoid of ship sightings other than a couple of trawlers, was enlivened in late morning when a large four-engine jet suddenly appeared from astern at what looked like mast-top height, though it probably was 100 to 200 feet up. It bore down on us with startling speed and swept by in a shallow banking turn to the right. Most of the crew rushed up and watched in astonishment as the tan-colored plane swooped by and off into the distance, only to reappear off to starboard a few minutes later. This time it stayed about a mile away. Colin identified it as an RAF Nimrod, a variant of the old commercial Comet. The British use them, among other things, for coastal patrol. He said it probably was checking us and other small craft in the area to ensure that territorial fishing regulations were not being violated.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully and it stayed sunny and warm until late afternoon, when a series of squally-looking thunderheads began marching across from the west. We had motored all morning with no wind in evidence, but the breeze came up again out of the northwest at midday. Before long we were carrying the MPS again.

The first of the dark clouds loomed up just after Colin and I had set the MPS, and we looked up to see it just as we finished coiling the halyards. Bill groaned as we pointed at the cloud coming up from astern, and we contemplated striking the big sail immediately. In the end we kept it up and miraculously one after another of the threatening thunderheads sped by without stirring up a squall in our immediate area

I know I'm going to repeat some of what I wrote that last afternoon at sea, but I want to recount a few more details. Jeff and Torpey had lucked into cook's duty for the last day and, amid great gnashing of teeth, Torpey acceded to our requests for peanut butter-and-jelly sandwiches for lunch. Since our boat-baked bread was almost gone, they turned out to be open-faced

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sandwiches. They were wolfed down with soup and the last few cans of beer, and I proposed in a whisper designed for Torpey to hear that we stick peanut butter into the Walker log, which he had just carefully dismantled and stowed in its antique green wooden box. From the galley came a return threat that the perpetrator of such a deed would not live to tell the tale.

Various other preparatory tasks took up much of the day, but several of us took care to nap in expectation that we might have a sleepless night ahead.

Jeff tackled dinner with the spectacular suggestion that we overcome two problems—the lack of any but canned food and an excess of leftover fresh eggs — by cooking omelets stuffed with tomato, cheese and mushrooms for the whole gang. One by one they emerged from the skillet, and with this final shot from his culinary cannon Jeff claimed and retired the cooking trophy for the trip. He had almost locked it up earlier, but this performance put to rest any possible challenging claim.

Pete did some more navigating work right after dinner and a final round of cigars, and I climbed into my bunk to rest up for the 11 p.m. watch. Long before Torpey roused me I became aware that for the second night in a row it was raining heavily. There was to be no relief from foul weather gear on our last night.

Our watch came around soon enough, and we took over to find two or three vessels, probably fishing boats, ahead to port. It rained very heavily off and on, and as each downpour hit, visibility was sharply cut. When it was not raining, however, visibility was good.

We soon saw other boats, again apparently fishermen, ahead and to starboard. One of them featured an astonishingly bright light, but even through the binoculars we could not make out any details of the boat. We tried to keep track of the bearing of each boat at first but by the time there were six or eight in sight it was a hopeless task.

Pete spent a good deal of time taking RDF bearings on the Scilly Islands, Land's End and the Lizard, the latter being our expected landfall. By the time Bill and Colin came up to relieve

us, the rain had stopped and Pete's calculations suggested we should be just about at the limit of visibility for the light on the Lizard.

I waited for almost an hour in hopes of seeing the light before bunking down, but fatigue overcame me and I went below. I discovered the next morning that only a few minutes later, at about 2:15 a.m., Colin had spotted the Lizard's beacon. Landfall at last, and I was already sound asleep.

When I next woke at about 7:30 a.m., everyone else was already up. Dressing, I glanced out a portside porthole and realized that the low grey mass I saw was not just another cloud—it was land! On deck, everyone was scanning ahead and around for buoys, boats and anything else. We were passing abeam of a point of land called the Manacle and had just passed the first buoy. Doing about 7 knots, we soon spotted the next one in the misty grey light and soon details of green and yellow pastures climbing the hillsides to port began to come clear.

Shortly after I took the helm as Pete and I went back on duty for our final watch of the trip at 8 a.m., a land mass began to appear dead ahead as well, and soon we spotted the white lighthouse on the east side of the Falmouth harbor entrance — which stands on a point called St. Anthony's Head.

Ahead and to port was moored a small Norwegian tanker, and then with a rush other details emerged. We made out the low outline of Pendennis Castle on a large hill to the left of the harbor entrance, and looking ahead we could see another large freighter moored well inside the river mouth.

By now sailboats, small fishing boats and other craft were bustling about their business on all sides, and all of us were busy studying the chart of the harbor approaches and snapping photos of each other and the shore as we drove toward the harbor mouth at considerable speed.

What we didn't see were the figures of Barbara Bean, Cici Coggins and the elder Beans waving to us from the base of the hill on which Pendennis Castle sits. They told us later they had spotted us about as we drew abeam of the Norwegian tanker anchored outside the harbor.

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Just inside the harbor entrance we passed the buoy and day beacon marking Black Rock and hardened up to sail close by the shipping basin docks and on into the branch of the river Fal, which runs off to the west into Falmouth itself.

The town appeared at first as a sizeable aggregation of houses marching up the gentle hillsides on the south side of the long and increasingly riverine harbor. As we came closer we could make out a commercial district at the base of the hills just beyond the fishing docks, the large Green Bank Hotel close to the water on the left side and a growing number of larger, more picturesque houses dotting the slopes to the right of us.

The harbor was crowded with yachts and small commercial boats on their moorings, and we tacked past them and through them about three or four times before the channel began to narrow sharply. Our first true, intended tacks of the trip, and just in the nick of time.

Just before that a British coast guard launch approached us, either having seen our yellow quarantine flag that we had raised on the flag halyard or simply recognizing *Felicity* as a stranger in town. They asked if we were headed for the marina upstream, and, having been told that we were, the young blond customs official aboard the launch let us know that they'd meet us there.

Quickly we furled the working jib and then the main and began to power straight up the harbor toward the marina.

As we approached the Green Bank Hotel, Pete spotted Barbara and Cici and the elder Beans on the dock waving to us. There was much waving back and forth as we swept past, but we were too far offshore to be heard or to hear them. Around the next bend the marina appeared. Dock lines and fenders were rigged to port, and then we could see Bill's daughters on the dock, along with the others.

Within seconds, it seemed, we were tossing lines ashore and then, with spring line in hand, I leaped from the port rail to the dock. It wasn't land exactly, since it was a floating dock, but it was definitely England. Handshakes and hugs waited while we warped *Felicity* in snugly to the dock, and then it was hearty greetings all around.

The customs man was there but stood off on his launch tolerating the round of greetings cheerfully even if they were, strictly speaking, a violation of procedure. Soon enough he came on board and descended to the cabin with Bill, where each of us eventually went to sign the entry document. Our two bottles of chilled champagne were broken out and soon everyone, including the customs man, had a glass. Amid the excited chattering, exchanges of news and asking and answering of questions, no one had noted exactly what time we got ashore. It was probably between 8:30 and 9 a.m., however, so that our passage had come within an hour of taking exactly 22 days.

We offered the shore-side contingent bran muffins that Jeff had baked that morning as his final offering from the galley, and they offered us a box of Cornish gingerbread, which turned out to be ginger snap-like cookies. Young Timothy Bean was quickly in Bill's arms, and I found myself very eager to shake hands or give a hug to all those were there to greet us.

I felt a pang that Maggy and Emilie were not there, and I told Barbara of the fantasy I had had of a secret plan on Maggy's part to fly over to meet us.

The rest of that day was a blur of wandering ashore, drinking beer and ale in the marina bar and finally a ferry trip to St. Mawes to an arrival dinner that Barbara put together at the house they had rented.

I wonder now, travelling at 600 mph at 37,000 feet above the waves we traversed at 6 knots, more or less, what effect the trip had on me. Am I different, have I learned something about myself, have I grown in any way for the experience?

The answers are not obvious. The trip was really easy from the point of view of weather and sea conditions — Torpey kept muttering that the rest of us didn't know how lucky we'd been, and in the next breath fervently hoping it would stay as manageable the rest of the way. No one was stretched to any kind of limit of strength, endurance or courage. Not that there was any reason to assume we would be, perhaps, but I think one of the stimulating things about making the passage was the possibility that here, indeed, all of us might come face-to-face

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with a challenge and danger of the sort that would test us to the utmost. But that didn't happen.

All of us have undoubtedly faced far more threatening situations afloat in the past than anything we encountered between Southwest Harbor and Falmouth. All the same, there is the satisfaction of knowing that we each exposed ourselves to a greater than usual possibility of an experience to test our mettle and our capacities.

No, nothing happened, but we had all been willing to take the chance of finding out first hand the answer to the question that frequently surfaces in our fantasies — just how well would I handle a true survival experience? We certainly don't know the answer on the basis of *Felicity's* voyage any better than we did before, but at least we didn't duck the question.

What else? Clearly we were a very tolerant and forgiving group of people. Actually, it wasn't so much toleration—I think that each of us took care, and had the capacity to do so, to avoid exposing those rough corners of personality and character that can make it difficult or impossible to live in close proximity with several other human beings. Oh, Torpey and Colin spent a lot of time needling the rest of the crew, perhaps testing to see how far they could go, but everyone seemed determined to enjoy each other's company to the fullest extent this particular mix of personalities would allow. Whenever anyone's behavior ventured even close to one or another's limit of acceptance, it always seemed possible to turn off the source of the discomfort before it became an annoyance, or worse. There were no bullies aboard, and no patsies.

But back to me, since I'm the only one available to analyze right now, have I changed? I guess not, not except in the incremental ways we all change with each bit of new experience.

Did I enjoy it? Hell, yes. I would kick myself if I had not availed myself of the opportunity.

Would I do it again? That question was asked on board the last day or two, and while I didn't keep score, the consensus seemed to be that other long offshore passages would be worth doing. Perhaps not this particular one. Why not try something else?

In sum, I am not a changed person, but neither will I soon forget the Atlantic crossing of the *Felicity*.

And now each second brings me vast distances closer to home. Distances that took us hours to cover are gobbled up in the blink of an eye, and at the end will be Maggy and Emilie, home — and that will be the final reward.

(Total miles 2,924)