

LOG

Brigantine
ROMANCE

Double Issue - Logs # 11 & 12
(Summer '81) Continued.

Homeward Bound! Cape Town,
St. Helena, Recife, Barbados,
Grenada

Romance's Second Circum-
navigation Completed!

We made other pilgrimages to seek out the last Cape Horn seamen; and as in 1977, they gathered together aboard Romance to eat, drink and tell the kind of sea stories few of us will ever be privileged to hear. Perhaps for the last time. The ranks had thinned since '77; there had been no such gathering, until Romance came again. And again, we were privileged to see Pim Penso's 1945 Lawhill films, surely some of the most valuable color footage in existence of a four mast barque under glorious full sail off the Cape.

Romance was feted royally by Commander and Mrs. Phil Nankin of the General Botha Merchant Naval Academy, by Carol Roehm and the World Ship Society, the Royal Cape Yacht Club, and our good friends, David and Jos Baker, he a former Romance mate in the Galapagos, and a master marine photographer.

Romance blew out of Cape Town alone in a gale, which cancelled the spectator fleet--and ran 192 miles noon to noon the first day, exactly 8 knots average for the 24 hours. This giant step carried us clear of that cold, windy corner; and the following day, we set stuns'ls before a chill, but sunny force 4. Thus began a romp to remember, 12 days under stuns'ls to midocean St. Helena. At night, the Southern Cross blazed with cold fire high in the heavens astern--that guiding constellation beloved of all southern oceanic peoples, which for 15 months, had risen somewhere on our port bow, as we ran southwestward around the world. Now, as Romance lengthened her stride toward that far Polaris, we looked fondly back on that blazing cross.

Within a week, Romance had trampled down 1,046 miles of Southern Ocean, the little ship's best 7 days on record.

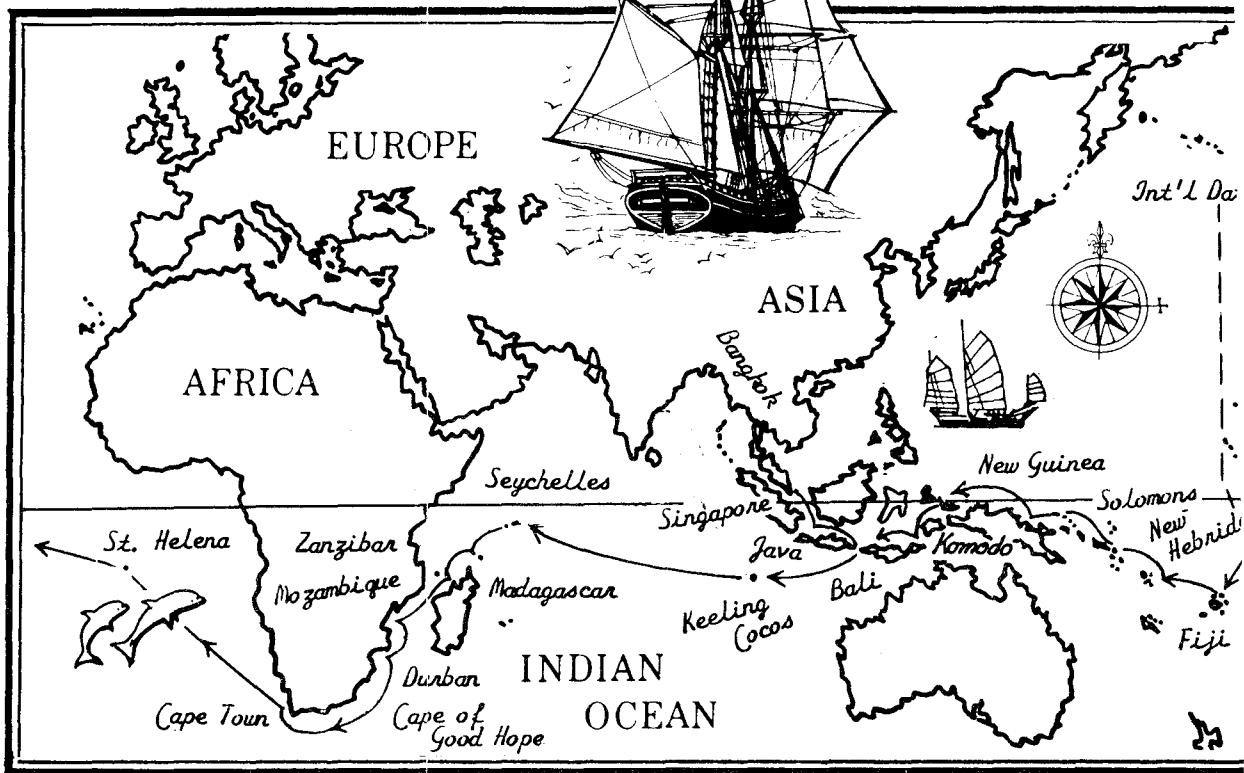
St. Helena by early morning light. We gazed in wonder at the barren brown cliffs rising from the sea, looking much as Napoleon first saw them from the deck of another sailing ship 166 years ago. A sad and brooding place to face lifelong exile--how his Emperor's heart must have sunk. We skirted the coast, and the battlements dug into the rocks so long ago. Only here and there a touch of green, as we neared Jamestown. It, too,

appears to have changed little. Whitewashed buildings follow a crease in the hills, the seaward end sealed off by a mote and heavy battlements, still pierced with very large cannon, their black muzzles commanding the harbor. Inside the fortified town gate is a genuine castle, barracks and old stone warehouses fronting an open square beneath great spreading trees. The only things missing are horse drawn carriages, red coated marines, and seamen in pigtales. Romance at anchor at the foot of mainstreet faithfully reproduces an old sepia post card view, still for sale (for 2 pence) in the shops.

The 699 steps of Jacob's Ladder climb ramrod straight up the barren hillside to fortifications above the town. A narrow, rock-walled road snakes out of the valley, and soon one is climbing in a moist, green countryside through tendrills of wispy cloud. Stands of dark pine and terraced flax fields lead to the stone pillars of Lot and Lot's Wife. At Longwood, Napoleon's home set in a formal garden, and commanding a view across the mountains to the distant pale blue sea, exile seems less terrible.

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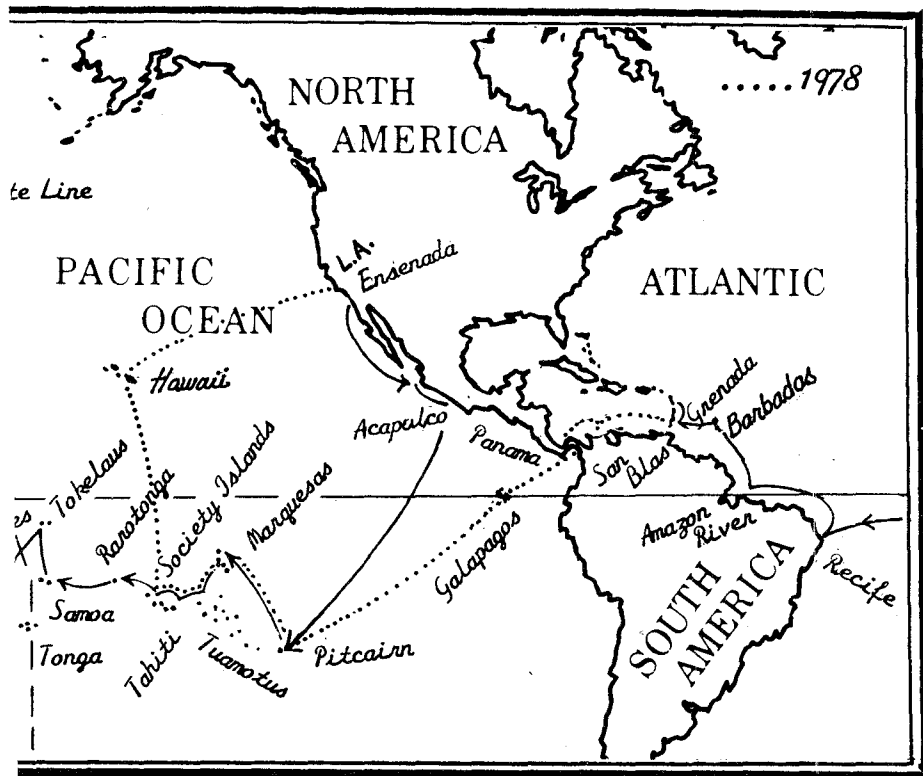
Brigantir ROMANCO



Today's St. Helenians themselves face a form of lifelong exile. There is nowhere among the convoluted landscape for even the smallest airstrip, and the '2 hour ship' every second month, is the only regular link with the outside world. Small wonder lonely St. Helena is so hospitable to wandering yachts.

Halfway between St. Helena and Recife, Brazil, we celebrated Romance's 15th Anniversary, with a 7 Knot Braai. It is one thing to barbeque off the stern in a quiet cove, and quite another to do it under full sail a thousand miles from land! We stretched a canvas windscreen from foremast to shrouds, and laid a charcoal fire in a big Fiji biscuit tin well insulated from the deck with dunnage. With water buckets standing by, and a whole ocean to draw from, we felt secure. Soon, a waft of fragrant smoke was rising behind the windscreen, from thick, juicy steaks, and spicy boerevons, South Africa's national sausage. What is there about a fire? Man's first comfort, warmth, security. Memories and dreams dance before it in the secret caves of the mind. We sat around the glowing

ie NE SECOND WORLD VOYAGE



..... 1978
South Pacific Expedition
(Grenada to Los Angeles)

(Log # 8.)

—— 1979-81
Los Angeles to Grenada - Via the World.

(Logs # 9 - 12.)

coals til long after the 8 PM watch change, listening to primitive chants of the South Pacific on tape--so far away . . . and only with regret threw our lovely fire hissing into the sea, to snatch a little sleep before midnight.

Much is being written today about sail-assisted modern cargo ships. A minimum of sail on downhill runs alone, would save thousands on fuel costs. The Captain of the world's most powerful tug, SAF Marine's John Ross, told us in St. Helena how he cuts the cost of tows simply by raising or lowering derricks, to create or minimize windage according to wind conditions. We were especially conscious, therefore, of the significance of Romance's Cape Town to Recife run, 3,616 nautical miles, with the expenditure of less than 24 hour's fuel. We used the engine only to sound the anchorage in St. Helena, and to enter Recife in a flat calm. Modern cargo vessels could certainly profit from sails on a similar run.

From modern sail to old--Olinda, a suburb of Recife, is the oldest city in Brazil. Here fishermen still sail the ancient Indian log rafts, called "Jangadas," surely the most elementary form of seagoing vessel possible. The rafts are nothing more than rough balsa logs pegged together, and fitted with a daggerboard and a gracefully curving mast. The helmsman keeps dry sitting on a high wooden stool, and steers with a long sweep. The rafts are very wet when first launched from the beach, but once they attain speed, they seem to lift, and the tops of the logs dry. The Jangadas carry a big rig, and are said to attain speeds of 10 to 15 knots, venturing well offshore. And lest racing yachtsmen scoff--they are fitted with hiking straps!

Leaving Recife, Romance crossed the Equator for the 6th time in this world voyage, with our first Queen Neptune--the unsinkable Camilla Heptinstall presiding as Neptunus Regina. We savored every moment now, begrudging every mile slipping inexorably into our wake, knowing we were soon to leave our snug little shipboard world of sea and sky. One more port, Barbados; and Romance flew her traditional Homeward Bound Pennant--a length of cloth cut from some old familiar garment worn by each of the crew, and sewn together into a proud and colorful, if rag-tag 20 foot banner.

And at 1:30 AM, April 24, 1981, Romance dropped her anchor off the silent fortress of St. Georges, Grenada, her Second Circumnavigation completed. We sat on deck in the moonlight, drinking champagne and listening to the clear, sweet music of the tree frogs--and knew we were home again in the West Indies.

Summary L.A.-Grenada, 19 months.

Total distance: 30,872 N. Miles - Total time: 313 days, 5 hrs. Total av. speed: 4.44 knots. (Last world voyage 4.22 K.) - Longest day's run: 192 NM. (8 knots.) - Best week's run: 1,046 NM, So. Atlantic. Longest passage: Acapulco-Pitcairn: 3,378 NM in 38 days, 16 hrs. Total ports: 53 - Total fish caught: 902 lbs.