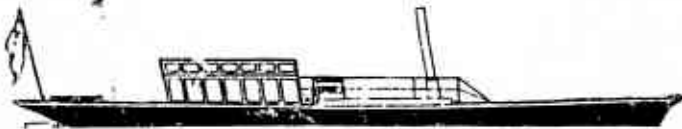


**The
Umpire's Launch
at
Henley Royal Regatta**

An Historical Review



**Richard Goddard
1997**

THE UMPIRE'S LAUNCH AT HENLEY

by

Richard Goddard

Secretary of Henley Royal Regatta

Rode and Rowed - the early days

At the first Regatta, held on 14th June 1839, the Umpire rode on horseback along the towing path¹, [figure 1] but at subsequent Regattas² this official followed the racing either in the bow of an eight³ or far more probably, as has been suggested elsewhere⁴, seated holding the rudder lines in the stern. Almost invariably, although not exclusively⁵, he was rowed by professionals; and an article in *Bell's Life*, on the 1840 Regatta, recorded :

'Mr. J.D. Bishop again officiated as Umpire, and was this year in an eight-oared cutter manned by a crew of London watermen.'⁶

In 1842 *Bell's Life* reported that the watermen carrying the Umpire decided to 'have a go' themselves and at Poplar Point they spurted round the outside of the bend 'so that on approaching the Stewards' stand all three boats were stem to stem...'⁷ [figure 2]

In several published reports of Regattas throughout these early years, details of the Umpire's watermen are given. In 1841, for example, we learn that,

'J.D. Bishop, Esq., captain of the London Amateur Scullers' Club, gave so much satisfaction at the previous regattas by his admirable management and superior knowledge of matters connected with rowing, the committee was again anxious to have his valuable assistance, and he consented for the third time to officiate as umpire. A crew of London watermen was selected to man his eight-oared cutter, and excellent well did they perform their work on both days. The men's names were 1 Shelton, 2 Doubledee, 3 Robert Doubledee, 4 Freeman, 5 Newell, 6 Kelly, 7 Williams, 8 Phelps (stroke).'

⁸

In 1859,

'capitally did they perform their arduous work...rowing well up with every race, and in that between Trinity and Balliol actually coming in second; they consisted of :- 1. J.Phelps, 2. J. Mackinney, 3. T. Mackinney, 4. J. Messenger, 5. W. Pocock, 6. G. Hammerton, 7. T.White, 8. H. Kelley, with Francis of Teddington on shore, in reserve, as a change at times for Messenger, who was slightly indisposed.'⁹

NOTICE!!

WINDLEY REGATTA

The Stewards and the Committee, being extremely anxious to afford every possible Accommodation to Spectators on the Banks of the River, and to avoid accidents or injury to any Individual, particularly request that no Gentleman will attempt to ride on Horse-back along the Towing Path during the Regatta, except the Umpire, who must necessarily ride by the side of the Boats during the Race.

JUNE 14, 1839.

[HICKMAN AND FINCH, TYP. PENNY]

Figure 1

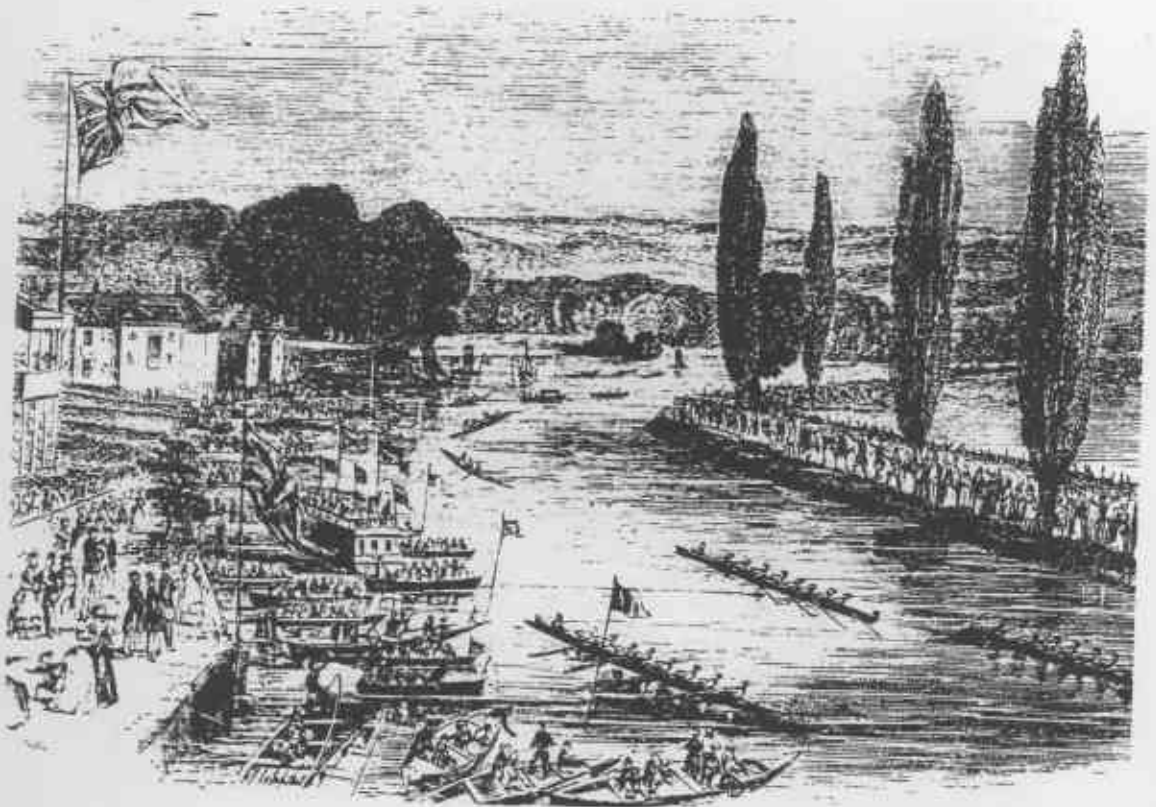


Figure 2

A number of these watermen, and those subsequently listed, were renowned professionals of their day.¹⁰ Kelley, for instance, is referred to as 'the champion' in *The Field* of June, 1866, although the same report adds that,

'the proximity of his race with Hammill, of the United States, rendered it advisable for him not to take an oar.'

Occasionally, as in 1848, it was reported :

'A little race among the watermen who rowed the umpire... wound up the regatta.'¹¹

and elsewhere the prize money offered is quoted : £7 to the winner and £5 for the second boat home. In *Bell's Life* (1863) twelve names are listed with a comment that a crew of eight was selected , with four relieving four thereafter.

Theodore Cook¹² considered his readers might find it

'of interest to add that the best watermen's crew which ever carried an umpire (as was their custom before steam launches) at Henley was that of 1853, which contained T. MacKinney, R. Newell, R. Doubledee, J. Messenger, W. Pocock, J. Phelps, T. Cole and R. Coombes at stroke.'

Despite the prowess of these professions, it seems that gradually the competing amateur oarsmen began to outpace the watermen. The official Records of the Regatta for 1868, state :

'Messrs. R. Lewis Lloyd and R.W. Risley officiated as Umpires, and were rowed by two crews of watermen; but in many instances they were unable to keep up with the races.'¹³

To overcome this, the Umpire's boat occasionally joined the race at an intermediate point along the Course, reference being made to it 'darting out of the bushes a third of the way up'.¹⁴

Perhaps the diminishing skills of these crews of watermen had, as suggested by a journalist, something to do with the means of their selection,

'The next point to comment is the making up of the crew of watermen to row the umpire; and the selection of the men is, we believe, left to that gentleman, who on the present occasion deputed the task of choosing fit and proper watermen to compose the crew to a deputy, and of his knowledge of the men's abilities or his impartiality in his selection the following crew will give a good idea Now, we have no wish to do any of these men a bad turn, but why Nos 1,4 and 7 should be chosen ... to the exclusion of [others] we cannot understand. Indeed much astonishment was expressed by several Londoners....For the future we would suggest that if the Umpire himself is not acquainted with the performances of the different watermen...he should either leave the selection in the hands of the committee, or else take the opinion of some amateur qualified

to give one, before finally making such an invidious selection, and so for the future obviate the jealousy and well-founded discontent which has on the last two occasions resulted from the course taken.'¹⁵

The Days of Steam - Thornycroft and Des Vignes¹⁶

Clearly this was not a satisfactory state of affairs and in 1869 a powered vessel was introduced. It may well be that the idea for such a departure from tradition was inspired by the British Regatta, held on the River Seine at Paris in 1867, when the umpires,

'Mr. Ireland and Mr. Brickwood were carried - one on board the steam launch...and the other aboard a private yacht...On the last day, when the eight-oared race was rowed, M. Benoit Champy was good enough to give the umpire a seat in his fast river boat the *Vauban*, the better to keep up with the eights.'¹⁷

It seems, however, more likely that the seed was planted earlier when :

'*Nautilus* of 36 ft. in length and fitted with a twin-cylinder engine and a locomotive-type boiler...was the first steam launch that could keep up with the eights of the University Boat Race. This was in 1862. The *Nautilus* ranks as 'Boat No.1' in the Thornycroft register of craft...The date of 1859...probably refers to the laying of the keel, when the budding engineer was only sixteen years of age.'¹⁸

However that may be, the Records of the 1869 Regatta merely refer to the official using 'a steam-launch'. It is very likely this first boat was named **ARIEL** - for it is certain such a launch was used at a very early stage. The Stewards' Minute Book makes reference to a steamer, the property of a Mr. Blythe, being put at their disposal 'to carry the Umpire during the Races'¹⁹, whilst an entry from the Minutes of December 1870 states:

'...I believe he [i.e. Mr. Blythe] is unwilling to sell the *Ariel*...'²⁰

Ariel, [figure 3] built by Thornycroft at the Church Wharf Works in Chiswick, was 40 feet in length, 5 feet 6 inches in beam, constructed of steel with a v-twin steam engine and deserves special mention,

'No.2 [in Thornycroft's Register of Boats], the *Ariel* of 1863, was well-named, for she was almost incredibly light, some of the hull plates being only a fortieth of an inch in thickness, that is a weight of only 1 lb. per sq. ft. Although the launch ran at 12.2 knots in lieu of the 9.5 knots of the *Nautilus*, Thornycroft was disappointed ...'²¹

A somewhat gushing account of the use of steam launches at this Regatta of 1869 related that,

'No great, fat, and puffing Citizens²² blackened the air with dense smoke, but, in strict keeping with the poetry of the scene, some five or six pretty little screws glided about as easily and noiselessly as swans. Shadowed by cool awnings and cheerfully decorated, these bijou craft seemed particularly adapted for upper Thames navigation. Conspicuous among them were, first, the remarkably handy boat that carried the umpires, and next the two twin screw boats, of light draught, by Yarrow and Hedley, of Poplar, neat, fast,

and manageable pleasure steamers of ten or twelve horse-power, and of remarkable pace and docility.¹²³

Apparently this pretty sight also had its down-side, for the Official Records for 1871 report that the Thames Conservancy had imposed a ban on the movement of all steam launches on the Henley Reach, save that carrying the umpire, during the hours of racing.

In 1870 two launches²⁴, one being Mr. Blythe's *Ariel*, the other being the property of Viscount Southwell were used, but it is clear the Stewards were still not content and appointed a sub-committee to investigate the way forward.

'The Sub-Committee reported as follows : that they had visited the yards of both Messrs. Yarrow and Hedley²⁵ and Mr. Thornycroft and requested tenders to build and let to the Stewards and Committee a Steamer of sufficient speed to carry the Umpire with the Races during the two days of the Regatta...'²⁶

They each submitted tenders and both were asked to guarantee the speed of the launch. Yarrow & Hedley replied that the vessel would be able to 'keep up with the Grand's Race', whilst Thornycroft wrote more specifically :

'The boat I should build for your Umpire would be of steel. 49 feet 9. by 6ft 6 ins and I could guarantee 12½ [*sic*] in still water. I expect 13 miles and more even; the boat will work quietly which will be important to you.'²⁷

The Committee opted for Thornycroft's tender, for though Hedley's was more moderate it was not so satisfactory as regards the speed - twelve miles an hour being the minimum recommended by the sub-committee.

There followed a deal of haggling, but eventually the Committee concluded a contract guaranteeing to employ the steamer for the first year at £50 and at two subsequent regattas for £40 per annum.

The Regatta Records merely refer to the outcome of these negotiations as follows :

'Messrs. R.W. Risley and J.G. Chambers officiated as Umpires in a steam-launch which had been built on purpose by Thornycroft'²⁸

and this vessel certainly seemed to have fulfilled its purpose, for it was remarked :

'Another improvement, resulting from the experiences of last year, was made in the mode of conveying the umpires, a very fast steam screw launch having been constructed, under contract, with the committee, by Mr. J.I. Thomeycroft [*sic*], C.E., of Church Wharf Works, Chiswick, builder of the celebrated *Ariel*; and the speed of the new vessel was the common topic of conversation during the day. A day or two before the race she had been run at full speed over the course against the stream which was slightly above its usual strength, and the little steamer covered the distance of 1 mile 2 furlongs and about 100 yards in 4 min. 40s... ...We believe that this

JOHN I. THORNYCROFT, C.E.,
STEAM-YACHT AND LAUNCH BUILDER,

Church Wharf, Chiswick, London, W.

Builder of the Screw Steam-yacht "Ariel," well known for the last six years as the swiftest small vessel on the Thames.

Mr. Thornycroft is now building still faster vessels, to which he begs to call attention.

Also, Sea-going Yachts, of either Iron or Steel, with condensing or non-condensing Engines.

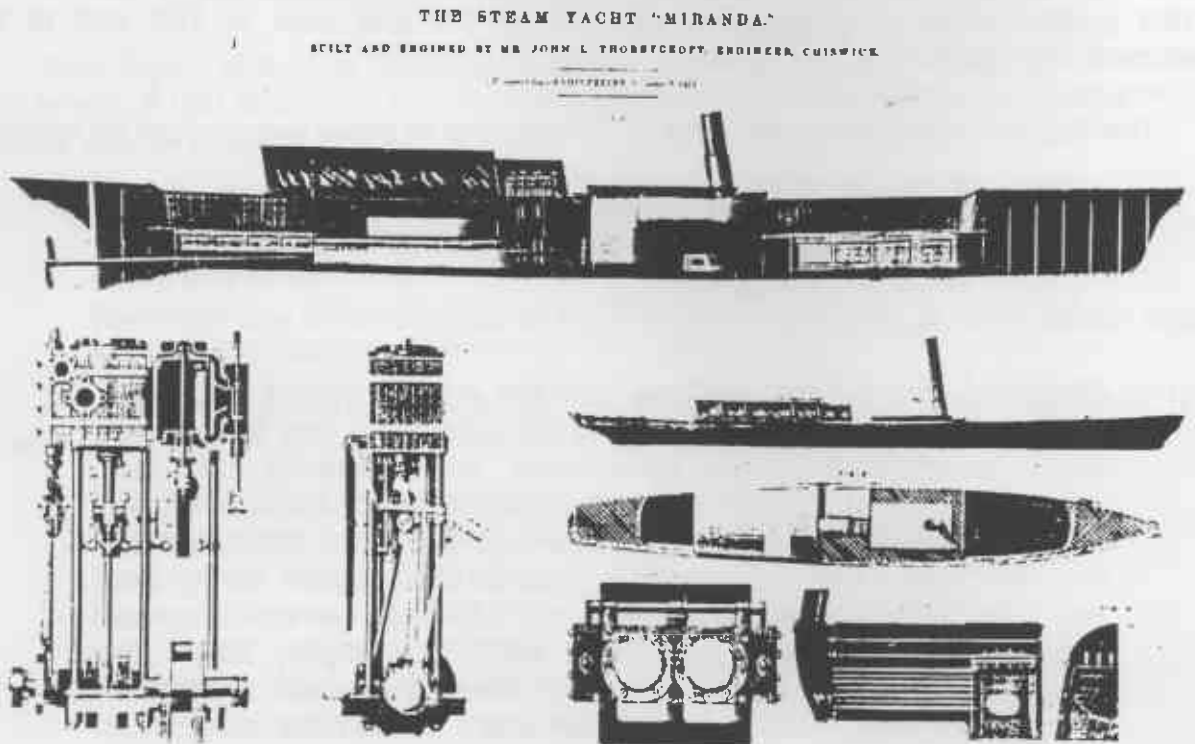
Sea Launches, and a special class of Light Steel boats, capable of navigating shallow rivers, where steamers have not hitherto been used.

All Screw boats fitted with an improved arrangement of screw and rudder, which gives greater speed and less vibration.

The Engines are designed and constructed by Mr. Thornycroft, at Chiswick, where any further information may be obtained.

Church Wharf, Chiswick, London, W.

Figure 3



Details of the steam yacht *Miranda*

Figure 4

vessel may be hired by other regatta committees; but the Henley stewards have first claim on her services.¹²⁹

However, the venture did not receive universal acclaim, it being stated that,

'A vast amount of valuable time was wasted by the crews having to wait at the starting post for the umpire's steamer which accompanied each race. She is an undeniably fast boat; in fact probably the fastest of her size ever built, but the long stoppages that were made opposite the Grand Stand for the purpose of taking on board and putting on shore the different umpires caused a wearisome delay. A watermen's crew.....might surely have been utilised for the purpose...'¹³⁰

No trace as to the name of this launch has yet been found, but at the following Regatta of 1872, reports of :

'...the races being umpired again by Mr. Risley and Mr. Chambers from Mr. Thornycroft's steam screw launch **MIRANDA**'¹³¹ [figure 4]

'Messrs. R. Risley and J.G. Chambers umpired the races from the *Miranda*, the little steamer doing the marked half mile in 2 min. 11 sec.'¹³²

'Boat No.10 [in Thornycroft's Register], the *Miranda*, [constructed in 1871] was a more important craft, since her success contributed so greatly to the growing reputation and rapid progress of her builder. This little vessel, [had] a waterline length of 45 ft. 6 in. She evoked widespread interest on account of her speed of over 16 knots, which was considered impossibly high. This disbelief made it necessary to arrange for an independent trial by Sir Frederick Bramwell, the leading consulting engineer of his day. Bramwell described the trials and confirmed the speed in a paper read before the Institute of Naval Architects in 1872.'¹³³

The paper described scientifically observed phenomena which were in direct contradiction to all the received laws of dynamics and hydrodynamics. Hitherto it had been regarded as impossible to attain speeds of some 17 to 19 statute miles per hour unless the vessels were at least 200 ft. in length, some even pointed out the necessity of going to lengths approaching 400 ft. before it was possible to reach speeds in the region of 20 knots. Thornycroft's launch was under 50 feet.

Certainly *Miranda* would have been admirably suited to the task of keeping up with the races at Henley ! What is not certain is whether *Miranda* were the launch Thornycroft built specially for the Stewards and Committee under the agreement of December 1870.

But we are aware that in the winter of 1873-4 he also built **EVA**, [figure 5] for a report of the 1874 Regatta stated :

'Messrs Risley and Chambers umpired in turn from a new little steamer built by Thornycroft...'¹³⁴

and there is frequent apocryphal - but I believe inaccurate - reference to *Eva* being the first launch for use by the Umpire to be commissioned by the Regatta. We do have a

Dated 10th March 1874.

314

Mr Messrs John Isaac
Thornicroft & Co

with

The Harward's Committee
of the Menley Regatta.

Agreement

to build and supply a
Steam Launch for the use
of the Harpines.

Figure 5

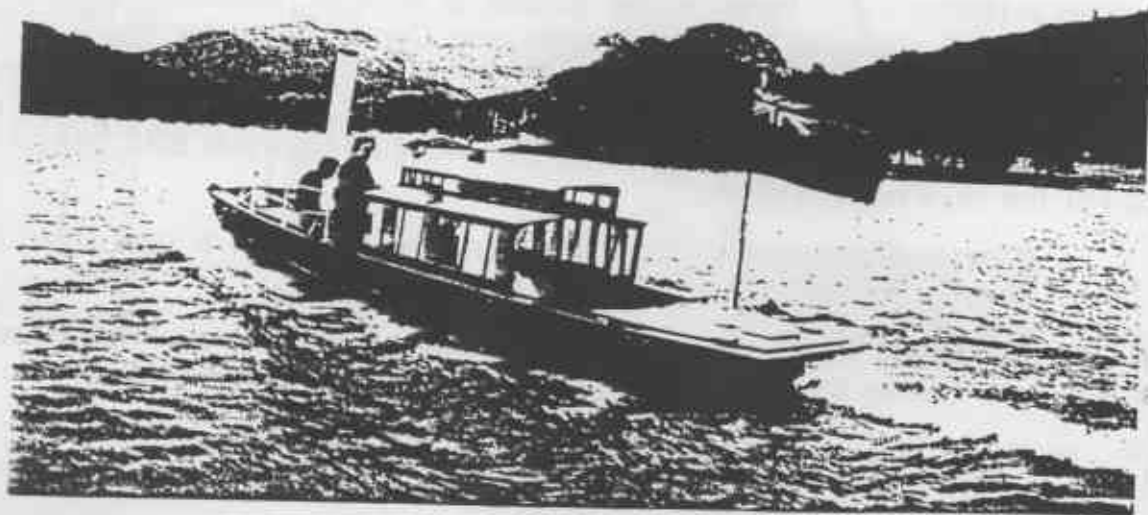


Figure 6

good deal of contemporary documentation regarding this contract, as the original Agreement is extant. This sets out the terms of the payment and a specification of the vessel to be built :

'...Thornycroft...hereby agrees to build and completely finish for the use of the Stewards and Committee of Henley Regatta by the tenth day of June one thousand eight hundred and seventy four a Steam Launch constructed to carry the Umpire and three other persons besides the crew necessary properly to navigate it and to travel at the rate of not less than fifteen miles an hour (so as to run over the Regatta course in five minutes) and to maintain that speed when necessary whilst accompanying the races throughout the two days of the Regatta...' [figure 6]

The matter is further confirmed by statements relating to the 1875 and 1876 Regattas, respectively :

'...the umpires were conveyed in a new steam launch by the same builder [i.e. Thornycroft] not so fast as the *Miranda* but still capable of doing a cool 15 miles per hour...'

'one of Mr. Thornycroft's speedy screw launches achieved 18 mph...'35

Eva, herself, was 44' 6" in length, 6' 4" in the beam and with a draft of 2'. She was powered by a single cylinder steam unit reported to be capable of 42 ihp [indicated horse power]. At trials she achieved 16½ m.p.h. Originally she was steered by a tiller and had no cabin, but after she left service with the Regatta in 1876 she was sold to Mr. H.E. Rhodes when a wheel and cabin were fitted, and it is in this form that she is shown at figure 5. *Eva* has been meticulously restored at the Kew Steam Museum and in 1985 returned to the Henley Reach to undergo trials to see if she could carry an umpire again - sadly the steering was erratic and it proved impossible to reduce speed rapidly enough to allow the boat to be employed safely for her original task : an added disadvantage was the discovery that the coal-fired boiler showered all on board with heavy black smuts ! *Eva* is soon to become a permanent exhibit at the River & Rowing Museum at Henley.

The arrangement with Thornycroft started at the 1871 Regatta and continued until 1876 when:

'The Secretary...reported that the Agreement to provide a steam launch by Messrs. Thornycroft [*sic*] ...[had] terminated...'36

After Thornycroft's departure from the scene, a Regatta Sub-Committee investigated three firms of Steam Launch builders, choosing Messrs. Des Vignes, who were willing :

'to undertake to supply a Launch, in every way suited to meet the requirements of the Committee for a term of three years, 1877-8 & 9 for the sum of Twenty Pounds each Regatta.'37

It seems this arrangement gave satisfaction, for no further reference is to be found till 1883 when the Minutes³⁸ record that a new Contract with Des Vignes for the hire of an Umpire's Launch of 'such size and power' as required, was approved.

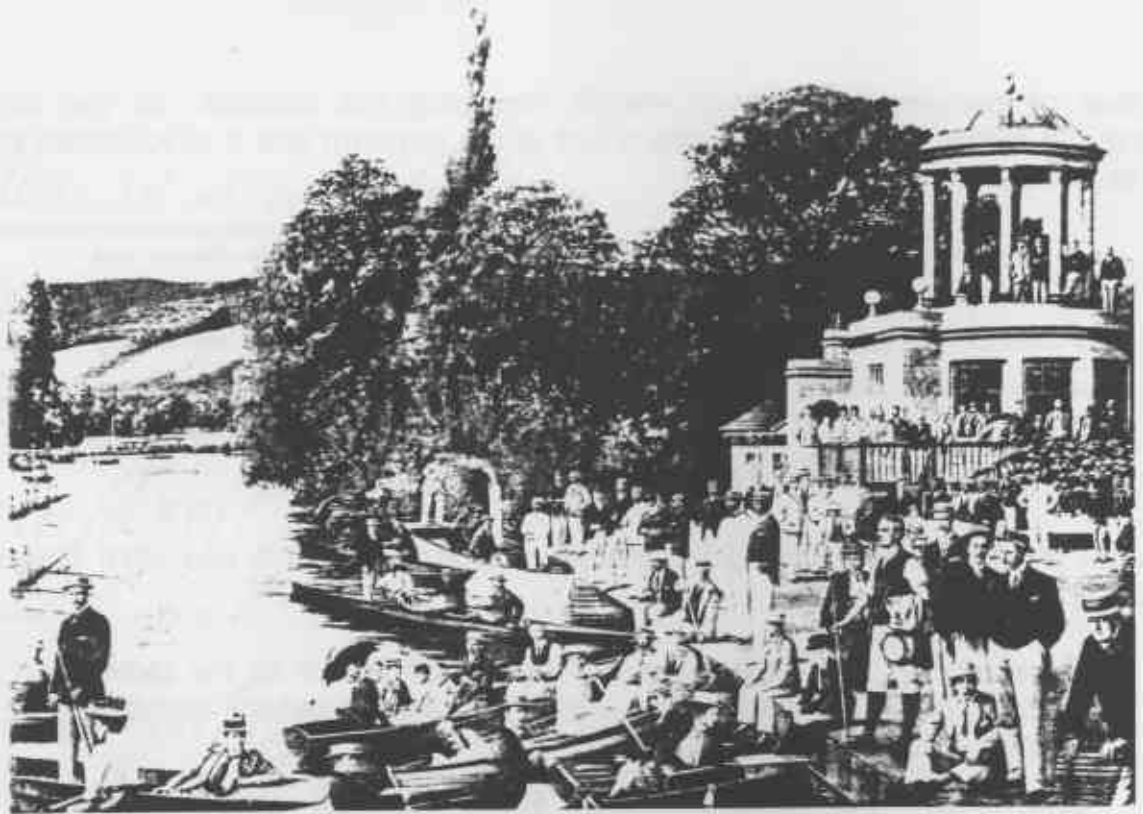
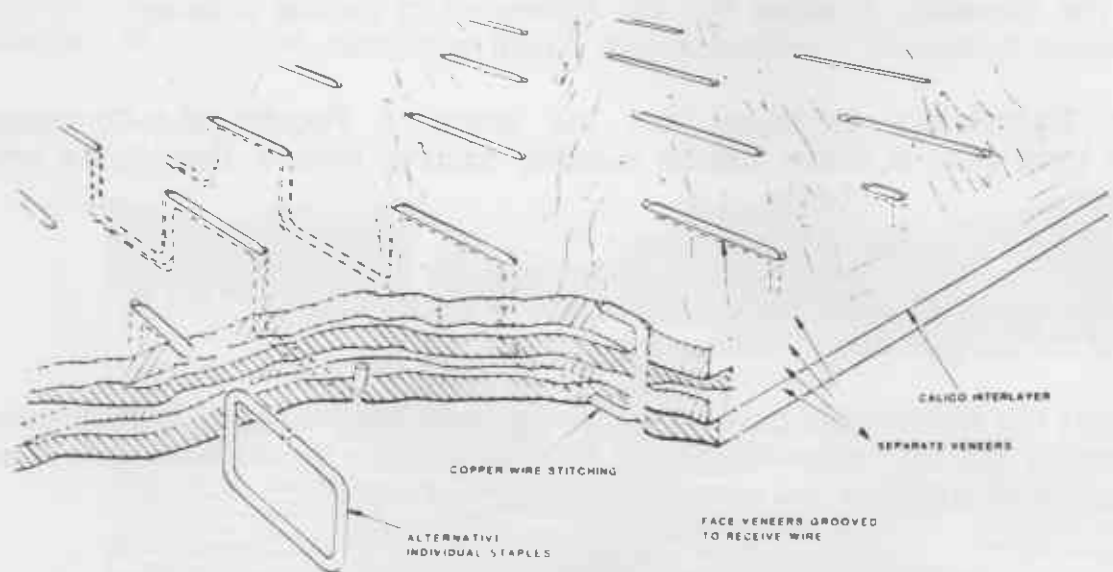


Figure 7



'Consuta' - The steam launch built in 1898. With its copper wire sewn laminated construction and advanced hull form, 'Consuta' created a sensation in boating at the time and was the key to the major expansion of Sam Saunders' business.



Typical detailed arrangement of Consuta construction.

Figure 8

Des Vignes' steam launches, all built of riveted steel and powered by twin cylinders turning a single screw, were employed at Henley for every Regatta between 1877 and 1898. It seems that for much of that period Des Vignes built a new boat each year, hiring it first to the Stewards for use at the Regatta as a form of advertising and thereafter selling the vessel to a private buyer.³⁹

Various newspaper and magazine reports of the period give the names of these launches, so we know that in 1880 the **WRAITH**⁴⁰ was engaged, **ZAMORA**⁴¹ in 1881, in 1884 and 1885 **INVICTA**⁴², in 1886 **EUPATORIA**⁴³, 1887 **ASTEROID**⁴⁴, 1888 **JAVELIN**, 1889 **ODALISQUE** and, in 1890, **DEIANIRA**⁴⁵.

This last launch is described as,

'a long powered boat and very fast but sends up too much swell for a crowded reach.'⁴⁶

In the following year, an engraving of Temple Island⁴⁷ [figure 7] shows the 1891 Regatta Start with a steam launch, clearly named as **ARAMIS**, flying the Umpire's flag from the stern. *The Field* of 11th July that year stated,

'Mr. Desvignes of Chertsey has built a new launch for the umpires - the *Aramis* and she seems well suited for the purpose - without being too long or inconveniently small - a fine specimen of the building of such swift and graceful craft.'

and this boat was used again in 1892 when owned by 'the Des Vignes Syndicate'. and again in 1893 when the Committee concluded an agreement with the Kingdon Company, with whom Des Vignes was, by then, in partnership :

'for the supply of four small launches and the Umpire's Launch'⁴⁸

At this last Regatta it is recorded that the Umpire took the Baron de Coubertin, Founder of the modern Olympic Games, as a guest on the *Aramis* when he officiated at a race involving a French crew.⁴⁹

During the same period the Committee was investigating other forms of propulsion. In 1888, Messrs Immisch & Co., the Electric Launch Builders were contacted as to the suitability of one of their launches carrying the Umpire.⁵⁰ The results were, apparently, unsatisfactory, for no such craft was used at Henley Royal Regatta in this capacity, though the Minutes record that Immisch was to be thanked for the loan of the electric launch *Beta* which helped 'keep the Course' in 1889.

In 1894 a new launch built by Des Vignes came on the scene and **HIBERNIA** was to be used at Henley for the next fourteen years.

Although It will be remembered that occasionally more than one launch had been used at regattas in the past, this seems to have been something of an *ad hoc* arrangement. For the 1897 Regatta, the Committee resolved definitively to employ two Umpire's launches instead of one.⁵¹ However, this had dire consequences :

'Two launches, one for each Umpire, were used on the morning of the first day in order to save time, but as it was found the second launch engaged caused a great wash when travelling fast, and therefore could only be used for slow races, the scheme had to be given up.'⁵²

Obviously it was the choice of **VARUNA** as the second boat which caused difficulties, for future reports make it clear that the principle of using two launches had become firmly established. Yet not every commentator saw the value of the innovation,

'The experiment of having two launches, one of which was to follow alternate races, was not a success and was abandoned for the greater part of the day; but, if the course was always clear, there would be no occasion for two launches, as, but for the delay caused by the pleasure boats, the umpire would have plenty of time to go down the course at half speed after every race, before the next one started.

'The Umpire's vessel had the greatest difficulty in making its way down the course...some people appear to take a pleasure in obstructing the passage of the launch, and on one occasion a mob...disgracefully abused the umpire at the start.'⁵³

The Problem of Swell

To solve the problem of swell the Stewards asked Mr. Saunders (later of Saunders Roe), boat-builder of South Stoke, to design a launch that would do close to twenty miles per hour without creating an excessive wash. He developed the 'tunnel stern' and the first vessel of this type, **CONSUTA**, [figure 8] was built in 1898⁵⁴ although, according to other sources it had been commissioned in 1896 by Mr. Clutton, a near neighbour, as 'a launch for the Umpire Committee of Henley Regatta....

The launch was to be designed to produce minimum wash as the current umpires' launch had been producing an unacceptable wash at the Regatta. The resulting launch, named *Consuta*, which is Latin [*consutillis*] for 'sewn together', was 51ft. long and 7½ ft. in the beam, had a fine entry with a shallow run aft, and a rounded tunnel stern. The hull skin comprised four mahogany laminations hand sewn together with annealed 16 SWG copper wire stitches laid in approximately 40,000 inch long grooves in the outer lamination. Power was provided by a Desvignes steam engine which gave the launch a trials speed of 27.5 knots [*sic*] with so little wash that the Umpire Committee was fully satisfied and used *Consuta* for many years until she became the BBC's television commentary launch for the Oxford and Cambridge boat races. She is now being restored by Kew Bridge Engine Trust in a workshop near Kew bridge in London.⁵⁵

[That optimistic report was penned some years ago (in the mid-1980s) and unfortunately the proposed restoration has yet to happen. The shell is now at the Laleham Boatyard of Mr. Dennett.]

Contemporary reports confirm that the vessel's design was a great success,

'...a new [launch] named the *Consuta*, which had been built by S.E. Saunders of Goring, with a view to avoiding as far as possible the raising of any wash, and the result is most satisfactory, for there was far less roll caused by her than any other boat hitherto used. The

construction of the boat is novel...the hull in consequence very light, being about half the weight of a steel one...¹⁵⁶

In 1899 there is documentary evidence, in the form of a copy-letter from the Secretary of the Regatta to H.S. Clutton that *Consuta* was hired for the use of the Umpire. We also discover, from the same source, that the other launch in use for 1899 was again the *Hibernia* hired from R.H. Labat of London Rowing Club:

'I enclose your agreement for the *Hibernia* for umpiring at the Regatta 1899...¹⁵⁷

This deal continued for some years. In 1904 the Minutes recorded :

'that arrangements had been made with Messrs. Clutton & Labat for the hire of their launches as usual,¹⁵⁸

and, furthermore, a photograph⁵⁹ of the Final of the Grand Challenge Cup for that Regatta shows the steamer *Consuta* carrying the Umpire, but the following year :

'The Chairman mentioned with great regret the death of Mr. H.J. Clutton the owner of the *Consuta* but said that the launch would no doubt be available this year tho' it might be considered advisable to modify the existing agreement.

It was also agreed to get the *Hibernia's* agreement renewed for this year.¹⁶⁰

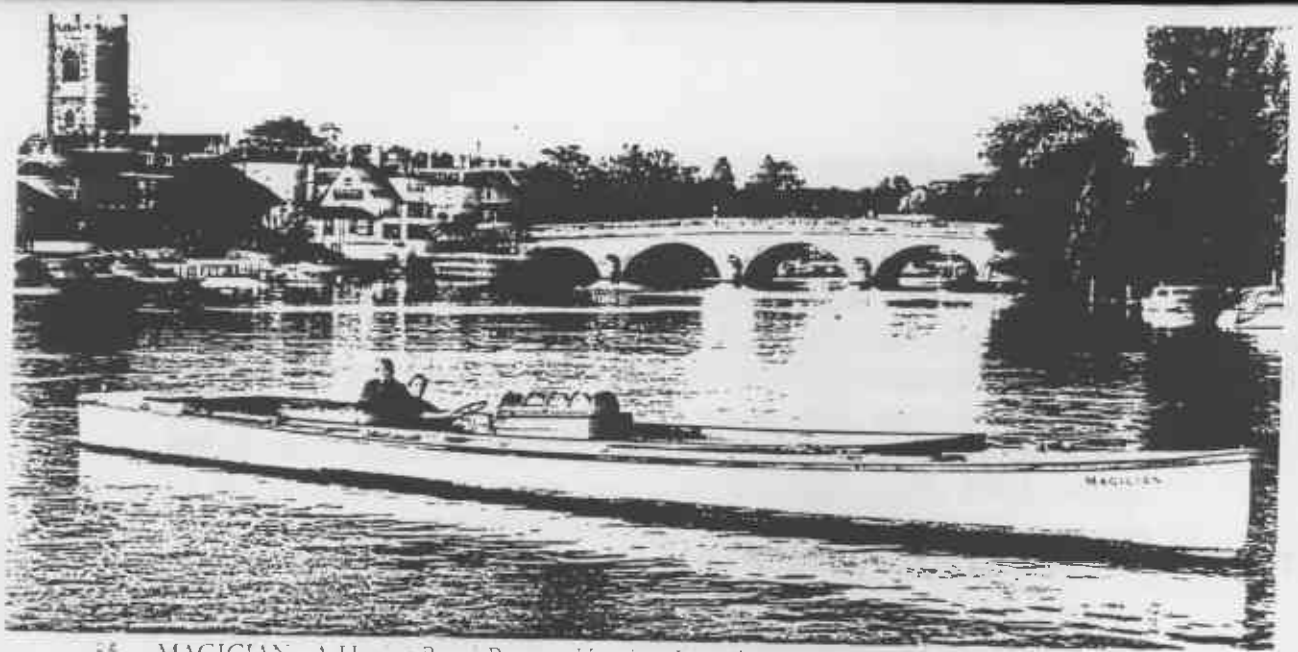
Actually, it seems the Chairman was mistaken, as in 1905 and for a number of subsequent Regattas, *Hibernia* was joined by the **MARITANA**. *Maritana*, also built by Saunders, was owned by Mr. Strick, who seemed to have lent the vessel to the Regatta without charge.⁶¹ A photograph of T.M. King George V and Queen Mary, following a race in *Maritana* at the 1912 Regatta, is to be found in 'Henley Royal Regatta' by Christopher Dodd (1981).

The next reference to the Umpire's launches in the Regatta's minute books occurs in 1909⁶² when the Chairman reported that he had engaged the *Consuta* and the *Maritana* and he was further authorised to engage a third launch if he thought it advisable, perhaps *Hibernia* was the probable choice, although apparently he did not do so that year.

The Advent of Petrol - Hobbs & Sons of Henley

Steam had, of course, provided a faster option for carrying the Umpire than the watermen, but tales were still told of steamers running out of power half way up the Course, letting the crews run away from them, as of old.⁶³ *Consuta*, which, as mentioned above, was originally powered by a steam engine designed by Des Vignes was subsequently converted to petrol propulsion, though *Maritana* remained under steam.

In 1912 mention is made, for the first time, of a [petrol-engined] motor boat for the use of Umpires to be provided by Hobbs & Sons for 'next and for following years' Regattas...for the sum of £40 for each year.⁶⁴ That launch was **ENCHANTRESS**, and the following June it was reported that the vessel, built by Messrs. Hobbs & Sons Ltd had been tried and proved satisfactory. That might now be considered something of an understatement, for *Enchantress* is still following the races at Henley to this day, 83 years since her first appearance at the Regatta, and, of course, Hobbs & Sons continue to own



35 MAGICIAN. A Henley Royal Regatta Umpires Launch

Principal Dimensions: Length: 50ft.; Beam: 8ft.; Draft: 2ft.

Built in 1921 by Hoops & Sons Ltd., Henley-on-Thames, with a plumb bow and tunnel stern, mahogany planked fore and aft outside and diagonal inside on 1-in. x 1-in. beamed timbers at approximately 9in. centres, copper fastened over roves. Painted white to the water-line and red below, varnished decks and interior. All as found.

Engine: Austin Skipper 100, four litre, six cylinder engine with Parsons Marine gear box.

General Arrangement: 5ft. 6in. foredeck with bow plate, Thames cleats and scoop ventilators with approximately 20 gallon fuel tank beneath, followed by 33ft. 6in. open cockpit, surrounded by 5in. coaming with 11ft. side seating, forward central engine case with half-round glazed top, steering to starboard by cable to transom hung rudder, helmsman's seat, central cleats and canopy sockets. Aft in the cockpit is 10ft. side and stern seating. Stern deck with ensign socket, cleats and weed hatch below. Included in the inventory are warps and an ensign and staff.

These craft are lightly built and restoration is a complex project.

(£3000-5000)

36 In 1921 the Prince of Wales presented the prizes at Henley Royal Regatta. The photograph above, not included with this lot, shows him on board *MAGICIAN* just after the final of the Ladies Plate, won by Eton College. The launch was also used by the BBC for the first live outside radio broadcast of the Oxford and Cambridge University Boat Race in 1927. The transmitter and assorted equipment weighed half a ton with four engineers required to operate the system. *MAGICIAN* was used on many subsequent occasions for the same event.



MAGICIAN in 1921

Figure 9

her. *Enchantress* followed the lines and construction of *Consuta*, which is perhaps unsurprising as The Thames Launch Company of Hobbs had acquired Saunders' yard, known as the Springfield Works at South Stoke, Goring, in 1911, and retained many of his skilled craftsmen.⁶⁵

It seems these same two launches, *Maritana* and *Enchantress*, were engaged once more on the resumption of the Regatta after the First World War, but thereafter there is scant reference to such matters in the official records. Indeed, it is not until the preparations for the 1945 Peace Regatta were in hand that we read :

'It was reported that Hobbs & Co. could arrange the launch '*Enchantress*' and Mr. Stanley Garton agreed to make enquiries about the launch '*Golden Vanity*'.⁶⁶

Notwithstanding the reticence of the Minutes of this period, we have photographic and other evidence that further launches, built and owned by Hobbs & Sons, carried the Umpires at the Regatta.

Mr. W.A.B. (Tony) Hobbs, the current Managing Director of the family firm, confirms that **MAGICIAN** was built in 1921, followed by **AMARYLLIS** in 1928. Certainly *Magician* saw duty as an Umpire's launch at the 1921 Regatta, for there is a photograph of her carrying H.R.H. The Prince of Wales - on the occasion he attended as Prize-giver - just after the final of The Ladies' Challenge Plate⁶⁷.

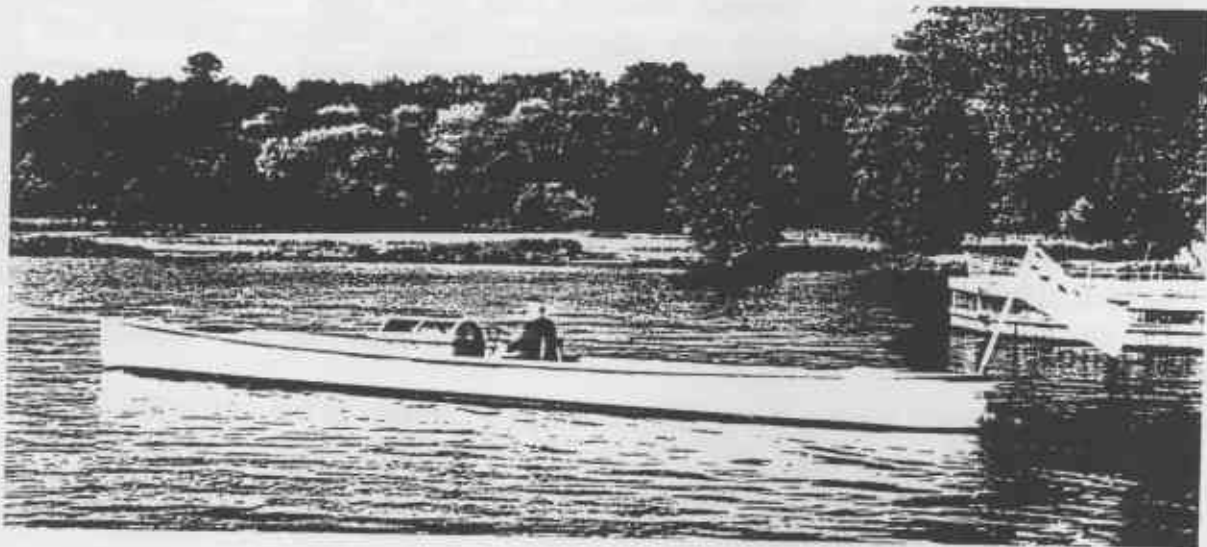
Magician last appeared in an official capacity at the 1994 Regatta and was subsequently sold at auction in 1996⁶⁸. [figure 9] *Amaryllis*, being the property of Cambridge University Boat Club which had purchased the launch from Hobbs & Sons, saw service until the 1995 Regatta. In 1996 she was bought by Dr. Walter Scott, and after undergoing restoration at Freebody's yard is once again to be seen carrying the Umpire at Henley and supporters of CUBC at the Boat Race.

In the post-war period, the number of races at the Regatta steadily increased in number and this gave rise to the need for another launch. *Enchantress*, *Magician* and *Amaryllis*, were joined in 1952 by **BOSPOROS**. Built by Hobbs & Sons Ltd, of double diagonal mahogany⁶⁹, *Bosporos* was commissioned by Oxford University Boat Club, which already owned two motor canoes named *Olive* and *Umbridge*. *Bosporos* was clearly intended to be the third vessel in a series of four - but, as far as one knows - the fourth launch, undoubtedly destined to bear a name beginning with **C**, was never realised.⁷⁰

The launch was paid for and launched by Lord Nuffield and was, very appropriately, first equipped with a Morris engine - this was subsequently replaced with a different and somewhat more efficient power unit, although it was thought best not to trouble Lord Nuffield with this particular development !⁷¹

The launch was named after the Straits of Bosphorus, which is a Greek compound word meaning 'ox ford'. Unfortunately for OUBC there was already a boat of that name registered, so an adaptation of the spelling to a phonetic variant had to be devised.⁷²

Bosporos carried the Umpires at Henley for many years, first on annual hire from OUBC and, thereafter, from 1980⁷³ to 1992 as the property of The Stewards themselves. After the 1992 Regatta the launch was sold at auction⁷⁴ to a Dutch buyer. [figure 10] OUBC had the foresight to re-register the name when the vessel left the United Kingdom,



83

83+ BOSPOROS. Henley Royal Regatta Umpire's Launch

Principal Dimensions: Length: 50ft.; Beam: 6ft. 5in.; Draft: 2ft. 6in.

Built by Hobbs & Sons Ltd., Henley-on-Thames in 1952 of double diagonal mahogany on steamed oak timbers at approximately 6in. centres with Rock elm keel, keelson and stringers, the hull is painted white with varnished top strake, decks and cockpit. The hull design is of moderate forefoot and the propeller operates in a tunnel stern, see footnote

Engine: Wolseley Sea Prince 6 cylinder petrol engine No. 29PA/H112 with twin S.U. carburettors. Westlake inlet manifold. Borg Warner Velvet driver gear box 1.1. ratio No. 31143. Instrumentation includes revolution counter, temperature gauge, ammeter and oil pressure gauge.

General Arrangement: 8ft. 3in. foredeck with bow plate horn, ventilators and cleats, 30 gallon fuel tank beneath, 34ft. 4in. open cockpit lined in mahogany with 9ft. side seating forward, a 4ft. 6in. central engine case with domed glass top. Cable operated wheel steering, Chrysler single lever gear and throttle control and a helmsman seat all to starboard. Aft in the cockpit is 10ft. side and stern seating supported on turned columns. Short aft deck with cleats, ensign socket and hatch with access to weed-trap. Included in the inventory are warps, fenders, fire extinguisher, lifebelt, ensign and staff.

The design of this launch involves many compound curves and the construction is necessarily complex. **Restoration should be undertaken by those with, or having access to, expert knowledge.**

BOSPOROS will be afloat at the Sale with a current N.R.A. Thames Licence.

which allowed the dark blues to use it again when they commissioned a new 50' launch in 1994.

In 1961 the Chairman of the Committee of Management reported:

'that he had given some thought to the number of races which might be required on the Wednesday of the Regatta.

The Committee agreed that it would be desirable to have an extra launch spare in case the entries for the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup necessitated running races in groups of five.⁷⁵

This decision required the hiring of one (and latterly of two and more) of the 40 feet launches, details of which appear below.

New Materials for a New Century

Traditional wooden-hulled craft and relatively elderly engines are expensive to maintain and towards the end of the 1980s it was becoming apparent that there were growing and significant difficulties attached to keeping these vessels in an appropriate condition to guarantee they could fulfil the punishing schedule demanded of them by the ever-expanding racing time-table.

Accordingly, in 1991, the Committee of Management decided to :

'give serious consideration ...to the manufacture of fibreglass hulls moulded upon the shape of an existing launch'⁷⁶

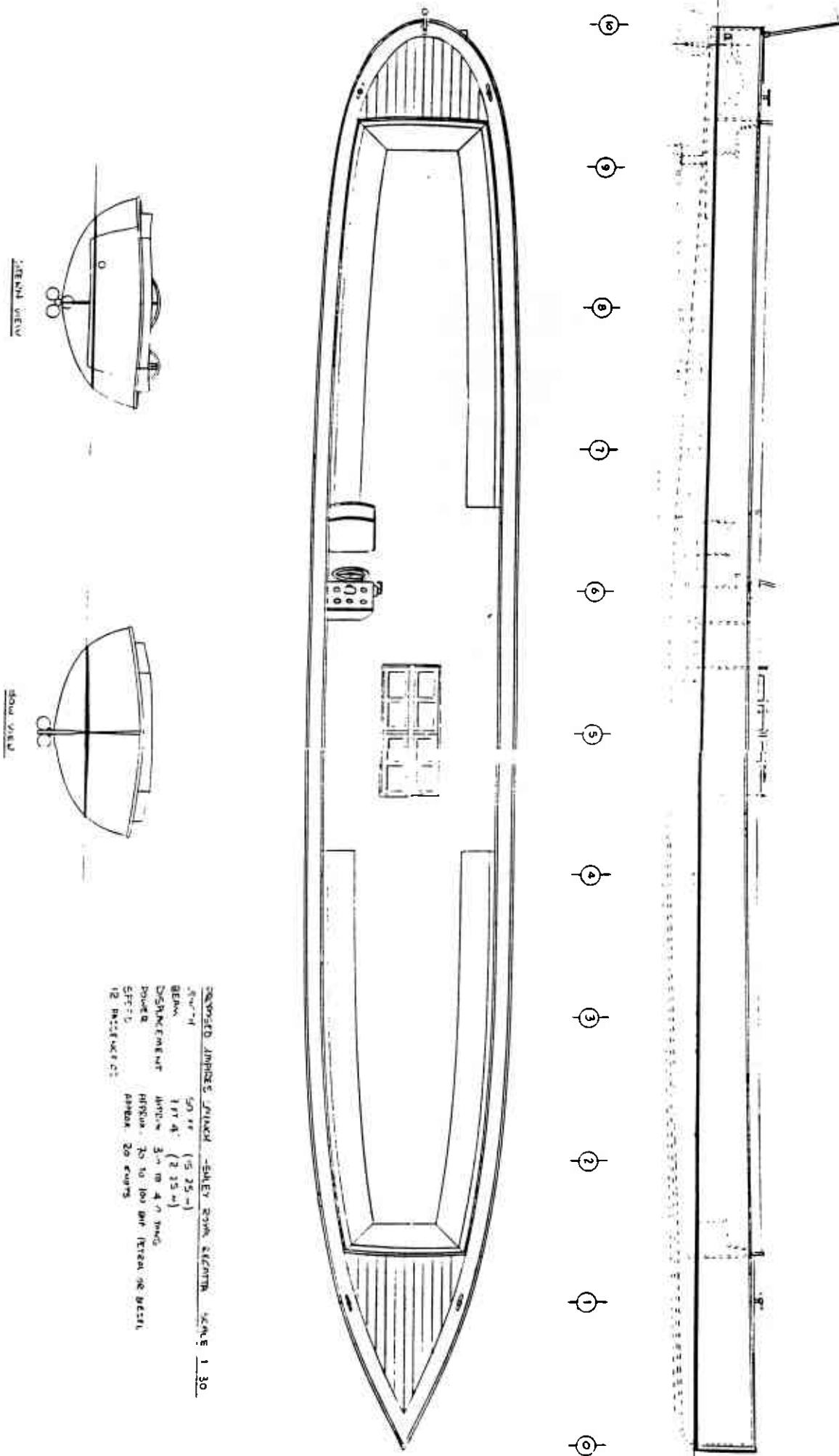
and after detailed research,

'It was agreed in principle to order two such launches, the first for delivery in June 1992 and the second prior to the 1993 Regatta.'⁷⁷

These boats, constructed by The Steam & Electric Boat Company Ltd of Ludham, Norfolk, were powered by petrol engines and the mould tool for the hull was based upon the profile of *Amaryllis* [figure 11] , chosen after consultation with Mr. Hobbs, who advised that the hull was slightly fuller than that of either *Enchantress* or *Magician* and better suited to the carriage of passengers.⁷⁸ Minor variations were incorporated in the design in an effort to improve manoeuvrability. The first - **ARIADNE** - was delivered to the Henley Reach on 19th May, 1992 and, after modifications to the size of the propeller, rudder and the gear box ratio, performed sufficiently well at that year's Regatta for the Committee to resolve:

'In view of the very positive reports... [following exhaustive tests] ...it was confirmed that two further launches, embodying the post-production modifications to *Ariadne*, had been ordered from the Steam and Electric Launch Company Ltd.'⁷⁹[figure 12]

These sister vessels, delivered by road to Hobbs's Boatyard, were launched on 7th May 1993, at a memorable occasion when Mr. M.A. Sweeney, the current Chairman, with Mr. J.L. Garton, C.B.E. and Mr. P.R.C. Coni, O.B.E., Q.C., the two surviving past Chairmen of the Committee of Management, named them **ULYSSES** and **ARGONAUT**.

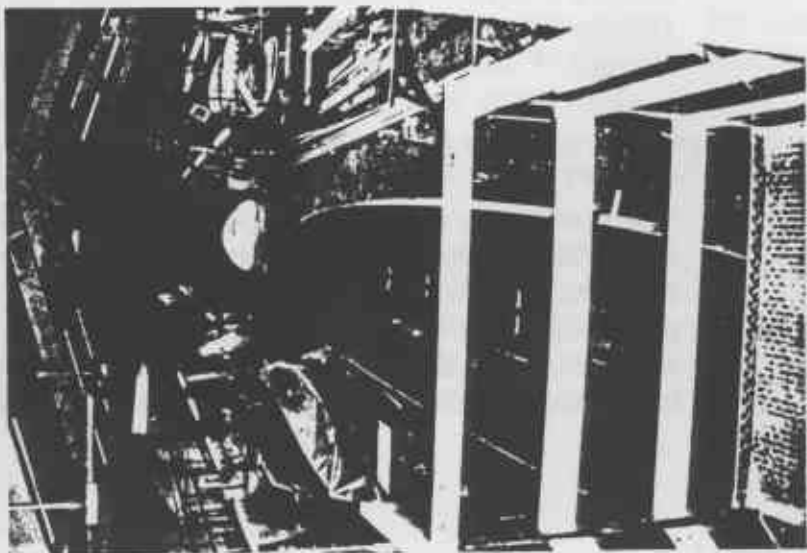
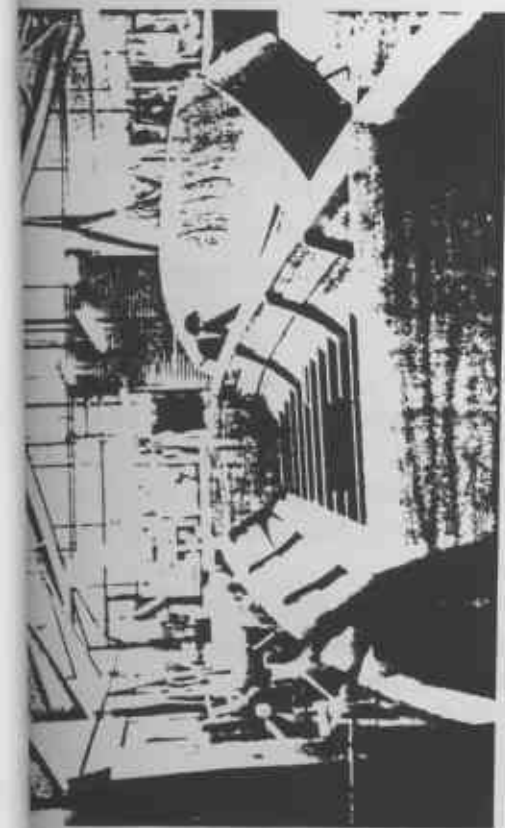
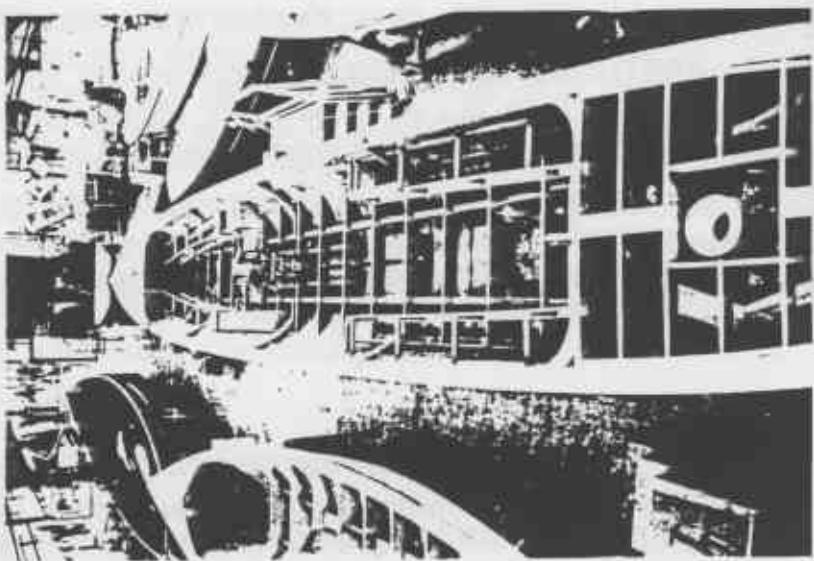
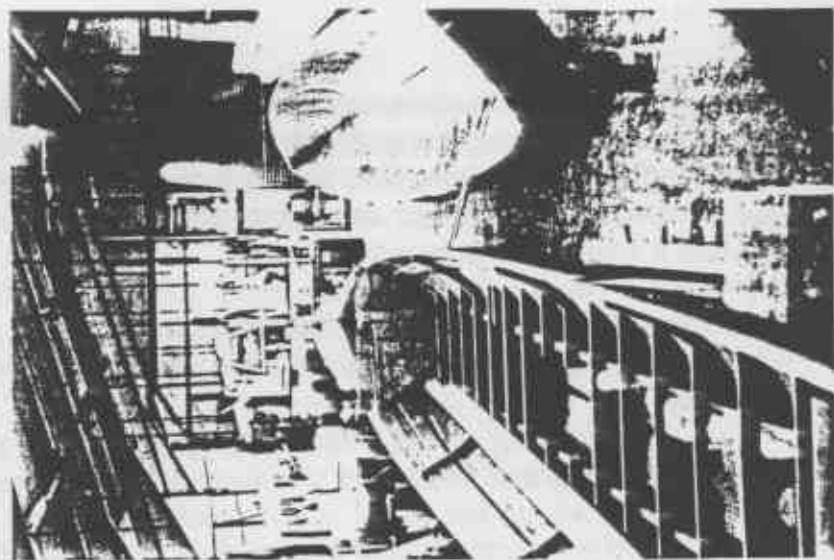
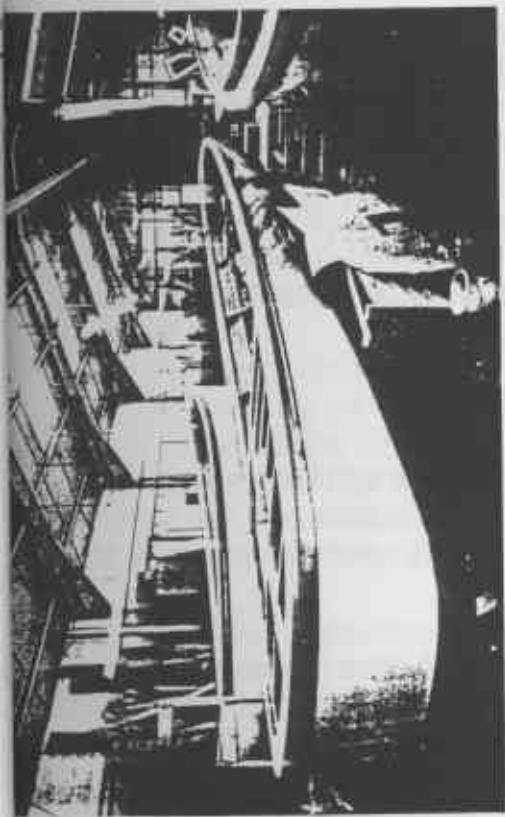


SARGENT JIMMIE JIMMIE - SALEY BOAT DESIGNER SCALE 1/32
 Length 50 ft (15.25 m)
 Beam 11 ft 4 in (3.5 m)
 Displacement 3000 lb (1360 kg)
 Power 20 hp (15 kW)
 Fuel 20 gal (75 l)
 12 Passengers

Stern View

Side View

Figure 11



When detailed discussions were in hand on the specification for these new launches, much thought was given to the most desirable power unit to be installed. Both diesel and electric motors had their advocates, but, after taking a range of soundings, it was decided to continue to use petrol engines, which could provide greater acceleration and had a better power to weight ratio.

In 1995 a re-born glass-fibre-hulled *Bosporos*, commissioned by OUBC from the same mould tool, was launched and was employed at Henley that year and at subsequent Regattas.

The Forty Footers

Since the introduction of *Consuta*, launches of fifty feet in length have always been preferred for umpiring purposes as their profiles were supposed to generate less wash at faster speeds. However, a number of 40 ft. boats (actually 41') were constructed and were used at Henley.

MAGNOLIA, built in 1902 by Sam Saunders for Jesse Boot (the chemist), originally had an electric motor. After the addition of a keel, the launch was re-named **MAJESTIC** and is currently owned by Chas. Newens who undertook an extensive re-build in 1985.

ARETHUSA, built by Hobbs & Sons in 1921 and subsequently restored by Messrs. Peter Freebody & Co. for Mr. Giles Every; the launch, now the property of Miss Charlotte Every has carried the Umpire at various Regattas between 1986 and the present.

MATRONA, (1956) and **CLIVANDA** (1958) both built by W.E.R. Sims were employed as Umpire's Launches in the 1970s and 1980s. They are now owned by Chas. Newens and have been re-named *Panache* and *Pommery*, respectively.⁸⁰

Carrying Passengers

From the very earliest days of powered craft, there was discussion, sometimes heated, on the contentious matter of who should accompany the Umpire when following the races.

A letter to *The Field* after the Regatta in 1878 left no doubt as to one opinion on the subject :

'Another reform greatly needed at Henley is the improper use of the Umpire's boat. It is simply preposterous to ask any gentleman to Umpire a race if he is to be accompanied by a dozen or so of ladies...'⁸¹

A year earlier, *The Field* had railed with even greater venom :

'...we noticed on the present occasion, as we have done before, that a number of spectators of both sexes - sometimes amounting to ten or a dozen - were berthed on board the umpire's steamer. Now, the presence of these guests - and they were guests pure and simple - is an abuse which has crept in at Henley, and which ought no longer to be tolerated. The official steamer is essentially an affair of

business, and the practice of carrying company, and wasting time between the races by embarking and disembarking various freights of passengers, is most reprehensible, especially when one and the same boat has to take races at twenty-minute intervals...'⁸²

The repeated publication of such views, often expressed in far from temperate language, is a regular occurrence in the sporting press of the period. It is, of course, possible that the journalist was merely stating a universally acknowledged truth when he reported,

'Of course time was lost in embarking and disembarking spectators, who as we have over and over again pointed out, have no right on board the official boat. At one moment it is a lot of old University oarsmen, at another it is a bevy of ladies, who may or may not be friends of the stewards, committee or other officials; but we do say that this is an abuse which ought to be put an end to...'

but, he rather undermines his chances of being taken for an unbiased observer by concluding his tirade with the thought,

'that considering the difficulties of the towing path...two or three seats in the official launch might have been offered to representatives of the Press ; but nothing of the kind. On the contrary, an application from the representative of a London sporting paper for a berth - owing to his having no horse as is his wont - was met with a prompt and decided refusal. And yet on board this very launch were two or three old University oarsmen, whose attendance at the regatta was for no other purpose than to report the racing for certain sections of the Press. We say that these things should not be and that they are a scandal to the management of the chief gathering of English amateurs.'⁸³

The feud rumbled on. In 1880 *The Sportsman* commented that,

'No times are appended [to the newspaper's report of the races] as the management according to custom, refused any facilities to the members of the Press, and no official 'clockers' were appointed.'

Incidentally, from the earliest days of the Regatta, the official times of races were obtained by the following procedure : an official near the finish watched the start through a telescope and started his watch on the departure of the crews. He stopped the watch when he surmised, again by use of the telescope, that the winner had crossed the line. This changed in 1877 when the judge at the finish was provided with a flag ' for the purpose of being dropped when the winning boat breasted the post.'⁸⁴ and the umpires 'good-naturedly took charge of the time-keeping in addition to their other duties.'

Prior to this development, an American newspaper report of the period described the ritual somewhat more facetiously :

'The method of timing in vogue at Henley is said to have been invented by Richard I (Coeur de Lion) King of England, in the third year of his reign, and to have been adopted by the Regatta Committee 684 years ago. These dates may be incorrect but the

system has internal evident of great antiquity. The official timer is perched on an elevation at the finish, and watches the crews start a mile and five sixteenths away. Originally he looked with an unaided eye and took the time by sun-dial, but a few centuries ago when telescopes and watches were invented he was persuaded to try these new-fangled devices, and has since then used them regularly.....At Henley the umpire follows each race in a swift steam:launch [*sic*], and could very conveniently carry the timer with him...There are startling rumours that a convention of English oarsmen will be called AD 1927, and a committee appointed to investigate and report upon the American system of timing boat races...'⁸⁵

An English journal commented favourably on this proposal, adding :

'...it has often occurred to me that it would be a very great advantage to all concerned if the committee were to appoint some person capable of holding a watch, to the office of official timekeeper, and send him on board the umpire's launch. Up to the present time the small steamer which accompanies the races has been occupied principally by persons who have no business whatever on board, and the displacement of one of these favoured individuals by a 'clocker' of experience I feel sure would be considered a great boon by visitors to the regatta, as it is only by such means that the time can be correctly taken.'⁸⁶

Whether the ridicule such a system attracted were the cause, or whether the Stewards took heed of the agitation of some sections of the Press, or, and perhaps more probably, because a far-reaching review of the constitution of the Regatta had resulted in the formation of an executive drawn from the rowing world rather than from the neighbourhood, they agreed in 1881 to make concessions :

'by offering a certain number of seats in the umpire's official launch ...no doubt in consequence of the criticism which has year after year appeared in the sporting and daily press, and by the intimation of an application having been made to the Thames Conservancy by the Press Committee for permission to run a special steam vessel at Henley, as is done at the University Boat Race. Communications passed between the Conservancy and the Committee, and as the latter agreed to let some of the reporters on board their steam launch, the Conservancy declined to allow a special boat, and thought the concession of the executive should be accepted. It turned out that *two* places were thus to be devoted to literature, coupled with the wearing of a badge after the manner of the ticketed special correspondents with the Russian armies in the Principalities and the provision that the wearers should obey the umpire in all things. So distasteful were the restrictions imposed, that the representatives of the Press for the most part declined to avail themselves of the offer, and agreed to stay ashore - although there were one or two exceptions.'⁸⁷

In 1883 a rule was framed and passed unanimously, to codify the system,

'That the use of the Umpire's Launch be confined to the Umpire and the crew necessary for navigating the Boat except that two Press tickets be issued, such tickets to be transferred among themselves as may be arranged by Members of the Press and shewn to the Umpire if demanded.'⁸⁸

Apparently, these journalists were asked to act as timekeepers. Indeed, it was not until 1906 that the Stewards made themselves responsible for official times over the Course⁸⁹, the official Timekeepers appointed in that year, being Mr. T.A. Cook and Mr. H. Ellington ; as both men reported for *'The Field'* (Cook being that journal's editor) the practice of using members of the press for this function was clearly long-established. Indeed, it was to continue until 1939, and it was at Regattas only since the war that these duties were undertaken by the Stewards themselves.

The question of passengers was addressed again in March 1887, when the findings of a sub-committee appointed to consider and report on the financial and other arrangements of Henley Regatta concluded :

'11. With regard to the Umpire's Launch, a question has arisen as to whether it should be allowed to carry any persons besides the Umpire and its own proper crew. We think that this question should, for the sake of the Umpires, be settled both as regards their friends and the Press. We propose that the Umpires should be requested to frame certain rules on this point which might be confirmed by the Committee, and remain for the guidance of Umpires in future.'

It has not proved possible to track down the rules the umpires were asked to devise. However, when the power of these launches allowed them to keep up with the crews whilst carrying a somewhat greater complement of passengers and, perhaps when the advent of the more responsive petrol engines allowed for a shorter 'turn-around' when embarking and disembarking guests, it was apparent that full advantage was taken of this facility. Photographs show the boats crowded with guests from the 1920s onwards. A memorandum prepared by the Chairman of the Committee of Management, set out the facts as they applied in 1965 :

'Four of the six launches now used have a total capacity (including the driver and his mate) of 23 persons. For Eights races this total is reduced to 21 because the additional speed at which it is necessary to travel to keep up with an Eights race causes an unacceptable amount of wash if the reduction is not made. The other two launches are slightly smaller, their capacities being a maximum of 14 persons each.'⁹⁰

Then, in 1966, a maritime disaster at Darlwen - in circumstances entirely unrelated to the conditions which prevail on the sheltered waters of the upper Thames - resulted in the government imposing very stringent safety requirements on all passenger craft carrying more than 12 passengers, that is to say upon those craft which fell within the licensing jurisdiction of The Board of Trade. The nub of the problem was that petrol engines were considered intrinsically a fire hazard and they should be replaced by diesel power units.

These demands caused the Regatta much agonising, and throughout 1967 and 1968 there were discussions within the Committee :

'The Chairman reported on discussions with Messrs. Hobbs & Sons Ltd. regarding the modifications required by the Board of Trade to the launches...'⁹¹

'[They are] very doubtful that the result [of replacing petrol engines] would be entirely successful owing to the inability of launches of this design to carry the much increased weight of a diesel engine'⁹²

The Chairman ... had arranged to meet the Deputy Chief Marine Survey Officer of the Board of Trade in an endeavour to discover what the Board's long-term policy was likely to be in respect of the use of these rather specialised craft for umpiring.'⁹³

'A letter had been received from the Principal Officer, Marine Survey Office, Board of Trade, saying that since the four launches hired by the Regatta from Messrs. Hobbs & Sons Ltd., were considered incapable of modification to Board of Trade requirements for permanent Passenger Certificates without very considerable expense... the Regatta was recommended to look for other launches for use in the future.'⁹⁴

The result of further negotiations was a compromise that required a severe reduction in the numbers allowed to go aboard :

'...it was evident that the Board of Trade⁹⁵ would not be prepared to grant Passenger Certificates for more than 12 passengers on the launches at the 1968 Regatta...'⁹⁶

'...Umpires' launches would only be permitted to carry twelve passengers...in addition to the crew of two....umpires, timekeepers and recorders were considered to be passengers and did not form part of the crew.'⁹⁷

Once established, this arrangement held good for nearly thirty years, with the minor modification that, when the professional crew of two was reduced to just the driver, then the Umpire was regarded as the titular 'captain' of the vessel - no longer a passenger.

In 1995, after the National Rivers' Authority promulgated detailed bye-laws on most aspects of navigation on the Thames, it became a requirement that launches be licensed if they were to be permitted to exceed the speed limit at authorised regattas. This certification procedure necessitated a speed trial and, as a result, the number aboard was further reduced by one - to comprise the driver plus twelve passengers, in whose number was to be counted the Umpire.

Conclusion

The decade from about 1966 was a period of great austerity for the Regatta, beset - as all were - by the ravages of inflation, which reached an annual level approaching 25%. Every aspect of the Regatta's expenditure was considered, and the ever more expensive 50' launches did not escape attention, for,

'The Committee decided to investigate the purchase of six launches equipped with outboard engines and capable of carrying at least four persons.'⁹⁸

Fortunately, this was one economy that was not followed through; for these graceful launches following races on the Henley Reach, present a traditional image of the Royal Regatta which evoke memories of a more elegant age and it is heartening that, by the construction of a fleet of modern vessels from new, durable materials and the dedication of those enthusiasts who are willing to maintain the older wooden craft in serviceable condition, this is a practice that can be sustained long into the next century.

APPENDIX 1

The Names of the Launches

There are regular enquiries made as to why a launch was given a particular name and in some cases the reasons for the choice are obvious. As mentioned in the text, *Consuta* is a delightful adaptation from the Latin word that describes her means of construction, but in many instances any specific explanation, if any ever existed, is now lost.

However, looking at the names referred to in the text above, one can divine certain patterns or groups emerging. **Classical mythology and geography** seem to predominate.

Amaryllis

Latin - Virgil uses the name to mean a shepherdess, or perhaps as a poetic allusion to Rome itself. Later adopted by English pastoral poets to imply a rustic sweetheart, 'To sport with Amaryllis in the shade' (Milton). Also, of course, a large lily-like flower.

Arethusa

Greek - A wood nymph with whom the river god Alpheus fell madly in love.

Argonaut

Greek - one of the sailors on the ship *Argo*, which sailed under the command of Jason in quest of the Golden Fleece.

Ariadne

Greek - daughter of King Minos of Crete who fell in love with Theseus and helped him escape the labyrinth after he slew the Minotaur.

Bosporos

As mentioned in the text, a phonetic rendering of Bosphoros, the straits close to the Hellespont, the scene of the deaths of the lovers Hero and Leander. The word is a Greek compound meaning 'ox ford' and hence eminently suited to a launch owned by OUBC.

Deianura

Greek - a princess of great beauty, daughter of King Oeneus, who became the wife of Hercules.

Eupatoria

A town of Paphlagonia, built by the Persian king, Mithridates.

Hibernia

Latin name for Ireland.

Maritana

One would conjecture that the name is derived from the Latin *mare* (sea).

Matrona

Latin name of the River Marne.

Ulysses

Roman name of the Greek hero Odysseus.

Zamora

A city in North West Spain on the river Douro

Literary references are to be found :

Aramis

One of the Three Musketeers from the novels by Alexandre Dumas.

Ariel

Name of a spirit, especially the 'airie spirit' from Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'; also the name of an Arabian gazelle - in any event, an apposite name for a speedy, elegant launch.

Miranda

Another character from 'The Tempest'. Incidentally both Miranda and Ariel are also names of the satellites of Uranus.

Eastern references are to be met with:

Odalisque

Turkish - interpreted as the harem of a Sultan; a frequent subject of the painter Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, whose works were enormously popular in the latter part of the nineteenth century, when the launch was built.

Varuna

In late Hindu mythology this deity can be equated with the Roman god of the sea - Neptune.

Descriptive names, with rather appropriate meanings, include :

Consuta

From the Latin *consutilis* (sewn) and descriptive of the method of construction where timber planks were sewed together with copper wire.

Invicta

Latin for unconquered.

Javelin

A throwing spear, which clearly evokes the notion of speed

Wraith

Something pale, thin and ethereal, such as a column of smoke - what could better describe a silent, gliding steam launch ?

Magician and *Enchantress* clearly form a related pair and were both built by Hobbs & Sons. Mr. W.A.B. Hobbs has also suggested that his family firm adopted the practice of naming their vessels after warships and a cursory glance at a list of such ships does indeed confirm that there was an H.M.S. Enchantress in service during the early years of this century, together with an H.M.S. Arethusa, the name of another boat from Hobbs' yard.

Finally, it has to be remembered that another constraint on the choice of names is that no two vessels on the Thames can have the same designation. This considerably reduces the options open to an owner, as the Stewards of the Regatta found when they took delivery of the three new launches in 1992 and 1993. The Committee of Management, favouring a classical theme, was presented with a list of those names still available and eventually had to make its decision by the unheard of practice of a secret ballot - the choice of a name for baptising an infant could hardly have proved more contentious !

APPENDIX 2

Alphabetical List of Launches known to have carried Umpires at the Regatta

- AMARYLLIS
- ARAMIS
- ARETHUSA
- ARGONAUT
- ARIADNE
- ARIEL
- ASTEROID
- BOSPOROS
- CLIVANDA
- CONSUTA
- DEIANIRA
- ENCHANTRESS
- EUPATORIA
- EVA
- HIBERNIA
- INVICTA
- JAVELIN
- MAGICIAN
- MAGNOLIA
- MAJESTIC
- MARITANA
- MATRONA
- MIRANDA
- ODALISQUE
- ULYSSES
- VARUNA
- WRAITH
- ZAMORA

- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12
- 13
- 14
- 15
- 16
- 17
- 18
- 19
- 20
- 21
- 22
- 23
- 24
- 25
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30
- 31
- 32
- 33
- 34
- 35
- 36
- 37
- 38
- 39
- 40
- 41
- 42
- 43
- 44

Notes to the text :

- 1 The Records of Henley Royal Regatta' - H.T. Steward (1903)
- 2 The wording of the official notices issued between 1840 and 1843 make reference to the possibility of the Umpire using either a boat or following on horseback. It is not until 1844 that reference to the latter option is dropped.
- 3 There is apparently an engraving [not found by the author] of an umpire in this position following a race on the Tideway is to be found in The Illustrated London News.
- 4 'Henley Royal Regatta : A Celebration of 150 years' - Richard Burnell (1989). There are numerous references to found along the same lines :
 - '...and the celebrated crew of London Watermen came dashing through the bridge, carrying the Umpire at the yoke lines...' (Bell's Life 1860)
 - '...a little before the hour above-mentioned, on the firing of the signal gun, the crew of London Watermen came dashing through the bridge, steered by the umpire.' (The Field 1862)
- 5 In 1867 it is recorded that during several of the races the Umpire's watermen were relieved by a crew of amateurs [See Note 1 above and Bell's Life (1867) in which the amateur crew, from various Oxford colleges, is listed by name.]
- 6 Bell's Life [July 1840]
- 7 Quoted by Burnell - see Note 4 above
- 8 Unattributed newspaper report (1841) in possession of Henley Royal Regatta
- 9 'Bell's Life in London' (July 17th, 1859)
- 10 'Rowing in England: a social history' - Eric Halladay (1990)
- 11 'Reading Mercury' (1848)
- 12 'Rowing at Henley' - T.A. Cook (1919)
- 13 See Note 1 above
- 14 From conversation with Mr. William Rose [October 1996]
- 15 Bell's Life' (July 1st 1865)
- 16 His name is variously shown as Des Vignes, DesVignes or Desvignes in contemporary reports.
- 17 'The Field' (1867)
- 18 '100 Years of Specialized Shipbuilding and Engineering' - K.C. Barnaby (1964)
- 19 Minutes of a Meeting of the Stewards and Committee June 7th, 1869
- 20 Extract of letter from Thornycroft to the Secretary reported in Minutes of 15th December 1870
- 21 See Note 18 above
- 22 A series of large paddle steamers built by The Citizen Company.
- 23 'The Field' (1869)
- 24 The Official Records refer to two launches, whilst 'The Field' stated that 'the umpires were in three screw steamers...*Ariel* followed the fastest races.'
- 25 Hedley's partner, Yarrow. later went on to build ocean going ships from his yard on the Clyde
- 26 Minutes of a Meeting of the Stewards and Committee December 15th, 1870
- 27 See Note 26 above
- 28 See Note 1 above
- 29 'The Field' (June 1871)
- 30 Unidentified newspaper report (1871) in possession of Henley Royal Regatta
- 31 'The Field' (June 1872)
- 32 'The Field' (1872)
- 33 See Note 18 above
- 34 'The Field' (June 1874)
- 35 Articles in contemporary editions of 'Land & Water'
- 36 Minutes of a Meeting of the Stewards and Committee November 23rd, 1876
- 37 Minutes of a Meeting of the Stewards and Committee December 19th, 1876
- 38 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management February 22nd, 1883
- 39 See Note 14 above
- 40 'Land & Water' (June 19th, 1880)
- 41 'Land & Water' (1881)
- 42 'The Field' (4th July 1885)
- 43 'The Field' (10th July 1886)
- 44 'The Field' (July 1887) : 'a small but fast steam launch. called the *Asteroid*, had been provided by

- 45 Mr. G.F. Des Vignes of Chertsey.'
- 46 'The Field' (July 1890)
- 47 'Land & Water' (1890)
- 48 Dickinson & Foster engraving of 'Henley - The Island' c. 1891
- 49 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management May 27th 1893
- 50 'The Field' (8th July, 1893)
- 51 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management December 29th, 1888
- 52 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management November 17th, 1896.
- 53 See Note 1 above
- 54 'The Field' (July 17th 1897)
- 55 Auction Catalogue of Traditional River Craft and Ephemera 1992 (Phillips, Son & Neale)
- 56 'From Sea to Air' - Tagg & Wheeler (1989)
- 57 'The Field' (1898)
- 58 Letter from J.F. Cooper (Secretary) 23rd March 1899.
- 59 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management April 28th, 1904
- 60 Photograph displayed at Leander Club, Henley-on-Thames
- 61 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management April 13th, 1905.
- 62 Report of the Committee of Management for the year 1902
- 63 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management June 26th, 1909.
- 64 Reminiscences of Mr.W.A.B. Hobbs remembering his father's stories.[September 1996]
- 65 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management November 20th, 1912.
- 66 See Note 55 above
- 67 Minutes of a Meeting of the Committee of Management June 3rd, 1945
- 68 Photograph on display at Henley Royal Regatta Headquarters
- 69 Auction Catalogue of Traditional Rivercraft and Ephemera 1996 (Phillips International Auctioneers)
- 70 Such a form of construction was used, due to the lack in the immediate post-war years, of
- 71 seasoned timber of sufficient length to employ the tradition fore and aft planking.
- 72 Information supplied by Mr. W.A.B. Hobbs (September 1996)
- 73 From discussions with Mr. J.L. Garton, CBE (September 1996)
- 74 See Note 70 above.
- 75 Regatta Records 1980 -1984 (1985)
- 76 See Note 54 above
- 77 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 7th May 19961
- 78 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 17th February 1991
- 79 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 23rd June 1991
- 80 See Note 70 above
- 81 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 11th October 1992
- 82 From notes compiled by Dr. R. Treharne-Jones from discussions with Chas. Newens, et al (1995)
- 83 'The Field' (July 1878)
- 84 'The Field' (30th June 1877)
- 85 Unidentified press cutting (1879)
- 86 'The Field' (June 30th 1877)
- 87 'Spirit of the Times' (c. 1876)
- 88 Unidentified press cutting (1878)
- 89 'Land and Water' (1881)
- 90 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 31st May 1883
- 91 'Henley Races' - T.A. Cook (1919)
- 92 Memorandum prepared by Mr. J.L.Garton 4th November 1967
- 93 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 19th March 1967
- 94 See Note 90 above
- 95 See Note 91 above
- 96 Minutes of the Committee of Management - 30th July 1967
- 97 John Garton, as Chairman of the Committee of Management, invited the President of the Board of
- 98 Trade to the Regatta to discuss the matter in a convivial setting - he recollects the day was especially convivial but had absolutely no influence on the outcome of the negotiations!
- Minutes of the Committee of Management - 22nd October 1967
- Minutes of the Committee of Management - 24th March 1968
- Minutes of the Committee of Management - 22nd March 1970