

HISTORY OF THE STAR CLASS

CHAPTER I

THE FAMILY TREE

Long Island Sound is the cradle of the Star and it is not even necessary to leave this body of water in order to study its genealogy, though to do so we must go back to the days of the early settlers in the vicinity of New Haven. When timber became scarce along the Connecticut shore, logs were brought down the Hudson River for the building of canoes, but this proved to be too great an undertaking and the natives were eventually obliged to use boards for the building of their small boats. From then on, straight-sided, flat-bottomed, inexpensive little boats, with various local names and ramifications of rig and design, came into general use all along the Atlantic seaboard of North, America. It is to this general family that the Star belongs and from which it has derived the chief characteristics of its lines and construction.

The common ancestor of boats of this type was the New Haven sharpie, which can be traced back to 1835. These sharpies, originally intended for oystering, had a center-board and two loose-footed leg-of-mutton sails (no jib) the sails being extended by means of a sort of horizontal sprit, reaching from the mast to the clew, the forward sail being slightly larger than the after one. About 1880 there appeared the Nonpareil Sharpie, built at Roslyn, Long Island, which had a partially V-shaped bottom. A decade later, miscellaneous skiffs were being sailed on Cow Bay, now Manhasset Bay, and a few of these had bottoms with a slight crown. Thus far we have been dealing with types of little center-board boats, not classes or boats intended in any way for racing. There were, however, a number of rather unsuccessful attempts made to produce racing yachts of this general type, among them the Mascot of 1878, the Question of 1895, and the Departure of 1896. The last named was designed by William Gardner to race against the Newport Thirties, which it was able to beat in a breeze with plenty of reaching but not otherwise. This boat had straight sides, a chine, a rounded bottom, and a fin keel. It would seem, therefore, to be the last link in the evolution from the canoe to the Star. While the influence of this family is to be found in the lines of the Star, nevertheless, the Star's design is probably as distinctive and original as that of any other racing class we have today.

This brings us to the early dawn of the twentieth century, when horses still shied at automobiles and the chug-chug of the one-lung gas engine was already violating the sanctity of our harbors. It would be well to pause at this point and review conditions, as they existed in those days, in order to fully appreciate the great change that has taken place and how instrumental the Star has been in helping to bring it about.

The day of the sand-bagger was almost at an end. Everything revolved around the racing of large yachts. In only one or two localities were regattas being held with any degree of regularity and decorum. There the big fellows were raced, usually by professionals, while their owners sat upon the club veranda and sipped highballs. To the public the whole thing was only a millionaire's hobby, not a competitive sport. What we are chiefly interested in, however, are the hundreds of little clubs throughout the country. At that time they were holding only occasional races for the nondescript craft in their localities, often on a makeshift and unsatisfactory time

allowance basis. The average skipper had only an elementary hearsay knowledge of rules. There was no standard code and few knew where to obtain a rule book. They depended mostly upon a several years old copy of a New York Yacht Club or Yacht Racing Association of Long Island Sound year book, which with luck might be found in some remote corner of the clubhouse. Racing instructions were vague and inaccurate and usually led to disputes and disqualifications. Intersectional racing was almost unheard of and such attempts as were made in that direction usually ended unpleasantly, with the committee showing marked favoritism for the local entries. Those were the grand old days that the rocking chair fleet now boasts of, the grand old days of sea lawyers and surreptitious potleading, when skippers did not know as much about aero-dynamics and racing tactics as our ten year old youngsters do today.

It is no wonder, therefore, that the one-design principle, which originated at Dublin Bay, Ireland, in 1878, with a small class called the Water-Wags, which in 1887 were formed into the Water-Wag Association, soon found high favor among the small boat enthusiasts in North America. The trouble was that it was being improperly applied. Each club built its own exclusive little class, consisting of from four to half a dozen cheap, crude, little boats of cat or knockabout rig. Offering no outside interest, their average span of life was about two years and as fast as one failed another was built. Yachtsmen were no better off than before. They had nothing in common, nothing to bring them together, and scarcely even knew the names of clubs a hundred miles away.

In 1907 the waters of Long Island Sound fairly teemed with this small fry and in the midst of this chaos was to be found a diminutive little gaff-rigged sloop called the Bug, the smallest keel boat of its day. The Bug was designed by Curtis D. Mabry, under the supervision of William Gardner, in whose office he then worked. Curtis D. Mabry's name has not previously appeared in Star literature but it must go down in the annals of yachting as that of the man who created the lines of the Star, for the Bug was a perfect Star in miniature. It was designed at the suggestion of George A. Corry, who had been previously sailing a Swamscot Dory, a little center-board contraption of suicidal dimensions. It was his opinion that a boat of the sharpie type with a fin keel might prove to be an inexpensive and popular little one-design class . . . and he was right, though many years were still to elapse before the world was to recognize this fact. From which it may be seen that George Corry is rightfully the "Father of the Stars", for he suggested and tried out the design four years before the Star was even heard of.

The Bug was seventeen feet long and fourteen of these craft, costing one hundred and forty dollars each, were built in the winter of 1906-07. For four years George Corry led them around the triangular courses on Long Island Sound and his "Big Bug" was easily the class champion, though the Bug was considered too insignificant to rate a Sound Championship medal. On only two occasions did this class attract any particular attention. The New York Herald of July 27th, 1907, gives a glowing account of a gale-swept Sound, of lost masts, and split sails, and comments upon the fact that the Bugs, lead by the "Big Bug", were the only boats to finish without casualties. Then in 1909, when a raging northeaster forced the Larchmont Yacht Club to call off its regatta, four Bugs, with double-reefed mainsails, and no jibs, completed the course. George Corry won that race and Donald H. Cowl and Commander A. B. Fry also sailed in it. These two instances convinced certain people of what the Bug design might be expected to do, if incorporated in a larger yacht. It is also said that the Bugs were very prolific, that six would

start a race and a dozen would finish it. Nevertheless, George Corry managed to beat them, whether they started against him, or came out from behind Execution and tried to slip in ahead of him, for in those grand old days skippers could think of more ways than one of winning a race.

Sponsored by a man named Carpenter, a small group of Indians, a class almost identical to the Bug, was established at Ossining, on the Hudson River, in 1909. One or two, the last of their tribe, can still be found in that vicinity. This branch of the family had no issue. To return to the Sound, the Bug was followed by the Star in 1911 and by the Fish Class in 1913. The latter was promoted by E.V. Willis and was of the same design but twenty-eight feet in length. The Fish Class lasted just two years, four in all having been built. It appears therefore, that while the smaller and larger adaptations of this design were doomed to failure, the Star struck a happy medium and was destined to meet with success. Now the little Bug is gone and forgotten together with the Indian and the Fish; it has long since met the common fate of the hundreds of one-design classes of that period and those that followed. But the insignificant little Bug did not live its short and humble life in vain, since its first born, the Star, has become the greatest one-design racing class that the world has ever known.

CHAPTER II

THE ADVENT OF THE STAR

Now thoroughly convinced that the Bug was too small and uncomfortable to become a popular racing yacht, George Corry went to the office of William Gardner, in the early fall of 1910, and proposed that a larger yacht along the same lines as the Bug be introduced. This time it was upon the drawing board of Francis Sweisguth that the lines of the new class developed, or to be more exact, that the design of the Bug was applied to a yacht five feet longer with a skeg, which the Bug did not have. Then George Corry and his committee, consisting of A. B. Fry, Thornton Smith, and William G. Newman, set forth to promote this new class.

Their purpose was to develop an inter-club class that would provide keen racing for good skippers of moderate means. It must be remembered that small boat racing was still being looked down upon with some degree of disdain and that the other small classes offered little appeal. There were many good skippers who were getting tired of racing large yachts for their rich friends and were anxious to get a little credit for winning, and some silverware of their own. There was no thought given at that time to creating a National or International class or even of extending this new class beyond the territory of Long Island Sound. All that was to come later. A real racing yacht for the man of limited means, that was the slogan used in introducing the Star.

At about this time a terrible catastrophe was narrowly averted. George Corry insisted that the new type be called the New or Big Bug Class, in fact the original circular descriptive of the class refers to it as the "Bug Class of 1911". Imagine our International Champion displaying a golden cockroach on his sail or the sleeves of our officials being adorned with the emblem of a golden louse. The late Stuyvesant Wainwright, however, saved the day. It was he who christened the boat the Star, and we owe him an everlasting debt of gratitude for having done so.

Twenty-two Stars were built that winter by Isaac E. Smith, of Port Washington. Half of them were to go as a unit to the American Yacht Club at Rye and the other half were to be distributed among a number of other clubs at the Western end of Long Island Sound. The boats cost two hundred and sixty dollars complete; the sails alone cost twenty dollars and were made by Botcher Brothers, of New York. But, as you may have heard before, that was in the days when one could get a glass of beer for a nickel. The boats were gaff rigged, the gaff extending far up above the mast, as in the sliding gunter rig. They also had water-tight compartments fore and aft with hatches on deck. The rigging, sheets, and spars were big enough for a battleship. Indeed they were crude little boats in comparison to the refined products of today, though of exactly the same design as our present Star.

The first race ever sailed by the Star Class was on Decoration Day, May 30th, 1911, on Long Island Sound, in the open regatta of the Harlem Yacht Club, the starting line being off Execution Lighthouse. Following is the order of finish, as published in the New York Herald the following day, with the brief comments which that paper made about the class:

Boat / Owner / Finish

Little Dipper / G. A. Corry / 3:13:52

Twinkle / A. B. Alley / 3:16:56

Snake / F. S. Richards / 3:19:37

Ceti / R. G. Browne / 3:22:40

Gold Bug / H. K. Landis / 3:26:16

"The new Star Class built last winter by some of the admirers of the 'Bug' type, raced for the first time. There are twenty in the class (an error) and the owners have already manifested a great deal of enthusiasm, promising to make the Star one of the most active classes in the Association's series. The Little Dipper, owned and sailed by George A. Corry, won the initial race, although she was the fourth boat on the starting line. Her nearest competitor was the Twinkle, Mr. A. B. Alley, and the Snake, Mr. F. S. Richards, finished third."

The Little Dipper (No. 17) continued her winning streak throughout the season of 1911, taking ten firsts out of twelve starts and thereby the championship of the Sound. Larchmont Race Week, however, was won by the Twinkle.

Later that same year, eleven Stars were built by Green Brothers, of Chelsea, Mass., and were sailed by members of the Nahant Dory Club. A. S. Johnson and the Motley brothers were among those who promoted this branch of the class. While these boats carried the star emblem on their sails, they became known as the Nahant Bug Class. And so they remained, isolated and unknown to the rest of the Star owners for ten years.

In 1912, one more boat was added to the above mentioned group and several to the class on the Sound, where George Corry kept right on winning. The Little Dipper took the Sound Championship and Larchmont Week, and won twenty firsts and five seconds out of twenty-six starts that year, a record that is apt to stand for all time in the Star Class.

The following year a group of about ten boats were built by Versoy for yachtsmen at New Haven, Conn. That season, however, proved to be an unlucky year for our Commodore for Commander A. B. Fry beat him for both the Sound and Race Week honors with No. 5, Star Faraway.

As a result of the outbreak of the World War in Europe, many of the large yachts went out of commission in mid-season in the summer of 1914, but the Star Class showed increased activity. Versoy built five Stars for Gravesend Bay, and two older boats were added to that group. Edward Unit, then only a young boy, won Larchmont Week in the Vega, No. 8. Little Dipper, however, again won the Sound Championship, while Star Faraway, following her around the courses, managed to finish second in most races Atlantic Race Week gave the Stars their first taste of intersectional competition, though on a small scale. The Sound sent eight boats down to this event, which George Corry won, and the best local boat, Shadow, sailed by W. L. Inslee, finished eighth. Then Gravesend turned the tables on the Sound by defeating in a four boat relay, Inslee beating G. W. Elder, in Zete, by one second on the last lap. On the following day, the Zete then sailing under the colors of the New Haven Yacht Club, won the Bensonhurst Yacht Club Regatta and gave what is now Central Long Island Sound its first victory.

It is interesting to note that up to this point, and in all the years that followed, new Stars were built and added to the class every year. Out of the hundreds of one-design classes that have been attempted, one can almost count on one hand the number that have been able to maintain their popularity for more than a year or so and even these classes were at their height the first year and began to decrease in numbers thereafter. There is scarcely a case on record of a one-design class being added to, much less of its spreading into other localities. The Star is the one exception. Since its conception, it has increased in numbers and spread from locality to locality, even before the days of our present organization, though at that time its growth was slow and resulted from the popularity of the design alone. The continued growth of the Star Class was already beginning to attract public attention. though yachting still centered about the big boats and the small ones received scant notice.

CHAPTER III

STAR CLASS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

In the year 1915, Star owners formed the Star Class Association of America. This was a loosely-knit little organization with a single typewritten sheet covering its class rules. Dues were one dollar. In addition to the owners on the Sound and on Gravesend Bay, four members were taken in on Lake Erie. Of course there were no fleets in those days. G. A. Corry was elected

President, G. W. Elder was Vice President, Allen Walker was Secretary, and Chas. E. Hyde was named Treasurer. There were in all about thirty-five members.

Bill Inslee had improved to a marked degree and won Atlantic Week, while E. V. Willis won Larchmont Week in Altair, No. 3. G. W. Elder presented the first Captain's Island Trophy that year and Little Dipper defeated Shadow over the forty-one mile course by one minute, and Allen Walker was seasick. George Corry won his fourth Sound Championship, establishing a record that has never since been equalled and probably never will be. This, however, marks the end of what might be called the "sorry Dynasty". From this date on, no longer did the Little Dipper lead the Stars around. The nearest that the "Father of the Stars" has come to winning a series since that time, was when he placed second in his fleet's eliminations eleven years later. Nevertheless, no other skipper in the Star Class will ever be able to boast of as many Star prizes as George Corry has stored in his home at Port Washington.

The first annual meeting and dinner of the Star Class was held on December 1st, 1915, at Mouquins, in New York City. About forty people attended this dinner and a demonstration was given by the newly opened trans-continental telephone. Each member had a receiver and heard Commodore Corry challenge the Commodore of one of the clubs in California to an intersectional race in Stars. No one at that time dreamed that within seven years such an event would actually take place.

The Star Class began to spread throughout the Great Lakes region in 1916. Small groups were being raced at Toledo, on Lake Erie, and also at Detroit, on the Detroit River, while a fleet of sixteen were built that year at Rocky River for yachtsmen at Rochester on Lake Ontario. This last named group did not join the existing Association and remained an outlaw fleet for many years. It was in this same year that George W. Elder suggested a national organization along the same identical system now used, but the plan was rejected as visionary. Something, however, might have developed along these lines had not the clouds of war already begun to appear upon the horizon.

On Long Island Sound, Port Washington skippers ruled supreme The Hydra, Buck Hyde, won the Sound honors; Adrien Iselin's Snapper took Larchmont Week, and Edward Willis won Atlantic Race Week and the Captain's Island race. These three boats with Elder's Zete and Percival's Mars, all belonging to the same club, won about every place' that season.

During the two years that followed there was no open racing on the Sound and very little racing of any kind anywhere. The Star Class Association of America, however, managed to keep itself alive those days of the World War by holding Sunday races on Manhasset and Little Neck Bays. Even during this period a few, though not many, new Stars were built. Willis, in the Altair was the unofficial champion won the majority of the races, with Hydra a close second.

It was in the summer of 1918 that the marconi rig was first tried out; Donald Cowl equipping No. 46 with such a rig, the boat having a curved hollow mast and huge wooden spreaders. Her points were not allowed to count but she was entered in the Sunday races and was also sailed in trial contests, various skippers handling her. The experiment was considered to be a

rank failure, as this boat was beaten easily, no matter who took the stick. Thus the marconi rig was discarded as being inefficient and was not thought of again for three years.

In 1919, when peace again reigned throughout the world, yacht racing was face to face with a grave crisis. Could the sport ever be revived? Power had replaced sail in every field, except for racing. Big sailing yachts had been out of commission for four years, and the many little classes had broken up. Open regattas were again attempted on Long Island Sound but few yachts came to the starting line. A few survivors of the once popular classes raced against each other in mixed divisions. The Stars, however, had not suffered any shrinkage in their ranks and came out in full force, being the only well filled class in these regattas. Without them, that year, the entry lists would have been almost nil. The Stars saved many a regatta and made many a race day possible, and the Star Class, though many have forgotten this fact, was largely responsible for kindling the spark and reviving interest in the sport at this most crucial point in yachting history.

The Stars at Gravesend and at New Haven, however, had gone. In all other localities many of our boats remained inactive. W. L. Inslee had drifted to the Sound and won Larchmont Week, while Willis won the Sound title. A few new boats were built but many had become inactive and the work had to be begun all over again.

A Junior Division, later known as Division "B", was established for the Sunday races on Manhasset and Little Neck Bays. This division included all new owners and those who had a score of under fifty per cent the previous year. This practice is still continued on the Sound, only now the yachts all race together and a separate score is kept for those rated "B". Many well known skippers were graduated out of this "B" Division during the period with which we are now dealing, among them F. W. Teves, Gordon Curry, Ernest Ratsey, and Jack Robinson.

Bayside Yacht Club skippers began to rule the Sound in 1920, B. L. Linkfield taking the seasonal honors with the Maia and W. L. Inslee winning Larchmont Week with Taurus. Five new Stars built by Nevins went to Black Point, near New London, at the Eastern end of the Sound, in that year. Elder won Atlantic Week with the Saturn, this being the last of the big Atlantic Race Weeks.

During the following winter, the use of the Marconi or Bermudian rig was made optional, provided that solid spars be used. This was done to please a few who wished to experiment with such a rig but the general opinion was that it would prove to be a handicap rather than an advantage. W. L. Inslee, B. L. Linkfield, and F. W. Teves were the first to come out with the rig. They all carried their masts raked aft and had spreaders, Linkfield having very large ones on the Maia. All these boats made a remarkable record that season, Inslee winning Larchmont Week. In mid-season, Elder put a vertical mast without spreaders into Saturn and from then on increased his percentage sufficiently to win the Sound championship. Owners were now beginning to realize that the marconi rig was a decided advantage and many made plans to adopt it the following year.

If, up to this point, it may appear that the history of the Class deals almost exclusively with activities on Long Island Sound, it must be remembered that the Star Class Association of

America, in spite of its imposing name, was really what is now our Western Long Island Sound Fleet. The only others who belonged were half a dozen owners on Gravesend Bay, until the war broke up that group, and four on Lake Erie. Stars in these waters were numbered by the S. C. A. of A. but those at Nahant, Rochester, and later at Detroit were not, and had local numbers of their own. In fact the S. C. A. did not even know that such boats existed at that time, for there had been little progress. since 1911 toward the unification of yachting interests throughout North America.

Whether rightfully so or not, the Sound Championship was considered to be the championship of the entire Star Class from 1911 to 1921 inclusive. No records were kept except of Sound races and the two race weeks that have been mentioned. Practically nothing is known about the activities of the boats at New Haven and Rochester, both groups having gone out of existence before our present Association was organized. Likewise, little is known of the early days at Nahant, but we do know that the Motley Brothers won the championship there in 1919 and 1920, with Weevil, while Foster's Humbug won in 1921. At Black Point there were two series in 1920 won by Brewer's Arcturus and Waite's Ursa Minor respectively, Burlingham's Wain winning in 1921.

Evening Star and Twinkle were winning in the vicinity of Cleveland and Vermilion, Ohio. The Dipper, sailed by Conners, won the Detroit River honors in 1921. The Put-In-Bay classic was won by Inslee's old Shadow, sailed by George King, in 1917, 18 and 19. Boice's Neptune took this event in 1921. The Championship of Gravesend Bay was won by Finlay's Meteor in 1915, by Inslee's Shadow in 1916. There was no racing the next two years, and Meteor defeated Doc. Atkinson's Murad, the only other survivor, in 1919. Other detailed records are not available.

CHAPTER IV

BEGINNING OF THE I.S.C.Y.R.A.

In the late summer of 1921, George W. Elder was appointed as a committee of one to try to bring about a race between the Champion of the Sound and the best boat on Lake Erie. Still having in mind his plan of a world-wide standard class, subdivided into local units, with an annual championship and entries selected by elimination, Elder went a step further than authorized and placed this plan, not only before the owners on Lake Erie but also those in the one or two other groups that then existed. The scheme was received with marked enthusiasm, for yachtsmen were beginning to realize the need of some such organization for the small boat owner. Individuals in other localities heard of it and wrote in for information, with the view of starting the class in their waters. This data was placed before the owners on the Sound and eventually arrangements were made for a meeting to which representatives from the other groups were invited.

The Star Class Yacht Racing Association was launched on January 20th, 1922, at the Hotel Astor, New York City, the meeting being followed by a dinner and entertainment. A

constitution and set of by-laws, drawn up by Elder, were read and adopted, while Linkfield, then Secretary of the Star Class Association of America, suggesting that the units be known as fleets. Five fleets were granted charters, these being: Western Long Island Sound, Eastern Long Island Sound, Lake Erie, Detroit River, and Narragansett Bay, the latter having no boats yet but being in the act buying three. The owners elected were: G. A. Corry, President; H. S. Waterson (Lake Erie), Vice-President; G. W. Elder, Secretary, and C. Burlingham (E.L.I.S.), Treasurer; W. J. McHugh (C.L.I.S.), W. C. Wood (N.B.), and J. F. Miller (D.R.) made up the National Executive Committee. The Western L.I. Sound Fleet then turned over its funds in the amount of fifty-nine dollars to the new Association. Dues were established at one dollar, and arrangements were made for holding the first championship on the Sound that year.

Before the end of 1922, four other fleets were organized, Massachusetts Coast, Lake Ontario, which already had Stars, and Southern California, a new fleet with three boats, while Central Long Island Sound, with four boats, was also given a separate charter, and a total of one hundred and eleven boats was recorded as belonging to the Association.

The first big championship was sailed on Long Island Sound September 18th, 19th, and 20th, consisting of three races only. There were six entries and W. L. Inslee, sailing Taurus, the first Star ever built, won with a clean sweep, taking three firsts. The Three Star, B. P. Weston skipper, finished second. The Southern California boat came up on the last run down the wind from a bad fourth to slip under Fejo's lee and then pass Bill McHugh's South Wind within a few feet of the finish line. Fejo, the Lake Erie entry, sailed by J. P. Schweitzer, placed third in the series. McHugh, in spite of being disabled in one race, beat the Narragansett Bay entry, sailed by Geo. Armitage, while B. N. Heminway, sailing Tara for Eastern L.I. Sound, trailed. This was the first time in the history of yacht racing that yachts from the Atlantic, Pacific, and Great Lakes had ever met in a race.

In February, 1923, another meeting was held, this time at Mouquins, in New York City. The same officers were re-elected and the date for future meetings was set for the period of the Championships. It was at this meeting that the word "International" was added to the name of the Association, when a charter was granted to the English Bay Fleet, of Vancouver, British Columbia. By the end of that year there were sixteen fleets in the Association. The annual championship became known as the "Internationals" and the trophy was a large half model of a Star under full sail on a huge board. English Bay and New South Wales swelled the entries to eight. The latter fleet, however, never built additional Stars and its charter was not renewed the following year.

Again it was Taurus that carried off the honors, but not so easily this time. Inslee won the first race by a good margin in a hard blow that dismasted the California. In the second contest, however, it was Harry Wylie's Astrea that came looming out of the fog to win by nearly two minutes. In the final race Taurus was last almost up to the last leg, Astrea leading, and it looked as if the 1924 Series would be sailed on English Bay. Inslee knew his wind and tide, however, and looped the field to win by a narrow margin, passing the Canadian boat just before the Maple Leafs reached the finish line. This time it was Ralph Walton that gave Central Lake Erie third place with his Doris, the Lake having been divided that year into a Central and Western Fleet.

Less than a dozen members attended the annual meeting at the Port Washington Yacht Club, but nevertheless some very important business was transacted. At the suggestion of Harry Wylie, future Internationals were to consist of five races instead of three. G. W. Elder recommended stakeboats instead of government buoys as turning marks and later drew up the present standard courses. It was also decided to issue a sort of bulletin, later named "Starlights," by Ernest Ratsey. J. F. Miller, of Detroit, was named editor. This consisted of several sheets of typewritten matter, with which a binder was supplied, issued about eight times during the year, and supplied free to officers and at fifty cents per copy to members desiring it. No change was made in the offices of President or Secretary, but B. P. Weston was elected Vice-President and Wm. H. Gidley Treasurer. The now International Executive Committee consisted of Ralph Walton, H. E. Wylie, and C. A. Smith, the latter of San Francisco.

The class began to grow rapidly. Thanks to Weston and Churchill, there were one or two Stars in every harbor on the Pacific coast, though the Southern California Fleet, which covered a vast territory, had not yet been split up. There were three little fleets up in Wylie's northwestern country and Dick Mouat's flotilla in New Zealand. Sponsored by Alamillia and Posso, Stars were being built by Puente in Cuba. Miller, Reeves, and Pearre had developed quite a large fleet on the upper Chesapeake and Hugins and Parrott had one under way at its mouth. There were also half a dozen boats on the Peconic, where the Class was being fathered by Bainbridge, Gibbs, and Hearn.

A quartet of veterans, consisting of Boice, Darlinson, Walbridge, and Alexander, kept the Stars active at Toledo. Waterson was working up a fleet at Cleveland, while Wakefield and his little group at Vermilion were sort of outcasts between the two. At Detroit, Buysee and Miller were the workers. Lake Michigan had two Stars at Chicago, owned by Elliott and Goss, and the third many miles away at Green Bay, Wis. The lake fleets suffered then, and some still do, by becoming too much involved in local club politics. Before the end of 1924, twenty-seven fleets were enrolled in the Association, but they were baby fleets, for the most part having but three or four boats. Even including the few rather large groups on the Atlantic coast, Western Long Island Sound being almost as large then as it is now, the average number of boats per fleet was only a fraction over seven.

From this point on it becomes practically impossible to record the names of those responsible for the development of fleets as they multiply, consolidate, and subdivide. Likewise local racing results become of little relative importance, though the winners of race weeks and the like will be found recorded elsewhere in this Log. There was no longer any opposition met with from clubs in isolated localities and the public was beginning to realize that the Star Class offered International yacht racing in a form that it could both understand and even afford to participate in. Old traditions had been swept aside and the Star Class had won its battle for recognition.

Ten fleets entered the Internationals and the newly created emblem of the golden star was won by Jack Robinson, sailing the Little Bear, for Western Long Island Sound, with Arthur Knapp as crew. The combination of Comstock and Gidley made its first appearance in Rhody and finished second. The California, Weston and Schauer, placed third. Bill Inslee, now representing the recently formed Gravesend Bay Fleet, won the first race. Then after having

finished sixth in that first battle, Jack Robinson came back and took the next three straight. Rhody beat the defender in the final race, one that will long be remembered. Robinson, having been deprived of four straight by the time limit the previous day, made a double-header necessary. Shortly after the finish of the morning race, one white squall after another swept the Sound. Many of the yachts went in under the shore to seek shelter. Either they could not see the signals, through the curtain of rain, or they lost track of the time. In any event five entries failed to start. One was Inslee, though his trouble was that he decided to reef a few minutes before the start and could not do it in time in the heavy sea, having to withdraw. The club committee, however, was not interested in these details and started the race regardless. This incident did not tend to promote a very happy feeling among most of the contestants and led to the "Attention signal" rule of future years.

Aside from H. S. Watterson and Sifford Pearre being elected to serve with Wylie on the International Executive Committee, no change was made among the major officers. Dues were increased to five dollars for the following year, and it is interesting to note that up to this time every Star owner, whether isolated or not, was a member in good standing of the I.S.C.Y.R.A. The meeting decided to have "Starlights" issued in printed form and, together with the Log, sent to all members. The old International Trophy, the Star model, was retired and presented to the Bayside Yacht Club in recognition of having been won three times by a member of that club. A new and more representative one was obtained, our present cup, by popular subscription from the membership.

At that same 1924 meeting, an important step was taken when the office of District Secretary was created. Six Districts were established and such an official appointed to each; they were not, however, to serve on the I.E.C. Elder was given the title of Secretary-in-Chief and made Chairman of the I.E.C., the District Secretaries serving as sort of assistants to him. The idea was to reduce the volume of work, but it did not prove to be successful. These gentlemen were about as efficient as all other minor officials of that period, they did not even answer a letter and were merely figure-heads. Headquarters was worse off than before, with the I.E.C. to look after, numbers to issue, all records to keep, all communications to answer, and "Starlights" and the Log to edit for their editors besides. It was at this time that the system of forms was devised by the then Secretary-in-Chief under which the business of the Association is now conducted.

The first printed issue of "Starlights" came out in January, 1925, and it has been published monthly ever since. The benefits derived therefrom became noticeable almost immediately. Members grew to know each other by reputation, and to understand conditions confronting other fleets. They no longer questioned the purpose of the many new rules that were being adopted, and there was a marked improvement in the condition and handling of their yachts, this being especially noticeable during the Internationals of that year. It was the last touch needed in uniting Star owners in the western hemisphere. Nor was the desire for standard rules and intersectional racing now confined to the Star Class. Other yachtsmen felt the same urge. The Star had paved the way and had shown what could be done. The North American Yacht Racing Union was formed before the close of the year and the I.S.C.Y.R.A. did its full share in helping to bring this about. The Star Class adopted the Union's racing rules, while the Union

recognized the Star Class. Needless to say, both organizations have been on the most friendly terms ever since.

H. M. Dowsett and Al Waterhouse had started a fleet at Honolulu and P. E. Edrington and Ernest Lee Jahncke had been responsible for establishing one at New Orleans. Not so many new fleets were obtaining charters, but the little skeleton groups had begun to fill out and many new Stars were being built. Commodore A. T. Vance presented the Class with the "Pandora Trophy", which, at the suggestion of George Corry, was made emblematic of the Atlantic Coast Championship of the Class and was won by the Ace. The purpose was to provide an event on the Atlantic Coast if the Internationals went elsewhere, from which it can be seen that some thought had already been given to that possibility.

With Cuba and Hawaii added to the list, the Internationals took on a much more International aspect and the entries increased to fifteen. Flat calms throughout the week, but the Ace, skippered by Adrien Iselin, with Ed. Willis as crew, gave a wonderful exhibition of drifting and glided across the line before the time had expired to win three of the races and give Western Long Island its fourth consecutive title. Second place went to Phillips, of English Bay. The Canadian skipper kept close to the Ace in the light going and, by beating her in a fair breeze in the Larchmont race, tied the point score, only to lose out in the final contest. This Larchmont race was won by Bill Inslee's Sunny in 1:40:21, a record for the ten mile windward and leeward course, only the wind shifted before the start and there was no windward about it. Rey Schauer placed third with Movie Star 11. Rhody romped away with the final race, sailed in a stiff nor'wester crossing the line nearly nine minutes ahead of the champion Ace. Four yachts followed Inslee inside the buoys that marked Hens and Chickens rocks and all five were disqualified. Joe Jessop's Windward won the "First Challenge Trophy", the first of the novice prizes to be competed for.

Western Long Island Sound no longer controlled the Association but its forty odd votes still came pretty near to giving the ancient fleet the balance of power. On two points, however, the other fleets were agreed. The five hour time limit allowed of drifting matches that they felt should not be called races and it was reduced to three and one-half hours. They also passed the "Three Year Rule", which provided that the Internationals could not remain in the waters of any one fleet for more than three consecutive years. This means that 1926 would be the last in which the great classic would be sailed on the Sound, regardless of who won.

Eight districts were established and District Secretaries were made a part of the I.E.C. The office of Commodore was created and George Corry elected to it. George Elder was elected President, and this officer was restored as Chairman of the I.E.C. Prentice Edrington was made Vice-President, T. D. Parkman Secretary-in-Chief, and William Gidley was retained as Treasurer. This system of government, and in feet this entire administration, with but two changes among the major officers, has remained intact right up to the present day.

CHAPTER V

WORLD-WIDE DEVELOPMENT

This closing chapter deals with what may be called the modern history of the Star. The year 1926 proved to be a most eventful one. It was marked by a wide-spread increase in inter-fleet racing. Western Long Island's veteran skippers no longer ruled the seas. The last of a series of drastic changes in rules was brought about, the experimental period being at an end. The Star Class was passing a crisis in its existence. It was a most difficult year for the new administration, but before it closed all of the more serious problems had been ironed out and the Class entered upon an era of peace, prosperity, and world-wide development.

The season started off in a blaze of glory with the first of the Havana Mid-Winter Championships, then called "Les Petites Internationales". Ernest Ratsey, sailing Irex (No. 24) for Western Long Island, was the first to win the Cup of Cuba, probably the largest trophy ever competed for in any sport. He won two out of the three races, but was beaten by one second in the last race by Hayward's Jane, of New Orleans. An American team composed of Ratsey, Hayward, Inslee, Bedford, and Elder, defeated a Cuban combination consisting of DeSena, Pons, Washington, Silva, and Gorrin, by a score of 39 to 15 in the first of these annual international events. Señor Bacardi had presented a beautiful cup for this race, but, as the Yankee skippers all belonged to different clubs, they had to draw it and Bill Inslee took home the cup. So successful was this mid-winter racing that the event was at once established as an annual fixture and is now rated as the second most important in the Star Class.

Rulon Miller's Shark defeated Irex for the Lipton Trophy in the first series on the Chesapeake. Pat Clancy carried off the honors at Put-In-Bay, giving Detroit the Championship of the Lakes. Swinnerton's Ola IV won the first of the Australasian Championships, while Joe Jessop's Windward took the Inter-Club title of the Pacific Coast. Rey Schauer won the Pacific Lipton Trophy, and D. S. Starring gave Central Long Island its first Atlantic Coast title. Duncan Sterling won Larchmont Week against a field of 53, still believed to be a one-design record number of starters. Many valuable trophies were presented to the Class for annual competition and suitable honor awards were devised

by the Association. An opportunity had been created for many to gain distinction, aside from the favored few that qualified for the Internationals. This continual bringing together of the leading skippers from every fleet, giving them an opportunity to study each others' boat and exchange ideas, soon developed a wealth of expert material no other class could boast of.

One very serious problem confronted the Association. Rumors were being circulated that the Star was not a one-design class and the optical illusion, created by the different methods of painting the boot-top, tended to substantiate these rumors. The Log, in which variations were published, was pointed to as proof that the Class encouraged differences in design. Outsiders, who started all this, could not grasp the fact the similar differences existed in all classes, but that in a growing one they must be recognized and provided for. Then the members took up the cry, not the good skippers, but the many new members that did not know how to sail and had not yet learned that skill and experience are required to win a yacht race just as much as to win in any other sport. Every winning yacht was a freak, and all builders were trying to break the rules. It was an excellent alibi. The worst of it was that the Association had difficulty in denying these rumors

convincingly because the only Stars that had been measured were those measured by F. W Teves before each International Series.

Something had to be done, and at the suggestion of Adrien Iselin it was decided to have every yacht in the Class measured and a certificate issued. If there were freaks about, then the Association wanted to know it and bar them. President Elder then appointed Certified Measurers and set the machinery in motion for the undertaking of this tremendous task, for there were already nearly four hundred boats in the Class. To help maintain uniformity, F. W. Teves, Chairman of the Measurement Committee, devised a means of making and selling sets of standard frames at cost. It is interesting to note that not over half a dozen boats were refused certificates in the years that followed and that, with but one exception, they were altered and obtained certificates later.

Just to be contrary, Long Island Sound produced a season of strong winds that lasted through the Internationals. Rhody, with her Rhody Runners and trick hardware, proved to be an easy winner. The Narragansett challenger, under the able handling of Comstock and Gidley, won the first two races, Movie Star II giving her a hard battle. The third race, the only light air one, was won by Starring's Ardara, while Harry Fisher in Dona Bertha was a close second. They eventually placed second and third respectively in the series.

What was to have been the fourth race was marred by an unfortunate episode. A fifty-six mile gale, which had been blowing all night, lashed the Sound into a fury. The New York Yacht Club Committee boat and five challengers were the only ones which ever got out to the line. The local tenders provided for the rest proved inadequate and the other eleven entries went in under Sands Point to reef and bend on sails. The Course Official soon joined them with the stakeboats in tow; he had been unable to get them out to the line, much less attempt to place them. His instructions were to wait until he went out and reported back what was to be done.

In the meantime, disregarding the "Accounting For" rule, the Race Committee started the race. Three Stars, with double reefed mainsails and no jibs, sailed around a drifting Coast Guard boat, possibly a mile away, and back, twice around. Inslee was the winner, followed by Vic Darlinson, Central Lake Erie, and Pat Clancy, Detroit. Eleven enraged skippers protested the race, which had not been over a standard course and in which class rules had been disregarded. An appeal made to the International Executive Committee resulted in the race being thrown out.

Rhody won on the following day, after which race Inslee withdrew and Gravesend Bay tried to appeal from the previous day's decision, claiming the championship, but this was denied later. G. W. Elder's defending Iscyras was the winner of the last contest.

It must be stated here that Dona Bertha was not Dona Bertha at all but actually the Colleen, a local boat then owned by B. L. Linkfield. It had been the custom to allow far distant fleets the right to use a local boat and bring their own sails. This had been done on a few occasions in the past but caused dissatisfaction. A rule was passed putting an end to the use of a loaned boat.

For the last time the Bayside Yacht Club held its vaudeville show, the Port Washington Yacht Club, its famous smoker, and the Manhasset Bay Yacht Club its grand banquet, thus bringing to a close a most turbulent season. Comstock and Gidley were greeted upon their arrival home by a torchlight parade through the streets of little Warwick, R.I., and the big international cup had started on its long tour of North America.

Prentice Edrington opened the season of 1927 by winning the Cuban classic his Sparkler. The New Orleans challenger, with her red sails, won one race; Ardara, sailed by McHugh, won another, and Moondyne, skippered by Nick Williams, the third. Irex IV placed second in the series, one point behind the winner. Adrien Iselin's Ace took the Bacardi Cup series, with Patterson's Felon, a Havana entry, placing second. Once again the American team won by a score of 21 to 9, the victorious combination being made up of Edrington, Ratsey, Iselin, and Jack Robinson.

Rumors about freak boats still being in vogue, it was spread abroad that Irex IV was not a true Star, this in spite of the fact that the yacht had one of the new measurement certificates. A special sub-committee of the I.E.C. conducted an investigation to clear the matter up. A disinterested committee re-measured the yacht and found that she was as near to being a perfect Star as any ever measured. An open hearing was held in New York City and many gave evidence before a special sub-committee of the I.E.C. which had been given full power to suspend any member guilty of spreading false rumors or impeach any measuring official guilty of granting a certificate to an ineligible yacht. The re-measuring of the boat automatically exonerated its owner and all measuring officials, but the committee was unable to trace the origin of the false rumors. The incident, however, put an end for all time to false and harmful gossip of this character.

Four new fleets were granted charters, among them one at Manila, which J. C. Rockwell was responsible for having promoted. Another was the little Solent Fleet in England, started by Colin Ratsey. His Joy was built that year, it being the first Star built in Europe.

A series for the Cuban National Championship was sailed for at Cienfuegos, J. E. Gorrin's Gavilan, of Havana, being the winner.

Many members were becoming interested in aerodynamics and mechanical fittings of all sorts. Stream line spars, revolving masts, adjustable steps and mast rakers, sliding goose-necks, loose footed mainsails, perforated sails, double-luffed mainsails, and every kind of trick fitting was experimented with. The I.E.C. was kept busy passing upon whether these various devices did or did not conflict in principle with the rules. Most of them were allowed for the time being at least but at the annual meeting that fall many were barred for the future. It was the beginning of a wide-spread movement to improve and modernize the Star Class and started members thinking along these lines.

The clans now gathered at Warwick for the first International Series to be held away from the Sound and the first to be conducted by the newly created International Race Committee. Experience had taught us that we could not depend upon any one else doing anything for us and doing it right. Five club committees could not properly manage an International Series, nor could

any committee of outsiders. The fact that the 1927 series was free from all protests and disputes and that most friendly feeling existed among the contestants, proved that another serious problem had been correctly solved.

Seventeen entries competed for the honors on Narragansett Bay in a week of good sailing breezes from start to finish. Even the Philippines, from the other side of the world, were represented. Colleen won the first race, Temple III the second, and Mackerel, of the Chesapeake, was the victor in the third. Then came another Black Thursday. A nor'easterly gale swept Narragansett Bay and the unfortunate incident of the previous year might well have been repeated had not the I.R.C. been running the series. Wireless telephones on the Coast Guard boats were put to work and pretty soon all the entries were rounded up. Hoku ran away with this race, Bogardus and Purvis giving Hawaii its first victory in a major event. Rhody, which has been well up in the point score, passed out of the picture as a contender when Gidley tried to shake a reef on the second round. It was also a pretty rough night ashore. The stag smoker was a great success and Bill Henderson made "Whiskie Johnnie" the anthem of the class. It was so stormy a night, in fact, that two of the major officers foundered and sank during the last session of the annual meeting, at which Jeff Davis offered to undertake the Editorship of "Starlights", a post he has ably filled ever since.

The last race was won by Colleen and this brought about a triple tie for first place between the Western Long Island challenger, Hubbard's Temple III, of Newport Harbor, and Harold Smith's Mackerel from Chesapeake Bay. The last named, however, having made the best score among the eastern entries on the last three days, carried off the Atlantic Coast title. The sail-off will never be forgotten. Colleen took the lead and beat Temple by half a minute to windward but the California boat picked it up on the run home. Mackerel fell far behind after a bad start. On the second round Bedford again took the lead and this time held it until the finish line had almost been reached. On the last sea, Hubbard ran under his lee and coasted down it to shove Tempe's nose across the line just a few inches ahead of Colleen for California's first International Championship. It was a great series and of the many who packed the little clubhouse on the shores of Narragansett Bay, there is not one but who would welcome an opportunity to some day return.

The season of 1928 was ushered in with another tie. This time it was Frank Robinson's Budsal II, of Peconic-Gardners, and Tim Parkman's Fleet Star, of Gravesend, which finished the Cuban Mid-Winter classic with eighteen points each. Irex won two races in this series and Fleet Star one. Robinson won the sail-off, however, and took home the Cup of Cuba and the Bacardi Trophy also, this being raced for in one race only that year. J. E. Gorrin, in Gavilan II won the three race series for the Pan American Cup, a special series in honor of the Pan American Congress being held at Havana at that time. Gorrin defeated a field of nineteen, including all the visitors, for the most glorious Cuban triumph ever scored. The Americans won the team race by a score of twenty-one to fourteen, the winning quartet consisting of McHugh, Ratsey, Robinson and Parkman.

The Pandora Trophy now had an opportunity to serve its intended purpose. With the big event of the year three thousand miles away, Atlantic Coast fleets sent their second choices to the Chesapeake to cross swords with Harold Smith. As a separate and distinct affair, the Atlantic

Coast Championships attracted much attention and many went to Gibson Island to attend the series. F. T. Bedford won easily and also sailed his Colleen to victory in the Chesapeake Lipton Series, held on alternate days, with a field of thirty-one entries. Colleen had previously won the Gravesend Lipton Trophy and was making quite a reputation for herself that season.

At about the same time, seventeen contenders for International honors were being tossed about on the open Pacific under a sunny California sky. They were tossed about by the long swells and not by the wind, for Newport Harbor offered little in that regard and the Sound, in its most unreasonable mood, never produced a week of less breeze and fluky airs. This series offered ample proof of the equality in competition that had developed in the Star ranks, for a different boat won every race. Ace, now being sailed by Ed. Willis, took the first for Western Long Island Sound, while the following day Frank Robinson brought Budsal II home the winner for the Peconic-Gardner Fleet. Then Joe Watkins won a first place with his Central Long Island Challenger Okla. The fourth race went to Joe Jessop and the Windward from San Diego Bay, the California hope after the defending Tempe had been disqualified, and Rey Schauer got out of a sick bed to win the final for Los Angeles with his Movie Star II. But that was not all; none of these yachts won the series. Prentice and Gilbert Gray, from New Orleans, sailed the Sparkler II to three third places and in so doing built up a point score of just one better than Okla and Windward. Even this was brought about by Budsal beating Windward by an eyelash in the last race. Okla beat Windward in the sail-off for second place.

The new world's champion, Prentice Edrington, Vice-President of the Association, presided at the annual meeting. Hawaii and the British Isles were established as separate districts and H. M. Worcester was elected Treasurer; otherwise the major officers remained unchanged.

January, 1929, saw F. T. Bedford and G. W. Elder fighting it out for the Mid-Winter title at Havana. Iscyra II won two out of the three races but Colleen accumulated just one more point and Bedford carried off the honors for Central Long Island Sound. He also took home the Bacardi Cup, winning all three races in that series. The American team this time consisted of Williams, Elder, Bedford, and Jack Robinson and it won the annual International race by a score of 23 to 12.

Enrique Conill, who had represented Paris in the above mentioned series, had already established two fleets in France, one at Cannes and the other near Paris. The Class had its first real foothold in Europe and both fleets grew a little that season. When he returned home, Conill started a campaign of missionary work, the results of which were to be felt within a year. At that time he was handicapped by the rig, as it was old fashioned and European yachtsmen did not like it. Larry Bainbridge had already advocated a change and was chairman of a special committee to make experiments in that direction. These were conducted during the summer months but nothing could be done about making the proposed tall rig official in Europe or elsewhere until the annual meeting in the fall. Ratsey experimented with several rigs and so did Bainbridge and Frank Robinson on Peconic with the cooperation of Prescott Wils