

only representative of the Watts family. The business struggled through the late 1930s and early 1940s until Fred Watts lost his battle with cancer in June of 1947.

When William and Susan's second oldest son, William Jr, moved to Vancouver he took some of the Watts technology with him. The Collingwood skiffs now had a western cousin dubbed the Columbia River skiff. William Jr formed the Vancouver Shipyard in 1902 and began construction and refit of larger vessels — up to 135 feet. They included towboats, power schooners; sailing vessels and skiffs. The west coast shop started to decline around the start of the depression when luxury capital was scarce. William Jr, then 67, decided it was time to retire and sold the business with one of the loveliest power launches I have seen still under construction. The new owner finished the *Cora Marie* with guidance by the ever-interested William Jr. She is a beautiful passenger ship with plumb bow, fantail stern, and private dining room. A fitting showpiece to end the west coast Watts line of boats.

I can't help but feel that the publishing of this book mirrors the Watts boatbuilding experience itself. Authors Watts (great grandson of William) and Marsh have an understandable obsession with those fine lapstrake hulls. There was probably a splinter of reason involved, but ultimately it was the single-minded drive to fulfill a dream that carried the book from idea to the bookstore shelves. When a search for the perfect publisher came up empty, in true Watts strong-willed style they decided to publish it themselves. We should be thankful for their perseverance.

In Marsh's foreword she concludes, "I thought that the completion of this book would relieve the desire to learn more about Watts and their wooden boats, but it has only added more fuel to the fire. Some day, there will be more." I look forward to more from this talented team, including the book's designer, Ronald MacRae. His clean layout and elegant chapter heads make the boat a pleasure to look at. If you like boats, history, rowing, sailing, fishing or just fine books, this one should be in your collection.

Wayne M. O'Leary, *The Tancook Schooners: An Island and Its Boats*

DAVID A. TAYLOR

O'Leary, Wayne M. *The Tancook Schooners: An Island and Its Boats*. Toronto: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994. 290 pp., illus., appendices, notes, bibliography, index. Cloth \$44.95, ISBN 0-7735-1172-5; paper \$17.95, ISBN 0-7735-1206-3.

The Tancook Schooners: An Island and Its Boats is a fascinating study of the roles one type of vernacular watercraft — schooners — played in the lives of succeeding generations of residents of Tancook Island, a small island located in Nova Scotia's Mahone Bay, between Lunenburg and Halifax.

In Chapter 1, after a brief description of the island's location and geography, the author presents a concise history of Europeans' possession (during the 1750s) and settlement (beginning in the 1790s) of the small island. He explains that although the original European owners of the island were British grantees, most of the people who actually settled it were Protestants from Germany and the German-speaking regions of Switzerland who came to Nova Scotia in connection with the British

government's efforts to establish a buffer against Acadian Catholicism. The majority of the island's settlers were peasant farmers without any experience with the sea, who naturally turned their attention to raising crops and livestock. The land was found to be quite productive and, by the middle of the nineteenth century, island residents were able to export surplus crops to Halifax and other cities in Nova Scotia. However, as the island's population grew it became apparent that there was not sufficient arable land to go around and so, by the 1870s, increasing numbers of residents began to turn to the sea. The story of *The Tancook Schooners* really begins at this point.

Chapter 2 addresses the genesis of the island's boatbuilding tradition. The first vessels, probably open fishing craft, were not documented, but the first vessel of sufficient size to be officially registered — a 29-ton schooner — was built in 1827. In addition to building schooners, the island's early boatbuilders also turned out a number of smaller craft, inshore fishing boats known as "lobster" or "jolly" boats. Another of the island's early boat types was a

small, graceful, double-ended sailing craft known as the Tancook "whaler." The author pays considerable attention to this vessel type, not only because of its importance in the island's lineage of watercraft, but also because it is a type that has been described by a number of twentieth-century maritime writers, including Howard I. Chappelle, perhaps the century's most important chronicler of North American vernacular watercraft. The author explores various theories that have been advanced about the origin of the Tancook whaler, but ends up siding with Chappelle, who posited that the craft was probably adapted from the Hampton boat, a fishing-boat type developed in New Hampshire that eventually spread throughout New England and the Maritimes.

Also addressed in this chapter are the questions of who built the first Tancook whaler and when. The author assesses the claims other writers have advanced and then adroitly uses data gleaned from local records and oral history to persuasively argue that John George Baker and his son-in-law John Crooks built the first Tancook whaler between 1865 and 1870. With similar thoroughness, he pursues the origin of the whaler's distinctive clipper bow. He argues that the whaler's stem was derived from a stem shape from Scotland that became known as the "Aberdeen stem," a distinctive feature that appeared on a number of ships island boatbuilders probably observed in local waters.

The design and construction of Tancook whalers is discussed, but only in a limited way. Instead of presenting a comprehensive, step-by-step description of these processes, the author concentrates on builders' shift from the clinker planking technique to the carvel planking technique, and the concomitant shift from one design-related device (moulds) to another (half models). Attention is also paid to the impact of yachting in the Tancook region, and how yachtsmen's fervent interest in the latest technological innovations influenced Tancook boatbuilders' interpretation of the work boats they constructed.

Leaving the subject of Tancook whalers, the author then addresses the schooners built at Tancook Island. He notes that the schooner has received far less attention than the whaler despite its greater significance to the island's economy. Schooners were, O'Leary maintains, "the ultimate expression of Tancook Island's boatbuilding genius and the pre-eminent small craft produced in the Maritimes during the first half of the twentieth century."

In the remainder of Chapter 2, the main subjects are: the evolution of the design of the local version of the schooner, the probable influences on design change, and the roles of selected island boatbuilders in the process of change. What emerges from this is an especially good depiction of the congeries of factors that typically influence change in vernacular watercraft design. The construction process used for schooners is also described, but the extent of the description (only four pages in length) may not be sufficient for readers who are particularly interested in this topic. Especially commendable in this chapter is the analysis of the specific contributions of a large number of the island's boatbuilders.

Chapter 3 impressively describes the economic context within which Tancook schooners were used. This includes coverage of the history, organization, locations, and techniques of a number of inshore and offshore fisheries, as well as the effects upon these fisheries of such factors as tariffs enacted by the U.S. Congress, and the Great Depression. The use of Tancook schooners as rum runners during the 1920s, and as carriers of livestock up to the 1940s is also assayed. What is especially appealing, however, is an admirably detailed description of the role schooners played in marketing Tancook's most important cash crop — cabbage — and its by-product — island-made sauerkraut — to Halifax and other cities in the region.

Chapter 4 documents the end of the Tancook schooner as an essential element of the local economy. Causes of this included the decline of the coastal trade, an increase in competition for cabbage sales in Halifax, the widespread adoption of a powerboat type — the Cape Island boat — for commercial fishing and cargo transport, and, especially, the development of a modern highway system throughout Nova Scotia. In a brief epilogue, the author celebrates Tancook Islanders' ability to create, with limited resources, beautifully constructed work boats that superbly fit their economic requirements and natural environment.

Fifty-three black-and-white photographs depict Tancook vessels, boatbuilders, boatshops, and other island scenes. Sail plans, lines plans and deck plans of various vessels, all meticulously drawn by the author, are also provided. Appendices include lists of registered and unregistered schooners, annual fishery catch statistics, and a glossary of island terms related to boats and boatbuilding.

The Tancook Schooners is an outstanding work. What is particularly notable is O'Leary's

superb analysis of the island's vernacular watercraft within broader social and economic contexts. (Regrettably, this sort of contextualization is usually absent in other studies of regional boatbuilding traditions.) Also exemplary is the depth, prodigiousness, and creativity of the author's research, research that makes excellent use of a variety of source materials, from marriage records to oral history accounts to sail plans to naval architectural drawings. The book has some shortcomings, however. For example, it lacks illustrations of the Hampton boat that would have enhanced the discussion of the hypothesis that this vessel was the probable inspiration for the Tancook whaler. Also, as noted earlier, the description of the boatbuilding process is less detailed than

many students of the boat would wish. Finally, the author seems to imply, quite incorrectly in my opinion, that Tancook's boatbuilding tradition has greater significance and higher standards of craftsmanship than other North American regional boatbuilding traditions that have, in fact, produced well-built vessels that have been just as well matched to their own unique circumstances as Tancook boats have been to theirs. On balance, these are relatively minor criticisms of a fine piece of scholarship, one that will serve not only as an exemplary study of the boats of Tancook Island, but also as a useful model for others interested in carrying out comprehensive research on the boatbuilding traditions of other localities.

Julian Mannering, ed., *The Chatham Directory of Inshore Craft: Traditional Working Vessels of the British Isles*

DAVID A. WALKER

Mannering, Julian, ed. *The Chatham Directory of Inshore Craft: Traditional Working Vessels of the British Isles*. London: Chatham Publishing, 1997. 239 pp., copious photographs, maps and line drawings. Cloth £35, ISBN 1-861176-029-9.

If a knowledgeable small craft writer had taken a clockwise voyage round all the British Isles late in the nineteenth century with a camera and measuring equipment, this book could have been 100 years old. No one did, so no older directory exists. But no Victorian could ever visualize or produce this fine, clear, well illustrated volume. It has been left to Chatham Publishing to compile the information, select writers, drawings and photographs and produce this comprehensive directory.

This data about the rich variety of traditional working craft once common in the UK is an excellent primary resource for either the expert or novice. Within the covers some 225 vessels are described in varying levels of detail, perhaps relative to their importance to the fishery, coastal trading or simply within the folk memory of the writers. Their historical significance is not always clear and reading the editor's introduction gives no indication. The descriptions are frequently accompanied by lines drawings or sail plans and informatively captioned photographs.

The writers draw heavily from the deep well of resources at the National Maritime Museum

in Greenwich. These materiel and documentary collections were gathered by such notable small craft scholars as Edgar March, James Hornell and Eric McKee. Their drawings and those of other respected researchers are complimented by superb photographs from the turn of the last century from the 12 000-negative Henry Oliver Hill collection.

The editor has divided the British Isles into sections and a short description of each, with a map, precedes each chapter. There are eight descriptive chapters: Scotland, Ireland and Wales each take one, while the other five include two chapters on England's east coast, and one each on the south coast, Devon and Cornwall, and the north west coast. The vessels indigenous to each region are described chronologically in a clockwise direction. While this may make it difficult for those who are unfamiliar with British geography to locate a particular boat, the maps and index make it easy. All the craft are studiously cross indexed by name, purpose, that is, type of fishery or gear, and geographic designation.

Two of the problems facing an editor of this type of reference book are the selection of subjects to be included and the amount of space to be accorded each. This book has covered all the well known and many of the lesser known British craft but there are some notable omissions. While the book's title suggests only inshore craft, some riverine vessels have