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These galleys had huge iron frames & Carthage bows & stems
for which the sailors fought while the ~~domms~~ ~~or~~ ~~rotaria~~ ~~in~~ ~~teers~~
four or five deep amidship, but when Rome ~~abandoned~~ ~~its~~ ~~domms~~
along the Atlantic, the merchants who ~~from~~ ~~the~~ ~~traded~~ ~~to~~ ~~Britain~~
& elsewhere soon found that these galleys with their shallow
draught & lofty superstructure were unsafe on the high seas; &
consequently their trading vessels were built of broader beam
~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~ships~~ ~~then~~ ~~type~~ ~~was~~ ~~used~~ ~~by~~ ~~the~~ ~~ships~~ ~~&~~ ~~others~~ ~~along~~ ~~the~~
Atlantic for the thousand of years that followed.

As the Roman Empire declined, however, ~~the~~ ~~trade~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~Mediterranean~~ ~~was~~
~~taken~~ ~~over~~, ~~since~~ ~~her~~ ~~commerce~~ ~~was~~ ~~dominated~~ ~~&~~ ~~the~~ ~~trade~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~
Mediterranean ~~passed~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~hands~~ ~~controlled~~ ~~by~~ ~~Spain~~ ~~&~~ ~~Genoa~~, until
in 1453, the Turks took Constantinople & broke up the ~~Caravan~~ ~~routes~~
from India to China upon which there rested dependence, but not
before Genoa had developed a vessel that could be propelled by ~~the~~ ~~power~~
alone. Until then the sail had been only an auxiliary to the ~~power~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~sails~~,
but when the domms were no longer needed, the high ~~draught~~ ~~vessels~~
~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~vessel~~ ~~that~~ ~~contained~~ ~~the~~ ~~domms~~ ~~boards~~ ~~were~~ ~~cut~~ ~~down~~ ~~at~~ ~~the~~
bow of the vessel & such was the type - the Caravel - that was
in common use along the Atlantic when Columbus discovered America
in which the early Adventurers came to America.

Along the North Sea however, the detail had been developed
sail that differed from both the later rig of the Mediterranean &
the Spanish sail that was used in ~~the~~ ~~sea~~ ~~going~~ ~~vessels~~.

The Baltimore Clipper and the Story of an Old Baltimore Shipbuilder.

By

James E. Hancock

"Should you ask me whence these stories
 Whence these legends and traditions -
 I should answer, I should tell you -
 I repeat them as I heard them."

This abstract from the prologue to Hiawatha fittingly expresses the purpose of this paper to record certain data, including the recollection of things that were told to me by retired sea captains who knew the maritime traditions of old Baltimore and who had sailed Baltimore Clippers and Clipper Ships from polar sea to polar sea and to the antipodes.

The story of boats runs back to the time when primitive men first found that they could transport themselves by water, and ~~then found~~ that they could make use of poles and paddles to help navigate their crude floats. Later they found that they could make use of the force of the winds to help them on their journeys and that this happened at an early period is evidenced by the sculptured remains on the tombs of ancient Egypt, of boats equipped with a simple rectangular sail of papyrus or cloth that was suspended from a pole. The early Phoenicians probably learned of the sail from the Egyptians, and from them in turn, its use was observed by the Greeks and the Romans as they emerged from barbarism. These early peoples along the Mediterranean were ^{the} traders of antiquity and their ~~national~~ progress ^{connections was} and ~~strength~~ were founded on their commerce. Their cargo boats were built broad and deep in proportion to their length, and these clumsy tubs were propelled by oars and captained by their merchant owners who gradually found ~~out~~ that they could get some force from the wind when it was abeam, by tilting the sails; ^{we} and we see by their early art that ~~this~~ ^{the} sail was assuming a rhomboidal shape because it could be handled more easily by their

small crews than the square sail, Eventually this became the lateen rig of the Mediterranean, but when commercial wars broke out between the Greeks and the Phoenicians and later between the Romans and the Carthaginians, these nations began to build fighting boats or galleys that were narrower than their trading boats, so that they could be maneuvered more speedily by the rowers. *When Rome was extending its dominion along the Atlantic*

During the days of imperial Rome these galleys had huge iron prows and castellated bows and sterns, from which the soldiers fought while the rowers were banked in tiers, four and five deep, amidship; but ~~as~~ Rome extended its dominions along the Atlantic, her merchants, who colonized Britain and elsewhere, soon found that these galleys were unsafe on the high seas and that the square sail was better than the lateen rig for ocean work. Consequently their trading vessels were built of broader beam with the high forecastle and stern ^{with} of the galley and this type was used by the Vikings and others along the Atlantic for the thousand or more years that followed.

About the middle of the 5th century, Attila invaded Italy and some ^{the} people along the coast ^{Adriatic} went out to the islands in the Adriatic to escape the ravages of the Huns. Here they built boats and began to pick up the old Roman trade with the East, and, acquiring great wealth, they built the ^{the} City of Venice. ^{Let their success stimulate them to build trading routes or} When Europe was emerging from the Dark Ages, we find Venice and Genoa in commercial rivalry in the Mediterranean, ^{all} but in 1453, ^{the} the Turks took Constantinople and broke up the caravan routes from China and India upon which these cities depended and their influence dwindled, but not before Genoa had developed a vessel that could be propelled by sails alone. In 1486, the Portugese rounded the Cape of Good Hope and in 1492, Columbus discovered America, each hoping to establish a new route to the East, so that they could supply the materials with which the better classes in Western Europe had become accustomed.

Now that ships could be propelled by sails there was no longer any need for rowers, and their high walled sides were cut down ^{in the stern} amidship, leaving

the high forecastle and stern castle as a protection against the waves and for the emplacement of the cannon that had come into use. This - the Caravel - was the type of ship that was in common use by the Europeans during the 16th and 17th centuries and in such square sailed, broad bowed, rounded bottom ships the early colonists came to America.

But up along the North Sea the Dutch were developing a triangular sail that was different from the lateen rig of the Mediterranean and the merchants of the Netherlands found these well adapted for their small vessels on the rivers and canals that threaded the land. For open sea work, however, they still held to the big bellied square sailed ships like the Half Moon in which Henry Hudson explored the American Coast. ^{by the square sail of the Caravel} Knowing the utility of the fore and aft riggers to which they were accustomed, the Dutch settlers at New Amsterdam, in 1614, built a little sloop of 16 tons for trading with the Indians, ^{and to explore} the New England Coast and the Delaware Bay, ^{but} later this little vessel was loaded with furs and sailed across the broad Atlantic to Holland. ~~and~~ Although the Dutch were dispossessed of their colonies in what is now New York, New Jersey and Delaware in 1664, their influence lingered until the colonists in New England and on the Chesapeake had adopted the sloop as a superior boat for their waters. In 1713 the first schooner was launched at Gloucester, Mass., and this direct evolution from the single masted sloop was brought about by moving the foremast further up into the bow when the hull was lengthened and the boom ~~was~~ extended ^{to} take care of the jibsail. The hull, however, still remained bluff bowed and stiff kneed and was heavily timbered so that the vessel could buffet the waves and ride out the gales while the men were fishing on the banks.

longer, the needs

The ~~needs~~ ^{along} the Chesapeake [^] were different. The prevailing winds on this inland sea were more equable and gales were seldom severe. Nor was life in Maryland as vigorous as it was in New England and the planters who had settled along the rivers that flowed into the bay led more leisurely

lives. The rivers and creeks were more agreeable thoroughfares than the rutty and muddy roads that ran back of the waterways, and the planters used boats for social purposes as well as to carry their tobacco and grain to certain wharves where the ocean going vessels lay. Almost every plantation of any size had its blacksmith and its carpenter and, with plenty of labor, the planters along the rivers built their sloops as fancy dictated. Many of these craft, it is true, were small open boats, but the men along the Chesapeake were boat conscious and they built into them their own conceits, and when they found that a small sail boat with certain features was faster than their neighbors, they would build ^{its} these details into a decked 45 or 50 footer. Naturally, too, some men proved more adept than others and fitted up small yards on the many coves and creeks that ran into these rivers; and we must ^{in those days a docton cargo carried on a large and built} not forget that the reputation of the Baltimore Clipper in the opening year of the War of 1812 was largely made by 50 foot craft, armed with one or two guns amidship. Not needing vessels that had to buffet high waves, the lighter hulls of the Chesapeake gradually took on more graceful lines, whose bows cut through the water instead of plowing it, and during the middle of the 18th century, when England was contending with France and Spain on the ocean, ^{our merchants} these men found that they could send these sloops to the West Indies with foodstuffs and materials that the islanders could not obtain from their mother countries.

Timber and iron ^{what} were the two essentials that were needed for shipbuilding ^{and}, Differing from almost every other port along the coast at that time Baltimore had a competence of both. ^X Forests grew on every hill around the town and there was iron at her very gates; while cotton for sails could be gotten in trade with the West Indies. When the Revolutionary War broke out and Congress needed ships, the first vessels for the continental navy were not only equipped and manned in Baltimore but before the end of 1776 Maryland had a State Navy of its own composed of twenty five vessels, each carrying from 20 to 30 cannon. On March 23rd 1776, Congress also authorized

the use of privateers and during that war Baltimore sent out about 250 private armed vessels which captured guns, ammunition and other supplies that helped to keep our army in the field. These Chesapeake Bay craft were often referred to in our local maritime history as of pilot boat construction and ^{they} evidently made an impression on the officers who served with the French fleet during the seige of Yorktown, because the sailing ability of the Bateau D' Amerique, as they called our sloops, was favorably compared in a French naval report of 1783, with that of the English Revenue Cutters, which kept inside the English and the Irish Channels while our sloops sailed the high sea.

For several years after our revolutionary war, the ^{American} people were fairly prosperous, but as we began to get back to fundamentals, ^{they} we found that we ^{they} had not won the independence that ^{they} we wanted. In ^{the} our Treaty of Alliance with France we had practically guaranteed her control in the West Indies but ^B By the Treaty of Peace of 1783, we were no longer a part of Great Britain and our trade was confined to our own country. ^{for} Our Continental currency was worthless, ^{and} we had no money for foreign exchange except the Spanish dollars that our merchants received in their trade with the West Indies and the Gulf Coast and gold went to a premium of 4000%. Then came the depression of 1785 ^{which culminated in the panic of 1791} and our economic distress was pitiful when Washington was inaugurated President in 1789. The French Revolution broke out the same year and soon England and France were at war and neutral shipping was swept from the seas. ^{in some instances upon foodstuffs that we could consume so suddenly so far into} Demands for our products began to come in from the West Indies, but England placed all food supplies ^{to} French ports on the contraband list and our shipping was held up and confiscated and our sailors were forced into the British navy. In ^{the south} this section, sentiment was strongly with France and ^{France of her help} Baltimore merchants took the chances with their ^{little vessels} Chesapeake Bay sloops, which ^{Time Chamber by Sloops} were the immediate predecessors of the famous Baltimore Clippers. The origin of ^{which} this distinctive craft is commonly attributed by those who do not know the maritime history of Baltimore, to the presumed visit of French

luggers to this port; but personally I do not believe that a single one of them came to Baltimore during our post revolutionary period, ^{while} and my tradition of this French influence on the evolution of the Baltimore Clipper is as follows:

Joseph Despeaux was born at Barbas, on the shores of the Garonne, above Bordeaux, in 1758, and after serving as a volunteer officer of marine in the French fleet he became a partner in 1784 of a Jean David, who operated a ship yard at Cap Francais, San Domingo. When David died, in 1787, Joseph Despeaux purchased the remaining interest in what was practically the repair station of the French fleet in American waters. Cap Francais was ~~called the Paris of America and~~ ^{San Domingo.} when the blacks took that beautiful city during the Haytian revolution and began to massacre the whites, Joseph Despeaux, with his wife and two infant sons and nine slaves - 8 men and 1 women - put out to sea in the yard boat, where they were picked up by an English Brig - ^{Dr. Tom} ~~Captain Proud.~~ ^{ed} Landing in Philadelphia, July 9th 1793, ^{Dr. Tom took} he took counsel with Stephen Girard, whom he had known as a boy on the banks of the Garonne, and because ^{Dr. Tom} there was a law against slavery in Philadelphia, ^{Am was} Girard advised him to go to Baltimore, where ^{and} he could keep his party together until they could return to Cap Francais, where Despeaux had left four ships on the ways, besides other valuable property. Fortunately Despeaux had been able to bring over considerable gold coin in his money belt and as ~~the~~ Spanish Dollars were practically the only money in the United States that had any value, he was able to buy water front property at the foot of Philpot St. where ^{Am} he established a ship yard. This yard fronted one hundred and eighty feet on Philpot St. and had over 500 feet of platform and wharf-way and as his men slaves were all shipwrights he was soon at work building vessels. Being a Frenchman there is no doubt that he was influenced by the policies of Minister Genet and I find among his papers a letter from Lt. Samuel Grove, executive officer of the H.M.S. Roebuck dated December 20th, 1794, advising him that the Sans Culotte had been captured by the Zebra

and was being sent to England and that Jacques Brun, the prizemaster of this French Privateer had that day died of his wounds. Tradition has it that the Sans Culotte ^{was built by Despeaux for the} was afterwards used as a model by the British for building faster schooners for their own navy.

Familiar with ~~the lateen rig~~ and the raking masts of the Mediterranean, which was a familiar type around Bordeaux, Despeaux also knew the ^{important} ~~fast sailing~~ ^{in the North Atlantic, which was admittedly superior to a great deal of the time.} ~~smuggler types of the West Indies.~~ ^{knowing} the emergencies of his native country in its war with England, Despeaux fitted his ideas to the improved hull work that was being developed by the ship builders of Baltimore in their pilot boat construction; and adapting the one to the other, he began to build blockade runners to French ports and to the islands. Other builders copied his ideas, until about 1800, the shipping of Baltimore began to take on new lines and these vessels became the sea hornets that stung British Commerce so viciously during the War of 1812. Among others, Despeaux built and operated the schooners "Joseph" "The Fremason" and the "Panama" and the brigs "Frances Ursula" and the "Mary Ann" ^{and} ^{his} books show that the "Wasp" and the "Hornet" and a number of the blue and of the white squadron of Barney's fleet, were either built, repaired or equipped in his yard. I ~~was also told that the "Mary Ann" which left Havre at the outbreak of the war could not get past the blockade of the Chesapeake and put into Charleston, from whence she sailed as a privateer and is accredited to that City instead of Baltimore.~~

In 1810 Despeaux built the ship "Alexander" which made several successful voyages to France under the command of Captain Wilson Jacobs, who afterwards commanded the famous privateer Kemp out of Baltimore. On May 23rd, 1812, the Alexander left Bordeaux for her return voyage but was chased by the British and had to put into Boston. On June 18th, 1812, the United States declared war on Great Britain, and on August 4th the cargo of the Alexander was auctioned at the Long Room, India Wharf, Boston, and the Alexander was advertised for sale as follows: "The said Ship Alexander,

with all of her appurtenances, as she came from sea - 103 feet long on deck, 28½ feet beam, about 309 tons burthen, well calculated for a Privateer or a Letter of Marque, built in Baltimore twenty two months since and is presumed will sail equal to any vessel out of the United States - coppered and copper fastened and armed with Guns, Blunderbusses, Pistols, Boarding Pikes, etc." Other arrangements were made, however, and Salem parties took a 4/5 interest while Despeaux retained a 1/5 interest, and this ship which had been previously insured for \$20000, brought \$43428.55 net. The terms for her privateering was one half to the owners and one half to the crew and on October 3rd, the Alexander was reregistered at Salem and sailed under the command of Captain Benjamin Crowninshield, and I have the record of ~~a~~ ^{one} dividend for \$8500 that was paid to Despeaux as his portion of the capture of the Brig Edward, 8 guns, ~~laden with a cargo from Brazil~~, which was sent into Salem. The Alexander carried an armament of 18 guns and was manned by a crew of one hundred and twenty and probably her most interesting exploit was the capture in the English Channel of the "Invincible Napoleon" a privateer that had been previously captured by the British from the French. This vessel was sent to America and was recaptured by two British Frigates off Cape Ann as she was trying to get into Portland and in turn she was retaken from the British prize crew at sea by ~~the Young Teaser~~ - a New York Privateer. Another prize ~~that was sent into port~~ was a sixteen ton brig loaded with dry goods and gun powder.

On her last cruise the Alexander captured 7 prizes and then on May 20th 1813, she was chased ashore in Wells Bay by two British men of war - the Rattler and the Bream, who recaptured over a hundred prisoners that the Alexander had taken. The Alexander was ^{refloated} ~~refloated~~ by the British and sent into Halifax ^{but} and I am sure that if her crew had not been depleted by the withdrawals that were needed to send her prizes into port, that she would have escaped the enemy and continued her interesting career.

Unfortunately the Alexander is credited in Navy Annals to Salem be-

cause she sailed as a privateer from that port, but she was built in Baltimore, and I am sorry to say that her model that used to hang above the door in the Seaman's Bethel when I was a boy, has disappeared. As I remember it, she had the Baltimore Schooner lines of that period and was ship rigged, and I was often taken to look at her by those old sea captains who told me that she was the first Clipper Ship that was ever built. Despeaux also built the "Father and Son" a sister ship along the lines of the Alexander, but she was driven ashore by a gale at Havre - December 11th, 1816, and was a total loss.

Other records reveal the fact that the frigate L'Poursivante, Admiral Willaumez, upon which Jerome Bonaparte served as Lieutenant while courting Betsy Patterson, and also the French frigate which loaned the 36 inch guns that kept the British fleet at a respectable distance during the bombardment of Fort McHenry, were both docked at Despeaux's Wharf; and that Joseph Despeaux with his sons John and Elie served in the marine artillery that manned these guns in the water battery of the fort. In 1805, after Napoleon had assented to the independence of San Domingo, Joseph Despeaux became a naturalized citizen of the United States, but he evidently kept contact with his relatives abroad, because another interesting souvenir is a copy of the "Almanach de La Cour de France" for 1811, which contains the names of the civil and military dignitaries, including that of a cousin, Baron Despeaux, the Commanding General of the 20th Division with headquarters at Perigneux. Joseph Despeaux's death in 1820 was followed by that of his son John in 1826 and although the business was continued by Joseph's widow, its real genius was gone, and after her death, in 1835, the yard was sold and became known as "Abram's Screw Dock" and, as such, it turned out a larger number of the best reputed Clipper Ships than any other yard in Baltimore for the China and the California trade.

When the War of 1812 began, Britain boasted a navy of 1060 men-of-war, while the little navy of the United States had seven frigates and about 10 sloop of war, most of which were laid up for repairs. Baltimore merchants

immediately began to send out their Clippers under letters of marque and this city is credited with supplying about 30% of the privateers against the British during that war; and when one knows of the great demand for Baltimore Clippers in other American ports, we have reasons to believe that this percentage ^{is} much larger for the service.

During the Revolution and the War of 1812, Baltimore was called a nest of pirates by the British, for doing the same thing that ^{the British} they had done ^{for against} ^{Columbus} against every nation in Europe with which they had been at war. ~~In fact it was the British who taught the Americans to privateer and~~ During the French and Indian wars the ^{American} colonists had supplemented the British navy with some 400 privateers, manned by 10000 men and these ships had kept the French and Spanish navy on the defensive in the West Indies, guarding their own merchantmen. ^{while the British Navy was capturing Spanish and ports in India.} In fact privateering was considered a natural auxiliary in offensive marine warfare at that time and bore about the same relation to the organized navy as did the volunteer companies that supplemented the army in times of invasion. In accepting their commissions, the privateers took the obligation to obey the rules of warfare between nations, while the government itself often participated in the prize money that was taken. ^{As nearly} ^{as I can find}, the Continental Navy was composed of 31 vessels in 1777 and when the revolutionary war ended there were only 7 government vessels in commission, while the number of privateers had increased from 136 to 449, within the same period. In Baltimore the commissions for these privateers was first given by the local Committee of Safety, but later the State of Maryland established a Court of Admiralty which issued commissions to 248 privateersmen between April 1777 and March 1783. If these figures are correct Baltimore must have supplied about 1/2 of the privateers during the Revolution and when one thinks that the American privateers took more prisoners during that war than the British surrendered at Saratoga and Yorktown combined, their influence during the war was considerable.

In 1785 - Benjamin Franklin proposed that "The United States of America, though better situated than any European nation to make profit by privateer-

that insurance cannot be effected but at an excessive premium, and that a horde of American cruisers should be allowed, unheeded, unresisted and unmolested to take, burn or sink our own vessels in our own inlets and almost in sight of our own harbors."

Beginning as a sloop rigged pilot boat, the typical Baltimore Clipper ^{frame} was a two masted schooner, with a square topsail on her foremast, although some of them were rigged as brigs and brigantines, and during the War of 1812 these craft were generally supplied with long oars or sweeps for the crew to maneuver them quickly when in a difficult position. Before the War was over, however, some of these Clippers carried double topsails to increase their speed in light weather and to help them escape when too closely chased. The great deadrise of their lean, easy lined hulls, sharp in the bow and deep aft, but broad beamed above the waterline forward of the centre, with their light and long raking masts which permitted them to carry a large area of canvas, without drifting to the leeward. Close hauled they were splendid sailers within 40° or 45° of the wind and ~~this ability to sail close to the~~ wind gained them a reputation for speed that did more than anything else to reform the century ^{old} old stereotyped lines of vessels throughout the world.

Probably ~~25 or more~~ ^{also in the} Baltimore Clippers were in the privateer ^{service} service of the ^{during the} South American War for Independence and Captain^s Thomas Boyle, Joseph Stafford, James Cunningham and ~~many~~ ^{in this service} others who had served out of Baltimore during the War of 1812 fought ~~against Spanish tyranny in America.~~ ^{also in the service of the} After the war the Baltimore Clippers were ~~sometimes~~ ^{often} overrigged by top gallants and flying ^{jibs} jibs, but their low freeboard ~~made them~~ ^{made them} a very wet ship and they then became dangerous plungers. ^{in such reckless hands.}

I also have the record of the Ferrata that was outfitted at Jackson's Wharf in 1827 and which I believe was the first 3 masted schooner to be built in the world. And then came the day of the Clipper Ship which was ^{developed by} ~~nothing more than~~ adapting the Clipper hull to the square rig and these Clipper Ships soon increased the number of their masts to 4 and more. But

I have always felt that the Baltimore Clipper, with its fore and aft rig did more to establish the commercial prestige of this city than did the Clipper Ship. At any rate the Baltimore Clippers were one of the chief instruments that won our War of 1812 and after that war they were soon found trading on every sea, and Baltimore models were in great demand, even in Europe. Largely through their influence, Baltimore became the third city of commercial importance in America and one of the incentives for building the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was to provide an outlet to the West for the cargoes that they brought back to this port.

With most people, a ship is almost anything that floats, but nautically it is a square rigged vessel, and while the Clipper Ship was larger than the Baltimore Clipper, their hulls ^{now modeled after the clean cut lines} ~~still held the deadrise and lower freeboard~~ of the Baltimore Clipper with its raking stem and masts. Clipper Ships with their increased tonnage played a great part in opening up California before the railroads reached across the continent; but other cities had copied our models and lured away our shipwrights and even before iron and steam had come into great vogue the shipbuilding business had largely gone to New England. Steam has now almost driven the sailing ships from the ocean but to the credit of this fair City the glory of these graceful creations which were known around the world by the distinctive name of Baltimore Clippers still lingers in the minds of those who love the romance of the sea.

The privateer Alexander, Captain Benjamin Crowninshield, was a splendid 18-gun ship with a complement of one hundred and ^{fifty five} ~~twenty~~ men. She was chased ashore May 19, 1813, by the rattle and Bream. Previously she had taken several prizes, one of them the brig Edward, mounting eight guns, from Brazil for London, with one hundred and eighty bales of cotton. This prize was sent into Salem. The Alexander also seized a brig of sixteen guns, laden with drygoods and gunpowder, and a schooner, the latter being released after the valuable portions of her cargo had been taken out. When chased by the rattle and Bream, the Alexander was so hard pressed that only twenty of her crew were able to get ashore; most of her other men, however, had been detailed to man the seven prizes the privateer had taken, so that the number of prisoners was not so large as might have been supposed. The Alexander had over one hundred prisoners, who were recaptured. The English managed to float the privateer off and carried her into Halifax.

The career of one of the Alexander's prizes is especially noteworthy. This was the French privateer Invincible Napoleon, a vessel mounting sixteen guns. She had been taken from the French by a British sloop of war. The Alexander fell in with the Invincible Napoleon, under her new masters, in the English Channel, and captured her after a hard struggle and sent her into Cape Ann. On the night of May 16, 1813, while lying at her anchorage in this place, the Invincible Napoleon was re-recaptured by the boats of the British frigates Shannon and Tenedos, which had gallantly pulled into the port, under cover of night, and attacked her. The vessel was anchored too far from the fort to receive any assistance from the garrison, so the British succeeded in carrying her out. But before the English masters could carry this unlucky ship to a place of safety she was captured by the American privateer Young Teazer, and arrived at Portland about June 1st. After refitting at this place, the Invincible Napoleon put to sea for a cruise, under Captain P. Desterbecho, with sixteen

guns and sixty men. On August 16, 1814, the misnamed Invincible Napoleon was captured for the fifth time by the British cruiser Armide, after having thrown overboard ten of her guns in the long chase that preceded the capture.

Primarily

but

oarsmen

Until then the sail had ~~only~~ been an auxiliary to the man power of the rowers, but when there was no longer any need for rowers, the high walled sides that contained their benches ^{are} was cut down in the waist, leaving the high forecastle and sterncastle as a protection against high waves and as an emplacement for the cannon that had come into use. This accentuated ~~the curvilinear appearance~~ ^{the curvilinear appearance} of the vessel and brought out ^{of, not under} the roundness caused by ^{the} wide breadth of beam, ^{or} when they began to build longer hulls and these larger vessels needed more sail and, they placed a square sprit sail in the bow and later rigged a latteen sail to a mizzenmast. Such was the type that was ~~in~~ common use by the maritime people of Europe when the Portugese rounded the Cape of Good Hope, and Columbus discovered America and in these bluff bowed, broad beamed, rounded ~~model~~ ships with a big sheer and widely ^{high} rounded ^{stem} stem - The Caravel - the early colonists came to America. These ships were good sea boats, and had considerable ^{with} carrying ^{capacity} capacity but they ^{had to} pushed too much water away from them in front and dragged ^{more water behind} too much of it after them to make much speed; yet this type of hull, ~~in a general way~~, persisted in Europe until after Nelson had won his great victory at Trafalgar.

lines 5 page 5 - line 15 - see other pages.

has no doubt

built by Despeaux and I am ~~sure~~ that he supplied the French government with many details of the Chesapeake models from which they ^{by} built faster ships for their navy. ^{some details}

clear see last other paper for last paragraph of page 6

made speed an

Just at the time when speed became the important factor to ~~maintain~~ ^{necessitate} the economic survival of infant America, the Baltimore shipwrights evolved a vessel of equal carrying capacity to the average merchant ships of the world, but much faster. Not only were they an important instrument etc.

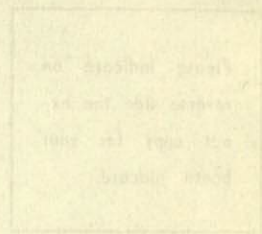
The Baltimore Clippers were spoken of as the most graceful objects ever built by man and to this day, they are considered the prototype of our racing yachts, the perfection of sailing vessels.

APPLICATION FOR EXHIBIT SPACE

Page 2 line 11.

^{to that} Previously the sail had been only an auxiliary ^{to the} ~~to the~~ ^{power} ~~power~~, but now ^{because} ~~that~~ there was no need of ^{the} ~~the~~ man power, the high walled sides that contained the rowers benches were cut down in the waist, leaving the fore-castle and the sterncastle as a protection against high waves and as an emplacement for the cannon that had come into use. This ~~accentuated~~ ^{emphasized} the apparent roundness of the vessel, and when they began to build longer hulls and they found that these curvilinear vessels could use more sail, ^{but} they placed a square sprit sail in the bow and later rigged a lateen sail to a mizzenmast. Such was the type that was commonly used by the maritime people of Europe when the Portugese rounded the Cape of Good Hope and Columbus discovered America and while these bluff bowed, broad beamed vessels with ^{with} ~~big~~ ^{high} ~~sheer~~ and high rounded sterns had considerable cargo space and were good sea boats, they had to push too much water away in front and drag too much of it after them to make ^{any} ~~much~~ speed. ^{these} ~~these~~ ^{very slow} ~~these~~ ^{because} ~~these~~ ^{any} ~~much~~ ^{speed} ~~speed~~. ^{these} ~~these~~ ^{very slow} ~~these~~ ^{because} ~~these~~ ^{any} ~~much~~ ^{speed} ~~speed~~.

these almost rounded models were by sheer persistence in Europe until after the invention of the Baltimore Clipper



The Baltimore Clipper and the Story of an Old Baltimore Shipbuilder.

By

James E. Hancock

The story of ships runs back to the time when primitive men first found that they could transport themselves by water, and that they could use poles and paddles to control their crude floats. Later they found that they could make use of the force of the wind to help them on their journeys and that this happened at an early period is evidenced by ~~the~~ sculptured remains on the tombs of ancient Egypt, of ^{galleys} boats equipped with a simple rectangular sail of papyrus or cloth that was suspended from a pole. The early Phoenicians probably learned of the sail from the Egyptians, and from them in turn, its use was observed by the Greeks and the Romans as they emerged from barbarism. These early peoples along the Mediterranean were the noted traders of antiquity and, for cargo purposes, their boats were quite broad in proportion to their length. These clumsy tubs were propelled by sweeps or oars and were captained by their merchant owners, who gradually found that they could get some force from the wind when it was not directly astern, by tilting the sail; and we see by their early art that the sails were assuming a rhomboidal shape because they could be handled more easily by a small crew than the square sail. Eventually this became the lateen rig of the Mediterranean, but when commercial wars broke out between the Greeks and the Phoenicians and later between the Romans and the Carthaginians, these nations began to build galleys that were narrower than their trading boats, so that they could be maneuvered more quickly in combat, by the rowers.

When Rome was extending its dominions along the Atlantic these galleys had castellated bows and sterns, from which the soldiers fought while the rowers were banked in tiers, four and five deep, amidship; but her traders who traveled to Britain and elsewhere soon found that these galleys, with their small draught and high superstructure were unsafe on the high seas and that the square sail was better than the lateen rig for ocean work.

Consequently their trading vessels, while retaining the high forecastle and sterncastle of the galley, were built of broader beam and this type was used by the Vikings and others along the Atlantic for the thousand or more years that followed.

Following the break down of the Roman Empire, Venice and Genoa had succeeded to their commerce in the Mediterranean, while the Hanseatic League dominated the trade in the North. In 1453, however, the Turks took Constantinople and broke up the caravan routes from the East upon which these factors depended and the influence of Venice and Genoa particularly was diminished, but not before Genoa had developed a vessel that could be propelled by sails alone. With the discovery of America and the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope, European shipping was pushed out upon the Atlantic and Spain and Portugal dominated the trade of the world and as there was no longer any need for rowers on sea going vessels, the high walled sides of ships that contained the rowers benches had been cut down in the waist, leaving the lofty fore-castle and sterncastle as a protection against the high waves and as an emplacement for the cannon that had come into use; and this type - the Caravel - was the ship that was commonly used by the maritime nations of Europe when Columbus discovered America in his search for a new route to Cathay; and in such bluff bowed, rounded bottom vessels, with square sails, the early colonists crossed the ocean.

With the opening of these new trade routes to India, the Dutch had largely succeeded to the trade of the Hanseatic League and when the commerce of Spain broke down because of its many wars, Holland took over most of her trade with America. In 1609, the Netherlands obtained its independence from Spain, and Amsterdam became the greatest maritime centre of the world. Here along the North Sea, the Dutch had been developing a triangular sail that was different from both the lateen rig of the Mediterranean and the square sail of the Caravel and the merchants of the Netherlands found that these sails were well adapted for their small vessels on the rivers and canals that threaded the land. For open sea work, however, they still held to the big

bellied square sailed ships like the Half Moon in which Henry Hudson explored the American Coast and established a colony at New Amsterdam. Knowing the utility of the fore and aft riggers to which they were accustomed, these Dutch settlers, in 1614, built a little sloop of 16 tons for trading with the Indians. In this they explored the New England Coast and the Delaware Bay, and later this little sloop was loaded with furs and sailed across the broad Atlantic to Holland. Although the Dutch were dispossessed of their colonies in what is now New York, New Jersey and Delaware, in 1664, their sloops had found favor with the colonists in New England and on the Chesapeake, who adopted it as a superior vessel for their waters. In 1713 the first schooner was launched at Gloucester, Mass., and this direct evolution from the single masted sloop was brought about by moving the foremast further up into the bow when the hull was lengthened and extending the boom to take care of the jibsail. The hull, however, still remained bluff bowed and stiff kneed and was heavily timbered so that the vessel could buffet the waves and ride out the gales while the men were fishing on the banks.

Along the Chesapeake however, the needs were different. Here was an inland sea with tide-water tributaries, whose shore line was nearly 3000 miles long. The prevailing winds were not only more equable, but life in Maryland was not as vigorous as it was in New England and the planters who had settled along the bay front and on the rivers that flowed into the Chesapeake led more leisurely lives. They used boats for social purposes as well as to carry their tobacco and grain to the wharves where the ocean going vessels lay and very naturally the rivers and creeks were more agreeable thoroughfares than the muddy and rutty roads that ran behind the waterways. Almost every plantation of any size had its blacksmith and its carpenter and, with plenty of labor, the planters along the rivers built their sloops as fancy dictated. Many of these craft, it is true, were small open boats, but the men along the Chesapeake were boat conscious and they built into them their own conceits, and when they found that a small boat with certain features could sail faster than their neighbors, they would build its details

into a decked 45 or 50 footer. Naturally, some men proved more adept than others and fitted up small yards on the many coves and creeks that ran into these rivers, and, not needing vessels that had to buffet high waves, the lighter hulls of the Chesapeake gradually took on more graceful lines, whose bows cut through the water instead of bucking it. Although their low free-board made them wet ships, nevertheless, during the French and Indian wars when England was fighting France and Spain on the ocean many of these Chesapeake Bay craft, rigged as sloops, brigs or little two masted schooners were sent to the West Indies with foodstuffs and materials that the islanders could not obtain from their mother countries and brought back sugar, molasses, cotton and other supplies that our colonists needed, or for reshipment to England. Very generally these vessels were armed with one or two guns amid-ship and service on these armed merchantmen was the practical school for the large number of Baltimore privateersmen during the Revolution that followed.

Differing from almost every other port along the coast at that time Baltimore had an abundance of timber and iron which were the two essentials for shipbuilding; while cotton for sails could be gotten in trade with the West Indies. When the Revolutionary War broke out and Congress needed ships, the first vessels for the continental navy were not only equipped and manned in Baltimore but before the end of the first year of the war Maryland had a State Navy of its own composed of twenty five vessels, each carrying from 20 to 30 cannon. On March 23rd 1776, Congress ~~also~~ authorized the use of privateers and ~~during the revolution~~ Baltimore sent out about ^{a number of them} 250 private armed vessels ^{that} which captured guns, ammunition and other supplies ^{which} that helped to ^{the} keep our army in the field. These Chesapeake Bay craft were often referred to in our local maritime history as of pilot boat construction and they evidently made an impression on the officers who served with the French fleet during the seige of Yorktown, because the sailing ability of the Bateau D' Amerique, as they called our sloops, was favorably compared in a French naval report of 1783, with that of the English Revenue Cutters, which kept inside the English and Irish Channels while our sloops sailed the high seas.

In reaction to the revolution, the American people were seemingly prosperous for a year or so after the war and then they awoke to the reality that they had not won that independence which had really induced them to fight. The Treaty of Peace practically confined the commerce of the United States to its own territory and in consequence the farmers were producing more than the people could consume. Continental money was worthless and what coin the merchants had been able to save was soon exhausted by purchases of needed materials abroad. This brought on the depression 1785 that culminated in the panic of 1791, and the economic condition of the United States was pitiful when the French Revolution broke out and by 1793 England and France were again at war and European commerce was swept from the seas. In a short while the United States was the only neutral left on the Atlantic and demands for foodstuffs and supplies began to come in from Europe and the West Indies. Then Britain placed all food supplies to French ports on the contraband list but Baltimore had already picked up its old trade with the West Indies and by 1800 she practically controlled the commerce with the islands and the Spanish Main. Baltimore had previously established the first sugar refinery in the United States and as tobacco was a staple that Europe needed, this city had also been favored with trade for these staples.

In those days the usual overseas merchantmen averaged 200 tons burthen or less and the demand for Chesapeake sloops and schooners was increased. These vessels were the immediate predecessors of the Baltimore Clippers whose origin is commonly attributed by those who do not know the maritime history of Baltimore, to the presumed visits of French luggers to this port. Personally I doubt that any of these French Luggers came to Baltimore during our post revolutionary period, and my tradition of this French influence on the evolution of the Baltimore Clipper is as follows:

Joseph Despeaux was born at Barbas, on the shores of the Garonne, above Bordeaux, in 1758, and after serving as a volunteer officer of marine in the French Navy he became a partner, in 1784, of Jean David, who operated a ship yard at Cap Francais, San Domingo. David died in 1787, and Despeaux pur-

chased the remaining interest in what was practically the repair station of the French fleet in western waters. When the San Domingo revolution occurred and the blacks began to massacre the whites at Cap Francais, Joseph Despeaux, with his wife and two infant sons and nine slaves - 8 men and 1 woman - put out th sea in the yard boat, where they were picked up by an English Brig and landed in Philadelphia, July 9th 1793. There being a law against slavery in Philadelphia, Despeaux took counsel with Stephen Girard, whom he had known as a boy on the Banks of the Garonne, and was advised to go to Baltimore in order to keep his party together until they could return to Cap Francais where Despeaux had left four ships on the ways, besides other valuable property. Fortunately Despeaux carried considerable gold coin in his money belt with which he was able to establish a ship yard at the foot of Philpot Street. This yard fronted one hundred and eighty feet and had over 500 feet of platform and wharfway and, as his men slaves were all shipwrights, he was soon at work building vessels. Being a Frenchman there is no doubt that he was influenced by the policies of Minister Genet because I find among his papers a notice from Lt. Samuel Grove, executive officer of the H.M.S. Roebuck dated December 20th, 1794, advising him that the Sans Culotte had been captured by the Zebra and was being sent to England and that Jacques Brun, the prizemaster of this French privateer had that day died of his wounds. Tradition has it that the Sans Culotte was ^{captured} built by Despeaux and that she was ^{Sent to England} afterwards used as a model by the British for ~~building faster vessels for their own navy.~~

Familiar with the improvements in French naval structure Despeaux also knew the utility of raking masts, ^{and lug sails,} and feeling the need of his native country in its war with England, he fitted his knowledge to the trim hull work that prevailed around Baltimore. Deepening the deadrise, both for cargo space and as an extra leverage against increased sail strain, he began to build blockade runners to French ports. Other shipbuilders saw the advantage of his innovations and copied his ideas, and thus the sloop rigged Chesapeake pilot boat with its low freeboard was developed into the typical Baltimore Clipper - a two masted schooner with close fitting sails, carrying a square

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of earlier ones etc - The formula used by Gulliver, he
knew to build blockade runners to small ports, deepening the hold
for additional cargo space, he noted that this increased draught
gave an ~~extra~~ extra leverage for sail strain, & other shipbuilders
saw the advantage of his innovations, & thus the slop rigged
Chapel pit boat with its low foreboom was progressively
developed into the typical Gulliver Clipper - a two masted
2 Chequer with close fitting sails, carrying a square topsail
on her forward ^{mast}. Notably some of the craft were rigged as brigs
or brigantines, which were popular types of the period & ~~but~~ ⁱⁿ general
the Gulliver Clippers were supplied with lay lines or sweeps to
help the crew to maneuver the ~~main~~ ^{main} ~~boom~~ ^{boom} luffly or
when in a difficult position.

Tradition has it that the Sans Culotte was outfitted by Des-
peaux, and as the United States was on the verge of war with
Great Britain in ~~1794~~, American sympathy for France was very
keen at the time.

topsail on her foremast. Some of these craft however, were rigged as brigs or brigantines and very generally they were supplied with long oars or sweeps to help the crew to maneuver them more quickly when in a difficult position. The great deadrise of their lean ^{low} easy-lined hulls, broad beamed above the water line forward of the centre but sharp in the bow and deep aft, permitted them to carry a large area of canvas on their light and long raking masts without drifting. Their ability to sail close to the wind made them the swift sea hornets that stung British commerce so viciously during the War of 1812 and before that war was over many Baltimore Clippers were carrying double topsails to increase their speed in light weather and to help them escape when too closely chased. Although at a later period, Baltimore Clippers were sometimes dangerously overrigged with royals and top gallants, their general ability gained them a reputation for speed that did more than anything else to reform the centuries old stereotyped lines of vessels throughout the world.

In 1810 Despeaux built the ship "Alexander" which made sever successful voyages to France under the command of Captain Wilson Jacobs, who afterwards commanded the famous privateer Kemp out of Baltimore. On May 23rd 1812 the Alexander left Bordeaux for her return voyage but was chased by the British and had to put into Boston. War between the United States and Great Britain was declared on June 18th and on August 4th the cargo of the Alexander was auctioned at the Long Room India Wharf and the vessel was advertised for sale as follows: "The said ship Alexander, with all of her appurtenances, as she came from sea - 103 feet long on deck, 28½ feet beam, about 309 tons burthen, well calculated for a Privateer or a Letter of Marque, built in Baltimore twenty two months since and is presumed will sail equal to any vessel out of the United States - coppered and copper fastened and armed with Guns, Blunderbusses, Pistols, Boarding Pikes, etc." Other arrangements were made, however, and Salem parties took a 4/5 interest while Despeaux retained a 1/5 interest in her. The terms for her privateering was one half to the owners and one half to the crew and on October 3rd, the Alexander was rereg-

istered at Salem and sailed under the command of Captain Benjamin Crowninshield. The Alexander carried an armament of 18 guns and was manned by a crew of one hundred and twenty and probably her most interesting exploit was the capture in the English Channel of the "Invincible Napoleon" a French privateer that had been previously captured by the British. The Invincible Napoleon was manned by a prize crew and sent to America but she was recaptured by two British Frigates off Cape Ann as she was trying to make port and she was again taken from the British at sea by an American privateer.

The Alexander captured 7 prizes on her last cruise but she was chased ashore in Wells Bay May 20th 1813, by two British men of war - the Rattler and the Bream - who recaptured over a hundred prisoners that the Alexander had taken. The Alexander was afterwards refloated by the British and sent into Halifax but I am sure that, if her crew had not been depleted by the withdrawals that were needed to man her prizes, she would have escaped the enemy and continued her interesting career.

Unfortunately the Alexander is credited in Navy Annals to Salem because she sailed as a privateer from that port, but she was built in Baltimore, and I am sorry to say that her model that used to hang above the door of the Seamen's Bethel when I was a boy, has disappeared. As I remember it, she had the Baltimore Schooner lines of that period but was ship rigged, and I was often taken to look at her by old sea captains who had sailed Baltimore Clippers and Clipper Ships, and who told me that she was the first Clipper Ship that was ever built. Despeaux also built the "Father and Son" a sister ship of the Alexander, but she was driven ashore by a gale at Havre - December 11th, 1816, and was a total loss.

Other records reveal the fact that the frigate L'Poursivante, Admiral Willaumez, upon which Jerome Bonaparte served as Lieutenant while courting Betsy Patterson, and also the French frigate which loaned the 42 inch guns that kept the British fleet at a respectable distance during the bombardment of Fort McHenry, were both docked at Despeaux's Wharf; and that Joseph Despeaux with his sons John and Elie served in the marine artillery that manned

these guns in the water battery of the fort. In 1805, after Napoleon had assented to the independence of San Domingo, Joseph Despeaux became a naturalized citizen of the United States, but he evidently kept contact with his relatives abroad, because another interesting souvenir is a copy of the "Almanach de La Cour de France" for 1811, which contains the names of the civil and military dignitaries of Napoleon's Court including that of a cousin General Despeaux, the Commandant of the 20th Division with headquarters at Perigueux. Joseph Despeaux's death in 1820 was followed by that of his son John in 1826 and although the business was continued by Joseph's widow, its real genius was gone, and after her death, in 1835, the yard was sold and became known as "Abram's Screw Dock" and, as such, it turned out a larger number of the well reputed Clipper Ships than any other yard in Baltimore.

I also have the record of the Ferrata that was outfitted in 1827 and which I was told was the first three masted schooner to be built in the world, and then came the day of the Clipper Ships which, as in the case of the Alexander, was ^{not built} developed by placing the square rig on the Clipper hull and these Clipper Ships later increased the number of their masts to 4 and more. While the Clipper Ships were larger than the Baltimore Clippers, their hulls largely conformed to the lines of the Clipper and with their increased tonnage they played an important part in opening up California before the railroads reached across the continent.

But it was the Baltimore Clipper with its fore and aft rig on raking masts and stem that established the commercial prestige of Baltimore. Not only were they an important instrument that helped to win the War of 1812, but soon after the war was over they were found trading on every sea. Largely through their influence, Baltimore became the third city of commercial importance in America and one of the incentives for building the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was to provide an outlet to the West for the cargoes that they brought back to this port. Models of Baltimore Clippers were in great demand, even in Europe; and other cities lured away our shipwrights until, even before

steam had almost driven sailing vessels from the ocean, shipbuilding had largely gone to New England. But to the glory of this fair City the name of those graceful creations ^{which seemed "as if about to rise & fly in the air" became} ~~were~~ known around the world by the distinctive ^{by their reputation} name of Baltimore Clippers still lingers in the minds of those who love the romance of the sea.