

APPLE DREAMS

by Bill Brearley

The story thus far

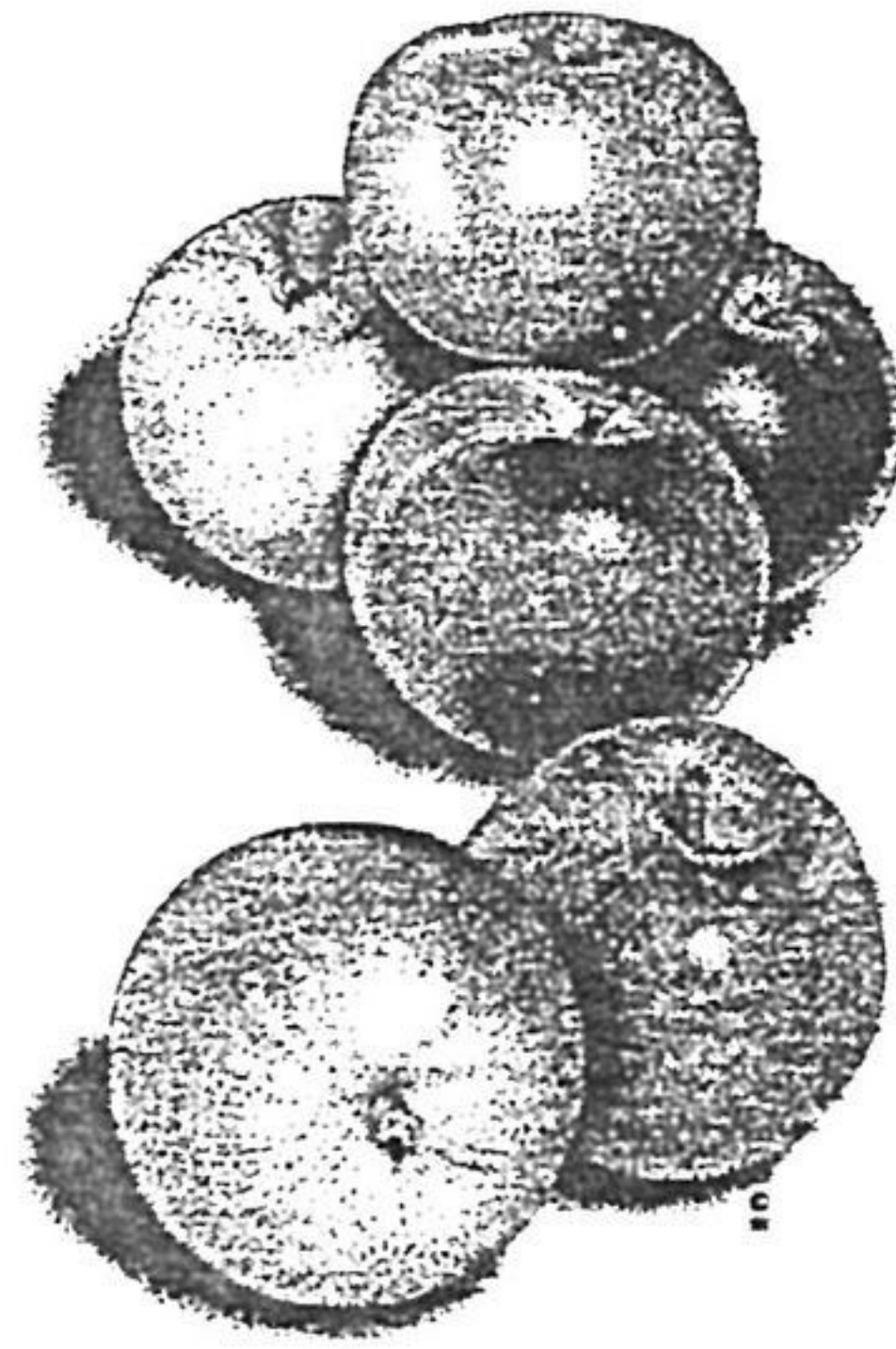
Two men from the County went to England to take part in a boat show honoring the Royal Navy. They were model boaters. After drinking some apple cider, at the B and B where they were to stay, they fell asleep. When they awoke they seemed to have travelled in time to the year 1942. Both were inducted into the navy and sent to sea on an MTB destined for the port of Brighton. The boat seemed to have some engine problems, solved by a passing Liberty Ship's crew.

Chapter Three

On docking, the base C.O. came on board to meet the two new Canadians and see that the difficulties were over. Commodore McLean was in small boats in the last war and had a certain sympathy for the limits of these warships and the difficulties that they faced. He looked over the engine spaces with the lieutenant. Noticing the cartons lashed on the deck, he asked what they were. Not knowing the Commodore, Chadwick decided to make up a quick story. He told him that it was some spares that had been available when the American engines were installed, lend-lease, and all that stuff. He further told how the Yanks were installing these guns on their P.T. boats. The Commodore remarked that it was somewhat irregular, but being an old small boat sailor, he would not interfere. Chadwick was glad that he hadn't asked HOW he had known about the American experiment which might not have yet occurred!

That night the crew enjoyed a night out, at some local pubs. The two Canadians seemed to have a taste for the West Country cider. After a few glasses of Scrumpy, the skipper was taken back to the boat, while Christopher stayed to chat up a young Irish girl who was working as a worker at a local farm. Christopher hoped to see her again, before they went to sea, but Meg had to go back to work tomorrow and wouldn't be off for a fortnight.

The next morning orders were delivered to a very sick young skipper. The crew were fueling and putting the new gun into the plates on the foredeck. It seemed that they were to accompany several small coasters to the Thames Estuary and return. Since these coasters would



not be ready until noon, the return would be at night. The skipper hoped that his brief knowledge of navigation, would be adequate. There was to be no clear sky that night, so he would have to keep well out to sea. Unnecessary communication was not desirable because of enemy listening posts on the French shore, anyway a R.N. lieutenant was supposed to be able to navigate under these conditions; if they only knew!

As the small convoy made its way to the east it became apparent that they would be wallowing along at 11 knots, making a fine finish to Chadwick's hangover. Christopher got him to lie down on the after deck, parallel to the axis of the boat. Well, after the dry heaves, there was some relief. The crew thought that it funny that a Canadian couldn't hold his drink.

The trip to the estuary was uneventful except for the over flight of some German aircraft heading for England. The seaman on the bow got a chance to loose a few rounds from the new 37m.m. cannon, with little effect except to the boat's moral. The chaps on one of the coasters cheered at the valiant but futile gesture.

At the Isle of Sheppey the M.T.B. turned back east into the semi-dark. By the time they had cleared the North Foreland it was quite dark. The Lieutenant told the crew that they would put into Ramsgate for the night as navigation in the dark, with no radar and restricted C.W. made the return trip dangerous to themselves and any other traffic in the Dover Straights. The crew were very happy since there was known to be beer and women for those not on watch. Chadwick's first executive decision on his own authority, was heady stuff. He put his second in command in charge when they docked, heading up to a local pub with Christopher and two other crew members. At the pub they ran into some civilian sailors.

As the conversation developed, the civilian sailors complained that they were getting hit by E boats from the French coastal ports, especially in trips up the English east coast.

"Why can't you guys take offensive action against these craft, instead of waiting until we are under attack?" said one fireman from a small coaster.

"Well," Les replied, "If we go after them in the daylight we'll be hit by their aircraft before we get to the coast. If they don't get us on the way over, they will get us on the way back. Anyway we've been so lightly armed we are no match for even one fighter."

Christopher, who had been downing boiler makers for a while, gave the skipper a knowing wink and said, "Remember at the model club, the story about Canadians in small boats and how they attacked the Jerries at

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