The Mariner's Mirror

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rmir20>

HOOKERS

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Published online: 22 Mar 2013.

To cite this article: H. S. Vaughan (1912) HOOKERS, *The Mariner's Mirror*, 2:3, 81-84, DOI: [10.1080/00253359.1912.10654582](https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1912.10654582)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1912.10654582>

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I take this to be the unabbreviated form :—

“ Quapropter ipse Rex Edwardus impressionem monetæ suæ aureæ fecerat commutari. Unde in suo nobili, dimidiam marcam valente, ex una ejus parte navem, cum Rege armato in eo contento, regio nomine circumscripto, et ex altera ejus parte crucem imprimi constituens hanc circumscriptionem adhibuit : ‘ Jesus autem transiens per medium illorum ibat.’ ”

Which may be translated :—

“ It was on this account [his victory at Sluys] that King Edward himself had the type of his gold coinage altered. Wherefore in his noble, which is worth half a mark, he ordered to be stamped on the one side of it a ship containing the King in armour with the royal title inscribed round the edge, and on the other side of it a Cross with the following inscription round it :

“ ‘ But Jesus, passing through the midst of them, went his way.’ [Luke iv. 30.] ”

HOOKERS.

BY H. S. VAUGHAN.

THE following remarks are offered as supplementary to those in the second article on Round-Sterned Ships (Vol. I., pp. 293, *et seq.*). It is proposed to place on record some particulars of the modern hooker derived from personal observation and experience, and to suggest that the term hooker as applied to these and former fishing craft has not, and never did have, any connection with the Hoeker, Houcre, Hourque, Howker, Oucré, etc., of the 17th and 18th centuries.

The plain English word hooker has been applied for two or three hundred years at least to a fishing vessel which employs lines and hooks, as distinct from nets, in her business, and has probably never indicated rig, build, or type of any special kind. Thus the vessel illustrated at page 294 (Fig. 16) is a hooker, merely because her business was to fish for cod with lines; but she was no doubt a totally different type of ship from Simon Smith’s “ Hooker, or Welboat, whose bayt is with Lampres,” and the latter is probably the ancestor of the hooker of to-day. A vessel used specially for fishing with lines and hooks will vary in type with locality, and the word hooker no more denotes rig or build

PLYMOUTH HOOKER CLOSE HAULED.

PLYMOUTH HOOKER RUNNING IN BEFORE
THE WIND.

than does "merchantman" or "collier." Unless you say Plymouth Hooker, Galway Hooker, etc., the term does not indicate type but merely occupation. Finally, the British hooker of to-day, and of many years past, is not a round-sterned vessel.

On the other hand, the Howkers, Hoekers, etc., were generally round-sterned (though Chapman illustrates in the *Architectura Navalis* a square-sterned Hoeker Yacht); they were mostly traders, and sometimes ships of war of some size, usually over 50 tons, and did represent more or less of a type, being generally two-masted and square-rigged. It is, I think, obvious that the English word *hooker* should not be used in connection with these vessels at all, being applicable to line-fishing-craft only, and the suggested origin of the various forms of their name in the word *hulk* seems to offer a reasonable solution of the difficulty. By the way, *hoek-boot* was another variant, and did we not have in the Navy, *circa* Charles II., "hack boats" or "hack frigates"?

Probably, also, the old Hoggie, or Hog-boat of Brighton, was an off-shoot of this family. Her Dutch origin is plainly seen from her bluff bows, lee boards, sprit mainsail and other details as depicted in the delightful drawings of E. W. Cooke. It would be interesting to know when the last of the Hoggies disappeared. Mr. Warington Smyth, in "Mast and Sail," alludes to them thus: "*Hoggie or hog-boat*: an old fore and aft-rigged clinker fishing boat of great beam used at Brighton in the last century. Probably connected with heck-boat, an old term for a pink, but also used for a clinker built boat with covered fore-sheets. Probably of Dutch origin."

There is at least one more variety of the tribe which I think has not been mentioned, and that is the still-surviving Hoogarts, the spritsail-rigged, lee-boarded fishing boats of Walcheren, which frequent the harbour at Flushing. The true Hoogarts are very curious little vessels: their mainsails and topsails are extraordinary in shape, and their bows have a big overhang; they are of the round-sterned family.

As regards the Galway Hooker, Dixon Kemp gives details and drawings. This is a short broad boat of 11-16 tons with very hollow bows: length 35 and beam 11 feet, and drawing 5.8 ft. aft and 2.7 ft. forward. She has a very raking stern post, slightly rounded stem and great tumble-home of topside.

The true Plymouth Hooker is quite a different craft, being a typically square-sterned boat, cutter rigged, without boom; the pole mast is stepped nearly in the middle of the boat, and has a tendency to rake forward as in so many West Country types.

The usual dimensions are: length 30-32, and beam 8-9 ft.; decked forward, with water ways and a large open well. They are usually manned by two men; bowler hats of an ancient type are the correct headgear on board in all weathers, and the figure of the hard-bitten "old man," hands deep in his pockets, calmly walking up and down the well, with an occasional expectoration to leeward, while the hooker sails herself along with sheets well aft, is as quaint a sight as you can find at sea in these days. It will be seen from the sketches that the bowsprit is a very long spar—nearly as long as that of the Thames Bawley—and the fine-weather jib is correspondingly large; the mainsail is comparatively small, having an almost perpendicular after leach, and a long gaff: a reaching foresail or balloon jib is frequently used, and a very large jackyard topsail of peculiar cut. From the head of the "topsail pole" (local term) a jib topsail is set flying on very rare occasions, as in light airs at regattas.

It will be evident that these boats have a considerable sail-spread for their size, and having sometimes "taken them on" for a trial of speed across Plymouth Sound, I can vouch for the fact that their pace is often astonishing. The larger boats use long lines, and are known as "boulter boats"; the smaller use hand lines and are called "Whiting-boats." There is also a larger type, 36-41 ft. long, 12-13 ft. beam; these are dandy-rigged, with a small mizzen. They ship drift nets for the winter herring and spring mackerel seasons, but at other times they are hookers (whiting, mackerel, and long-lining). They carry a larger crew, of five to six hands, and some go "dogging" after the Christmas herring season is over, *i.e.*, hand-lining for dog fish, now a marketable fish.

Probably the hookers, in some form or other, will be the last sailing vessels—other than yachts—to survive upon our coasts on the fast-approaching day when steam and motor power have completely driven the sailing trawlers and drifters off the seas, and the last of the rapidly-vanishing trading schooners and ketches have met their doom in the winter gales or been sunk by the "ram-you, damn you" liners and tramps.