

VIGILANT.

## THE VICTORY OF THE VIGILANT.

BY A. J. KENEALY.



HE race for the *America's Cup* has been sailed, and America still maintains her supremacy of the sea. *Valkyrie*, splendid vessel that she is, has been forced to succumb to the superior prowess of *Vigilant*. It was not granted to Lord Dunraven to win even one of the series of contests, though by his pluck, and the able seamanship of Captain Cranfield, he certainly ought to have won the last. *Valkyrie* is by far the finest and fastest yacht that ever crossed the Atlantic. She was designed with the sole object of carrying off the *America's Cup*, and in the hope of fulfilling the proud ambition of her designer, Mr. George L. Watson, whose aspiration has always been to win the emblem of international superiority in yacht sailing. Rut as his *Thistle* was vanquished by *Volunteer*, so was *Valkyrie* forced to haul down her flag and surrender to *Vigilant*.

The *America's Cup* Committee must be congratulated, Lord Dunraven, a chivalrous and generous foe, has returned to his own country with nothing but the most cordial reminiscences of New York and Mr. S. Oliver Iselin.

The first race day, Thursday, October fifth, was, ominous prognostications to the contrary notwithstanding, an ideal Indian Summer day. The sun shone brightly, the gentle zephyrs blew softly, and the sailor girl decked herself in her holiday apparel and sallied seaward intent on a heartbreaking tournament.

Thus it happened that the immense excursion flotilla was crowded by Young America and by grizzled gray-beards.

It was, indeed, a great and glorious procession that wended its way through the Swash channel toward Sandy Hook lightship. And all these went to see two single-stickers wage warfare for the possession of an ugly cup worth about one hundred dollars, measured by its weight of metal, and much less by the inartistic crudeness of its design.

The Cup however meant much. It was a cup of sentiment, with many patriotic frills and adjuncts, that we went out to see fought for.

Now we did not know just how to take *Valkyrie*. From what we had read about her she appeared to be a demon in light airs and a perfect devil in a blow. Therefore all of us on the *St. Johns* went down on our bended marrow bones and prayed for the happy medium, a shade between the two, just breeze enough to allow *Vigilant* to carry a club topsail with safety, and then we didn't care. But if it was to be a drifting match or a reefing breeze, why, then we were on the tenter-hooks, for these were just the points of sailing in which the Britisher was said to excel.

As we sailed seaward there wasn't an atom of encouragement, not even the semblance of a mare's tail in the glorious empyrean, from which your hardy mariner might take heart of grace. Whistling was no good. Sticking one's jack-knife into the foremast was of no avail, and as for old Æolus, why, magnums of champagne and puncheons of fire-water were consumed in his honor in the vain hope that he would liberate from his caves a young Wind with plenty of snap and ginger in him to make things lively for the yachts. But it was no go. There was scarcely enough strength in the air to straighten out the pennants on the stay of the flagship.

The racers had been towed out to the lightship, attiring themselves on the way in fighting garb. There were battens in *Valkyrie's* mainsail and there were battens in her jib; and when I read that the British yacht had in this respect taken advantage of a Yankee "wrinkle" I thought of old times at Wivenhoe and chuckled. All of us admired the set of *Valkyrie's* sails, whose evolution we rightly ascribed to the lesson taught by *America* in 1851. But there was nobody

on the *St. Johns* who was so ignorant as to say the battens were of American origin.

The course was fifteen miles to leeward, due south, and return, and the tug "Edward F. Luckenbach" was sent out to measure off the course and anchor the mark. The yachts, meanwhile, were dodging about, waiting for the preparatory signal. Their spinnaker booms were lowered to starboard, and big jib-topsails were hoisted in stops, ready to break out in a jiffy. Captain Cranfield was at *Valkyrie's* tiller, while Nat. Herreshoff, designer of *Vigilant*, clung to the spokes of her wheel. It was to be a one-gun start, and that was supposed to be particularly trying to the American boat,

*Vigilant* broke out her balloon jib-topsail, and timed the start so accurately that she crossed the line at 11h. 25m. 24s., just twenty-four seconds after the boom of the gun. *Valkyrie* crossed at 11h. 25m. 53s., or twenty-nine seconds after her rival. This was score number one for the Bristol boat. Just after crossing the line, *Vigilant's* spinnaker was broken out.

A minute or two later we were treated to a genuine surprise. *Valkyrie* set a spinnaker of snowy whiteness and of gossamer lightness. It looked as though it had been woven from a spider's web on a fairy's loom. It caught every vagrant breath of air, and pulled at the spinnaker pole like a three-year-old Percheron horse.

"Silk," said one.

"Irish linen," remarked another.

"Neither, my good friends," said I, "but simply a sail of bleached calico, or muslin as they call it in dry goods stores, and such as our Sunday go-to-meeting shirts are made of." And so it proved to be. It was splendid material to make a light-weather sail of, and quite a feather in the cap of sailmaker Ratsey. Nothing like it had ever been seen in these waters, and yachtsmen gazed at it with yearning eyes.

Meanwhile we noted that *Vigilant's* sail-spread looked gigantic compared with that of *Valkyrie*, and it seemed that with such a lot of muslin hung out she ought speedily to draw away from her British foe. But they hung together for a long time, with not more than a few feet between them. The wind was faint and fluky, with neither truth nor strength in it, fickle indeed as a sailor's sweetheart.

But somehow or other the Yankee boat did manage to crawl ahead, though with the sluggishness of a snail, not the alertness of a clipper. In an hour she had gained perhaps two lengths.

The wind was about north, and in that quarter it stuck pretty nearly steady until 1h. 15m., when *Vigilant* got becalmed, refused to steer and was hopelessly in the doldrums, with her sails flapping helplessly as she rose and fell in the heaving groundswell. *Valkyrie*, meanwhile, had fallen in with a streak of good luck. The wind had come out from the southwest. It was only the faintest breath, but the most was made of it. Down came the spinnaker. In came the sheets, and *Valkyrie* glided past her adversary as though the latter was at anchor.

There has been a great deal of rubbish written about *Vigilant* in this her most trying crisis. People with a good deal of nautical knowledge have said that she was in irons. This is not true. She was simply becalmed and had lost steerage way. And so she remained utterly helpless for nearly fifteen minutes.

The wind, what little there was of it, continued to head the boats, so much so, indeed, that the contest to the outer mark resolved itself into a beat to windward, each yacht having to make three tacks to round the mark. *Valkyrie* accomplished this feat at 3h. 37m. 20s., *Vigilant* rounding at 4h. 03m. 40s. or 26m. 20s. after her opponent.

If the wind had only held *Valkyrie* would have been a sure winner, but good luck was on the side of the Yankee sloop. The wind flattened out into the deadest of dead calms, and as it was soon demonstrated that the race could not possibly be made within the time limit of six hours, the struggle was given up and the boats were towed to their anchorage at Bay Ridge.

Saturday morning dawned with a dash of dampness in it. Then came a small portion of fog, by way of a second course, followed by the rays of the rising sun that soon gobbled up all the stray humidity. Although the morning had not sufficient promise of wind to make it entirely satisfactory to yachtsmen, it must have been delightful indeed to the excursionists who, in increased numbers, and in every queer sort of craft propelled by steam or sail, flocked out to the starting

point. The sea was charmingly smooth and there was a balmy warmth in the air that soon made the ladies discard their heavy wraps.

With our decks thronged with exultant Anglophiles and taciturn, but nevertheless hopeful Americans, we wended our way seaward to await events. On the way out we overtook both the rival clippers in tow, *Vigilant* under mainsail, jib and foresail, and *Valkyrie* with only her mainsail hoisted—ah! but what a well-cut sail it was. Clearly no tentmaker had had a hand in clipping out such an artistically cut canvas, and when she came to set her club-topsail over this fairy-like mainsail one could not help admiring hugely.

On the triatic stay of the proud flagship *May* there fluttered a string of signals, which meant that the yachts must steer a course of east by south, fifteen miles dead before the wind, the direction of which was due west by north.

Just as soon as the course had been laid out, the tug "Edward F. Luckenbach" (in charge of Superintendent Olsen, of the New York Yacht Club), with a patent log on each quarter in order to avoid the possibility of an error, sallied forth with a raft surmounted with a flagstaff to mark the outward goal.

At 11h. 15m. the preparatory gun was fired. Both yachts were then boxhauling about and working Tom Coxe's traverse for position. *Vigilant's* spinnaker was already hoisted in stops to starboard, *Valkyrie's* spinnaker boom being lowered on the same side.

At 11h. 25m. the bang of the starting-gun startled all the excursionists into life. Almost with the gun, *Valkyrie*, whose skipper had calculated the time to a nicety, crossed the line and hoisted the snowy spinnaker of light material that had excited so much admiration two days before, and her bowsprit spinnaker blossomed out on her stay at about the same time. Both were set flying. *Vigilant*, too, was by no means behind hand. It was so close I could not see which boat actually bore off the palm of the start.

Wafted by soft westerly airs, the two yachts started nip and tuck, the English boat fifteen seconds ahead, as was discovered later. For several miles they jogged along at about a six-knot gait, neither one able to get the heels of the other. At this kind of sailing in a soft

breeze and on a smooth sea, one was quite as good as another. There was nothing to pick or choose between them. *Valkyrie* broke out a balloon foresail that seemed superfluous, though it may have served to catch a few faint breaths of air. And so both boats glided along until noon with scarcely a ship's length well-defined between them.

At eight bells, when the sun is at its zenith, and grog is served, there not infrequently comes a change; and this day was no exception to the rule. The shy wind freshened, and smiting the Yankee craft first wafted her ahead of her rival. Few could understand what made the American boat so fast and the Clyde yacht apparently so sluggish. *Valkyrie* soon caught the wind, but nevertheless continued to drop astern. Running dead before the wind has always been considered her forte, and all hands and the cook were about equally amazed and delighted. Everybody asked about the vaunted speed of the Britisher. Her tenuous, cobwebby ballooners aloft, that bellied out with the slightest breath of old Æolus, were indeed lovely to behold; but so far as lugging the hull along, they seemed a little inferior to those plain, dull, yellow sails that were set on the American boat. At half-past twelve the Yankee craft was pretty nearly half a mile ahead, and gaining all the time. The smart English cutter that had so many times given the Prince of Wales a glorious view of her far from ugly stern, now had a capital opportunity of studying all the beauties of a Herreshoff stern-post and after-body.

The Americans went below and toasted the sleek boat from "Little Rhody," but the Britishers never despaired. I have sailed the waters and walked the shores in wanderings which have been almost as long as those of Ulysses, but never have I seen a true son of Britain despair. As *Valkyrie* kept dropping behind I saw them ready as ever to lunge down into their trousers pockets for the ruddy gold and the spider-like tissue of "The Old Lady of Threadneedle street," and to wager it on old England's yacht.

The Americans, too, were lavish with their coin. The fact that their boat was

leading was an encouraging symptom of the times. They "felt it in their bones" that if their yacht could outfoot the Britisher dead before the wind in a gentle breeze, she would easily outpoint her, and gain still more to windward.

*Vigilant* had got the lead and, in spite of fairy-spun ballooners, meant to keep it.

There was now a sudden shift of the wind to the southward, which shook up *Vigilant's* spinnaker and made them take it in quite smartly. But this was no mishap, for it gave the immense balloon jibtopsail an excellent chance to develop its pulling powers, and right, nobly did it perform its duty. Both boats then set their lug foresails, determined not to lose the slightest breath of the fast-blowing breeze. *Valkyrie's* snowy spinnaker came down with a rush and her bowsprit spinnaker for a time did all the work.

At last the outer mark was plainly in view, and there wasn't the slightest doubt as to which boat would reach it first. It was only agony a little further prolonged. The Americans rejoiced with their usual enthusiasm, while the Britishers looked on more in sorrow than in anger. *Vigilant* was a good nautical mile ahead, and it was no use kicking. The run had been accomplished in the open sea in straightforward, honest weather, which gave the advantage to neither of the yachts, and in water devoid of aiding or retarding currents.

It was now evident that there would be no beat to windward, for the southerly shift had made it possible to lay the course home with sheets eased off a bit. This was a keen disappointment, for all yachtsmen had been eager to see Great Britain's crack cutter give an exhibition of her windward work.

Nothing of note occurred after the wind changed until the outer mark was reached. The yachts rounded it as fol-

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> . . . . .	I 50 50
<i>Valkyrie</i> . . . . .	I 58 56

This shows a difference in favor of *Vigilant* of 8m. 6s., a gain quite unexpected in a run nearly all the way with the wind dead aft. This was a point of sailing in which we had been taught to believe that the English yacht excelled; and, truth to tell, we were not unprepared

for a beating on this leg of the course.

As the victorious sloop luffed round the mark, a great rush of escaping steam shrieked through the brazen tubes of the whistles. Down came the big balloon jib and the sheets of the jib and the lug foresail were flattened in, while thirty men tailed on to the main sheet and rattled in the boom with a lively rush. Then, heeling over gracefully to the fresh little breeze, away she scooted on her homeward course. In a little while

the Scotland lightship, it was figured that it had taken *Vigilant* 2h. 25m. 50s. to go over the first half of the course, while *Valkyrie's* elapsed time to the same mark was 2h. 35m. 56s.

The wind was southwest and the course west by north, but the yachts feared that the breeze might head them, and steered about a point higher. *Valkyrie* footed very fast, and, for a time, her admirers laid flattering unction to their souls that she would surely over-



S. NICHOLSON KANE, CHAIRMAN REGATTA COMMITTEE.



PHILIP SCHUYLER, AMERICA'S CUP COMMITTEE.



J. D. SMITH, CHAIRMAN. AMERICA'S CUP COMMITTEE.



C. OLIVER ISELIN.



JOHN V. S. ODDIE, SEC'Y NEW YORK YACHT CLUB.

she set a small jibtopsail, which was undoubtedly one of the worst looking sails ever turned out of the loft of a tent-maker, but strange to say it seemed to have much pulling power.

*Valkyrie* turned the mark in a yachtmanlike manner, but her sails were not handled one whit more smartly than were those on the American boat. Perhaps the crew, not accustomed to beatings of this kind, felt a little less spry than usual.

After both yachts were heading for

haul the sloop before the end of the long close-hauled stretch. But this hope could not be fulfilled, although it was certain that at one time she was sailing far faster than her Yankee antagonist. *Valkyrie* gained slightly by steering a more direct course for the lightship. This must be offset, however, by the fact that *Vigilant* was able to start sheets considerably, three miles from the lightship, and swoop down to the line with the speed of a sea-gull.

Meanwhile the convoying fleet of

excursion boats, tugs and yachts, was behaving admirably, keeping far to leeward of the racing yachts. This decorous conduct was observed from start to finish, and so far as I could see—and I kept my weather eye open—neither of the boats was hampered or delayed in the slightest degree. I desire to emphasize this, because the Englishmen made complaints after the race which, in my judgment, were unfounded.

Nothing worthy of special mention occurred during the fifteen-mile stretch homeward. About three miles from home *Vigilant* set a large jib-topsail, and, with sheets broad off, steered straight for the mark, where, clustered round, was an American armada, ready to greet the champion as she glided on to victory. It was a goodly sight to see all these boats, crowded with enthusiastic patriots, watching the battle for the yachting supremacy of the sea. Steam-yachts and yachts that would have been paid out of commission weeks before, if the purse strings alone of their owners had been consulted, were looking as though financial stringencies were unheard of. Gay parties were on board of them, and the pop of the champagne cork was heard above the rattle of excited conversation. Never before had I seen so many people out for a holiday on the water. Finally, *Vigilant* sailed over the imaginary line an easy victor. Then it was that the pent-up enthusiasm was allowed full vent, and by and by, when *Valkyrie* came along, there was sufficient enthusiasm to repeat the concert. It was a great day for the American Eagle, and that magnificent bird did not forget to scream. The Regatta Committee issued the following official record:

	Start.	Finish.	Elapsed	Cor-
	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	Time.	rected
	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	Time.
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	11 15 00	3 38 23	4 13 23	4 11 35
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	11 25 00	3 30 47	4 05 47	4 05 47

The *Vigilant* won by 5m. 48s., corrected time.

The elapsed time of the boats from the outer mark to the finish was:

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	1 39 57
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	1 39 27

Thus *Valkyrie* made the reach home in thirty seconds less time than *Vigilant*.

And so it was that the Yankee sloop won her first race in the series of the

international championship. On board of her during the race were: C. Oliver Iselin, August Belmont, O. H. P. Belmont, Charles Kerr, who represented Lord Dunraven on board, Newberry D. Thorne, E. A. Willard, Dr. Hopkins, Herbert C. Leeds, Designer Herreshoff and Captains Hansen and Terry, and a crew of sixty sailor men. Mr. Herreshoff and Captain Hansen took trick and trick at the wheel while racing, and nobody else was allowed to take the helm. The race was pretty to look at, and it showed that in light weather *Vigilant* was a little faster at reaching and running combined than her opponent.

The yachts came together in the strife a third time on Monday, October ninth. The course over which they were to sail was an equilateral triangle; the first leg, southwest by south, a beat to windward; the second leg, east half south, a broad reach; the third leg, north-northwest, with, as it turned out, the wind broad on the port quarter. The morning dawned bright and clear. The wind was nearly southwest, and bronzed and brazen mariners will tell you that when, in these latitudes, it begins to blow, from that windy quarter in the morning, its merry music is not unlikely to be heard through the day, whistling in the rigging and making delightful harmony among sheets and halyards.

There was indeed a certain sturdy strength in the breeze that cheered us up to concert pitch: It brought the color to the cheeks of the ladies, blew stray wisps of hair bewitchingly about their ears, and made their eyes doubly bright with here and there a tear. It was not a threshing breeze, but it taught us to believe that it would not languish and die disgracefully, and that its melody should be heard loud and strong in Æolian strains while the contest was in progress. Nor were we destined to be disappointed.

Backing and filling, and jockeying generally, the two big yachts gave us a fine exhibition of nautical prowess round and about the lightship.

The scene was inspiring and worthy of the pen of a great descriptive writer, and the brush of a splendid marine artist. On the deck of *Valkyrie* was a charming feminine figure in blue serge, cut into such a fascinating costume that it made all old bachelors want to

swear off. It was Lady Rachel Wyndham-Quin, one of Lord Dunraven's daughters. But the fair lady was fated to bring no good fortune to her father's yacht. Commodore Gerry has often told me that his control of wind and weather does not extend farther East than Pollock Rip; and I think that Lady Rachel's influence on the elements does not reach to the westward of the Lizard.

At 11h. 15m., punctually at the time agreed upon, the bang of the preparatory gun startled all hands into life; even the crew of the lightship had turned out of their warm bunks to see the unusual spectacle and, lolling over the rail, kept their weather eyes glued on the two eager rivals. At 11h. 23m., both of the flyers stood for the line, closehauled on the starboard tack, and to the surprise of all hands the American boat got two seconds the best of the start, crossing at 11h. 25m. 19s. The wind was blowing at the rate of ten miles an hour. Immediately after crossing, *Vigilant* broke out a small jibtopsail. She had the weather position and, do all he could, Captain Cranfield could not get from under her lee. *Valkyrie*, too, set a little jibtopsail, but it did not benefit her much. At 12h. 6m., the *Valkyrie's* jibtopsail came fluttering down the stay, her skipper, perhaps, thinking that it set her down to leeward, for *Vigilant* at this time was both outpointing and outfooting her. The British boat was first to go about on the port tack, the time being 12h. 9m. The Yankee craft followed suit, determined to stick close to her sleek antagonist and not allow her to get from her clutches by breaking tacks.

And now the wind freshened a trifle, and you could see the ruddy copper of the black cutter and the amber bronze of the white sloop, as the yachts heeled over to the influence of the puff. Slowly, but with certainty, the Yankee craft gained on her opponent, until there was quite a gap between them. Both yachts were cutting through the water at about the same speed, but the *Vigilant* held up to windward in grand style, while the *Valkyrie* sagged off to leeward in a most disappointing manner.

At 12h. 49m. the *Valkyrie's* helm was put down, and round she spun with the velocity of a top, followed a minute later by the *Vigilant*. And here I want to record that never was there a yacht

in these waters that came about with such remarkable rapidity as Lord Dunraven's vessel. With all her faults, and she has many, she is an extraordinarily well-balanced boat. But she was under *Vigilant's* lee, and there she stuck, unable to get out during that long beat to the outer mark.

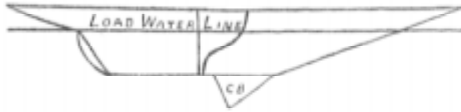
The wind had now increased to a steady rate of fifteen miles an hour. The English cutter only kept on the starboard tack till 12h. 52m, when she went about again, the sloop imitating her forty seconds later. The mark was now in sight, and unless some dire accident happened the American boat was sure to pass it a long way ahead of the cutter. At 12h. 58m. *Valkyrie* made a short starboard tack, the sloop holding on to her port tack until 1h. 5m., when she tacked for the mark and rounded it in gallant style, to the merry and encouraging music of guns and whistles. Then she set a large jibtopsail and a lug foresail of generous proportions, and with her mainsheet well eased off and the wind on the starboard beam, went off at race-horse speed for the second mark. *Valkyrie* tacked for the mark at 1h. 10m. 30s. and, after rounding it, set a lug foresail and started to chase her rival. The times of turning were:

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	I 06 35
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	I 11 20

Thus, in the beat to windward *Vigilant* beat *Valkyrie* 4m. 45s., quite a creditable performance, taking all circumstances into consideration.

Still the wind increased. The velocity of the breeze was now twenty miles an hour, and lee rails were well awash in the puffs. A pretty little lop of a sea got up and it was feather-white to windward.

The white sloop going very fast, and looking lively indeed, continued to outfoot her opponent. There were no flukes or flaws on this occasion to bother either of the two yachts and it was evident that the cutter was going to get an unqualified beating. *Vigilant* was going pretty nearly twelve knots an hour with her lee rail well under, dropping her opponent all the time. The reach to the second mark was uneventful. Before rounding it *Vigilant's* jibtopsail was taken in, no risks being indulged in, for if the topmast was whipped out of her while jibing it might mean the



THE VIGILANT.



THE VALKYRIE.

loss of the race. She rounded the raft in a workmanlike way and, with the wind well on the port quarter, steered a direct course for Sandy Hook lightship and the finish line, setting her little jib-topsail two minutes later.

*Valkyrie* followed *Vigilant's* lead in all her manœuvres except that, after jibing round the mark, she set a larger jib-topsail, perhaps in the vain hope of catching her swift and saucy rival. The times at the second mark were:

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	1 56 55
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	2 05 52

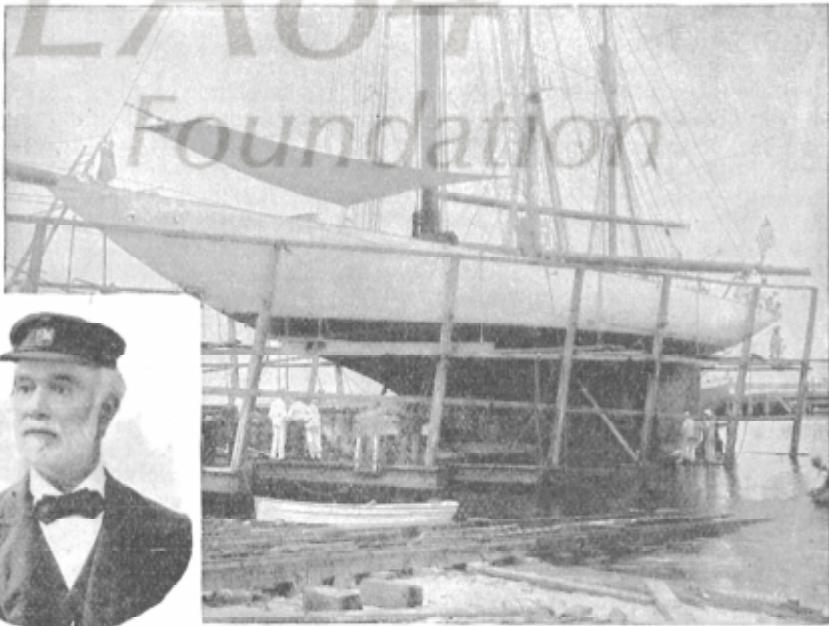
This showed a gain on the second leg of 4m. 12s., and a total gain, so far, of 8m. 57s. Americans were beside themselves with joy. They forgot the unkind things they had said of Herreshoff on the occasion of the fluke on the first day's race, and now sang his praises as the king of all yacht skippers. A queer thing is human nature, my shipmates!

And now the anemometer registered the wind velocity at 29 miles an hour,

Lee rails were still further under water, while the sailors all got as far to windward as possible and some of the Britishers for the first time had an opportunity of discovering how they liked the taste of American salt water.

*Valkyrie's* chance of winning had by this time dwindled to nothing, though she was sailed as pluckily as ever and steered as straight as a dart. Sandy Hook lightship had been long in sight, and *Vigilant* was just humming through the blue water with the speed of a torpedo boat.

There is little else to tell. Amidst a triumphal din the white sloop swooped past the red lightship and the black flagship, the winner of as fine a race as had ever been sailed in these waters—a race won on the merits of the boat and without the adventitious aid of flukes or flaws. The *Valkyrie's* finish was hailed with a good deal of noise. We could afford just then to be generous with steam and powder to a foe that had sailed so valiant a race.



JOHN HYSLOP, MEASURER.

THE VIGILANT HAULED OUT.

(By courtesy of Frank Leslie's Weekly.)



G. L. WATSON,  
Designer of the *Valkyrie* and *Britannia*.

The official record of the contest was:

	Start.		Finish.		Elapsed	Corrected
	H.	M. S.	H.	M. S.	Time.	Time.
Vigilant.....	11	25 00	2	50 01	3 25 01	3 25 01
Valkyrie.....	11	25 00	3	02 24	3 37 24	3 35 36

*Vigilant's* gains were:

	M. S.
First leg.....	4 45
Second leg.....	4 12
Third leg.....	3 26



LORD DUNRAVEN.

Total, 12m. 23s.; less 1m. 48s. allowance. *Vigilant* wins by 10m. 35s. corrected time.

The victory of the *Vigilant* was highly creditable. She might have gone over the last leg of the course in less time if she could have carried her big jibtopsail, as the *Valkyrie* did. This, however, was impossible, as she unfortunately sprung her bowsprit, which had to be replaced by a new spar for the next race.

In all the pride appertaining to the possession of a new bowsprit, with which she had been equipped with remarkable celerity, the *Vigilant* went



CAPT WILLIAM CRANFIELD OF THE  
VALKYRIE.

out to meet her antagonist on Wednesday, October eleventh. This was the fourth meeting, and, if successful, would make the third race. There was again little or no wind, and both yachts agreed to postpone the race for a while in the hope that a breeze would spring up. The Regatta Committee wished to call the contest off for the day. To this proposition the *Vigilant* assented, but the *Valkyrie* would not agree. The yachts were accordingly sent across the line at 11.45m., the course being south by west fifteen miles to windward and return.

There was only the faintest breath of southerly air as the two yachts were fanned across the line, close hauled on the port tack. *Valkyrie* had the best of the start, blanketing her adversary in racing style. The cutter seemed to have struck her favorite weather at last, and it was quite surprising to see how swiftly she cut through the water in the flattest and most flaccid of calms. One would form the idea that concealed somewhere below her water-line was some mysterious mechanism that was sending her along at, all things considered, quite a respectable rate. Very slowly and sulkily moved the *Vigilant*. There was evidently not wind enough for her.

With varying luck the boats continued to beat down the Jersey coast, but their progress was slow indeed. The *Valkyrie* gained all the while until her rival got a favorable catspaw of wind from off Seabright at 5h. 25m. and she was able to cross the cutter's bow by only a small margin. This seemed to afford much comfort to the attending fleet, for there was a great plenty of triumphant tooting from strident steam whistles. There was never a duller or more disappointing race—if race it can be called. It was simply a drifting match, the eccentricities of which are not worth recording. It was pitch dark when the outer mark was rounded and the competing craft would never have found it had not the tug "Luckenbach" stood close beside it and displayed a brilliant string of lights. The yachts rounded as follows:

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> . . . . .	6 07 17
<i>Valkyrie</i> . . . . .	6 14 00

Both set their spinnakers to port and their balloon jibtopsails were also hung out. Thus they drifted until half past seven o'clock, when the time limit of

six hours had expired. Both gave up the weary struggle and were towed to an anchorage. The race was only a drift. It proved nothing.

The decisive race between the two boats was sailed on Friday, October thirteenth. Here was a pretty kettle of fish! The thirteenth of the month and a Friday, too! Why, it was enough to make the blood of a grizzled mariner run cold in his veins. Dismal and drear were the vaticinations of the ancient barnacled sailor-man as he went down to the sea on that memorable morning, and cocked his eye in a nautical and knowing manner at the angry and threatening clouds to the eastward.

It was piping high from due east off Sandy Hook lightship when the yachts got out there, and there was somewhat of a sea on. The weather has been described as a gale by some yachting enthusiasts from the rural regions, but with all respect to their nautical knowledge allow me to ask: Whoever in the name of old Neptune, saw a yacht carry a gaff-topsail beating to windward in the teeth of a gale?

The day of the week being Friday and the day of the month the thirteenth, an accident was inevitable. The sheave of one of the throat halyard blocks of *Valkyrie* carried away, and the sail had to be lowered to give the carpenter a chance to repair damage. When *Vigilant* observed this she evidently thought her rival was reefing, and followed her example. The Yankee sloop's throat and peak halyards were lowered away handsomely, and a single reef was most expeditiously turned into the mainsail.

The lynx-eyed Captain Cranfield saw what his rival was doing and clapped in a single reef too. It was probably owing to a mutual misapprehension that those mainsails were reefed at all. In my modest judgment whole mainsails could easily have been carried, but I am always ready to bow to superior knowledge. On top of the reefed mainsails, jibheaded topsails were set, working forestaysails and No. 2 jibs being also spread.

And just here occurred one of those combinations of circumstances out of which trouble often arises, for according to one of the general racing conditions insisted on most forcibly by Lord Dunraven, the preparatory gun on each race day was to be fired at 11h. 15m. and

the starting gun ten minutes later. At the time for firing the preliminary signal *Valkyrie* was quite three miles away, in the act of setting her mainsail, so the Regatta Committee on the flagship *May* hoisted a signal postponing the race. If they had been the unsportsmanlike sea lawyers they have sometimes been called, they would have started the race at the time agreed upon, and have given *Vigilant* a most delightful walkover, at which the Britisher could not have protested.

However, fair play is the motto of the Regatta Committee of the New York Yacht Club, and the race was postponed to allow *Valkyrie* the benefit of an even start.

As it was Friday and the thirteenth of the month it was now *Vigilant's* turn to get into trouble. The bronze centerboard got jammed in the trunk and could no more be lowered than a pig can fly. This caused another disappointing delay, and much signalling went on between the yachts and the flagship. Finally the tug "E. L. Luckenbach" was sent to each vessel to inform them that there would be three signals—preliminary, preparatory and starting.

How they did work on *Vigilant* to get that centerboard down, using every device known to the shipbuilder and the mariner; but it could not be prevailed upon to do its duty. Finally they got it partially down and signalled to the flagship that they were ready to start. The preliminary gun was fired at 12h. 07m., the preparatory ten minutes later and the starting gun at 12h. 27m.

*Vigilant*, with sheets trimmed flat on the starboard tack, just before the starting gun, had secured a commanding position on *Valkyrie's* weather quarter, with the polite intention of giving her the benefit of a blanketing, but Captain Cranfield had been brought up on the Colne, and was not to be caught napping. He put his helm up sharply, so that the yacht turned right round on her keel, and, describing a semi-circle, found herself on the weather quarter of *Vigilant*, and a hundred yards to windward. It was done like lightning, and was one of the smartest bits of yacht jockeying ever seen in these waters. At this moment the gun fired, and in the nick of time both sloop and cutter crossed, the cutter having by far the best position.

There were about seventy men on *Vigilant*, and all were as far up to windward as they could crawl, each of them getting an occasional shower of spray as the yacht's sharp bow cut through the white-crested waves. The men on *Valkyrie*, thirty-five in number, had a first-class opportunity of seeing the shape of the American boat.

And now came the surprise of the yachting season, The English keelboat seemed to eat her way out to windward in a manner almost magical, while the centerboard craft slowly sagged off to leeward. Conditions were reversed for the nonce, and the experts of the New York Yacht Club could scarcely believe their eyes. It drove some of the nervous ones below, where they piped to grog in the vain hope of changing the luck. But the merry pop of the champagne cork, and liberal libations to the gods of the sea and the wind, failed to produce the slightest effect, *Vigilant* continued to slide down to leeward "like a bloomin' old crab," as one from the region of Cockaigne remarked.

*Vigilant* all this time, it should be said, was slipping through the waves faster than her opponent, but, although forereaching admirably, she seemed to have no grip on the water. It was generally conceded, too, that the English cutter was making better weather of it than the American boat.

By the time the hotels and cottages at Long Beach loomed up large on the sandy shore, it became evident that the race was not going to be quite dead to windward, for at one o'clock the wind was east by south. *Vigilant* at 1h. 10m. was so far ahead that Nat. Herreshoff, who was at her wheel, determined to go on the port tack in the hope of weathering *Valkyrie*. In three minutes she was right under the cutter's lee bow and only one hundred yards distant. Seeing that she could not weather her opponent, she again went about the cutter, blanketing her. Both stood on toward Long Beach until 1h. 16m., when *Vigilant* tacked again, followed by her British antagonist five seconds later. There was at this time only a slight difference of position between the two craft, but that difference was in favor of *Valkyrie* who was one hundred and fifty yards ahead and about one hundred yards to windward of *Vigilant*.

The breeze, which had already registered twenty-five miles an hour, blew just a little more robustly, and the sea heaved a trifle more viciously. The yachts heeled over until you could see a great deal of the cutter's ruddy copper and much of the shining yellow bronze of the sloop. On this port tack it was noticed that *Vigilant* made more fuss through the waves, pounding them more boisterously and shipping more water than her opponent.

On this port tack seaward the boat named after one of those weird sisters of Scandinavian mythology, outfooted and outpointed the craft from Rhode Island. Cutting out a path for herself, and heading up at least a quarter of a point higher, *Valkyrie* gave *Vigilant* a fair and square beating in a windward thresh.

The scene reminded me somewhat of the second and decisive battle between *Puritan* and *Genesta*, except that *Valkyrie* was doing better and braver work than Sir Richard Sutton's boat.

It was quite too discouraging to see our boat beaten on her pet point of sailing by this Clyde cutter. But there it was, enacting right, before our eyes, and there was no sand aboard our ship in which we disappointed and disgruntled admirers of *Vigilant* could, ostrich-like, bury our heads. Ever since I saw the two boats out of water, I had been a devoted acolyte at the Herreshoff altar. *Vigilant* has enough lateral plane for a twenty-gun brig of the old school, and she is so thoroughly balanced in all of her other quantities that, theoretically, she ought to have drowned the British cutter out and beaten her fifteen minutes in a fifteen-mile beat to windward.

At two o'clock the mark with its red and white flag was plainly in view, bearing about a point on the port bow of each yacht. It was clear that the boats could pretty nearly fetch it if they kept a good luff; but they were allowed to slip through the water with every sail rap full and pulling like mad. It was an anxious moment. *Valkyrie* had the weather gauge and meant to keep it, too, for the honor of old Wivenhoe, if for nothing else. Just as often as the Yankee boat sought, by keeping away! to get out of the blanketing handicap of the British cutter, Captain Cranfield would put his helm up a little

and so maintain his superlative advantage. The same remark applies to the sloop's luffing tactics. *Vigilant* was jammed securely under *Valkyrie's* lee, and out she could not get. It was an unsavory dish for patriotic Americans, but all had to "eat crow."

At 2h. 14m. *Valkyrie* went about on the starboard tack, *Vigilant* following 55s. later. Both boats were now heading for the mark with a certainty of fetching it, and sheets were eased off an inch or two, so that every sail belled out in beautiful style, with neither a wrinkle nor a shake. *Vigilant* was quite one-third of a mile astern of *Valkyrie*, and the gap between them seemed to widen out a little, if anything, as the minutes passed away. At 2h. 33m. 10s. *Valkyrie* went about under the lee of the mark raft that was bobbing in the boisterous sea, and whirled round it on the port tack in admirable style, easing off her main sheet as she went about, and setting a large spinnaker in the creditable time of three minutes. The turn was performed in such a manner as to call forth the admiration of both friends and foes. This was a minute of intense joy for every Briton.

*Vigilant* tacked for the mark at 2h. 33m. 10s., and rounded it in excellent style. She set her spinnaker in good shape, shook the reef out of her mainsail, sent up her big clubtopsail to leeward of her working topsail, which she then hauled down. Next she set her balloon-jibtopsail in stops, but the halyards got jammed and it took her an unconscionable long time to break it out and get the sheet aft. It was exactly three o'clock, or six bells in the afternoon watch, when she had every stitch of her balloon canvas spread and was scooting through the gray waves on the homeward stretch. She had as much sail set as she could stagger under. Her topmast buckled as though it would succumb to the combined strain of spinnaker and balloon jibtopsail, but it was a stout stick, scientifically stayed, and it withstood the enormous pressure of the breeze, which freshened on this homeward run. It was a trying time for the Yankee sloop, because if anything carried away she would have been forever dishonored and disgraced—not in the eyes of her opponents, but in the judgment of her fanatic partisans, who had declared her invincible.

And now while these two swift and splendid vessels, the pride of two mighty maritime countries, are flying homeward to the triumphal goal, let us do a little figuring. Pencil and paper show something extraordinary in the thresh to windward. In all the previous struggles for the Cup, it was on this point of sailing that the American boats excelled. For instance, in the twenty mile beat of *Volunteer* and *Thistle*, the Scotch yacht was beaten nearly fifteen minutes; but against the *Valkyrie* there was a far different result. Here are the official figures:

	Round the Mark.	Elapsed Time to Mark.
	H. M. S.	H. M. S.
Valkyrie . . . . .	2 33 40	2 06 40
Vigilant . . . . .	2 35 35	2 08 35

This shows that *Valkyrie* beat *Vigilant* 1 m. 55s. to the outward mark in a strong breeze nearly dead on end—a feat unprecedented in the annals of the Cup.

As the day of the week was Friday and the day of the month the thirteenth, it was not destined that either of the yachts should reach the homeward goal without a certain measure of bad luck. The first to encounter the ill-natured blows of fortune was *Vigilant*, whose centerboard refused to be hauled up until after the boat had passed the outer mark and was humming Westward Ho!

Now it was *Valkyrie's* turn to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune. Rounding the mark from the point of view of human intelligence an almost sure winner, she met with two unlucky blows that ruined her chances of victory. At 2h. 50m. she set her balloon jibtopsail, and under its influence began to widen the gap still further. There was at this time a slight shift of the wind which enabled this fine sail to draw to advantage as well as the spinnaker, otherwise it would have been spread long before. She was two minutes in the lead, as nearly as could be estimated. Both yachts now carried the same canvas, except that *Valkyrie's* mainsail still remained reefed, and she was content with a jibheaded gafftopsail. When the spinnakers were set the jibs on each craft were hauled down.

And now a squall came up astern that caused a feather-white crest to erect itself on the top of each dull, gray wave. There was a wicked look in the clouds. There was surely some weight of wind

beyond those great sheets of vapor. It was time for the hands on the ordinary vessel to begin to stand by sheets and halyards and be ready to clew up and haul down with smartness, or else have all sorts of tophamper come flopping down about their ears.

As the gust came hissing along, driving the spindrift from the white summits of the waves, we wondered if *Vigilant*, which was first to feel its full vigor would carry away any sail or spar. We were quite anxious to discover whether strength aloft had been wholly sacrificed to the racing exigencies of lightness. *Vigilant* came through the ordeal bravely. Not a rope yarn parted. The topmast buckled a little more, but withstood the vigor of the blast, while the boat, under its livening impulse, seemed almost to leap out of the water like a dolphin. Borne along with it, she attained a mighty burst of speed and steered right in the cutter's wake, trying to keep as much wind as possible out of the towering sails of her so far victorious competitor.

Then came *Valkyrie's* turn to suffer. In the hurry of hauling the spinnaker up out of the sail locker, a tiny tear was made in the inner leech about half way up. Nobody noticed it, or if it was observed nobody thought it was going to lose them the race. At about 3h. 30m. the whole force of the blast smote the English boat. The spinnakers split right across into fragments and tatters, and what little remained of it was hauled down and bundled below in double quick time.

Captain Cranfield, nothing daunted by this misfortune, hauled out that light-weather spinnaker of bleached calico which excited so much admiration in the first day's contest. It was bigger than the one just blown away and was just in the nature of a forlorn hope. But desperate measures were necessary at that particular time. *Vigilant* was close astern, and it was nothing venture, nothing win. According to Designer Watson, the Britishers have not improved upon that antique custom of setting sail which had descended from Capt. Noah and his good ship *Ark*. The natural result was that this light tenuous fabric fouled the crosstrees, got a rent in it and split into smithereens.

I am not anxious to give lessons in seamanship to such a man as Captain

Cranfield, but I think if he had sent the sail up in stops and broken it out handsomely, humoring it at all times with such touches of the tiller as he well wots of, the sail would have remained whole, and would have driven him on to a well-deserved victory.

Cranfield, however, was not yet at the end of his nautical tether. With great despatch the snowy remnants of his calico spinnaker, nearly blown from its boltropes, were gathered inboard, and the fragments secured. Then a "bowsprit spinnaker" which had done magnificent service in races in British waters was dragged out of the sail locker. Halyards, outhaul, and sheet were bent on with cheery promptitude, and the sail—alas, too small to be of much benefit—was bowed up to the topmast truck.

While these stirring events were happening aboard the British craft, *Vigilant*, of course, forged ahead. Almost as soon as *Valkyrie's* first spinnakes flew into fragments, she rushed past with the speed of a man-eating shark. It was by a pure stroke of rare good luck, for the American craft had been out-footed, out-pointed, and out-admired by the Sassenach.

My yarn is nearly spun. In point of fact there is little else to tell. As all of us are aware, a stern chase is a long chase. *Vigilant* maintained her lead, and the gap between the two clippers gradually broadened, but not to such an extent as to assure us fully that victory would perch on the Yankee banner, Nobody knew how the race was going to turn out. The parting of a tack, outhaul or sheet might alter the destiny of the day. But on sped *Vigilant*, sweeping magnificently over old ocean's pathway, with her præam-like prow pointed toward that longed-for line of victory. As *Vigilant* leaped across the line with

her splendid sails belling out to the boisterous blast, a hundred brazen throats saluted her; and there was just as loud and hearty a welcome to the great English cutter when she too crossed the line. Then there was a period of hesitating expectancy, for there was time allowance to be calculated, im. 33s. Nobody knew which was the victor, the margin between the two contestants being so infinitesimal.

At last the agony was over. The private signal of *Vigilant* fluttered from the flagships's triatic stay. The Yankee boat had won and the Cup was safe for another year, at least.

The Regatta Committee later in the day issued the following official return: "Course from Sandy Hook lightship, fifteen miles to windward and return; wind east, fresh

	Start.		Finish.		Elapsed Time.		Corrected Time.		
	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.	H. M. S.		
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	12	27	00	3	51	39	3	24	39
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	12	27	00	3	53	52	3	20	52

The *Vigilant* wins by 40s. on corrected time.

FROM START TO OUTER MARK.

	H. M. S.
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	2 06 40
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	2 08 35

The *Valkyrie* beat the *Vigilant* on the windward leg im. 55s.

FROM OUTER MARK TO FINISH.

	H. M. S.
<i>Vigilant</i> .....	1 16 04
<i>Valkyrie</i> .....	1 20 12

The *Vigilant* beat the *Valkyrie* in running home 4m. 8s.

The *Vigilant's* gain over the entire course was 2m. 13s.

Less im. 33s. allowance for the *Valkyrie*, and there remains 40s. by which the *Vigilant* won."

A close shave, wasn't it? but the *Vigilant* was victorious for the third time, and the Cup was kept.

