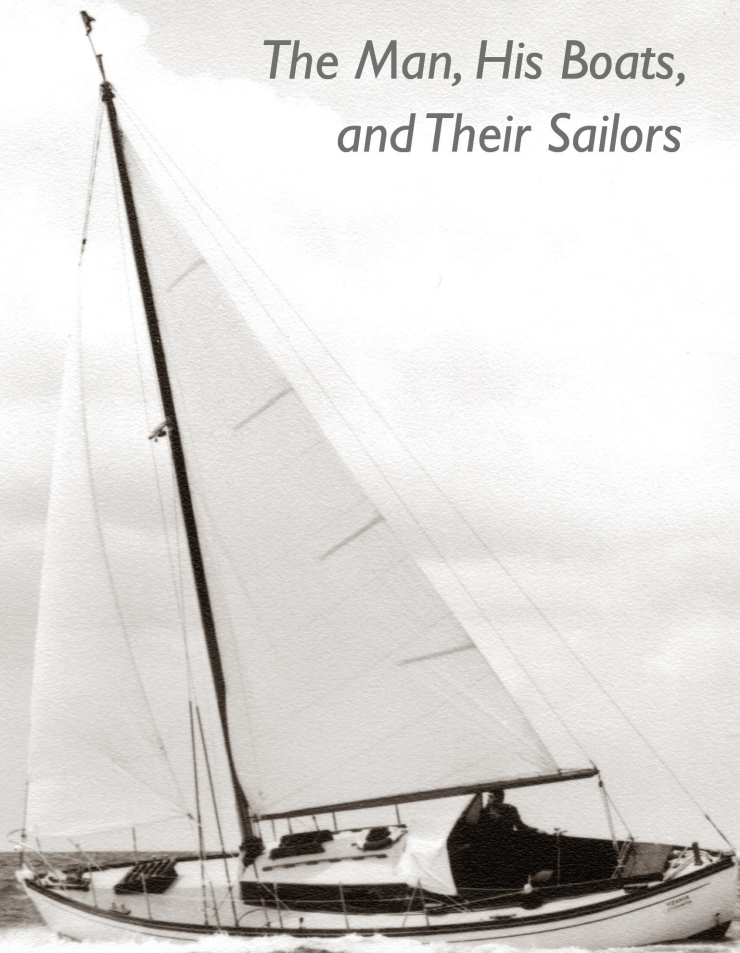


# HILLYARD

*The Man, His Boats,  
and Their Sailors*



Nicholas Gray

Foreword by Sam Llewellyn, Editor, *The Marine Quarterly*

**David Hillyard**, founder of the famous firm of boatbuilders in Littlehampton, was born in the late nineteenth century, at the height of the Big Boat era. His family were stalwarts of Rowhedge in Essex, where the aristocratic owners of the enormous cutters dicing in the Solent sent their skippers to pick their racing crews of hard-bitten fishermen. Yachts, in those days, were for the very rich, but the men who sailed them were often the reverse. Perhaps it was a consciousness of this divide that led Hillyard—a devout Christian, descended from a long line of fishermen—to build boats that were robust, practical, and within the means of those lacking the advantage of dukedoms or armaments factories.



This account of David Hillyard's voyage from apprentice boatbuilder to founder of a boatbuilding dynasty will fascinate not only owners of his boats and enthusiasts of traditional boatbuilding, but anyone interested in messing about in boats as practised in Britain. It also provides fascinating insights into the relationship between the people of these islands and the seas that surround us.

**Nicholas Gray** is a member of the Association of Yachting Historians and has written two books of nautical history – *Last Voyages* (Fernhurst Books 2017) and *Astronauts of Cape Horn* (Conrad Press 2018).





"Hillyard, despite owning a substantial business, was not interested in the trappings of success... He was a simple man with a simple ethos who preferred looking after his men and his customers before himself. This is shown in such things like his never owning his own yacht (he preferred to 'borrow' a boat from the yard for his annual summer holiday cruise) and in never parting with his faithful motor cycle for an expensive motor car...

...For David Hillyard, who cared deeply for the welfare of his men, speculative building when there were no firm orders had another big advantage. It enabled him to keep his staff together and provide them with work however bad external circumstances were. He, in turn, could count on a workforce who became intensely loyal and did all they could to enhance and maintain the reputation of the yard. Hillyard and his men prided themselves on the seaworthiness of their craft, as well as the quality of their build."



*ISBN 978-1-907206-54-2; 234 x 156mm, 256 pages, 24 pages plates, bibliography, index. Hardcover with sewn binding, head & tail bands, photo endpapers, matt laminated jacket. June 2021. £20*

*Available from your local bookshop, or online at [lodestarbooks.com](http://lodestarbooks.com)*