

# **THE DRASCOMBE OWNER'S HANDBOOK**

**How to get the best  
from your boat**

**Price £1.00**

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**Devon, England**

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## THE DRASCOMBE FLOTILLA

### AN INTRODUCTION BY THE DESIGNER

Contrary to popular belief, boats of the "Drascombe" flotilla were not designed to appeal to the market for nostalgic reasons. It all started when I had sold my boat-building concern in 1964 and had retired to a remote farmstead on the top of Dartmoor. After a while I decided to *indulge in the pleasure* of designing and building a boat to suit my own requirements and being out of the boat business, I was entirely free of thoughts of "what will sell".

My family did not share my *passion for sailing small boats*. In fact, it had come to the point when I went boating alone.

Quite simply, if we were going to enjoy our leisure time on the water as a family, I had to design a boat that they could enjoy and, *to do this, the first requirement* was that they should have complete confidence in the craft. The design began to shape by my thinking solely of our own needs which were . . .

1. Ability to trail and for the family to handle on and off the trailer.
2. First rate sea-keeping qualities.
3. A good motor boat for, to start with, it was going to be a question of fishing and pottering under power.
4. I wanted the boat to be *lively enough for me to enjoy a good hard sail* once I had put the family on the beach.

It was uphill work but eventually the first "Drascombe Lugger" was launched in 1965.

The half-decked open boat with a high bulwark did wonders for confidence. The loose-footed yawl rig, with all sails stowing aloft and out of the way, gave the space needed for a family. *By making the boat balanced under jib and mizzen as well as under full sail*, the motor could be cut and fishing lines streamed without fear of hearing that sickening crunch as boom strikes female head. The hard turn to the bilge gave a powerful hull well able to carry sail. Her generous sheer kept her dry.

In short, we started to enjoy our boating together.

But it was not until 1967 that I was persuaded that other men might also have my problem. So at Earls Court in 1968 the first wooden production Drascombe Lugger was sold, within 29 minutes of the doors being opened to the public.

The first G.R.P. Lugger came out in 1969. By 1970 the "stretched" version, the **Longboat**, was in full production. This boat was primarily for youth training but the clamour for some shelter led to the "Cruiser" version coming out in 1971.

There followed in 1972 the 15ft. 6in. **Dabber**—basically a double-ender with the upper two planks being allowed to flare away to form a V-shaped transom. The balanced hull form, vee'd at both ends, needs only a shallow rudder hung on the transom.

In 1974 came the **Driver**, an 18-footer of similar hull form to the **Dabber** but having a long central keel and short bilge fins. Her sailing performance without a centreplate proved to be very good, particularly to windward, and the absence of a centreplate combined with the rudder being hung on the transom has allowed a large, useful cockpit.

The lessons learned were put to good use in designing the **Drifter**, introduced to the public in 1977 after a year of prototype trials. Although no longer than the **Longboats**, the **Drifter** is beamier, deeper and heavier, with cruising accommodation for two or four people. She can be fitted with a sturdy diesel engine and full electric cabin and navigation lights.

#### **For the Record**

- 1968–69 Ian Brinkworth cruised the Greek archipelago in his **Lugger**.
- 1969–70 David Pyle sailed his **Lugger** from Emsworth, England, to Darwin, Australia.
- 1970 Ken Duxbury and his wife cruised the Aegean in their **Lugger**.
- 1971 The same intrepid couple sailed their **Lugger** from Greece to England.
- 1973 Geoff Stewart sailed an open **Longboat** from England to Jamaica.

There have been numerous crossings of the English Channel and the Irish Sea by various Drascombe boats, but—

**DON'T FORGET—**

**THE SEA HAS NO MERCY**

and, although the boats are seaworthy enough, when the chips are down, safety depends on the skill and experience of the crew. Good sailing and good luck!

J. L. WATKINSON.

# DABBER

DRASCOMBE DABBER

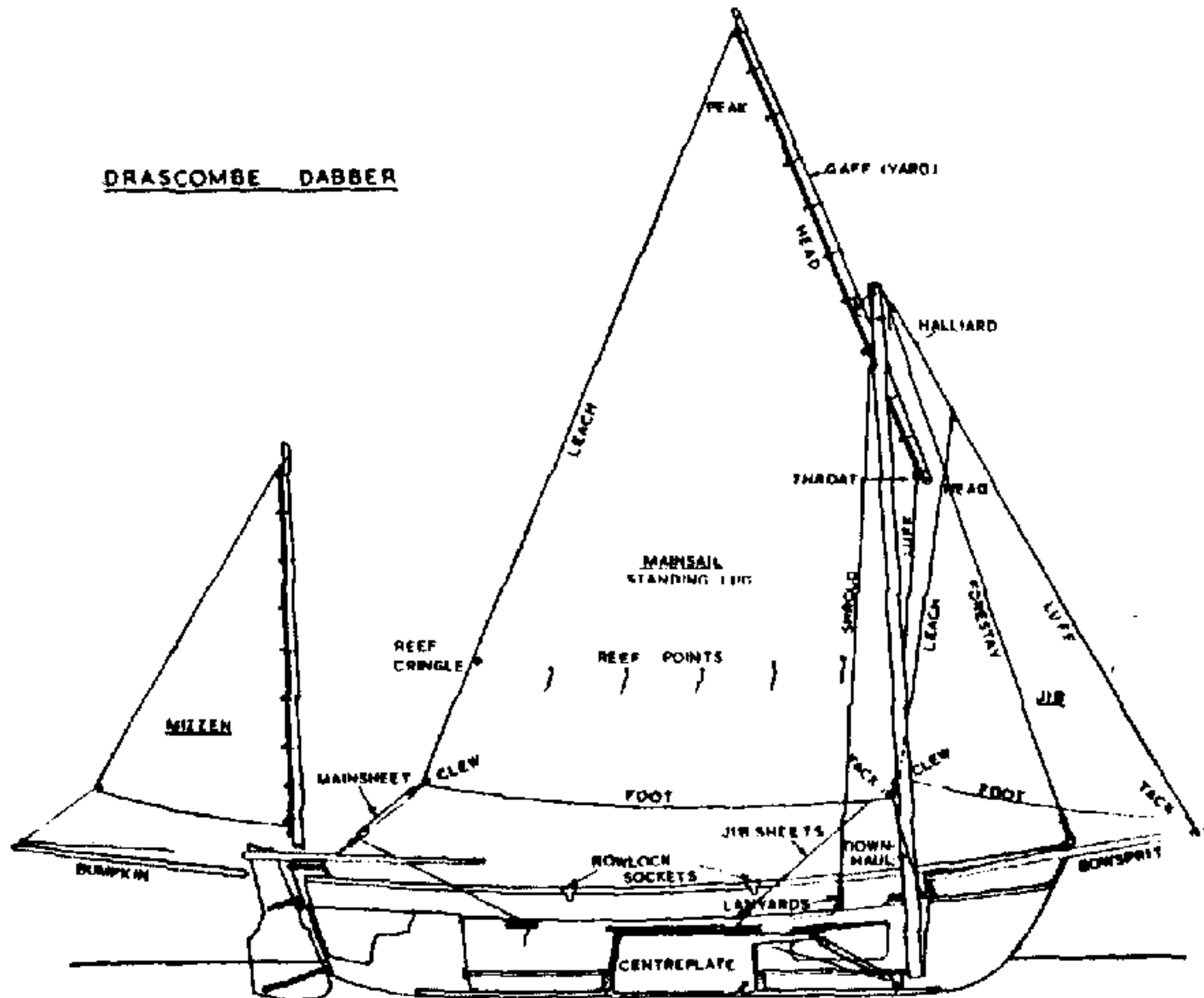


FIG. 1—The rigged Dabber showing the principal parts.

**Preparing to Launch.** The screw bung to drain out bilge water is in the after locker. Get rid of any water present and make sure the bung is screwed tightly home. If an outboard motor is fitted, check that it is centred on its mount and that the securing clamps are done up tightly. If pushing the boat off a trailer, secure a rope to the mooring cleat and hold on to it!

**Rigging for Sailing.** Most of the preparation for sailing is done most conveniently before launching but it can be done from inside the boat while afloat if necessary. Before stepping the mainmast make sure that the shrouds (side stays) and the forestay are attached to the mastband and lying along the mast without twists or tangles. The main halyard should be rove through the sheave at the masthead and the jib halyard through the block hanging from the forestay lug. Tie their ends together to ensure that they do not undo themselves. Pick up the mast and hold it vertically in the boat with the

forestay lug on the mastband facing forward. Raise it and lower it straight down through the hole in the thwart, placing the heel firmly in its socket.

To set up the shrouds take one side and pass several turns of the lanyard through the U-bolt fairlead which is fitted on the side bench. Tension slightly and secure with two or three half-hitches (Fig. 2). Do the same the other side, pulling the mast central and bending it somewhat aft. Finally reeve off the forestay lanyard through the shackle in the stemhead fitting and pull it up as hard as you can before securing. This should tension all three wires and leave the mast standing straight without bearing hard on the thwart in any direction. Note that the forestay is always set up to the stemhead and not to the end of the bowsprit.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.

Ship the bowsprit through the hole in the stem and the bumpkin through the hole in the corner of the transom and you are ready to go. Step the mizzen mast through the transom cap into its step and tie its sheet to its clew. Pass the sheet through the bullseye on the bumpkin, back to the clam cleat on the after deck via the bullseye on the side of the mast. Tie the jib halyard to the head of the jib and slip the loop at the tack of the jib over the end of the bowsprit. Hoist away on the halyard and belay to the belaying pin on the thwart with a good amount of tension. The jib sheet may conveniently be secured to the clew by tying an overhand knot in the middle, passing one end through the clew cringle and tying a second overhand knot as close up as possible. Pass the ends through the fairleads on the side bench and either put a knot in each end or tie the ends together.

Ship the rudder in shallow water and fix the tiller by holding the thin end high in the air while passing it down over the rudder head until it engages with the notch in the rudder. You may then raise the tiller a considerable distance before it comes clear of the circular arc on the rudder and hence in danger of coming off.

Before hoisting the mainsail first Reeve off the main-sheet (Fig. 4) and shackle it to the clew but do not secure the end other than with a knot to stop it from being lost through the lower block. Pass the tack downhaul, which is a single length of line approximately 4ft. long, up through one of the holes in the thwart, tying a knot in its end to hold it there, through the tack cringle on the sail and down through the other hole opposite (Fig. 5) but do not draw tight. Attach the halyard to the yard by taking two turns round the yard immediately below the triangular chocks, and secure with two half hitches. Temporarily attach the other end to make certain it does not vanish up through the masthead sheave. Loosely attach the yard to the mast with the parall beads on their short length of line (Fig. 6). Hoist the sail up quickly to the masthead, tensioning the luff to avoid a poke in the eye from the yard as it goes up! Belay the halyard on its belaying pin and then pull down on the tack and cleat underneath the thwart.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads" on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends (Fig. 10).

For sailing in light winds the tack downhaul should be tight enough to cause just a small amount of creasing in the sail between peak and tack when head to wind. When the sail is full of wind and sheeted home these creases disappear and it draws well with a full, fair curvature. As the wind increases in strength, so the tack should be pulled down harder. The secret of getting a good performance from the standing lug lies largely in the adjustment of this tension. At no time should it ever be slack enough to permit creases across the sail from clew to throat.

# LUGGER

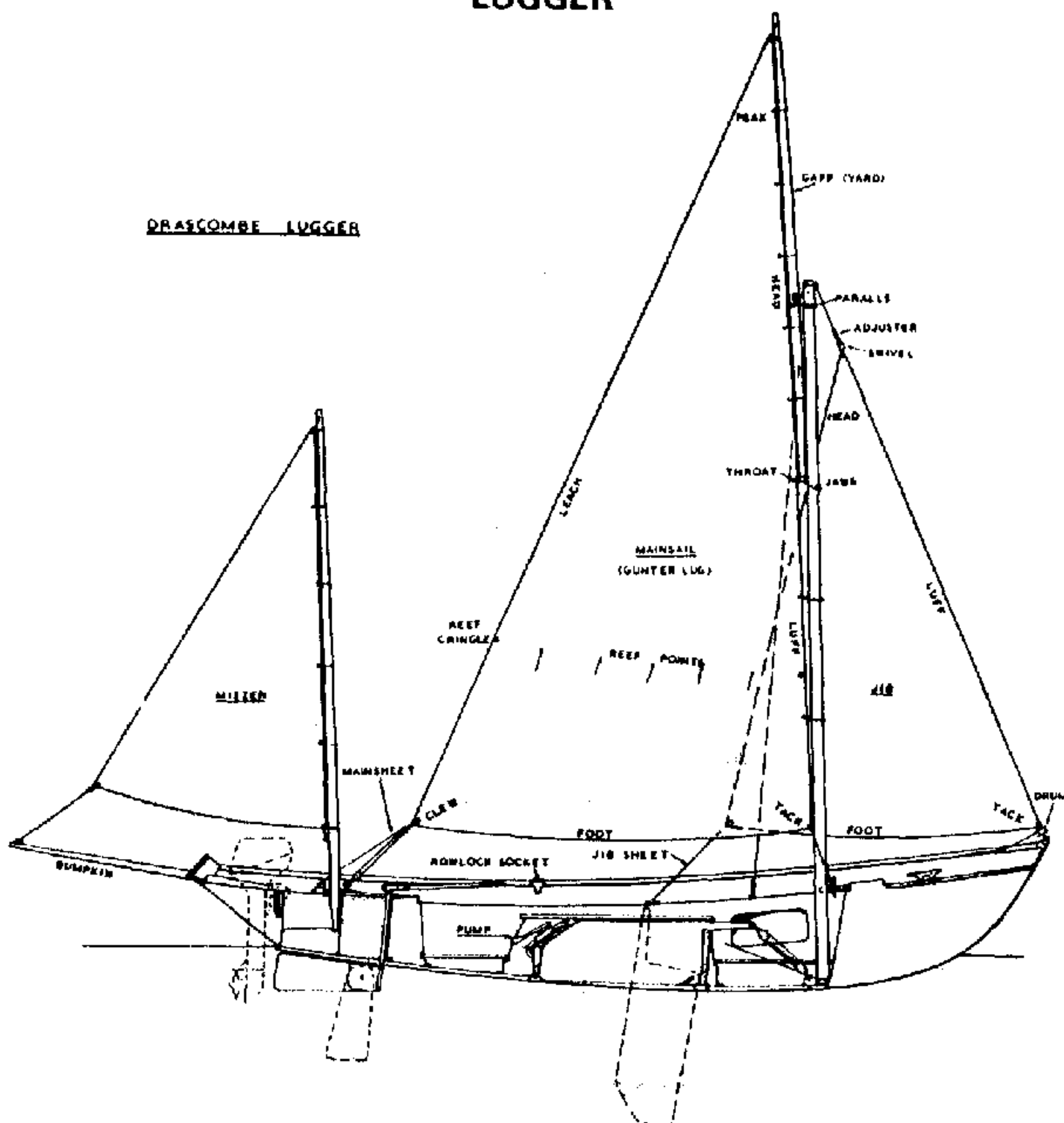


FIG. 7—The rigged Lugger showing the principal parts.

**Preparing to Launch.** The screw bung to drain out bilge water is in the aft locker. Get rid of any water present and make sure the bung is screwed tightly home. If an outboard motor is fitted, check that it is centred on its mount and that the securing clamps are done up tightly. If pushing the boat off a trailer, secure a rope to the mooring cleat and hold on to it!

**Rigging for Sailing.** Most of the preparation for sailing is done most conveniently before launching but it can be done from inside the boat while afloat if necessary. Before stepping the main mast make sure that the shrouds (side stays) are attached to the mast band and lie straight down the mast.

The head of the jib should be shackled to the swivel of the furling gear and the swivel attached to the stub forestay by means of the two multi-hole adjusting plates. Try about the middle of the adjustment first and arrive at the correct pair of holes by trial and error (Fig. 8).

To step the mast have it lying in the boat with its heel under the mast thwart and secure one end of the main halyard to the mooring cleat. Lift the mast, insert the heel in its step and raise until it fits into the half-round notch in the thwart. Take up the slack in the halyard and secure it to a belaying pin. The mast is now secured while you attach the tack of the jib, with the furling gear drum secured to it (the top of the furling gear drum has a hole in it through which the furling line is knotted) to the stemhead casting. It should just reach without bending the mast forwards. If it is not right, lower the mast and adjust the length at the head of the jib. Set up the shrouds by passing several turns of the lanyards through the U-bolt fairleads which are fitted on the side benches and finish with two or three half-hitches (Fig. 2). Set them up before securing the jib tack, so that they pull the mast evenly aft about a  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. from the thwart. Finally heave down on the jib luff and secure to the stem head, thus tightening the shrouds and leaving the mast with about two degrees aft rake.

Roll up the jib by hand, passing the furling line round and round as you do so. With the jib fully rolled up pass the line a couple of times round the drum and then lead it through the hole in the guide and aft along the gunwale capping to the cleat on the port side. Middle the jib sheet and make it fast to the jib clew. An overhand knot close up to the clew cringle each side is a convenient way to do this. Lead the sheets aft outside the shrouds through the fairleads on the side benches and either put a knot in each end or tie the two ends together. To set the jib it is only necessary to release the furling line and pull on one of the sheets. The furling line will be wound up on the drum as the sail unrolls.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the pin at the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.



Step the mizzen mast and ship the bumpkin through the transom board. The mizzen sheet is secured to the clew by means of a bowline or round turn and two half-hitches, passed through the bullseye on the bumpkin and back through the small hole in the transom board to the clam cleat on the after deck.

The main halyard is secured to the yard by a clove hitch immediately below the small triangular chocks which stop it from slipping upwards. One set of parall beads is then used to retain the galvanised steel jaws to the mast and another set to hold the yard upright against the mast (Fig. 8). This second set is conveniently secured to the turns of the clove hitch which holds the halyard so that the yard lies an inch or two back from the mast.

Further paralls are used to stop the luff from bowing away from the mast (Fig. 7). It is important that they are adjusted in length to hold the luff and head in a fair continuous line and that they do not hold the luff too tightly to the mast.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads" on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends. To secure the gaff jaws to the mast it is sufficient to use two beads, while where the parall goes right round the mast four beads are necessary (Fig. 10).

Hoist the mainsail right up and secure the halyard to a belaying pin. Then pass the tack downhaul (which is a single length of line about 4ft. long) up through one hole in the mast thwart, the end knotted under the thwart, through the tack cringle and down through the other hole (Fig. 5). It should be tensioned according to wind strength and secured to the other belaying pin. In light winds the tension should be sufficient to cause just a suspicion of vertical creasing down the luff of the sail, while in fresh winds it should be increased to cause very marked folds in the region of the luff where the sail is head to wind. These folds should vanish when the sail is sheeted home and full of wind.

Reeve off the double-ended mainsheet (Fig. 9), leaving roughly equal amounts of surplus line on each side. The system permits the sheet to be cleated in settled weather but leaves the helmsman with freedom to jerk one end free and release the sheet instantly if a sudden puff demands it. While sailing it sometimes happens that all the letting out is done on one tack and all the pulling in from the other side, leading to all the spare line accumulating on one side. If this happens the first opportunity should be taken to equalise matters.

DRASCOMBE      DRIVER



**Rigging for Sailing.** Most of the preparation for sailing is done most conveniently before launching but it can be done from inside the boat while afloat if necessary. Before stepping the main mast make sure that the shrouds (side stays) are attached to the mast band and lie straight down the mast. The head of the jib should be shackled to the swivel of the furling gear and the swivel attached to the stub forestay by means of the two multi-hole adjusting plates. Try about the

middle of the adjustment first and arrive at the correct pair of holes by trial and error (Fig. 8).

To step the mast have it lying in the boat with its heel *under the mast thwart and secure the fall of the main halyard to the mooring cleat.* Lift the mast, insert the heel in its step and raise until it fits into the half-round notch in the thwart. Take up the slack in the halyard and secure it to a belaying pin. The mast is now secured while you offer up the tack of the jib, with the furling gear drum secured to it (the top of the furling gear drum has a hole in it through which the furling line is knotted) to the stemhead casting. It should just reach without bending the mast forwards. If it is not right, lower the mast and adjust the length at the head of the jib. Set up the shrouds by passing several turns of the lanyards through the U-bolt fairleads which are fitted on the side benches and finish with two or three half-hitches (Fig. 2). Set them up before securing the jib tack, so that they pull the mast evenly aft about a  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. from the thwart. Finally heave down on the jib luff and secure to the stem head, thus tightening the shrouds and leaving the mast with about  $7\frac{1}{2}$  degrees aft rake.

Roll up the jib by hand, passing the furling line round and round as you do so. With the jib fully rolled up pass the line a couple of times round the drum and then lead it through the hole in the guide and aft along the gunwale capping to the cleat on the port side. Middle the jib sheet and make it fast to the jib clew. An overhand knot close up to the clew cringle each side is a convenient way to do this. Lead the sheets aft outside the shrouds through the fairleads on the side benches and either put a knot in each end or tie the two ends together. To set the jib it is only necessary to release the furling line and pull on one of the sheets. The furling line will be wound up on the drum as the sail unrolls.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.

Ship the bumpkin through the hole in the corner of the transom and step the mizzen mast through the transom cap. The mizzen mast is offset to allow the tiller room to swing

and to assist in this the tiller should be shipped on the side of the rudder opposite to the mizzen mast. To ship the tiller lift the inner end high up until the outer end engages easily in the notch on the rudder. Lowering it then locks it in place while still permitting the inner end to be lifted a foot or so. Tie the mizzen sheet to the clew of the sail and pass it through the bullseyes on the bumpkin and the side of the mast, forward to the clam cleat on the after deck.

Before hoisting the mainsail first reeve off the mainsheet (Fig. 4) and shackle it to the clew but do not secure the end other than with a knot to stop it from being lost through the lower block. Pass the tack downhaul (which is a single length of line approximately 4ft.) up through a hole in the thwart, with a knot in its end, through the tack cringle on the sail and down through another hole opposite, but do not draw tight. Attach the halyard to the yard by taking two turns round the yard immediately below the triangular chocks, and secure with two half hitches. Temporarily attach the other end to make certain it does not vanish up through the masthead sheave. Loosely attach the yard to the mast with the parall beads on their short length of line (Fig. 6). Hoist the sail up quickly to the masthead, tensioning the luff to avoid a poke in the eye from the yard as it goes up! Belay the halyard on to its belaying pin and then pull down on the tack.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads" on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends (Fig. 10).

For sailing in light winds the tack downhaul should be tight enough to cause just a small amount of creasing in the sail between peak and tack when head to wind. When the sail is full of wind and sheeted home these creases disappear and it draws well with a full, fair curvature. As the wind increases in strength, so the tack should be pulled down harder. The secret of getting a good performance from the standing lug lies largely in the adjustment of this tension. At no time should it ever be slack enough to permit creases across the sail from clew to throat.

## OPEN LONGBOAT

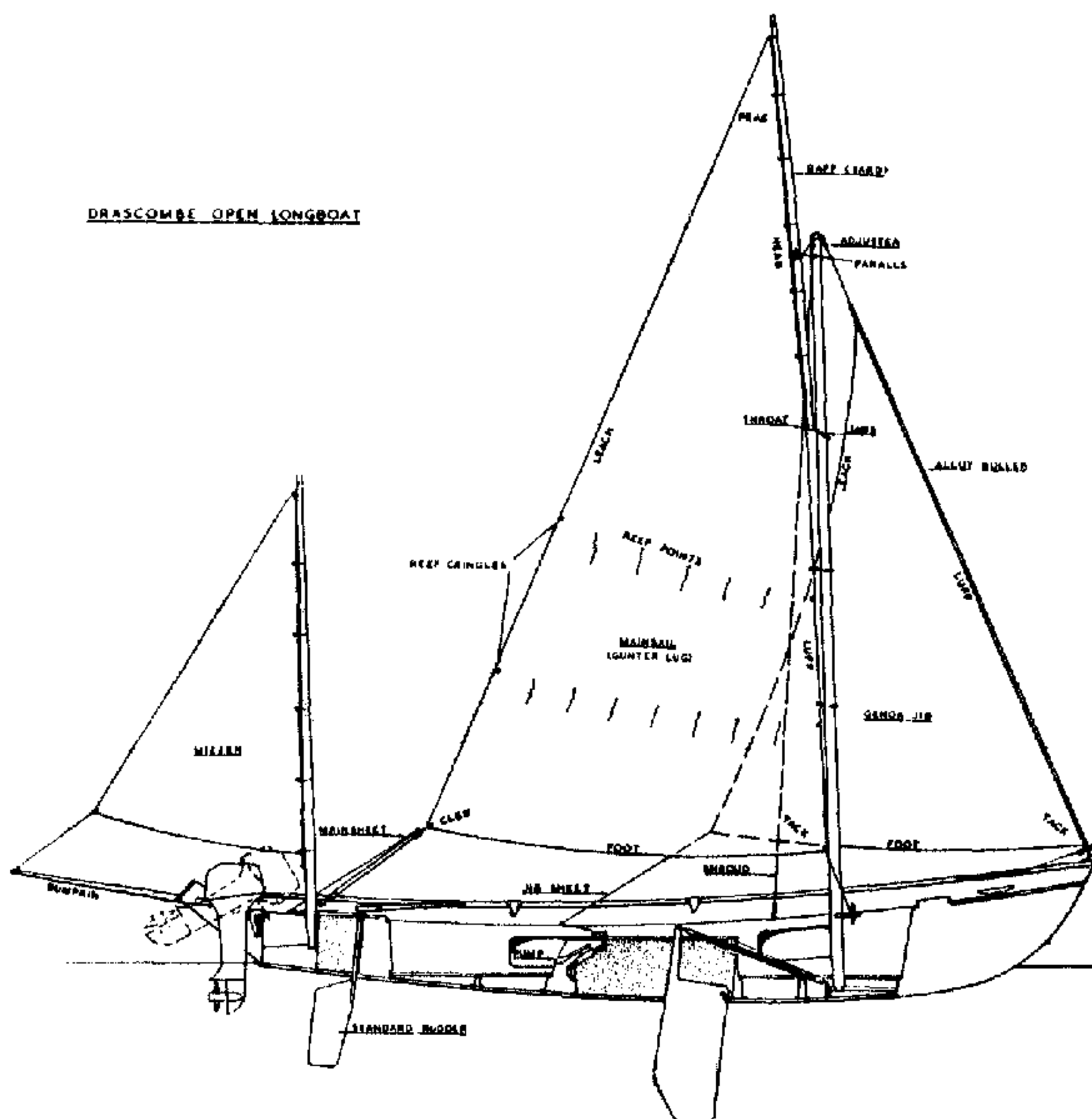


FIG. 12—The rigged Open Longboat showing the principal parts.

**Preparing to Launch.** The screw bung to drain out bilge water is in the after locker. Get rid of any water present and make sure the bung is screwed tightly home. If an outboard motor is fitted, check that it is centred on its mount and that the securing clamps are done up tightly. If pushing the boat off a trailer, secure a rope to the mooring cleat and hold on to it!

**Rigging for Sailing.** Most of the preparation for sailing is done most conveniently before launching but it can be done from inside the boat while afloat if necessary. Before stepping the main mast make sure that the shrouds (side stays) are attached to the mast band and lie straight down the mast. The length of forestay at the head of the roller jib spar should be secured to the mast band by means of the two multi-hole

adjusting plates. Try about the middle of the adjustment first and arrive at the correct pair of holes by trial and error.

To step the mast have it lying in the boat with its heel under the mast thwart and secure one end of the main halyard to the mooring cleat. Lift the mast, insert the heel in its step and raise until it fits into the half-round notch in the thwart. Take up the slack in the halyard and secure it to a belaying pin. The mast is now secured while you offer up the forestay with the roller spar on it, to the stemhead casting. It should just reach without bending the mast forwards. If it is not right lower the mast and adjust the length at the head of the stay. Set up the shrouds by passing several turns of the lanyards through the U-bolt fairleads (which are fitted on the side benches) and finish with two or three half-hitches (Fig. 2). Set them up before securing the forestay, so that they pull the mast evenly aft about a  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. from the thwart. Finally heave down on the roller jib spar and secure the bottom of the forestay to the after hole in the stem head, thus tightening the shrouds and leaving the mast with about two degrees aft rake.

Shackle the head of the jib to the light halyard in the luff spar and hoist it up the groove until the tack can be secured by means of the split pin just above the drum. Tighten the halyard and secure it in the cleat before passing the tail of it down through the hole in the drum and out through the other hole to its working position. Secure the short length of line which stops the unit from turning to the foremost eye inside the gunwale. Roll up the sail by hand, passing all the free line round and round as you do so. With the jib rolled right up, take two or three turns round the drum before leading the line through the guide and aft along the gunwale where it is secured on a cleat.

Middle the jib sheet and make it fast to the jib clew. An overhand knot close up to the clew cringle each side is a convenient way to do this. Lead the sheets aft outside the shrouds through the adjustable fairleads on the side benches and either put a knot in each end or tie the two ends together. To set the jib it is only necessary to release the furling line and pull on one of the sheets. The furling line will be wound up on the drum as the sail unrolls.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the pin at the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail

shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.

Step the mizzen mast and ship the bumpkin through the transom board. The mizzen sheet is secured to the clew by means of a bowline or round turn and two half-hitches, passed through the bullseye on the bumpkin and back through the small hole in the transom board to the clam cleat on the after deck.

- The main halyard is secured to the yard by a clove hitch immediately below the small triangular chocks which stop it from slipping upwards. One set of parall beads is then used to retain the galvanised steel jaws to the mast and another set to hold the yard upright against the mast (Fig. 8). This second set is conveniently secured to the turns of the clove hitch which holds the halyard so that yard lies an inch or two back from the mast.

Further paralls are used to stop the luff from bowing away from the mast (Fig. 12). It is important that they are adjusted in length to hold the luff and head in a fair continuous line and that they do not hold the luff too tightly to the mast.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads" on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends. To secure the gaff jaws to the mast it is sufficient to use two beads, while where the parall goes right round the mast four beads are necessary (Fig. 10).

Hoist the mainsail right up and secure the halyard to a belaying pin. Then pass the tack downhaul (which is a single length of line about 4ft. long) up through one hole in the mast thwart, knotting the end under the thwart, through the tack cringle and down through the other hole (Fig. 5). It should be tensioned according to wind strength and secured to the other belaying pin. In light winds the tension should be sufficient to cause just a suspicion of vertical creasing down the luff of the sail, while in fresh winds it should be increased to cause very marked folds in the region of the luff when the sail is head to wind. These folds should vanish when the sail is sheeted home and full of wind.

Reeve off the double-ended mainsheet as shown (Fig. 9), leaving roughly equal amounts of surplus line on each side. The system permits the sheet to be cleated in settled weather but leaves the helmsman with freedom to jerk one end free and release the sheet instantly if a sudden puff demands it.

While sailing it sometimes happens that all the letting out is done on one tack and all the pulling in from the other side, leading to all the spare line accumulating on one side. If this happens the first opportunity should be taken to equalise matters.

The bearing-out spar may be used to keep the mainsail flat when reaching or running before the wind. The thin end is slipped into the pocket at the clew and the jaws set on the mast as high as is necessary to give the desired curvature to the sail. It is shipped on the windward side and a length of line made fast on the mast thwart prevents it from riding up the mast.

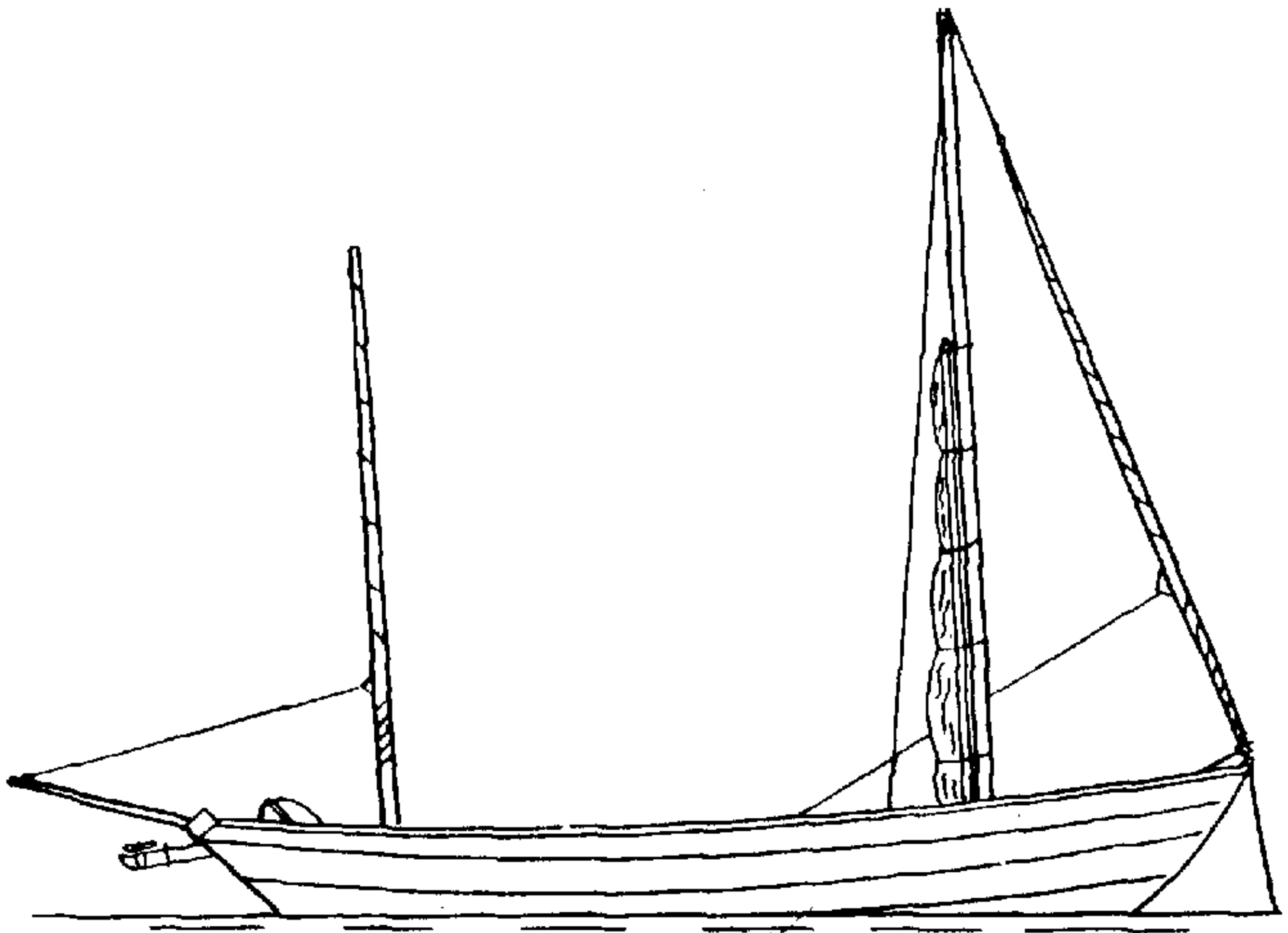


FIG. 16—Lugger showing sails furlled on spars. A jib protection sleeve is available to keep sunlight from bleaching the edges.



## CRUISER LONGBOAT

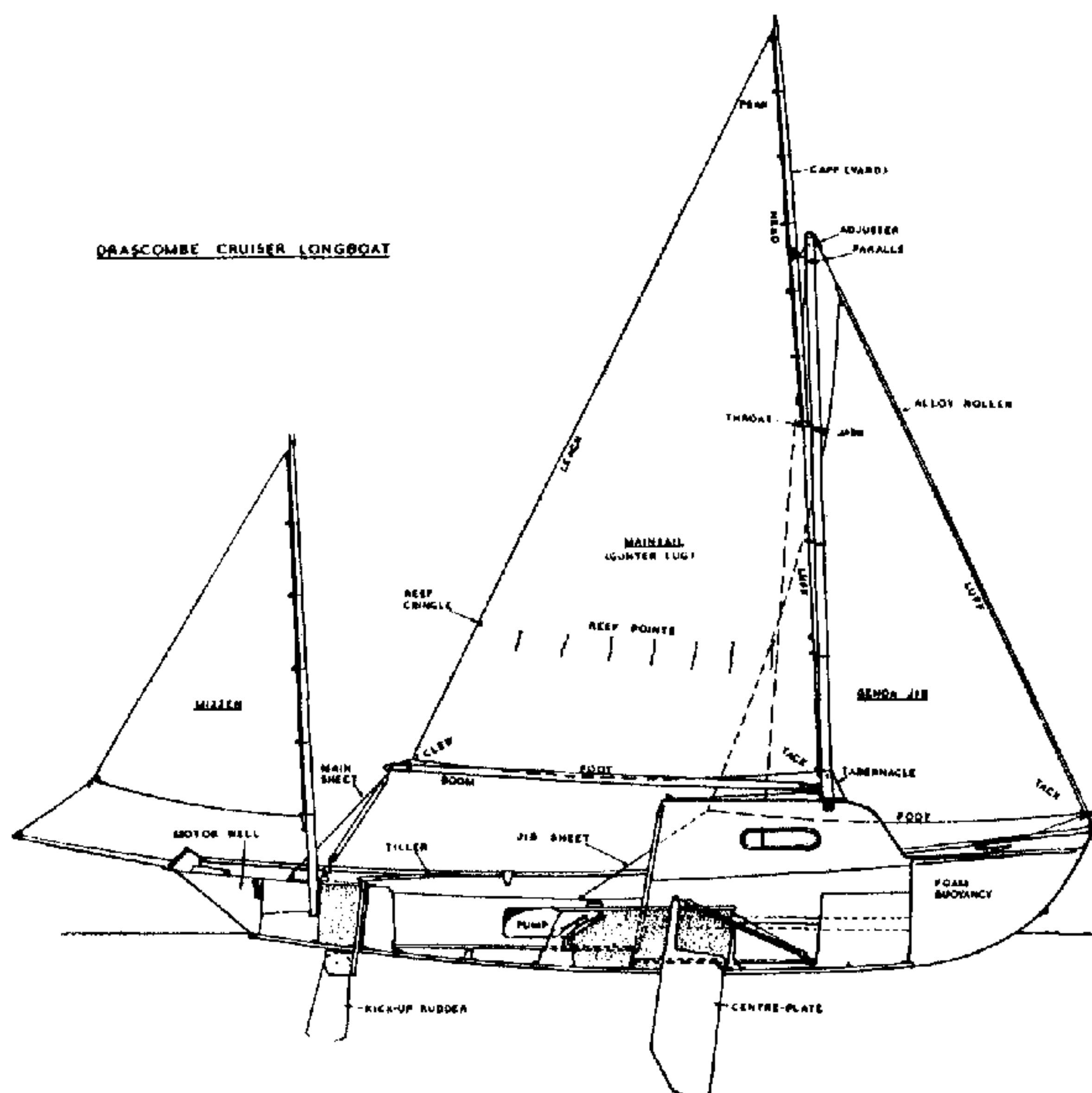


FIG. 13—The rigged Cruiser Longboat showing the principal parts.

**Preparing to Launch.** The screw bung to drain out bilge water is in the after locker. Get rid of any water present and make sure the bung is screwed tightly home. If an outboard motor is fitted, check that it is centred on its mount and that the securing clamps are done up tightly. If pushing the boat off a trailer, secure a rope to the mooring cleat and hold on to it!

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adjusting plates. Try about the middle of the adjustment first and arrive at the correct pair of holes by trial and error.

To step the mast have it lying across the cabin top and cockpit with the heel adjacent to the tabernacle. It helps to have someone in the cockpit to hold the head up until the spar is roughly horizontal but this is not essential. Making sure that the forestay is on top, put the heel in the tabernacle and secure it with the bolt right through. Raise the mast to vertical and attach the forestay fitting at the lower end of the roller jib spar to the stemhead. Take a turn or two of the lanyards from the shrouds through the U-bolt fairleads which are fitted on the side decks, to avoid excessive side strain on the tabernacle. If the mast sits well in its tabernacle and leans aft with about a two degree rake, the forestay is correctly adjusted. If it is too upright or has too much rake, lower it and change the length of the stay by the adjuster at the masthead. Finally set up the shrouds by taking several turns of the lanyards through the fairleads and securing with half-hitches (Fig. 2). The second shroud to be set up should need its lanyard tightening as hard as you can pull in order to pull the mast up straight.

Shackle the head of the jib to the light halyard in the luff spar and hoist it up the groove until the tack can be secured by means of the split pin just above the drum. Tighten the halyard and secure it in the cleat before passing the tail of it down through the hole in the drum and out through the other hole to its working position. Secure the short length of line which stops the unit from turning to the foremost eye inside the gunwale. Roll up the sail by hand, passing all the free line round and round as you do so. With the jib rolled right up, take two or three turns round the drum before leading the line through the guide and aft along the gunwale where it is secured on a cleat.

Middle the jib sheet and make it fast to the jib clew. An overhand knot close up to the clew cringle each side is a convenient way to do this. Lead the sheets aft outside the shrouds through the adjustable fairleads on the side bench and either put a knot in each end or tie the two ends together. To set the jib it is only necessary to release the furling line and pull on one of the sheets. The furling line will be wound up on the drum as the sail unrolls.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the pin at the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail

shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.

Step the mizzen mast and ship the bumpkin through the transom board. The mizzen sheet is secured to the clew by means of a bowline or round turn and two half-hitches, passed through the bullseye on the bumpkin and back through the small hole in the transom board to the clam cleat on the after deck.

The main halyard is secured to the yard by a clove hitch immediately below the small triangular chocks which stop it from slipping upwards. One set of parall beads is then used to retain the galvanised steel jaws to the mast and another set to hold the yard upright against the mast (Fig. 8). This second set is conveniently secured to the turns of the clove hitch which holds the halyard so that the yard lies an inch or two back from the mast.

Further paralls are used to stop the luff from bowing away from the mast (Fig. 13). It is important that they are adjusted in length to hold the luff and head in a fair continuous line and that they do not hold the luff too tightly to the mast. Paralls should pass outside the fall of the main halyard.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends. To secure the gaff jaws to the mast it is sufficient to use two beads, while where the parall goes right round the mast four beads are necessary.

Lead the tail of the main halyard down the fore side of the mast, through the sheave in the heel of the mast and aft to a cleat on the after edge of the cabin top. Secure the light line at the tack of the mainsail to the bullseye on the mast just above the tabernacle and hoist the mainsail. The tension in the halyard must be varied to suit the strength of the wind. In light breezes there should be just a suspicion of vertical creasing down the luff of the sail, while for strong winds the tension should be increased to cause pronounced folds down the luff when the sail is head to wind. These folds vanish when the sail is sheeted home and full of wind.

The boom is prevented from jumping off its hook on the tabernacle by securing the short lanyard to one of the holes in the metal strip immediately beneath. At its outer end the mainsail clips to a wire strop round the boom and this strop may be adjusted in or out by an outhaul which leads through the boom end and forward to a cleat (Fig. 14). The sail

may be adjusted in or out by an outhaul which leads through the boom end and forward to a cleat (Fig. 14). The sail should have plenty of fullness for light winds and for reaching but be hauled out fairly flat for close-hauled work and flatter still in fresh winds. The double block of the main sheet is clipped to a second strop round the end of the boom.

Reeve off the double-ended mainsheet as shown (Fig. 9), leaving roughly equal amounts of surplus line on each side. The system permits the sheet to be cleated in settled weather but leaves the helmsman with freedom to jerk one end free and release the sheet instantly if a sudden puff demands it. While sailing it sometimes happens that all the letting out is done on one tack and all the pulling in from the other side, leading to all the spare line accumulating on one side. If this happens the first opportunity should be taken to equalise matters.

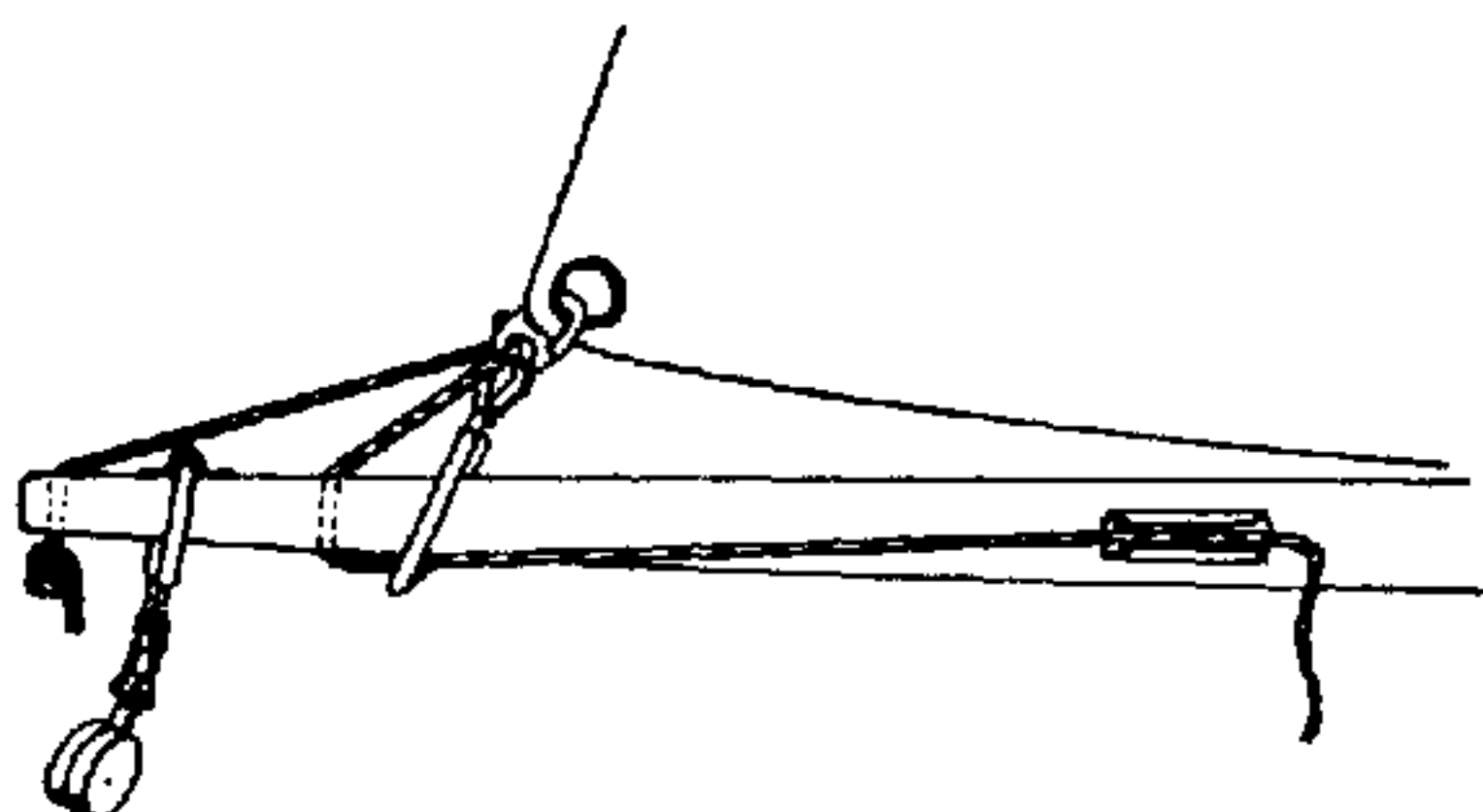
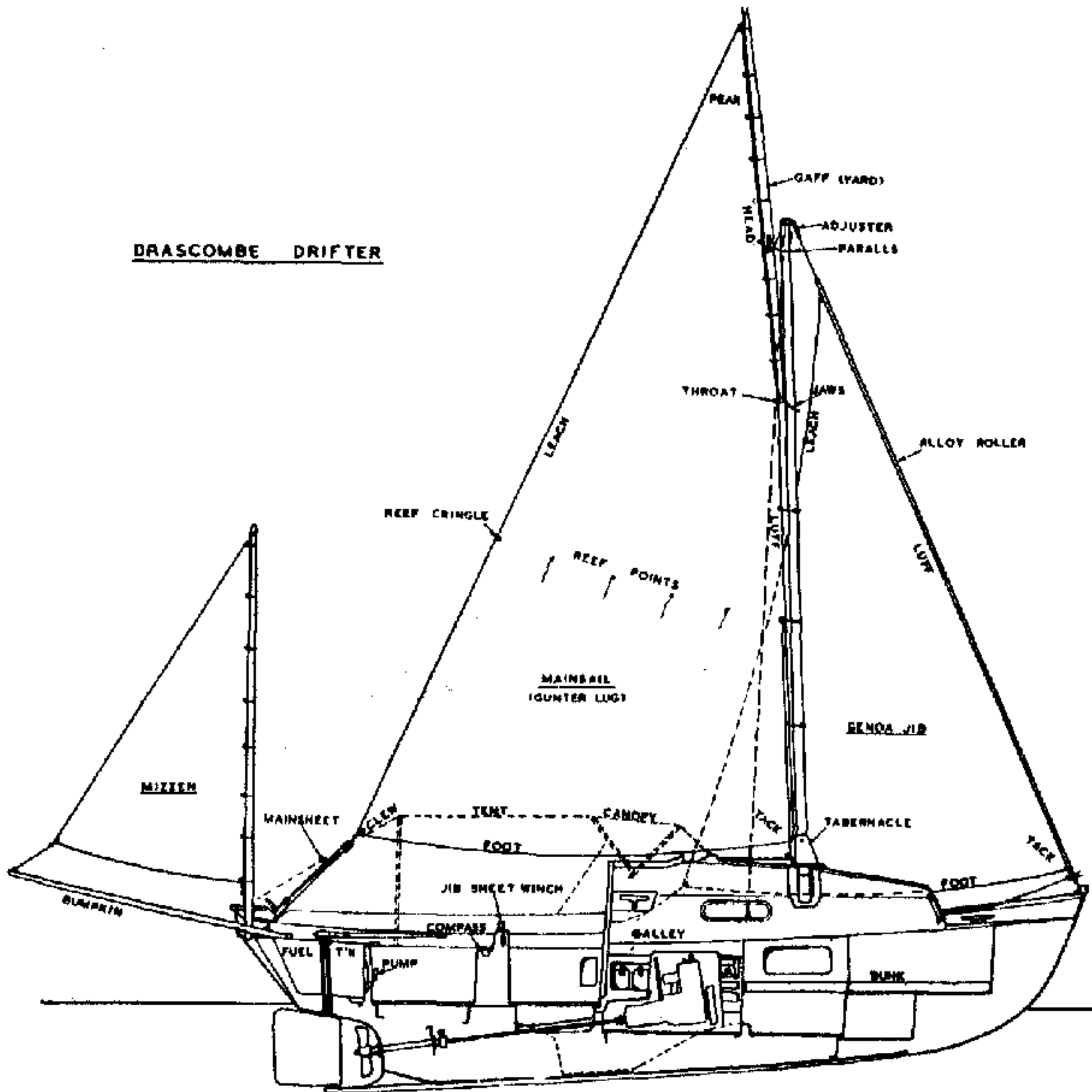


FIG. 14—Arrangement of outhaul at end of Cruiser Longboat boom.  
The double block is for the mainsheet.

# DRIFTER



**FIG. 15—The rigged Drifter showing the principal parts.**

**Rigging for Sailing.** Most of the preparation for sailing is done most conveniently before launching but it can be done from inside the boat while afloat if necessary. Before stepping the main mast make sure that the shrouds (side stays) are attached to the mast band and lie straight down the mast. The length of forestay at the head of the roller jib spar should be secured to the mast band by means of the two multi-hole adjusting plates. Try about the middle of the adjustment first and arrive at the correct pair of holes by trial and error.

To step the mast have it lying across the cabin top and cockpit with the heel adjacent to the tabernacle. It helps to have someone in the cockpit to hold the head up until the

spar is roughly horizontal but this is not essential. Making sure that the forestay is on top, put the heel in the tabernacle and secure it with the bolt right through. Raise the mast to vertical and attach the forestay fitting at the lower end of the roller jib spar to the stemhead. Take a turn or two of the lanyards from the shrouds through the U-bolt fairleads which are fitted on the side decks, to avoid excessive side strain on the tabernacle. If the mast sits well in its tabernacle and leans aft with about a two degree rake, the forestay is correctly adjusted. If it is too upright or has too much rake, lower it and change the length of the stay by the adjuster at the masthead. Finally set up the shrouds by taking several turns of the lanyards through the fairleads and securing with half-hitches (Fig. 2). The second shroud to be set up should need its lanyard tightening as hard as you can pull in order to pull the mast up straight.

Shackle the head of the jib to the light halyard in the luff spar and hoist it up the groove until the tack can be secured by means of the split pin just above the drum. Tighten the halyard and secure it in the cleat before passing the tail of it down through the hole in the drum and out through the other hole to its working position. Secure the short length of line which stops the unit from turning to the foremost eye inside the gunwale. Roll up the sail by hand, passing all the free line round and round as you do so. With the jib rolled right up, take two or three turns round the drum before leading the line through the guide and aft along the gunwale where it is secured on a cleat just to port of the cabin doorway.

The jibsheet is in two parts. Make fast both parts to the clew of the jib with bowlines. Lead the sheets aft outside the shrouds through the adjustable fairleads on the side decks, beneath the fore ends of the coamings and through the blocks on either side of the cockpit and so to the winch. Put a knot in each end or tie the ends together. To set the jib it is only necessary to release the furling line and pull on one of the sheets. The furling line will be wound up on the drum as the sail unrolls.

The mainsail has to be lashed to its yard and the mizzen to its mast. The method is the same for both. First secure the lower corner (in the case of the mainsail, the throat cringle to the pin at the lower end of the yard) and stretch the sail along the spar. Tension the top lanyard until the sail shows slight creasing parallel to the spar and secure the peak. Then lace to the spar with the marlin hitch (Fig. 3) but not too tightly. The lacing is only to stop it from bowing away and

should be slack enough to permit some movement of the sail relative to the spar.

Step the mizzen mast through the transom cap into its step and ship the bumpkin through the transom. The mizzen sheet is secured to the clew by means of a bowline or round turn and two half-hitches, passed through the bullseye on the bumpkin and back through the small hole in the transom to the clam cleat on the after deck.

The main halyard is secured to the yard by a clove hitch immediately below the small triangular chocks which stop it from slipping upwards. One set of parall beads is then used to retain the galvanised steel jaws to the mast and another set to hold the yard upright against the mast (Fig. 8). This second set is conveniently secured to the turns of the clove hitch which holds the halyard so that the yard lies an inch or two back from the mast.

Further paralls are used to stop the luff from bowing away from the mast as shown (Fig. 14). It is important that they are adjusted in length to hold the luff and head in a fair continuous line and that they do not hold the luff too tightly to the mast. Paralls should pass outside the fall of the main halyard.

Paralls are made up by threading the "beads" on to light line with an overhand knot between each and a retaining knot at the ends (Fig. 10). To secure the gaff jaws to the mast it is sufficient to use two beads, while where the parall goes right round the mast four beads are necessary.

Lead the halyard down the fore side of the mast, through the sheave in the heel and aft via the port hand fairlead on the coaming to the porthand cleat on the after edge of the cabin top. Pass the tack downhaul through the bullseye on the mast and aft to the middle cleat via the double block shackled to the starboard side of the tabernacle. The reefing downhaul is shackled to the port side of the tabernacle and passes up through the reef cringle in the luff of the sail before being led aft via the double block to the starboard cleat.

Hoist the mainsail right up and adjust the tension in the luff by means of the tack downhaul. The tension in the luff must be varied to suit the strength of the wind. In light breezes there should be just a suspicion of vertical creasing down the luff of the sail, while for strong winds the tension should be increased to cause pronounced folds down the luff when the sail is head to wind. These folds vanish when the sail is sheeted home and full of wind.

Reeve off the double-ended mainsheet (Fig. 9), leaving *roughly equal amounts* of surplus line on each side. The system permits the sheet to be cleated in settled weather but leaves the helmsman with freedom to jerk one end free and release the sheet *instantly if a sudden puff demands it*. While sailing it sometimes happens that all the letting out is done on one tack and all the pulling in from the other side, leading to all the spare line accumulating on one side. If this happens the first opportunity should be taken to equalise matters.



## SAILING HINTS

The following notes point to some of the special characteristics of the Drascombe boats and assume a basic knowledge of sailing by the reader. Should anyone become a Drascombe owner with no knowledge of sailing they would, before setting out on their own, be well advised to take a short course at a sailing school or from a knowledgeable friend.

To get to understand the yawl rig it helps to sail under jib and mizzen only. The Lugger, Longboats and Drifter are good at this because they have relatively large jibs. The Dabber and Driver with smaller jibs are less satisfactory although they will do it reasonably well. If it is desired to reduce sail without reefing, they are better sailed under main only, with jib and mizzen furled. However, for jogging along while fishing, jib and mizzen are ideal because the furled mainsail leaves a large clear cockpit.

The mizzen is mainly a balancing sail and the adjustments of its sheet can usually be left until last. The one time it calls for urgent attention is when a tack has been misjudged and the boat gets stuck head to wind. If she then starts to make sternway it is essential to let go the mizzen sheet quickly to give the rudder a chance to swing the stern one way or the other.

You will almost never get in irons if you take care always to sheet the jib smartly home on the new tack while the boat still has way on. The mainsail can be dealt with later if necessary.

Mainsails on the Lugger, Longboats and Drifter may be cleated in moderate breezes and may be tacked without attention. In the case of the Dabber and Driver the fall of the mainsheet must be transferred to the cleat on the new lee side—not cleated to leeward but with a dry turn round the horn of the cleat and then across to the helmsman's hand (Fig. 4).

It must never be forgotten, even in the case of the Drifter, that it is dangerous to cleat the mainsheet in strong or gusty winds. In a severe knockdown any of the boats may be swamped.

In sailing the boats with centreplates use should be made of the fact that the centre of pressure on the plate moves aft as it is hoisted. In fresh winds it sometimes helps to pull the plate just a little up when close hauled, while with the wind abeam or further astern the plate needs to be about half up. If broad reaching in fresh conditions it may make steering easier if the mizzen is completely furled. In very severe weather use the jib only.

The standing lug sails of the Dabber and the Driver are very simple and are very powerful sails, but they are a little more difficult to hoist and lower than the gunter lug sails of the other boats. To reef the standing lugs in fresh winds it is best to lower the yard right down and re-hoist when the reef has been tied and the sheet and tack downhaul shifted. The gunter sails may be lowered the appropriate amount and reefed as they stand. To maintain maximum control it is best to clip the upper sheet block into the reef cringle without first unclipping it from the clew cringle. The sail may then be sheeted home and the tack downhaul and reef points dealt with at leisure. When reefing it is usually best to heave-to by hauling the jib aback, using the windward sheet. With the jib aback and the mizzen sheeted in, any of the Drascombe boats will lie more or less stopped and the helm may be left untended.

### OUTBOARD MOTORS

The Dabber, Lugger and Longboats have all been designed for outboard motors and have sturdy motor mounts fitted. A prime consideration has been the need to facilitate simple maintenance such as plug changing and propeller clearing from safe positions within the bulwarks. This called for trunk mounting but care also had to be taken to cut out the excessive drag sometimes associated with outboards in trunks. Hence the slot in the sloping transom which eliminates undue turbulence.

Some motors have restricted turning ability but it should be remembered that all the boats are intended to be steered by their rudders when under power, the motor normally being left free to pivot so that it will follow turns of its own accord. This it does easily, a touch on the engine tiller being needed only to assist a sharp turn or to bring the engine back amidships after a hard rudder turn.

If you do not have a kick-up rudder, remember always to leave the centreplate half down when motoring in shallow water. When the plate touches bottom it is time to raise both rudder and engine and take to the oars—or else sheer off for deeper water.

Nothing is to be gained by over-powering a Drascombe boat. All that happens is that the fuel bill goes up while the stern goes down—and you go hardly any faster. The recommended powers are as follows :

Dabber	-	-	2 to 4 h.p.
Lugger	-	-	4 to 6 h.p.
Longboat	-	-	4 to 8 h.p.
Drifter	-	-	6 to 10 h.p.

## **INBOARD ENGINES**

The Driver has the Watermota Shrimp petrol engine as standard equipment. It make use of the Watermota variable pitch and feathering propeller in place of a gearbox, the advantage being that the large blades may be feathered fore-and-aft to reduce drag when sailing. The boat can be fitted with a diesel engine at extra cost.

**Please read the manufacturer's handbooks very carefully before filling up with fuel and starting the engine.** During the first few hours of running frequently check the tightness of the holding down bolts and if vibration should noticeably increase at any time look to this first. Do not forget to give the stern tube greaser a turn after every few hours running and make sure you have grease aboard to re-fill the cup when required. Check the oil level and the water in the battery, if your boat is fitted with electric starting. The recoil starter on the Shrimp benefits from fairly frequent oiling.

Before starting up the Shrimp always make certain that the propeller is in neutral position and never forget that the propeller turns as long as the engine runs. Always switch off when recovering a swimmer or if in danger of fouling moorings or fishing lines.

The Sabb diesel fitted in the Drifter has a clutch in addition to the variable pitch propeller. It is rarely used when under way but it does enable the engine to be run up, possibly for charging batteries, without the propeller constantly turning.

Immediately after starting up, lean over the stern and check that cooling water is coming out of the exhaust pipe. With rubber exhaust hose it is important not to run for long without water keeping it cool. In the case of the water-cooled engines, also, they are likely to seize up if run without proper cooling. The first thing to check is that the seacock at the water intake is open and that nothing is obstructing water entry. After that check the water pump.

Diesel engines are very sensitive to air or dirt in the fuel and to avoid the possibility of air locks in the system it is usual to leave the cock on the fuel tank open. Fuel should be filtered when put into the tank and any accumulation of water in the bottom of the tank removed from time to time. If it becomes necessary to bleed air from the fuel system, do so in strict accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Finally, we would stress that these are brief general comments based on use of the engines in Drascombe boats and the engine manufacturer's handbook supplied with the boat should be followed with care.

## **TRAILERS**

Modern boat trailers are reliable and very tolerant of abuse. If they do let you down it is very probably because you have not given them the small amount of maintenance that they call for.

You may immerse them in salt water to launch or recover boats but never do so if the hubs are warm immediately after a long, fast trip. Do keep the hubs well packed with grease and also grease the hitch from time to time. Braked trailers need to have the brake mechanism cleaned and oiled to ensure it works freely.

Remember to apply the spacer which stops the brakes from coming on when you have to reverse.

It makes sense to carry a spare wheel (correctly inflated to the pressure shown on the plate on the trailer) and if you do a lot of trailing you may think it prudent to carry spare wheel bearings as well. You will probably never need them but if you should do so they could save you a long and frustrating delay.

To recover a boat on a steep slip, tow it out of the water by attaching it to the car with a length of rope. Then block its wheels and back down to hitch up directly.

## **MAINTENANCE**

Built from fibreglass mouldings and having oiled teak wood trim, your Drascombe boat needs very little maintenance in order to preserve her in good condition. The sails are of terylene (dacron) and the rigging is of stainless steel wire or synthetic cordage, so that rot and corrosion find little or nothing to attack. However, she will soon lose her good looks if allowed to get dirty and scratched and the boat-proud owner will make sure the mouldings stay clean by occasionally washing with warm water and detergent. A mild abrasive powder can be used to shift any stubborn marks, while petrol may be used for oil and grease. It helps to keep the fibreglass from getting dirty if it is given a good polish with a wax polish such as used for cars.

Minor scratches will have no effect on durability but severe scratching or abrasion which reveals the glass fibres should be dealt with. A coat of polyurethane paint will give protection but for best results the scratches should be filled and sandpapered flush before painting. For filling use a polyester paste or we can supply matching gel coat kits. When painting fibreglass mouldings, it is essential to prepare the surface for the paint to key firmly. Special primers can be obtained from the paint manufacturers and must be used

exactly in accordance with the instructions. Alternatively, the surface may be rubbed down lightly with a fine grade of sandpaper.

Spidery fine cracks, usually radiating from a central point, are known as "star-crazing" and are the result of the impact of a hard object on the surface coat of coloured, un-reinforced resin—the "gel coat". They are almost never structurally significant but may be opened out and filled with gel coat if desired.

Left to itself, the teak will bleach to a pale greyish brown and many people prefer its appearance thus. To maintain a rich dark brown, an occasional rub over with a rag soaked in boiled linseed oil is all that is required. The floorboards are treated with a special preservative and will weather to a pleasing grey shade. They need no attention other than an occasional scrub to keep them clean. The spars, however, are varnished with polyurethane varnish and need a rub down and another coat whenever they show signs of wear—normally once a year.

Centreplate and rudder are of mild steel, galvanised by the hot dip process, and they should last several years before needing any attention. When they show signs of rust they may be re-galvanised or treated with a good quality anti-rust paint and several coats of marine paint or anti-fouling.

Should you have the misfortune to bend the steel stock of a rudder by running hard aground, the simplest way to straighten it is to careen the boat on a beach and apply an equal force in the opposite direction. You may need to cramp a stout piece of timber to the blade to do this or you may be able to muster sufficient strong men. If this is not feasible and the rudder is bent too badly to come up through its trunk you have no alternative to removing the tiller fitting in order to drop it out through the bottom (having first secured a line to it). Boats fitted with aluminium alloy tiller fittings present no problem, since they can be unclamped. In earlier boats which have an integrally welded tiller fitting, however, the only answer is a hacksaw. After straightening the stock the top will then need to be welded back on.

**"DRASCOMBE"**—the name and its origin. Drascombe lies high up on the fringe of Dartmoor, on or near the ancient Mariners' Way, the path taken by sailors going from North to South Devon ports or vice versa. It is first mentioned in A.D. 689 and "DRAS" is Saxon for mud.

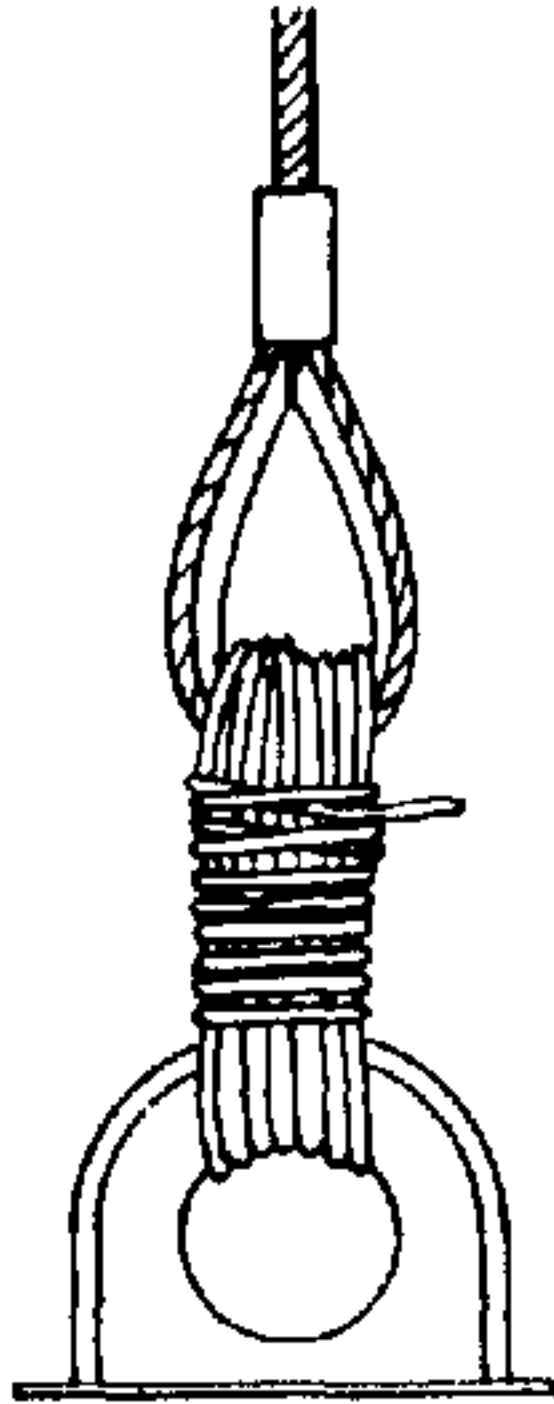


FIG. 2—Method of securing shrouds to U-bolt fairleads on side-decks by lanyards.

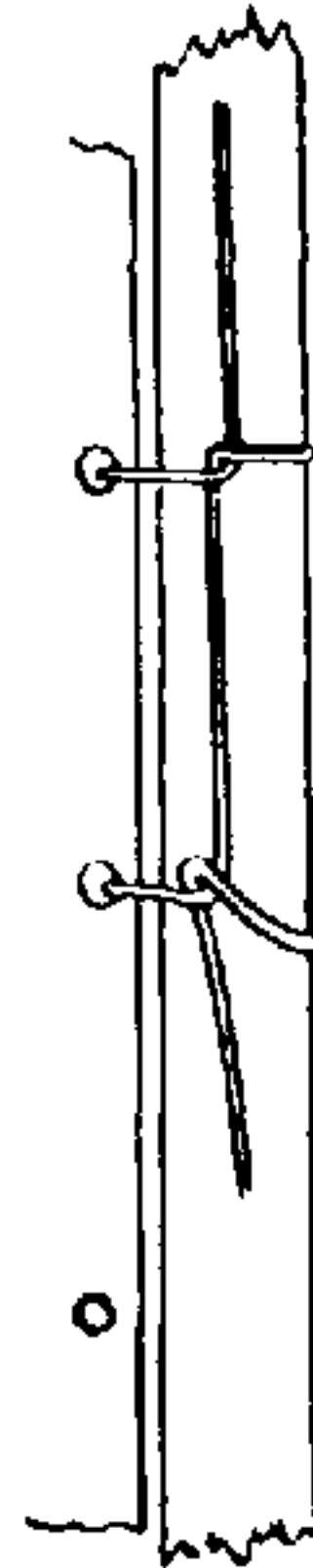


FIG. 3—Marlin hitch, used for lacing sails to spars.

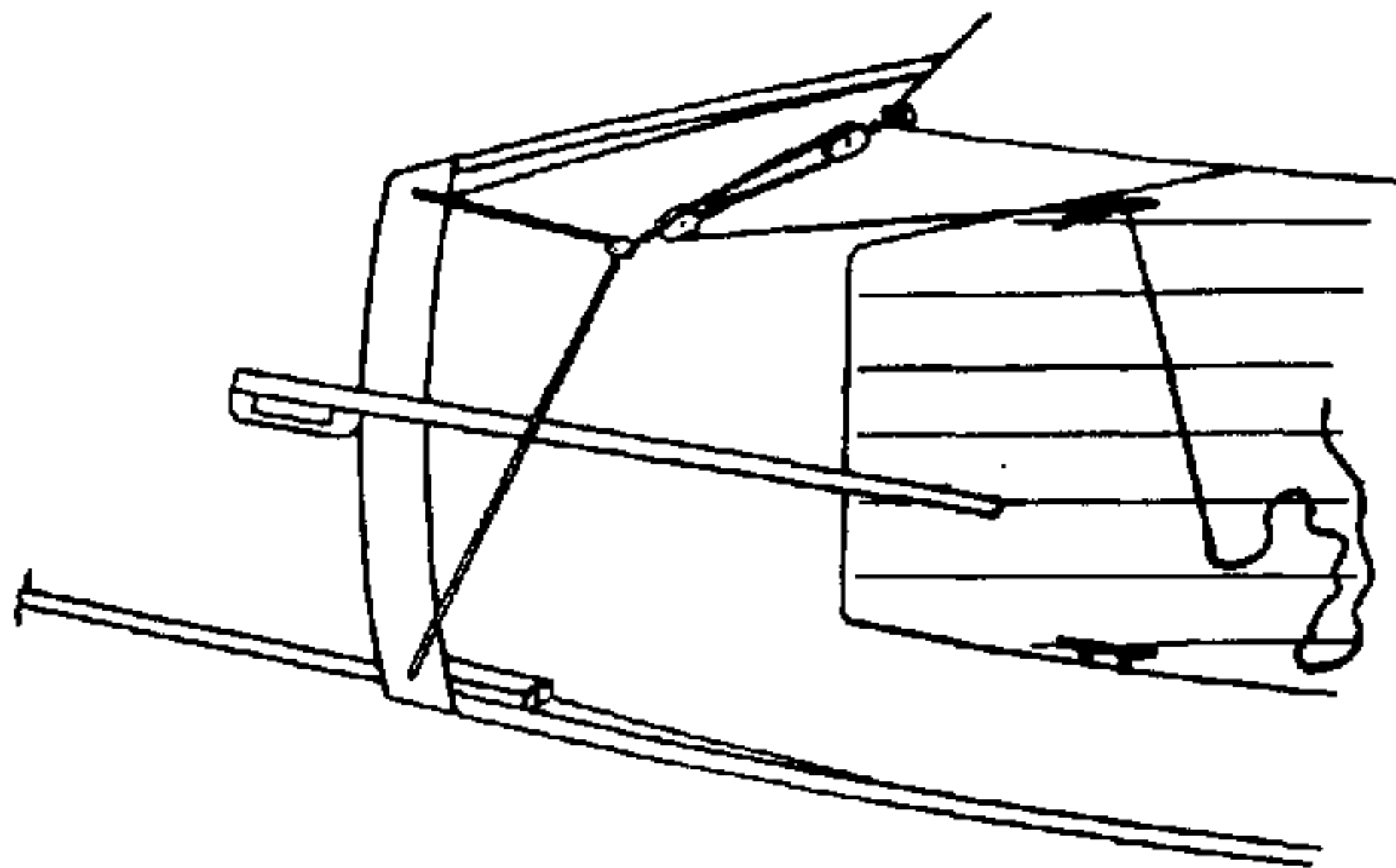


FIG. 4—Dabber and Driver mainsheets use rope horses and the sheet is led round the leeward cleat and then to the helmsman's hand.

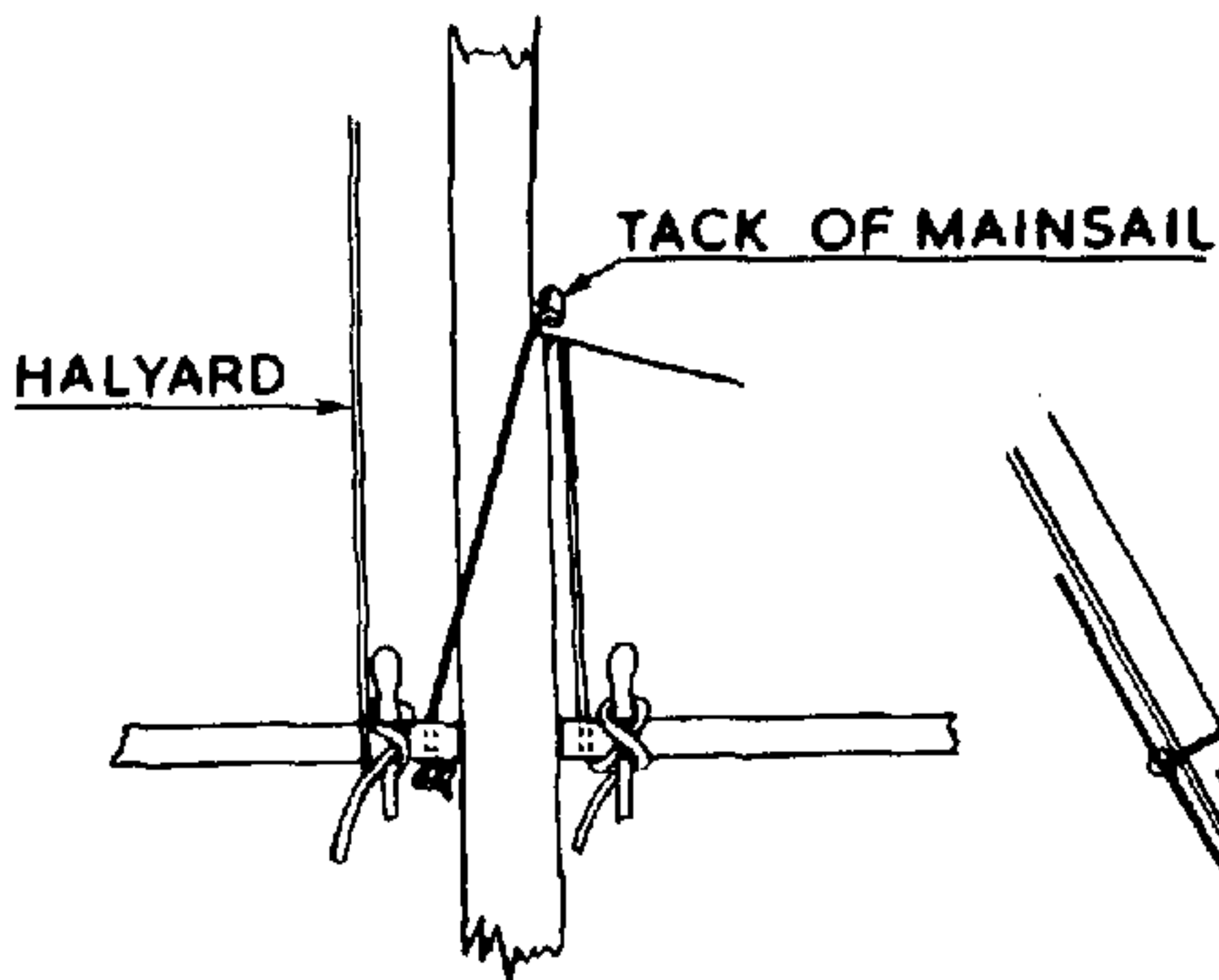


FIG. 5—The tack line is used to tighten the luff. In the Dabber it is secured in a clam cleat beneath the thwart.

FIG. 6—Dabber masthead arrangement. Driver is similar but has stub forestay with furling gear swivel as shown in Fig. 8.

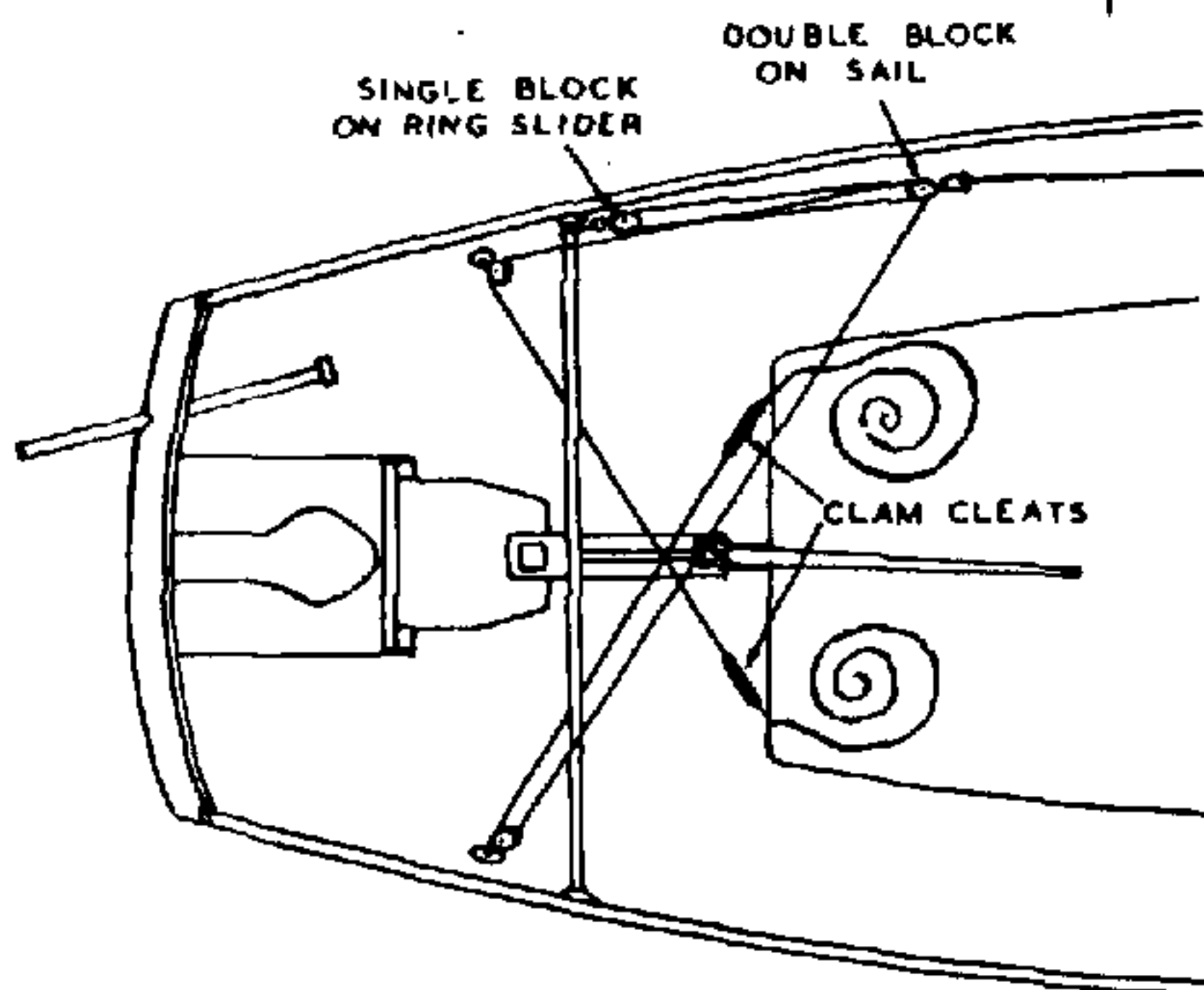
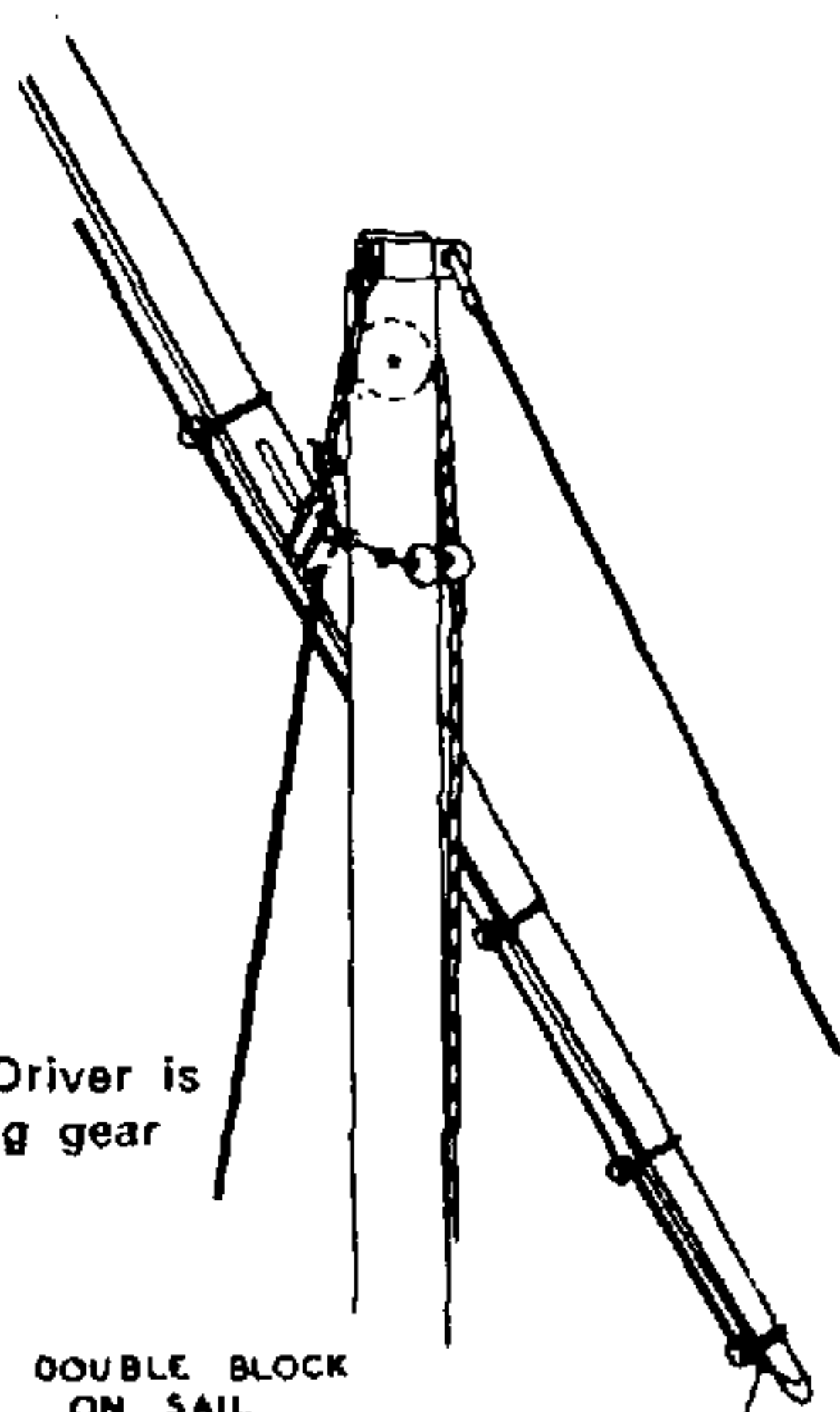


FIG. 9—Mainsheet arrangement used in Lugger and Longboats. The Drifter uses a very similar arrangement.

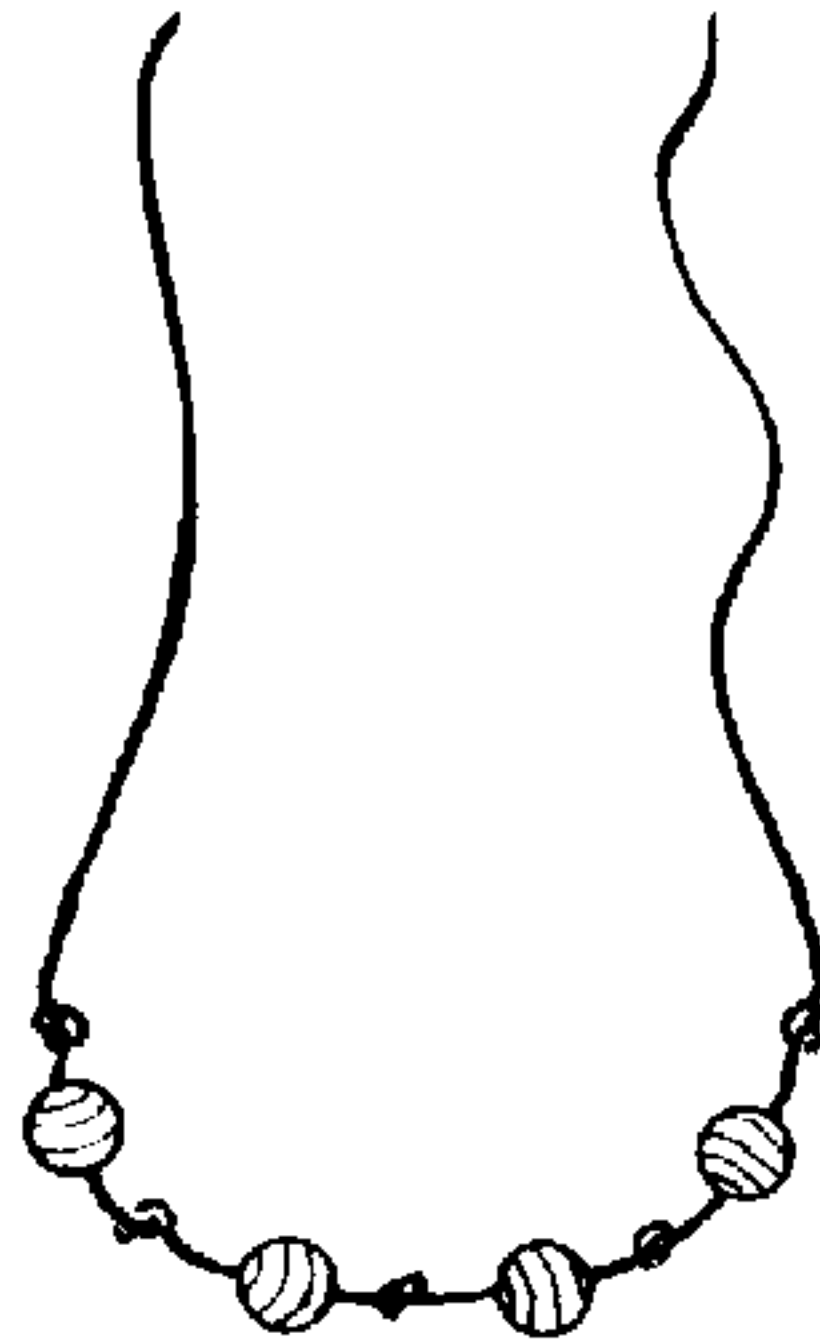
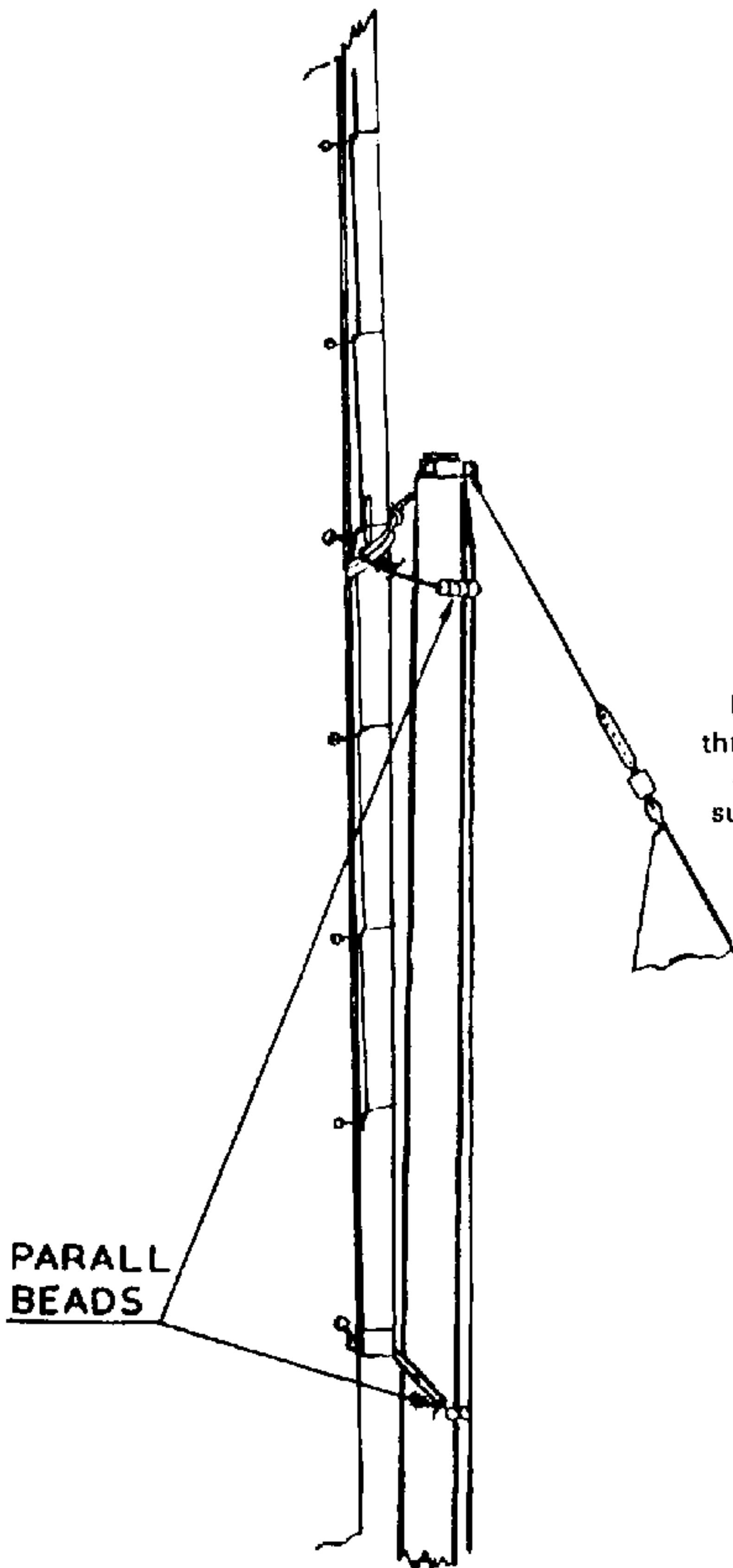


FIG. 10—Paralls are made up by threading the beads on light line with a knot between each. Two beads suffice between the ends of gaff jaws. Four or five are needed where the mast is encircled.

FIG. 8—Lugger masthead arrangement. Longboats are similar but have jib luff spars on continuous forestays with the adjusters at the masthead.