

*from F. W. Morgan*

CAPTAIN WYLIE points out that the ordinary steering rules cannot properly apply until visual contact has been established. Surely, however, when an echo appears in the starboard fore quadrant no watchkeeper can ever be at fault if he so manœuvres the vessel as to ensure that the bearing of the echo does not remain constant. Presumably in most cases the object should be to bring the echo abaft the beam and then to ensure that its bearing continues to change, at least until it is abundantly clear that the range is increasing. If this fundamental rule were always followed, it would appear on the face of it that a collision could not possibly result.

The suggestion that radio identification and intercommunication should be made a requirement, might, if adopted, leave the position of the small yacht or fishing-vessel worse off than before.

George Margetts

*from D. H. Sadler*

I AM much indebted to Commander W. E. May for calling my attention to the numerous references to George Margetts (see this *Journal*, 6, 403) in *The Marine Chronometer* by R. T. Gould (J. D. Potter, 1923). The following extracts from this book will provide some of the biographical information which I was unable to give previously.

'George Margetts (1748-1804), already referred to as the inventor of a form of lever escapement, produced several machines of this kind.' (Namely chronometers showing sidereal and mean time.)

'Margetts also made several very complicated watches designed to give a certain amount of the information which was normally afforded by astronomical and tidal tables. They showed the tide at various ports, the age and place of the moon, the place and declination of the sun, and the stars visible at any time above an observer's horizon. Also the time in hours and minutes.'

'One of these watches, and the movement of another, is preserved in the British Museum, and there are also several examples in private collections. . . . The decoration of the dial, exhibiting the figures of the constellations, is very fine, but the workmanship and engraving of the movement is far from first class—a feature which is characteristic of all Margetts' work. Were it not for this lack of finish, he might have a claim to be regarded as the English Breguet.'

The footnote to this last extract gives most of the information of interest.

'He was, in many ways, a remarkably gifted man. He detected and corrected a large number of errors in the tables of refraction and parallax published by the Board of Longitude, and also produced a large volume of "Horary Tables", a work of enormous labour, designed to provide a graphical method of clearing the lunar distance by inspection. He received from the Board a gratuity of £100 as a reward for this work.

'He was for some time chronometer maker to the East India Company, but his circumstances declined, and he died in a lunatic asylum.'