

EX-NAVAL BOAT BECOMES THEIR FLOATING HOME

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JUST over nine months ago, Mr. and Mrs. M. De Crespigny, and Mr. De Crespigny's brother, solved their housing problem by purchasing at an auction sale an ex-Naval torpedo boat.

After a stormy passage from Poole, during which the craft was almost lost on three occasions, Mr. De Crespigny headed for the calm waters of Christchurch Harbour and eventually anchored in a quiet backwater of the Stour near Tuckton Bridge. Here the De Crespigney's have been living in more or less comparative comfort, but now it looks as though they are heading for troubled waters again. They have heard that they may soon be told by certain authorities that they must cast-off from their anchorage.

They are at a loss to know precisely why, so Christchurch Times decided to investigate both sides of the picture. Here first of all is the reason why the De Crespigney's decided to have a floating home.

"We found it impossible to afford rental for rooms, so by selling our car and other personal belongings we were able to buy this boat," said Mr. De Crespigny, who added that he gave £190 for it.

The boat has an overall length of sixty-three feet and provides ample room for accommodation. There are excellent sanitary arrangements and the galley is large enough to handle all necessary cooking. Mr. De Crespigny told our reporter that the moorings were on private property and he paid a yearly rental of £10.

VERY HAPPY.

"We are very happy in our new home, and we shall remain here until we can find something more suitable and reasonable which appeals to us," he said. He went on to say that he had heard rumours to the effect that the presence of his boat was illegal and that the Water Board would at any time give him instructions to leave.

To get the other side of the picture, Christchurch Times asked Mr. D. Llewellyn, of the West Hants Water Company for his opinion, as the Water Company have full jurisdiction over the bed of the river.

Mr. Llewellyn said the company were not in favour of houseboats on the river for several reasons. With families living on them it was difficult to prevent pollution of the water. Apart from this, houseboats usually disturbed the free flow of water, and so far as the Stour was concerned, their presence would curtail the scope of the Sailing Club by lessening the width of the river.

Another point made by Mr. Llewellyn was that it was desired to keep the river free as far as possible for passenger boats.

THE ANSWERS.

Mr. De Crespigny's answer to these views is: "I've never heard anything so utterly ridiculous. Which is more important, living accommodation or a few pleasure boats. We would not pollute the river, as it is tidal. If however they insist we will use chemical sanitation, and that conforms with all sanitary rulings. We do not prevent the free flow of water, as we are not in the main channel, and the boat only draws two feet of water. Apart from sailing being purely for pleasure, we are a mile inland from their sailing grounds, and we haven't seen a single yacht all the time we have been here."

Mr. De Crespigny added that he was quite willing to move his boat to another part of the river, providing he would be within reach of food stores and other necessities.