

## Get Out And Walk

### *Cotehele Quay to the River Tavy*

It rained and blew. I listened to many shipping and weather forecasts. July was half over before I returned to Cotehele Quay to be reunited with damp little Epic. Upturned in the boat compound, my angular vessel looked more like a picnic table pining for the sun than a sailing boat. Toby chauffeured me through the showers and helped rig and re-clutter the dinghy. We sheltered in the car during a particularly heavy downpour wondering when the 'later', in the weatherman's 'clearing up later', would begin.

At ten thirty as the river began to fall, I drifted away from Cotehele under rather depressing cloud cover. It was not long before the sky lightened and patches of blue appeared. Two miles down-river I met Dave, a salmon fisherman. He was sitting on a wall at Halton Quay. It is not exactly a shipping port; in fact, Dave and the wall was all there was; oh, and his boat of course. I stepped ashore on the shingle and chatted for a while. He explained the purpose of the rowing boats with large numbers painted on their sides which I had passed earlier. Worked by a crew of one or two, the boats around fifteen feet long are found on all the rivers which empty into Plymouth Sound. At high and low water, when tides are slack, long nets are stretched across the river, snaring the game fish that suffer the misfortune of being very tasty. Fishing had steadily worsened due to excessive sea fishing, according to Dave, who had caught nothing that morning. Wishing him better luck for the evening session, I unfurled the red jib and continued on my way.

Half a mile downstream, below Pentillie Castle, hidden behind trees high up on the Cornish bank, stands a grand boathouse of stone and two-tone tile construction. This enhancement to the riverside has a gabled, open sided porch, and roof resting on four stone columns. It is very pretty and, though tempted to paint the structure that blended so well with its surroundings, I gave it a miss, respecting the 'No landing' sign. (I bet it had no stairs either.)

Down from the boathouse the river forms a giant S. The first three-



Storm Force Ten – Mevagissey

13½ x 19"

'It rained and blew. (Not like this though.) I listened to many shipping and weather forecasts.'