Backalong . . . . . .

Beer as Ballast

'Fatal Boat Accident.

On Wednesday, the 23rd ult, four men from Trebarwith, in the Parish of Tintagel, went for an excursion in a small boat to Port Isaac, taking guns with them for the purpose of shooting sea fowl.

After drinking freely at the latter place, they left about seven o'clock in the evening to return, and were advised to take a bag of sand as ballast. They, however, treated the advice with contempt; and instead of the sand they took a jar of beer.

Some persons at Port Isaac, being apprehensive of danger, kept a look out on the hills; and seeing the boat upset when about half-way to Tintagel, two fast sailing gigs went off immediately, and were just in time to save two of the parties, named Brown and Marshall, one of whom was holding by the boat, and the other by an oar in a very exhausted state. Mr James Rounseval, jun, who has lately come into considerable property on the death of his grandfather, and who was one of the party, was seen to sink just before the gigs were near enough to lay hold of him; and the other man, a pensioner, called Collecott, sank immediately the boat was upset.

It appears that the sail was made fast to the boat, instead of being held in such a way as to admit of its being "let go" in case of danger. Ten pounds have been offered by the friends of Mr Rounseval, for the recovery of his body, but it has not been found. He had a belt on, with shot in it, which in all probability accelerated his sinking.'

How have things changed over the 150 years? Not too much. People take to the water without seeking local advice. Some are known to have had too much to drink. Their boat may not be suitable for the North Cornish Coast and their skills are not great. Where in 1845 the rescue was by the village gigs, today we have the Inshore Lifeboat. The sea conditions are still the same and don't alter in the passing of time. We say 'Don't Drink and Drive' and that applies when afloat.

Our man in Fuerteventura,
David Castle