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Subject: Re: Paul Pouliot, Illinois Boatbuilder

Author: Scott Peters

Date: Saturday, February 16, 2002

Classification: Query

Surnames: Pouliot

Hi Leah,

I am creating an inventory of small craft builders in Michigan, or at least trying to identify as many as I can. Here is what I have on Pouliot Boat Company of Detroit. Perhaps some connection will become evident, or so I hope-- Joseph A. Pouliot
Pouliot Boat Company

Joseph A. Pouliot worked as a boat builder in Detroit as early as 1898. By 1901, his shop was located on the south side of Jefferson Avenue at the corner of Holcomb Avenue.

Pouliot Boat Company was incorporated in Detroit on November 2, 1907, with an authorized capital of \$10,000. The company's shop was initially located at the foot of Bowen Avenue. Officers of the firm included William E. Scripps as president, Henry L. LeGrou, vice-president, and Otto F. Barthel as secretary and treasurer. Joseph A. Pouliot served as both general manager and a director of the firm. Scripps was a newspaper publisher and manufacturer and later president and general manager of Scripps Motor Company, makers of marine gasoline engines. Barthel was a Detroit patent attorney and prominent yachtsman who was commodore of the Detroit Yacht Club in 1906-1907.

Among the products of the company were four unique rowboats built for Columbus, Ohio, industrialist Julius F. Stone for a recreational trip down the rock-strewn Colorado River of the Grand Canyon, starting in September 1909. The boats were designed and their construction supervised by a Grand Canyon area resident, Nathaniel Galloway, at Stone's expense. The design was later called a cataract boat.

The four boats were 16-1/2 feet long, with a beam of four feet and depth of 18 inches, with a rake of 10 inches fore and aft from the center. The boats hulls were made of 5/8" planking over white oak ribs. Each held two compartments in the bow and two more aft; one of each pair was more or less watertight for buoyancy as well as storage, and the others were decked with canvas. The above water seams were sealed with cord and caulking and the below water seams were covered with cloth gasket, under thin iron sheet strips. The bottom was covered with thin iron sheet. The boats also had a cotton ticking splash shield.

One of Stone's boats was left with a Grand Canyon resident during the trip when one of Stone's party had to return home. One of Stone's remaining three boats was preserved at the Ohio State Museum of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society in Columbus, Ohio, until December 1950, when the Museum turned the boat over to the National Park Service's Grand Canyon National Park, in whose collection it resides today.

Stone passed on information on the boat design in a letter dated June 29, 1911, to Ellsworth Kolb, who with his brother subsequently made their own trip down the Grand Canyon. In the letter he stated that the boats were built by the Pouliot Boat Company of Detroit, Michigan.

Other boats built by Pouliot Boat Company included the auxiliary schooner Agawa (US

20518), designed by Detroit naval architect Carlton Wilby and built in 1908 for Dr. C. G. Jennings; the sloop Spite [later Camilla?], designed by naval architect Herbert C. Sadler of the University of Michigan School of Naval Architecture, and built in 1908; Nomad II, a 36-foot screw launch designed by Joseph Pouliot and built by the company in 1909; and the Narmada (US 207364), a 91-foot flush decked yacht designed by Joseph Pouliot, and built by the company for William E. Scripps in 1910. The Narmada was initially powered by a Standard 6-cylinder engine but later repowered with twin Scripps gasoline engines by 1912. Joseph Pouliot is also credited with designing the Alpha (US 210309), a 38-foot trunk cabin screw launch built in 1912 by the Mayea Boat Works of Detroit after the Pouliot Boat Company dissolved.

By 1909, officers of the firm were listed as William E. Scripps as president; Henry LeGroue, vice-president; F. L. or Valney [Volney?] Copeland, secretary and treasurer; and Joseph A. Pouliot, manager. Other stockholders included Andrew J. Downey, son of the superintendent of police for Detroit, and F. L. Copeland. The address was listed as Park Place at the foot of Parkview Avenue. On October 29, 1909, the company employed 14 men, according to the state factory inspection report.

In 1911 the officers were W. E. Scripps, president, and Volney Copeland as secretary-treasurer. The firm had relocated by 1911 to the south side of Jefferson Avenue at the foot of Parkview Ave. [perhaps a renaming of Bowen Ave. ?]

Pouliot Boat Company filed notice of its dissolution on December 30, 1911.

[see also Hacker-Pouliot Boat Company--successor firm? Separate firm? Affiliated with John F. Hacker or John L. Hacker?]

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Hacker-Pouliot Boat Company

Hacker-Pouliot Boat Co. was incorporated at Detroit on March 1, 1911.

Hacker-Pouliot Boat Co., Detroit, Michigan. Dissolution filed March 29, 1900.[sic? Date?]

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