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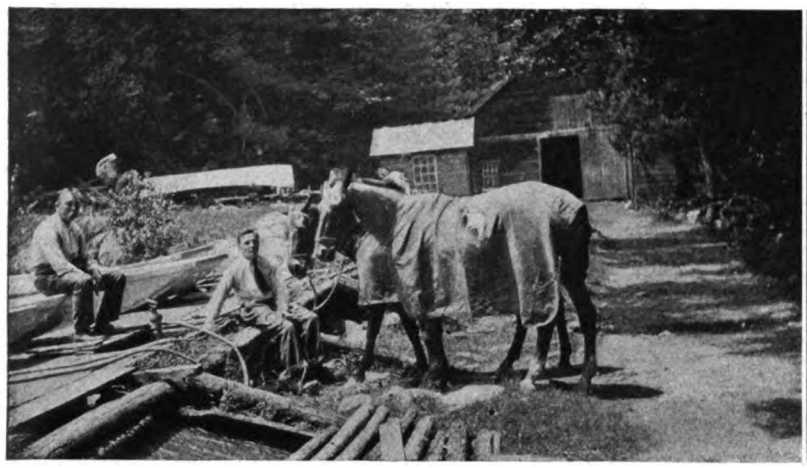
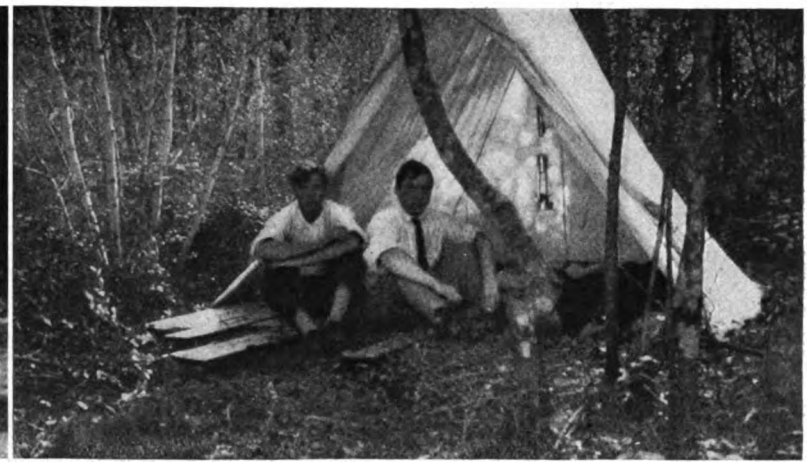


Giving the horses a moment's respite. Personal care of the mounts used for such a trip is a prime requisite



Two student campers from Bowdoin College extended hospitality to the horseback travelers, with that freemasonry which is always a part of outdoor living

Mechanicsville, our prospective stopping place the first night, we followed the bank of the Hudson through a very pretty country. Our horses did much better than we expected, so instead of stopping at Mechanicsville, we pushed on to Stillwater. In the latter village we put up at what I find designated in my diary as "Hewitt's World Famed Hostelry." Here again we first saw to it that our faithful horses were fed and bedded down for the night before we made our onslaught on the dinner table. It had been a strenuous day so we were glad to go to bed at nine o'clock that night.

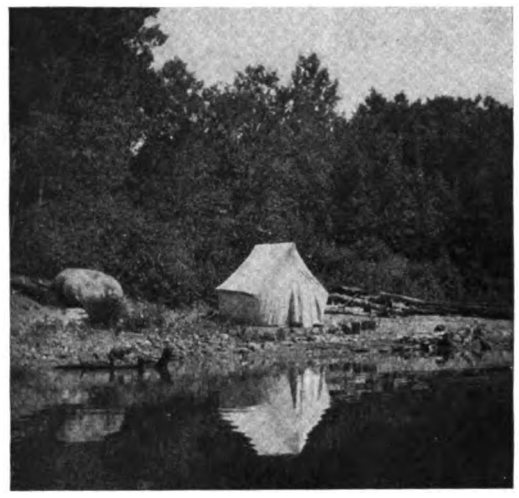
While we were sleeping the sleep of the just and the tired it had been raining. Accordingly, on awakening we decided to give the roads a chance to dry before we started on our way. At eleven o'clock we set forth to what proved to be the most historic country of our entire trip, Bemis Heights and the scene of the Battle of Saratoga being two of the notable places which we passed. We lunched at Schuylerville, and then continued along the east bank of the Hudson, passing Forts Miller and Edward to Sandy Hill, where we stopped for the night.

Again rain caused a slight disarrangement of our plans, a steady downpour all the morning of the third day keeping us close to the veranda. Despite this we got away in time to reach Lake George by nightfall, after having passed through beautiful Glens Falls and past numerous attractive estates. It was at this point that we entered the real Adirondacks, our journey being over the so-called old plank road, although why it should be so named is a mystery.

Having gotten into the habit of lingering in the morning at our night's stopping place, we followed this plan at Lake George Village, dividing the morning equally between a row on the lake and the settlement of our bill for lodging with the loquacious landlord. The latter detail adjusted, we pushed on, though first breakfasting at a lunch wagon.

That night we reached Pyramid Lake, where we had planned to make a comparatively lengthy stop, this being the place to which our suit cases had been sent.

Three days were spent here, two of them being devoted to camping out on the shores of the lake. For food we caught trout, pickerel and bass, frying them immediately. Any camper who has done likewise will guarantee our faring well. Eggs cooked in a coffee pot (we believed in economy in the matter of dishes and cooking utensils), coffee, potatoes and bacon completed our menu. In addition to the coffee pot we had one small frying pan, two knives, two forks and two spoons, birch bark cut in front of the camp



Another of the neighboring camps at Lake Pyramid

serving for dishes. For shelter we constructed a lean-to out of boughs, nothing more elaborate being needed because of the ideal summer weather which fell to our lot. Our few cooking utensils had been sent on to Pyramid Lake in the suit cases but could as easily have been carried in our saddle bags. To any one contemplating taking a horseback trip like ours, I think I would recommend that the latter plan be followed, as in summer it is easy to camp out each night and thus avoid the discomforts and expense of hotels, to say nothing of the greater fun attained. It is possible to buy enough provisions for dinner and breakfast near each place that you stop and thus not be burdened with a food supply to be carried from place to place.

Idling away our time, yet employing it profitably in idling, if that paradox be admissible, we spent three joyous days at Pyramid Lake, camping, mountain climbing and exercising the ponies.

On the eighth day out of New York, we repacked our suit cases, shipped them home and turned our horses' heads toward Pottersville, which we reached after traversing a beautiful country. Thurman was our next stop after Pottersville. This, the ninth day, was marked by our being compelled to ford the Hudson River because the bridge had been washed away. This was exciting but more dangerous in theory than practice, so that we came through the ordeal with flying colors.

Luzerne next received us. Here an exorbitant livery bill made our stay memorable, so that we were glad to leave for Saratoga early on the morning of the eleventh day. This proved to be one of the best rides of the entire trip, taking us over twenty-three miles of sandy road, through Cornwall and Greenfield to the famous American Carlsbad.

The next morning, after consuming untold quantities of spring water, we rode away from Saratoga around the shores of the lake to White Sulphur Springs, where we breakfasted most royally. In the afternoon the pilgrimage was continued to Round Lake, where we decided to stop for the last night of our trip. A thorough examination of the place filled the next morning and then we started for Canton's by way of Clifton Park and Crescent. Soon after our start, we again encountered the famous old plank road, its distinguishing feature being an utter absence of planks.

Reaching Canton's at five in the afternoon, we decided we would not stay there that night, as we had originally planned, but would instead push on to Albany and catch the night boat for New York. This we did. And thus ended the first of a series of vacations spent on horseback, which have been unequaled for the amount of genuine enjoyment which they have provided.

ROWBOATS AND BOATING

By W. E. PARTRIDGE

Photographs by UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD, EDWIN LEVICK, VERNE MORTON, and others

THE universal love of the water among the people of the American continent — rich and poor alike — is remarkable. Wherever there is water of any extent we find boats if the shores are already inhabited. Regardless of comfort, style or safety, the American goes afloat whenever he finds in his neighborhood water deep enough to float even a pan.

While there are boats on almost every rivulet, and they are indispensable features of amusement parks, country residence and summer resorts, there is an almost spartan simplicity in their fittings. From the flat-bottomed skiff to the mahogany-trimmed rowboat, comfort does not seem to be dreamed of. The joy of being afloat appears to be sufficient. Canoeists have awakened to the fact that, not having seats, cushions are desirable, and cushions appear to be the limit of luxury. Practically, the American does not appear to appreciate comfort afloat in his small boats. Even in open motor boats, wicker chairs are his limit in gratified self-indulgence.

There are some reasons for this, but no excuses. Among the reasons we find that the pleasure boat is too frequently not housed, is leaky, and lastly is so cheap that the idea of being comfortable appears to be quite absurd. Boats can be made tight without much trouble, covers will give protection, and there is no reason why even a punt should not be made entirely comfortable.

The English can teach us some lessons in regard to comfort on the water, in boats of all kinds, which it would be well for us to heed. In punts of most primitive model, the ladies have seats with high backs and cushions — they can take their pleasure comfortably.

On the Thames at Henley, during the race week, the boats have upholstered backs to their seats, which are wide enough to accommodate two persons. This style of craft is propelled by two paddles at the stern, and is large enough to carry seven persons. Other boats are propelled by oars but are fitted up with an equal regard for the ease of the passengers.

In a rowboat of the most luxurious style known in our waters, the trimmings are of brass, nickle-plated. There are gratings the whole length of the boat, the seats are caned and stretchers are fitted. There is rarely a practicable back for any of the seats against which a person may lean. There is a great display of bronze and mahogany, and the boat is expensive, but, except for the cane seats, she is no more comfortable than the commonest skiff or punt, and the cane-bottom seats are not perceptibly better. A top view of a most elaborate yacht tender or dinghy will show superb workmanship, with the lavish use of costly woods, but there will not be the slightest effort at ease or comfort for passengers or oarsmen. In the light boats for a single pair of oars the arrangement is uniformly that found in the smallest and commonest forms of skiffs. There are three plain seats on which to sit, and that is all. As the size increases another pair of oars is added, and two more persons can usually be carried. Model, finish and material are beautiful, but the caravels of Columbus's time were not more comfortless.

The St. Lawrence skiff, one of our most famous rowboats, is a classic model. As a boat for a heavy sea or rough water there is no other pleasure boat to be compared with it. In fact, as a "sea boat" it is only equalled by a regular whale-boat. Probably its model was originally largely derived from a study of the whale-boat.

Almost all other American rowboats have one serious defect in model — they are too short for really swift rowing, and so small that one is almost forced to go ashore at lunch time.

With the exception of the St. Lawrence skiff, there are very few boats in this country built for pleasure rowing, and not for racing, that exceed 16 or 17 feet in length. Builders' catalogues do occasionally list boats of greater length, but as the short boats can carry seven persons they are supposed to be large enough for general wants. In these days of the almost universal use of the power boat, where the rowboat is used only for short pleasant explorations in shoal waters, this length is, perhaps, sufficient. But the bigger, steadier, easier-pulling boat has great advantages. High-backed, comfortable seats, with ample spaces between, are easily possible, so that lunch afloat becomes feasible and the boat is, in addition, much safer.

Such a scene as the finish of an English university race, with most of the spectators afloat, standing in their boats, is hardly possible in America with our little 16-foot rowboats. In the luxurious punts used on the Thames six or seven people may stand easily and safely. For enjoyment in shallow, quiet waters they are unexcelled.

For exploring shallow stretches of streams and narrow, sheltered corners, the short boat is eminently suitable. It turns quickly and it draws little water, but there is no reason why it should not be made restful and easy with high-back seats in both bow and stern. The bottom should be covered with cocoa matting, instead of a grating, over which should be placed a piece of carpeting. Even the canoe can be made far more comfortable by the use of matting and carpet, with high-backed cushioned seats.

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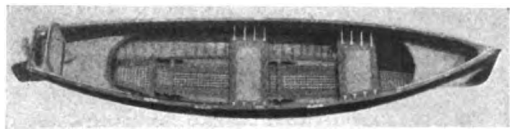
Finish of the Henley Olympic Regatta on the Thames. Such a scene, with most of the spectators afloat, standing in their boats, is hardly possible in America with our 16-foot rowboats

In some of our larger 18-foot canoes those who use the paddle may find a departure from established usage convenient and agreeable, by placing the ladies side by side forward, and the gentlemen side by side just behind the midship section; in this way passengers and crew will be agreeably disposed and the canoe will be much safer than with the gentlemen on seats in the ends. This arrangement is possible with large canoes and people of moderate size.

One of the most luxurious things which Americans have, the motor-boat with an awning, is in marked contrast with the typical American pleasure craft. It is true, part of the people in the motor boat sit in chairs, and in the small boats the boys have seats without backs. Those who do not have chairs in the motor-boat sit up as stiffly as boys in a rowboat. Although steering a boat with a stick is not as stylish or convenient as a brass steering wheel, it is quite as much fun.



A 16-foot American rowboat, finished in mahogany, with bronze or nickel-plated trimmings

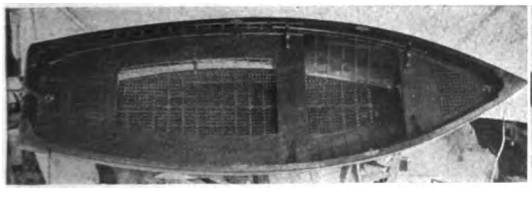
One of the most exclusive things which the American has in the boating line is what is sometimes called the "Sandwich" boat. In a barge of six or eight oars a lady occupies a seat on the thwart alongside each oarsman. This is very nice for those who row, but it is not particularly easy for the ladies, who might as well be rowing themselves, so far as comfort is concerned. Those who do not happen to be "sandwiched" have the pleasure of sitting by themselves on hard thwarts without backs.

On the borders of the great shallow bays of the coast, as well as on the shoal inland waters, we have a form of boat called the Barnegat sneak box. It was designed for a hunting boat, for shoal water, though sometimes used as a pleasure craft. To be easily concealed when shooting ducks, the upper works are made as low as possible, so that the boat is like an exaggerated wafer. For shallow water it is an ideal boat, though in wide, deep water it is likely to pound where the waves are of any size. Although primarily a hunting boat for the marshes, long voyages have been made in craft of this class. This is possible because the sneak box is decked, having a comparatively small wall in the centre.

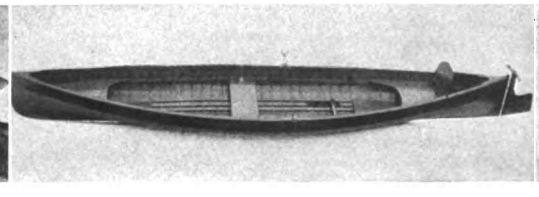
The dory is a boat developed on our northern coast to carry large loads in rough water. It was originally a fisherman's boat but so useful and so seaworthy has it proved itself, as well as so convenient, that it has come to be extensively used for pleasure. In its original form it had a flat bottom, straight flaring sides, with good sheer and an unusual freeboard. In skilled hands it is the safest of all our pleasure models. With the coming of the gasolene motor it has been built with a round bilge and smooth skin. Although it is now fairly well established as one of our pleasure craft, none has yet been fitted up with any idea that seats can have backs or be any softer than plain pine planks.

Fresh-water boat-builders make a distinction between boats to be used on fresh and those to be used on salt water. This is a needless distinction however, because only galvanized iron and brass or bronze fittings are fit to be used about a boat, whether the water be fresh or salt. Nickle-plated trimmings are soon rendered unsightly in salt water. They may last somewhat better in fresh water, but solid bronze or good galvanized iron give the best satisfaction. Salt water is so destructive to almost all metallic work that the best is not too good. The freedom from rust given by galvanizing is an advantage even on fresh water.

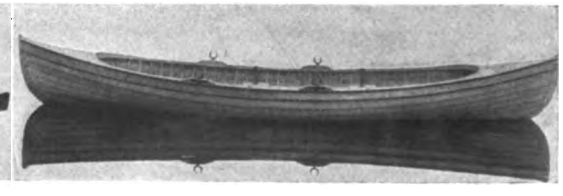
Where it is possible, boats should be hauled out of water when not in use and put under cover. If this is not practicable, a canvas cover can be put over the boat. This will save some annoyance, especially after a rain, and it will also preserve the boat. A boat house in which boats can be lifted from the water when not in use, and protected at



A 14-foot rowing boat arranged to be used as a yacht tender. Bronze trimmings



Two-oar pleasure boat for three persons. Mahogany trim. Light and fast for its length



St. Lawrence skiff—a fine boat for rough water. Occasionally built to a length of 20 feet

The Sandwich barge—seats without backs

Power boat and rowboat—little ease in either

all times, enables one to have cushions and fittings in place, and the boat is always ready for use.

The cost of pleasure boats is a variable quantity. In the case of canoes, a short one, say of 14 feet length, may not cost more than $20. While one 20 feet long, and of the finest workmanship, may be listed as high as $65 or more. The round-bottom boats for rowing have an equally wide range of prices, but the difference in price represents but little difference in the boat beyond fine woods, much bronze in trimming, and a great deal of highly polished varnish. The models are usually the same and one boat will row as easily as another of the same style, though the prices may be vastly different. Selected lumber is one of the great "talking" points of the manufacturers.

Steel boats have a great vogue in fresh waters of the West. They are of good models but salt-water men are afraid of the metal. Some report that they are quickly eaten into holes by rust.

The way amateurs tumble about in row boats is a matter of horror to an experienced man. Instead of keeping in the middle line of the boat they surge from side to side as though on land, and handle the oars as one would a pickaxe. To leave a boat on making a landing, they drop the painter, give a kick, and the boat is liable to float away without a thought. The most discouraging feature is that so few people care to learn the elements of boat handling. So we have pin oars to save the trouble of learning to row, and boats with a single pair of oars have rudders for the same reason. In canoes blundering awkwardness causes many accidents. When loaded deeply, the canoe becomes cranky, and an attempt to change places is pretty sure to cause a spill.

It is worth while to take some pains to learn how to row. Get into a boat with the idea o. learning the proper method of handling the oars, and not with an idea that it is necessary to get somewhere as soon as possible. For comfort, the oars should be properly leathered at the point where they rest in the row-locks. There should also be a ring of leather about the oar to prevent the oar from slipping out of the row-lock. O course, this refers to the loose, round oars. After getting in and properly seated, take an oar in each hand and turn the blades so that, with the wrists dropped, the blades are horizontal, or parallel with the surface of the water. Lean forward a little, pushing the handles out in front, and by raising the wrists the blades will become vertical. The blade is put into the water just deep enough to be entirely covered. The handles are then pulled toward the body till the hands nearly touch the chest, keeping the wrists still raised. As the blades are taken out of the water the wrists are dropped, then the blades become horizontal and the stroke is repeated. Bringing the blades into a horizontal position is called feathering. It is very important because it prevents much annoying spattering.

Exploring in shallow waters is a pleasure confined to light-draft rowboats and canoes

In the beginning no great amount of force should be used. In learning to row, one is learning to use both sides of his brain. One arm must not be allowed to pull harder than the other. It is necessary to look over the stern of the boat and keep some object in line. If there is any swinging, a little more strength must be applied upon the oar on the side to which the stern is swinging.

Here in the beginning the brain has the two hands to attend to without looking at the oars, and it must pay attention to the movement of the stern of the boat, or rather must keep it fixed on the distant object so as to prevent the stern from swinging, and thus secure a straight course. The hands at the return stroke must be kept level so that the blades of the oars do not rise above the oar-locks. To see the blade of the oars high in the air is a crime beyond forgiveness.

The use of the single or double paddle seems more simple, inasmuch as most people are able to put it into the water and spoon with it. When paddling, the canoe should not roll. The stroke should be so nicely graduated that when one or two persons are at work the canoe will be perfectly steady. The one sitting in the stern steers, and the Indians in some parts of the country provide him with a broad and comparatively short paddle, giving the man in the bow a very long and narrow one. In general the man in the bow paddles straight ahead while the man in the stern does the steering. When one paddles alone the stroke has a peculiar outward finish, or an outward swing, which holds the canoe's head on its course.

Handling the canoe with a paddle is much more easily accomplished than managing a rowboat, but with a pair of oars in the hands a boat or a skiff can be turned or sent backward or forward with great certainty. Pushing on one oar while pulling on the other twists the boat about.

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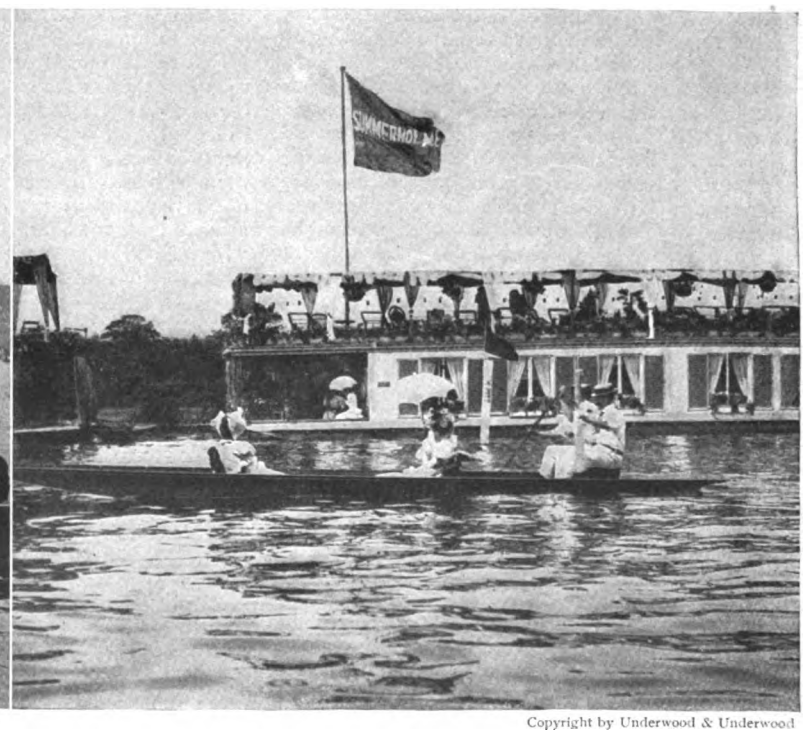
Scene on the Thames during the Henley Regatta, showing punts and college barges. Paddles are often used instead of poles when the river is crowded



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A summer home on the Thames. In the foreground is a punt propelled by paddles. Oftentimes the water is too deep for the poles