

Appendices to Chapter 3: 1903 to 1915: The Early Years at St. Catharines

A

This is the complete account of the meeting between proponents of the permanent Regatta site and some Port Dalhousie politicians and businessmen as published in the St. Catharines *Daily Standard*, April 22, 1903. The name “Henley” is used as a generic term for a large, important regatta. It was not yet the name of the Regatta.

REGATTA AT PORT.

—

Interesting Public Meeting Held
There Tuesday Night.

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Large St. Catharines Delegation Present — Project Met With Favorable Reception Enthusiastic Speeches by Prominent Citizens.

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Captain Barker, of Toronto, who made such an enviable record with “C” company of the R.C.R.I. [Royal Canadian Regiment of Infantry] in South Africa, and who is prominently identified with the interests of amateur oarsmen, and a large and distinguished delegation of St. Catharines gentlemen, comprising the following: Mayor Burgoyne, Ald. Marquis, Manager Seixas of the N.St.C.&T.R. [Niagara, St. Catharines & Toronto Railway], Manager Hodgetts of the Bank of Toronto, Lt. Col. C.C. Carlisle, chairman of the water commission, Dr. W.H. Merritt, Capt. Malcolmson of the Welland, C.A. Case, M.Y. Keating, John S. Marshall, A. Courtney Kingstone, G.B. Burson and Arthur Bate, visited Port Dalhousie on Tuesday evening to attend a public meeting there, and endeavour to arouse local interest in the splendid plan of making that pretty marine village and its adjacent waters a Canadian Henley, which will be the Mecca for thousands upon thousands of Canadians and Americans for at least one week the year.

In the absence of Reeve Read, Manager R.F. Foote, of the Maple Leaf Rubber Co., took the chair by request, and A. Courtney Kingstone explained the very simple objects of the meeting, which had been called at the suggestion of St. Catharines people for the purposes of arousing local interest in the magnificent project, and endeavoring to secure local financial assistance. Mr. Kingstone then called on Capt. Barker, of Toronto.

Capt. Barker proceeded very eloquently to outline the plan for establishing the permanent headquarters of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen along the old canal, somewhere between Port Dalhousie and St. Catharines. For 30 [sic] years the annual regatta of the C.A.A.O. had been held at different points, such as Toronto, Ottawa, Brockville, Hamilton and Lachine, and those places had given grants. For many reasons this constant moving about was very unsatisfactory.

The question of securing smooth water was an important one. In almost any wind there was a nasty sea in Toronto bay. Brockville was almost as bad and had a stiff current, while Hamilton and Ottawa were in the same class as Toronto. For several years the C.A.A.O. had been hunting for a course with fair water conditions, and now it was the consensus of opinion among the members of the association, from Vancouver to Toronto, that such a course had been found at Port Dalhousie. It was a course that could be depended upon, an ideal place for the purpose.

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If the C.A.A.O. should make its home here, funds must be expended in the erection of a club house and grand stand. The latter as a source of revenue for the association.

All the races with the exception of the “eights” were rowed over a course of a mile and one-half, with a turn, viz., three-quarters of a mile each way. It was the intention to have the course for “eights” the same as at Henley, Eng., one mile and 550 yards, straightaway. There was plenty of room on the old canal for such a straightaway race with a finish at Port, and the course was, if anything, better than that at the world-renowned English Henley.

Continuing, Captain Barker told how St. Catharines had come to the front, both individually and municipally. If the local council saw fit to grant financial assistance to the project the grand stand would be placed at the Port end of the course and there would be from two to ten thousand people in the village for several days each year.

Crews from Philadelphia and other American cities would be present, beside a host of Canadian crews from as far west as Vancouver. These crews would all have to remain in and about the village for several weeks of training purposes. The races would last from four to six days, and the regatta would be the biggest kind of advertisement for the whole district.

The United States is following England’s example and is making an American Henley on the Schuylkil [sic] river at Philadelphia. Their races will be held in July, and ours will come in August, so that oarsmen can come from there to here. If this course is established everyone [sic] of the Associations [sic] races will be brought off on it.

Capt. Barker said the C.A.A.O. is the only recognized rowing authority in Canada, and if our crews go to the States, they will send their crews here, especially if they had good water.

The plan for the establishment of the course on the Welland canal had been endorsed by the C.A.A.O. and the city of St. Catharines, and it only remained to incorporate, form a reception committee and advertise.

The captain then made the striking announcement that it was very probable his Majesty King Edward would donate a challenge cup for senior “eights” and if this became a fact it would give a tremendous impetus to rowing all over Canada and bring Americans flocking over by thousands to see an international race for the Sovereign’s Royal Cup.

In concluding the captain said it had taken years to decide that Port Dalhousie was the place for holding the big regatta, and spoke of its convenience and accessibility to both the United States and Canada. As he sat down, amidst great applause, Capt. Barker signified his willingness to answer all questions as far as he could.

G.B. Burson told of his trip over the course with Messrs. McDonald [sic] and Thompson and how a good course of Henley length, one mile, 550 yards, could be laid out from the rubber factory south-west, only, at the far end, some pile and weeds would have to be removed. If Port saw fit to do her share, a grand stand, seating 2,000, would be built in the village, and a club house constructed. Mr. Burson told how \$1,200 in private subscriptions had already been collected, and of what enormous benefit to Port the whole affair meant.

Manager Seixas of the N.St.C.&T.R., spoke of the wonderful amount of advertising that would accrue from the regatta. On his recent trip to Jamaica he met three gentlemen interested in rowing matters—one from New York, one from Boston, one from Philadelphia. As soon as Mr. Seixas mentioned St. Catharines, all three gentlemen exclaimed, “why that’s where the Canadians are going to hold their regatta, isn’t it?” Mr. Seixas told how Port Dalhousie would become known all over the country. Sporting writers would send out long articles from Port, pictures of the course and scenes at Port would be in all the illustrated papers, and the whole thing would be of the greatest possible benefit to the village. There were three or four locations

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for the grand stand and club house, but if Port helped the plan financially, Port should have the buildings.

Manager G.W. Hodgetts, of the Bank of Toronto, supported the movement as a business proposition and a paying investment for both Port and St. Catharines. If the grand stand were in Port it would bring a tremendous influx of people to the village; these people will leave money behind them. The benefit from the world-wide advertising would be enormous. Interest in boating would be aroused, and a firm of boat-builders could readily be induced to locate in Port. Mr. Hodgetts hoped the Port people would take right hold of the matter as a meeting of the Association would be held on the 29th.

Dr. W.H. Merritt had seen regattas, and knew the crowds of people that attended them. As Mr. Hodgetts had said at a previous meeting it was well to get out and do missionary work. He believed the public sentiment created in St. Catharines caused the council to grant the \$2,500, and hoped that public sentiment in Port would influence the village council to grant what sum it might deem fit.

Wm. Hutchinson, speaking as a ratepayer, spoke strongly in favor of the scheme, and was willing to do his share.

"What do you expect the village to give?" asked Mr. Hutchinson.

Mr. Kingstone replied \$1,000 had been put down on the committee's books as being about the proportionate sum the village should give, but if this was too much, "give what you can." The grand stand would cost about \$3,000, and there were other heavy expenses.

Mr. Hutchinson didn't think the amount unreasonable if Port got the buildings.

Councillor Smith thought the proposition a good one, a very good idea, indeed.

Councillor Curry said the financial condition of the village was not good; but if they couldn't give \$1,000 they could give something.

Mayor Burgoyne hoped the Port councillors would have an increase of faith, and be able to do more; he was sure the ratepayers would be behind them. The mayor referred to what St. Catharines had done, and said he had no doubt but what the full amount would be raised.

"You have got more to gain, in proportion, than St. Catharines has," said he: "you'll have the buildings; we won't, but our money will go for the structures to be erected in another municipality."

The mayor spoke of the extensive advertising Port would derive. All the dispatches would be sent from there, and there would be pictures of Port in every illustrated paper
->[line missing at bottom of page 6]<-

St. Catharines has." The ratepayers should look at the proposition as one of great benefit to the village.

Mr. Seixas told of the wonderful growth of New London, Conn. from a country town to quite a metropolitan city, all because of one boat race—the Harvard-Yale. The people there profited enormously from the thousands upon thousands who flocked into the town on dozens of special trains for the purpose of seeing the race.

He had talked to a prominent Philadelphia oarsman who promised there would be a delegation of at least 100 from the Quaker City.

"These people will bring big money with them; if we don't get a good piece of it that's our fault."

Mr. Kingstone said that if the C.A.A.O. went anywhere else they wouldn't have any trouble getting money. Toronto would gladly give them \$10,000. Don't let a good thing get by us.

Geo. Scott expressed himself as being heartily in favor of the project.

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Mr. Foote corroborated Mr. Seixas' statements re. New London. He had been at Henley, Eng., and the scene there during the races beggared description. It seemed as though all England were there. Port Dalhousie could be made a second Henley. He would pay his share, apart from what the village might do.

Capt. John Berry said he would support the council in whatever they might do.

Col. Carlisle spoke of the great change for the better since the car line came to Port. The advertising might be a means of bringing factories to the village, which could use the immense amount of surplus water now going to waste, with more to follow when the Cataract Co. finished its developments.

Mr. Seixas, as a Port taxpayer, would stand whatever came his way beside giving a large private subscription.

Ex-Mayor Keating thought if the council gave something, the balance of the \$1,000 could be raised by private subscription; lists would be placed in the factory, etc. Port would do proportionately better than St. Catharines, for the latter would never see the Toronto people who came over for the races at all.

John Green, jr. was in favor of all sports, and would willingly subscribe with others.

Percy Nelson was heartily in favor of the project. He had seen Henley; it was good enough for him.

Ald. Marquis suggested the chairman form a committee to present the matter to the council.

John Harrigan said: "It's a pretty good thing; it won't be necessary to pull out any weeds if the finish is at this end."

R.F. Foote, chairman, William Hutchinson, John Berry, John Harrigan and Geo. Cox were appointed a committee to lay the matter before the village council.

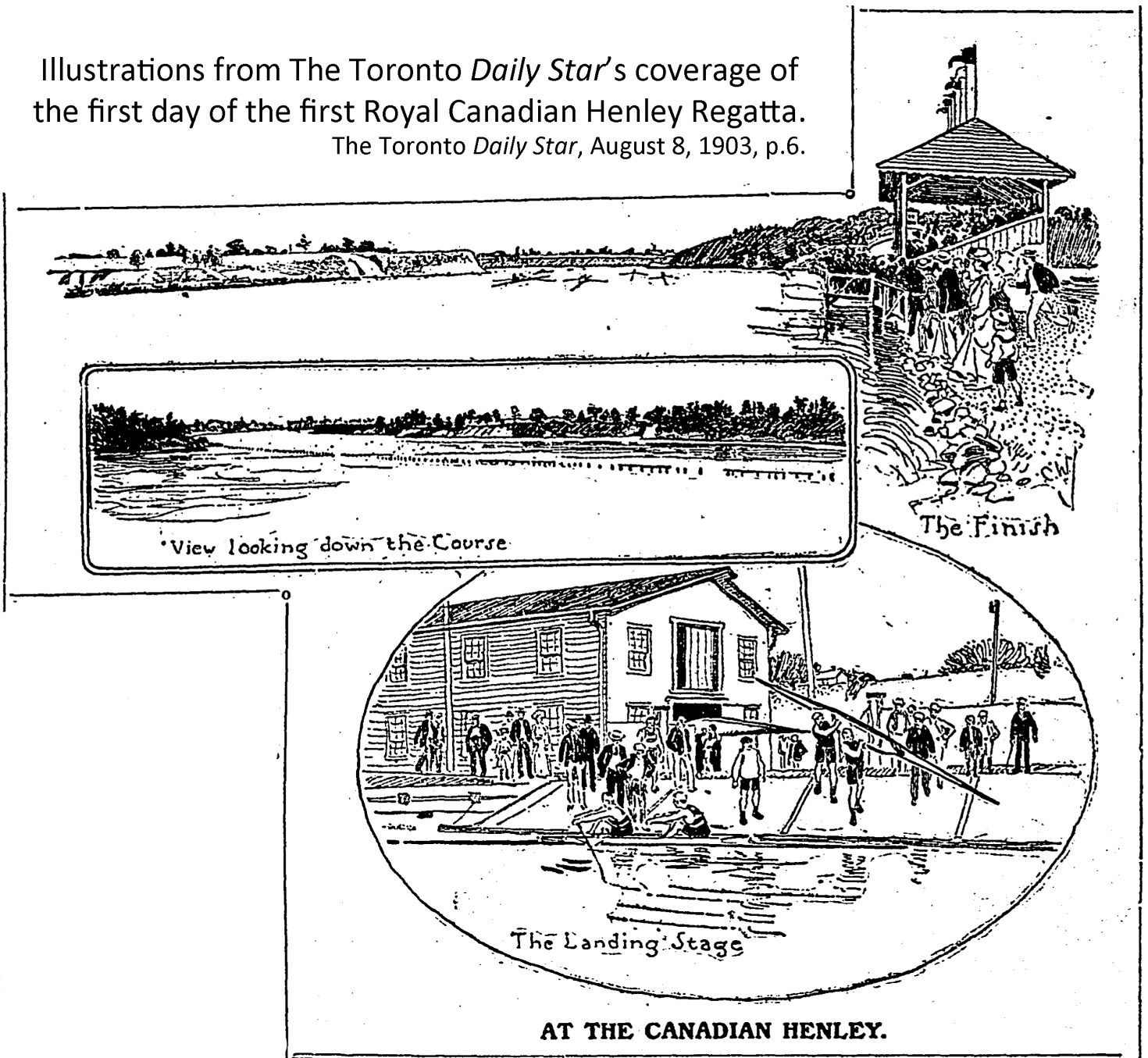
Mr. Hodgetts said that in St. Catharines they had already formed a rowing club. All he could say to Port people was, "Go thou and do likewise."

The very successful and enthusiastic meeting was then adjourned while little groups gathered to continue the discussion of the interesting question. [The St. Catharines *Daily Standard*, April 22, 1903, pp.1 and 6]

B

Illustrations from The Toronto *Daily Star's* coverage of the first day of the first Royal Canadian Henley Regatta.

The Toronto *Daily Star*, August 8, 1903, p.6.



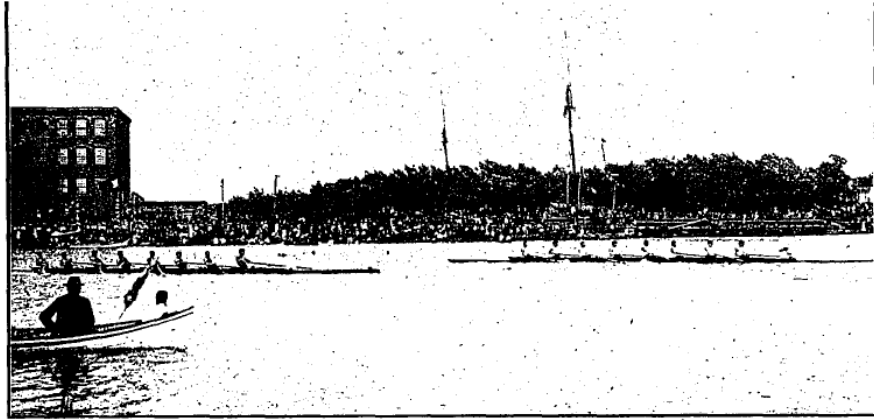
"Page 6." *Toronto Daily Star* (1900-1971), Aug 08, 1903, pp. 6. ProQuest, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.torontopubliclibrary.ca/docview/1427870894?accountid=14369>.

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C

Here is an example of photo manipulation involving a famous photo from the 1903 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta.

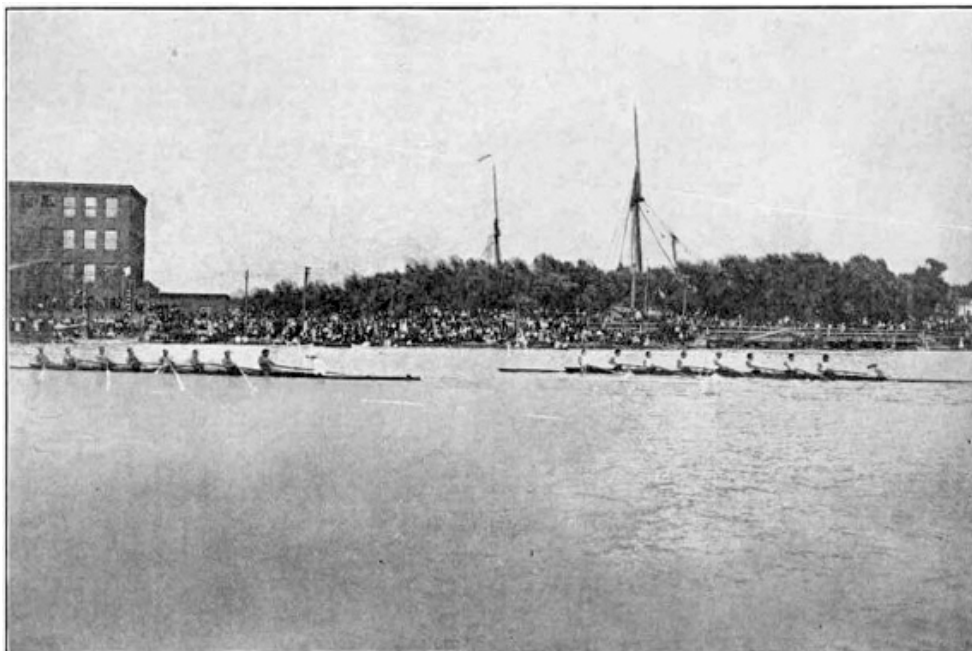
This version was published in the Toronto *Globe*, August 22, 1903.



The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta, August 7 and 8, on the Course Between St. Catharines and Port Dalhousie. The picture shows one of the events of the closing day, the final race of the Argonauts and the Winnipeg, won by the former. (Photo by Galbraith.)

A H YOUNG Special Correspondence of, The Globe. "Genoa and Naples." *The Globe* (1844-1936), Aug 22, 1903, pp. 1. *ProQuest*, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.torontopubliclibrary.ca/docview/1353888149?accountid=14369>.

Here it is as it usually appears. This version is taken from the 1904 Royal Canadian Henley Regatta programme.



D

When Did It Become the *Royal* Canadian Henley Regatta?

Although Wikipedia says that Queen Victoria granted permission to the CAAO in 1880 to use the prefix “Royal,” there is no contemporary confirmation of that.

In 1903, the press, then the CAAO, adopted the name “Henley,” and for months the Twenty-Fourth Annual Regatta was also called the “Canadian Henley Regatta.” A week or so before the Regatta, the CAAO unveiled the new plaques which were inscribed with the name “Royal Canadian Henley Regatta” similar to the one below from 1909.



Photo by Stephen Malbouef, Detroit Boat Club Crew. Used with permission.

In 1983, the Canadian Amateur Rowing Association, the name adopted by the CAAO in 1977, asked the office of the Governor General of Canada (the Queen’s

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representative) to confirm that permission had been received to use the word “Royal.” Rodger Sellars, Executive Director of CARA received a reply from Edmond Joly de Lotbinière, Executive Secretary to the Governor General, dated March 22, 1983, which said, in part:

We have searched our archives at Government House and I regret to inform you that we have no record of the title ‘Royal’ having been extended to the Regatta. As the Department of Secretary of State advises the Governor General on matters pertaining to the use of the prefix ‘Royal’, I have taken this matter up with Mr. Jean Paul Roy, Chief, Ceremonial and Institutions, State Ceremonial Directorate, Secretary of State Department, to see if by any chance they might have any record of the Regatta being so honoured. In the event that Mr. Roy confirms our records, I regret to say that The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta would have been using the title ‘Royal’ in error.

Apparently, Mr. Roy confirmed the Rideau Hall findings, because in a letter dated October 25, 1983, Edmond Joly de Lotbinière has this to report to Rodger Sellars:

Despite an extensive search we have not been able to find any record of a request having been submitted in the past by the Canadian Amateur Rowing Association for the use of the title “Royal”.

In his reply to Edmond Joly de Lotbinière, dated November 10, 1983, Rodger Sellars formally requested “permission to use the prefix ‘Royal’ in the title ‘Royal Canadian Henley Regatta.’”

On March 21, 1984, that permission was granted. Edmond Joly de Lotbinière sent the news to Rodger Sellars on April 16, 1984:

With reference to previous correspondence, it gives me great pleasure to inform you the Queen, under the date of 21st March, 1984, has been graciously pleased to approve that the title “Royal” should continue to be used by the Canadian Henley Regatta.

On July 14, 2018, I contacted the Office of the Secretary to the Governor General and asked her to confirm that the “Royal” designation was not obtained until 1984. On August 20, I got this reply, in part, from Sara Régnier-McKellar, Communications Advisor, Office of the Secretary to the Governor General:

One of my colleagues [Shelagh Cimpaye] has done a bit of research in regard to your query and here is what she has found:

1. The Royal Canadian Henley Regatta received its “royal” designation in 1984.
2. I did not find any trace of “the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen” being granted “royal” designation.

The answer to the question posed above: March 21, 1984.

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F

Scattered throughout this history are stories of competitors' journeys from their hometowns to Port Dalhousie.

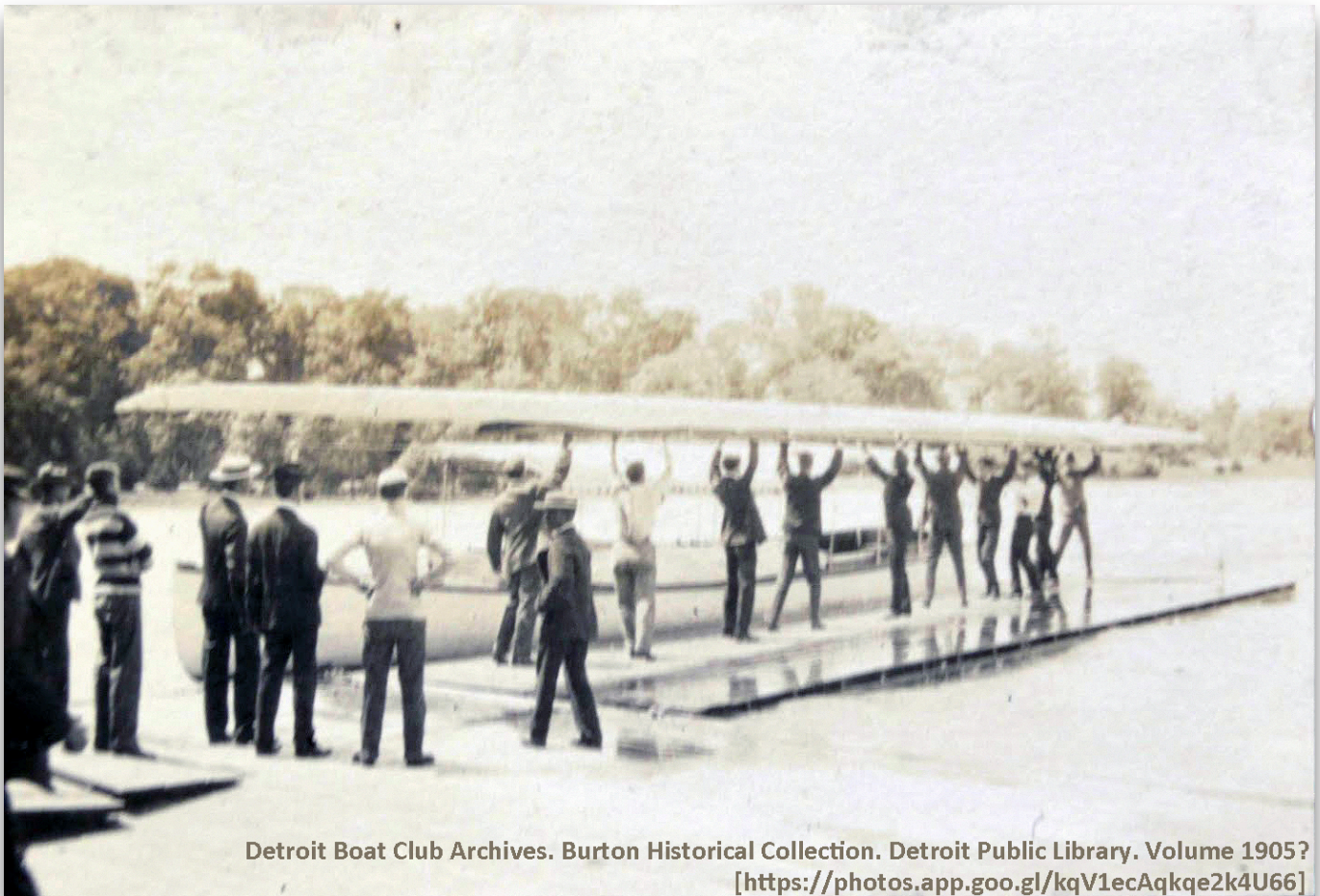
The photo below, may be the beginning of one of those journeys.

The only fact we know for sure is that the photo was taken at the Detroit B.C.'s Belle Island boathouse on the Detroit River. We also know that it was taken in either 1904 or 1905, probably the latter year. Detroit did not contest an eight race at the 1904 Canadian Henley Regatta. However, in 1905, it was in both the Junior and Senior Eights races. If the photo is from 1905, it may show a Detroit B.C. shell beginning the first leg of its trip to Port Dalhousie via the Club launch to a train station.

Detroit B.C. historian, Stephen Malbouef, adds:

[T]hey likely would have either gone to the Grand Trunk Depot in Detroit (about where the Renaissance Center stands today, 2 miles downriver from the boathouse) or I suppose they could have gone to the train station in Windsor [Ontario] as well. [Malbouef, Stephen. "Re: Photo & shirt." Message to Stan Lapinski. August 6, 2024. Email.]

At the depot, the shell would have been transferred from the launch to a baggage car. At its destination—the rail yard on the east side of Port Dalhousie Harbour—it would have been unloaded, rigged and rowed across the Harbour to be racked.



Detroit Boat Club Archives. Burton Historical Collection. Detroit Public Library. Volume 1905?

[<https://photos.app.goo.gl/kqV1ecAqkqe2k4U66>]

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G

Inter-Provincial Amateur Rowing Association of Canada

In 1913, (or perhaps 1912) the Inter-Provincial Amateur Rowing Association of Canada was founded. This organization might not merit more than a brief footnote, except some of the same men who were involved with the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsmen were also principals in the new group.

Its first annual meeting was held on the morning of its first regatta, August 16, 1913. The regatta was held at Hamilton/Burlington Beach, and the meeting was held at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club.

Among the names listed in the minutes are: Major Heron from the Argonaut R.C., who was then the President of the CAAO, Capt. John Wilson from the Argonaut R.C., who was then the CAAO's 2nd Vice-President, Thomas A. Murphy from the Don R.C., J.W. McAllister from the Hamilton R.C. who was then in his third and last year as a member of the CAAO Executive Committee. Also present was T. Percy Galt who had been President of the Argonaut R.C. and CAAO 2nd Vice-President in 1897, and W.D. Greer who had been the CAAO Secretary.

Some familiar names also appear in the list of officers and executive elected at that meeting:

President - R.T. Steele

Vice-President - W.D. Buchall

1st Vice-President - T.A. Murphy [*The minutes do not use 1st and 2nd Vice-President.*]

Executive: E.H. Pulford, W.W. Harrison, R.L. Schram, W.D. Greer, P.E. Boyd, P.J. Mulqueen, Capt. Crawford.

Secretary-Treasurer - J.W. McAllister

The regatta, had an ambitious programme: 11 races (the CAAO Regatta had 14 in 1913). The Inter-Provincial Amateur Rowing Association of Canada Regatta followed the current CAAO practice of racing a mile and half with a turn, except for eights which rowed one mile, 550 yards straightaway.

On the day, all 11 events were filled.

The Don R.C. had the biggest entry, but the Argonaut R.C. won the most finals: five. The Hamilton R.C., St. Catharines Rowing and Canoe Club, and Detroit B.C. also competed. The latter club won the Senior Eight, beating three other crews on the Lake Ontario course.

Three more clubs which—although members of the Association—did not attend the regatta were: Britannia Boating Club, Lachine R.C., and Ottawa R.C.. The presumption seems to be that since they had participated at the CAAO Regatta two weeks earlier, they were unable to attend.

The new Association was in good health in December, as evinced by the minutes of the annual meeting with a covering letter on Association letterhead, dated December 1, 1913, sent to the St. Catharines Rowing and Canoe Club, % "H.L. Schram" [*sic. It should be R. [as in Richard] L. Schram,*] from Secretary-Treasurer J.W. McAllister.

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A second regatta was planned for Labour Day, September 7, 1914, in Ottawa. However, on August 6, Ottawa spokesman, Harvey Pulford, announced that the regatta would be postponed because “owing to the European war, interest in sport has died out.” [The *Montreal Gazette*, August 8, 1914, p.14] Two days earlier, Britain and its dominions—including Canada—had declared war on Germany. That seems to have spelled the end of the Association.

Why was the Inter-Provincial Amateur Rowing Association of Canada—which appears to have been a carbon copy of the CAAO—formed?

Since many of the men involved in the new Association had been, were currently, or would be heavily involved in the CAAO, it’s not likely that the new group was meant to compete against the established group. Perhaps it was meant to provide an additional regatta for clubs to compete at. That was an idea that was successfully implemented in 1921 when the Eastern Rowing Association was established, and again in 1952 when the Centra Ontario Rowing Association was founded.

Sources:

Inter-Provincial Amateur Rowing Association of Canada. Annual Meeting.
Hamilton. August 16, 1913.

The *Hamilton Spectator*, August 18, 1913, p.11.

The *Montreal Gazette*, August 8, 1914, p.14.

The *St. Catharines Standard*, August 18, 1913, p.5.

The *Toronto Daily Star*, August 7, 1913, p.14.

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PLEASE NOTE: This History is a work in progress. I will post chapters as I finish them and I will make changes to chapters which are already posted as I become aware of new information, or have errors pointed out to me. This version was completed on August 10, 2024. If you find errors or omissions, use the Contact link at <http://goldmedalphotos.com/> to point them out to me. Stan Lapinski.