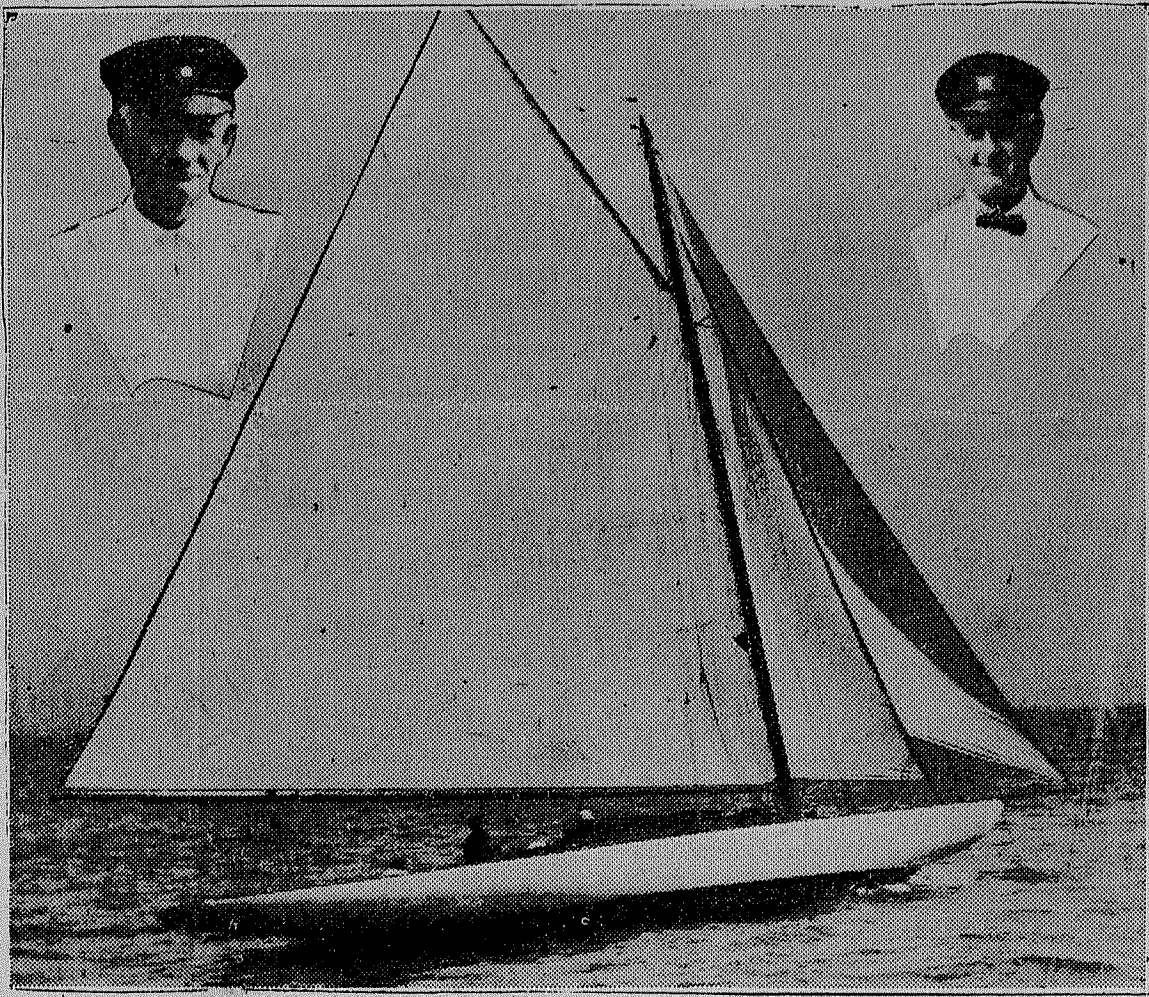


# Old Racer Iroquois Succumbs To Ravages Of Time



Iroquois in her prime and the two men that tillered her to fame. Upper left, Frank T. Christy; upper right, Lorenzo G. Mabbett. (Rochester Times-Union of Sept. 24)

By Charles A. Rawlings

The old Iroquois has gone to pick up her last mooring in the "Port of Many Ships."

Grimy, a trifle up in the bow and down in the stern from her eighteen years of racing but still staunch and valiant, the ancient sloop, possibly the proudest ever to carry the Union Jack out of Rochester harbor to duel to the finish with the Blue Ensign of the royal clubs of Canada, was rolled over on her starboard side, today cut up and burned.

With her passing much of the glamor that surrounds the years of 1905, 1906 and 1907 in yachting on the Great Lakes fades more dimly away into history, leaving only the trophy she won, the classic Canada's Cup, to remind the younger generation of sailors that the Rochester burgee was at one time unbeatable.

She was built in the fall of 1904, one of three trial boats, in answer to the challenge of the Royal Canadian Yacht Club of Toronto for a series of races for the Canada's Cup. The trophy had been won by the Irondequoit of Rochester in 1903 and the Canadians were up in arms to revenge the defeat and take the much prized trophy back to Toronto.

Designed by Herreshoff

Charles F. Herreshoff was obtained as designer and Lawley of Boston chosen as the builder by a syndicate headed by Frank T. Christy and composed of Charles M. Everest, William H. Briggs, Lewis B. Jones, William Hull, Joseph Robbins, Edward Bickford, Charles VanVoorhis and James Graham. The other Rochester boats were the Kee Lox II, designed and built by Charles and Winfield Pembroke, and the Rochester designed by William Gardiner of Boston and built by William Miller of Charlotte.

In the solid week of trial races, sailed by Frank Christy, she demonstrated superiority in the first three days, all marked by heavy winds and

sea and held her own on the final three days with the weather light, and was named as the Rochester defender. The Canadians after a long series of trials picked the Temerarie, designed by Rife of Scotland over the Zoraya, drawn by Mylne of Glasgow and the Naniwa built in Hamilton.

Lorenzo Mabbett was chosen as the Rochester skipper and he picked James Backus, William Little, Taylor Howard, Fred A. Mabbett, John A. Taylor and Harry Van a professional, as his crew.

Great excitement attended the races and when the boats went over the line in the first day's race more than 150 craft were standing about the course and both piers were black with people.

Series Go the Limit

Iroquois won the first contest by the wide margin of 12.40 in a light shifting breeze and Rochester hopes ran high. The next two races went to the heavy weather Canadian in a howling nor'easter, however, and it was conceded that unless the blow abated the cup was gone. The wind answered Americans' prayers and after it had been found impossible to start the boats in the fourth race due to the heavy sea and no breeze the race was postponed and on the following day conditions were ideal for the Iroquois. She annexed the remaining two races and the cup stayed in Rochester where it was again defended in 1907 by the history making Seneca.

The Canada's Cup triumph was Iroquois' most famous victory but she was still queen of the Rochester fleet the following year and chosen to defend the Fisher Cup, also held by the local club, against the Zoraya of the Royal Canadian Club. Frank Christy was named to sail her.

Zoraya proved to be a much more powerful boat in 1906 than she had been in 1905 when she was beaten by Temerarie in the Canadian trials and, sailed by the genius Amelius Jarvis, she won the first two races and took

home the cup, where it has remained in spite of two attempts by the Rochester club to win it back.

Following the Canada's Cup series the defender was put up for sale and was purchased by Frank Christy and Charles VanVoorhis. They kept her in commission and she raced in club events until the great war, when all the fleet went into drydock.

Queen of the Lake

On resumption of racing in 1921, Iroquois, skippered by Christy, proved to be champion of the lake in the first Lake Yacht Racing Association Regatta and won the cup offered in that year for the boat winning the greatest number of points. Since that time she raced in all of the lake meets until 1925 when she was leaking so badly that it was decided to keep her out of the water. She was considered beyond feasible repair this season and the high price of the lead market prompted her scrapping. She carried 9,500 pounds in her fin.

She was a scow type of racing hull with fair straight lines. Her over-all measurement was 52 feet and her waterline 30 feet. She carried 1,550 square feet of canvas in her large mainsail and two head sails. Her best sailing was with slightly started sheets. With the wind a trifle aft of beam and a smooth sea she probably was the fastest sailing machine that Lake Ontario ever saw excepting, in some sailors' minds, the Genesee.

Two men are woven into the glamorous fabric of her history. They are Frank T. Christy and Lorenzo Mabbett. Both are among the best sailors ever produced in Rochester water and both reached the pinnacle of their careers with her tiller in their hands. Under Mabbett the old boat won everlasting fame in the hectic struggle for the Canada's Cup and under Christy she carried the Rochester burgee into foreign waters until it became as well known as the crown and beaver pennant of the Royal Canadian club of Toronto as a fighting flag.



BRACKETT H. CLARK

10/16/78

I believe the  
enclosed might be  
of value for your  
archives.

BHC