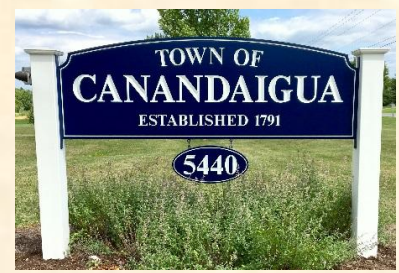


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Local History Notes

Canandaigua's Multi-Tasking Utility Boat

Before the days of the motor boat, the jet-ski, and the wind surfer, boating for recreation and short travel on Canandaigua Lake was a quieter and more leisurely affair. In



An unidentified lone sailor navigates the lake on a St. Lawrence Skiff - note the businessman's attire.



St. Lawrence Skiff pulled up on shore at the Marks cottage, Menteth Point, c. 1920

the late decades of the 19th century, one wooden boat model gained special popularity - the St. Lawrence Skiff. It originated in 1868 as a guide's workboat on the St. Lawrence River, and gained popularity through the Thousand Islands and beyond. Wide and pointed at both ends, it was fast and well suited to rowing, sailing, fishing trips, and sightseeing. Its flat bottom made it easy to beach and extremely stable. It had no centerboard or rudder, and when under sail it was steered by shifting one's weight.

In the 1890s the Natural Science Camp at Tichenor's Point was equipped with over a dozen St. Lawrence Skiffs for the use of their pupils, once they demonstrated that they could swim. The camp's 1892 brochure stated that "The boats are intended for the campers' use, and visitors will not be permitted to monopolize them when the campers want them. In case there are boats to spare visitors may rent them for twenty-five cents per hour by applying to the boat master."

For more information, see St. Lawrence Skiff exhibit at Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, NY:

<https://www.abm.org/index.php/exhibits/ongoing-exhibits/the-st-lawrence-skiff-our-indigenous-watercraft/>



Out for a row in 1898 - boaters are Alexander Davidson, Bob Johnson and Herb Ellis