



# AUTO HOUSEBOATS

THEY ARE SOMETHING NEW  
IN THE WAY OF A HOME

You can Hitch Your Machine to Your Houseboat and Travel  
Most Anywhere on the River

ingenious Chicago Man Perfects Arrangement Whereby Houseboats May Be Put in  
Motion by Simply Connecting Up With the Family Automobile,  
Escaping the Noise and Shocks of the City.



WHEN the patrician of ancient times went forth to cruise idly over pleasant waters, scores of galley slaves were put into the hold of the barge or galley to pull the oars, while the master lolled on the canopied deck, eating nightingale's tongues and sipping cool wines.

He thought he was having a good time, and perhaps he was. But his vessel moved slowly at the best, carried very meager equipment and stocks of supplies, and was anything but a habitable place when an extended voyage was necessary.

Moreover, when he went ashore the best he could do, for all his wealth, was to be jolted in a springless, clumsy chariot, which traveled only where, when and how horses could travel.

When a financial king of these days goes forth to seek the cool placidity of the waters, he builds a houseboat in which he can live for months, or always, if he so desires. He goes down to the shore in an automobile that consumes space at the rate of a mile a minute.

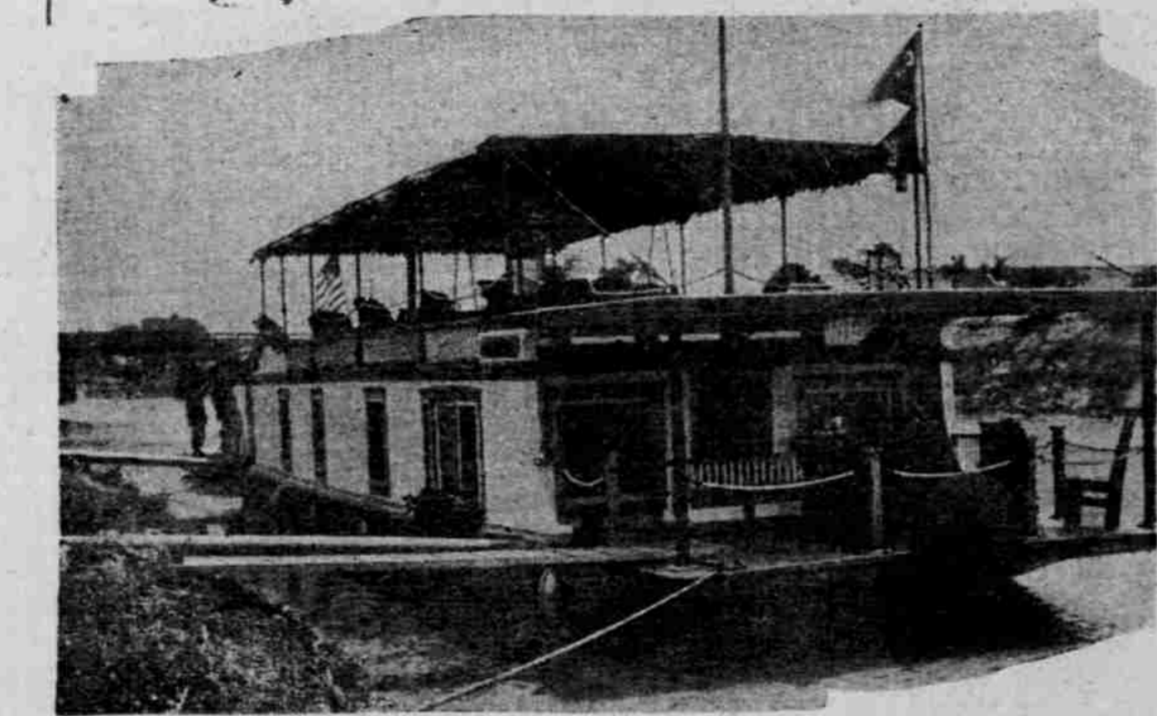
He drives the automobile aboard the houseboat, jacks up the rear wheels, gears the rear axle to a propeller shaft, starts the engine and sails away in true luxury. On leaving the houseboat he unshackles the auto and drives off at a speed that would sicken the nobleman of old.

This, at any rate, is the plan followed by Edwin F. Brown, a Chicago banker, and he says it can be done by anybody who has the houseboat and the automobile. From which it is inferred that others will follow his example as soon as they learn how easily the automobile can be made to drive a houseboat in exchange for its "passage."

The automobile never kicks on being put into the stowage or stowed away in the hull; it lives on gasoline, oil and water, and does its work easily, swiftly, and with very little noise. And it never gets tired.

Mr. Brown has a houseboat called the Driftwood, which is really a floating house, and undoubtedly is one of the finest structures of the kind in the country. It is 75 feet long, 18 feet 3 inches wide, and on its deck is built a house 50 feet in length, the full width of the boat. The Driftwood has hot and cold water, refrigerator, gas stove, roof garden, sun parlor, laundry, clothes drier, gas-making machinery, a complete plan for filtering and clarifying water, and all the features necessary to make life on the boat just as pleasant as it would be in a city mansion.

Mr. Brown, in fact, resides in the Driftwood Summer and Winter, and says his health has been improved greatly by the ability to get away from the noises and shocks of the city. He has the houseboat moored in a boatyard in the Winter.

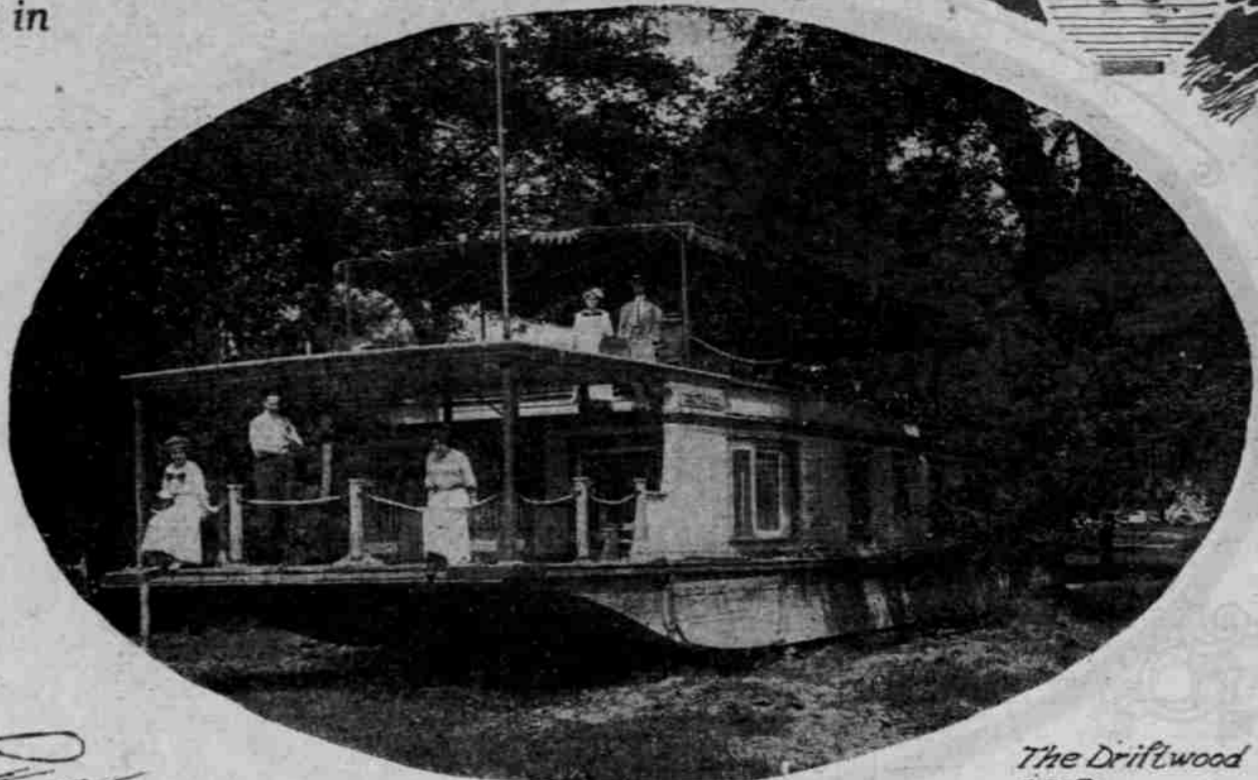


The Driftwood Moored on the Evanston Canal.

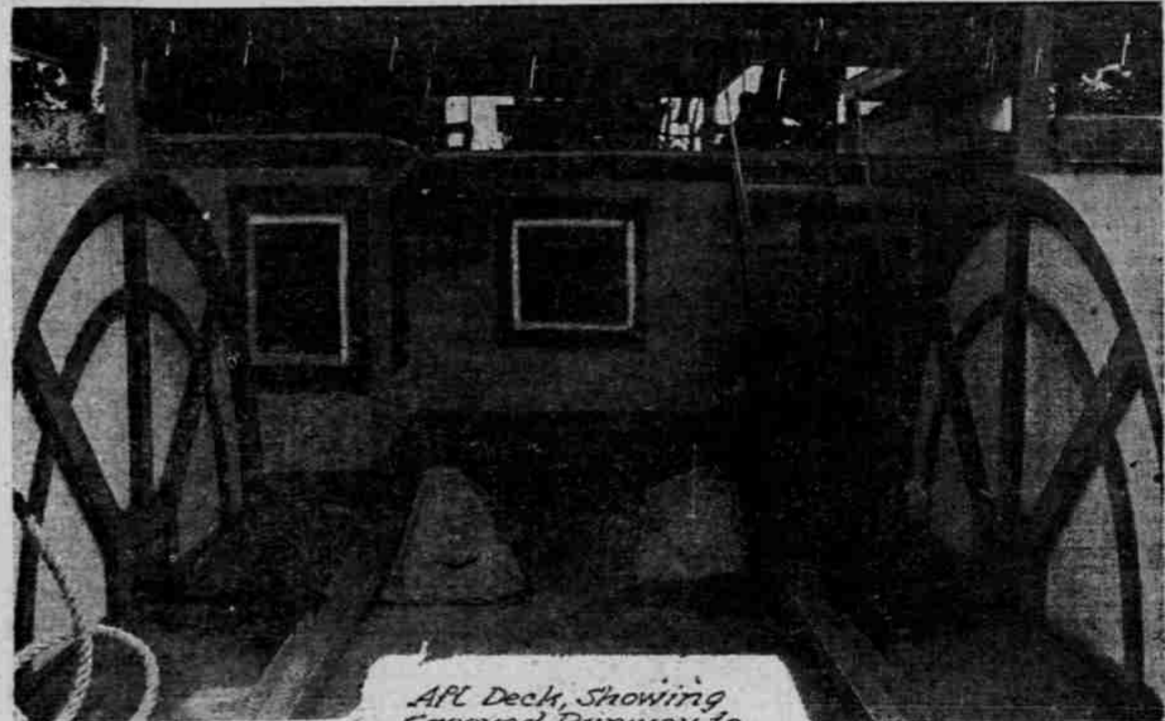


The Forward Deck

than such vessels generally can be propelled. The Driftwood, under ordinary circumstances, is steered by two rudders, each of which is six feet long and 2 1/2 feet wide. Should the rudders be disabled, however, the craft can be guided by the paddle-wheels alone, as they are so arranged that they can be operated independently of each other. The emergency brake of the car is disconnected from one driving wheel



The Driftwood as a Land Craft.



All Deck, Showing Grooved Runway to Hold Automobile, and Sprocket Wheels on Shaft of Paddle Wheels



The Living Room.

and the foot brake from the other, so that one paddle-wheel can be made to revolve while the other remains stationary. If the port wheel is kept in motion and the other one still, the bow of the boat is turned to starboard, and vice versa. These steering arrangements are supplemented by two drift-boards, each 19 feet long and three feet wide, to counteract the tendency of a flat-bottomed boat to drift sidewise. The Driftwood weighs 36 tons and draws 16 inches of water. It will pass through any canal in the country, the owner having made a close study of canal and lock dimensions before building the boat. Oregon fir and tank pine were used for the hull, insuring absolute damp-

or foul, however, the interior constantly is swept by a current of air forced through by the ventilating system. A roof garden on the top of the Driftwood is one of the most unique features ever embodied in water craft of this kind. The roof garden is covered by awnings, supported by a frame which folds flat on the roof when the boat passes under low bridges. The spacious forward deck is fitted up as a veranda. The boat has three sleeping-rooms, a well-appointed bathroom, and a commodious combination dining-room and parlor. Driftwood, the name of this remarkable craft, is also the motif for the color scheme of the boat, for French grays, water greens, and river browns carry the idea of weather-beaten, water-beached driftwood into the wall hints, the window glass, the hangings, rugs, curtains and decorations. Even

the cigar boxes seem to have been made from wood drifted ashore, and when the hospitable host offers the weeds there goes with every smoke chip of driftwood on which is printed "May each gray curling fume entwine a wish that will come true." The stationery also has the appearance of driftwood shavings. The practicability of this houseboat for living purposes both in Winter and in Summer has been thoroughly tested. For a time last Summer it lay off the Chicago Yacht Club, on Lake Michigan. With the approach of Winter it was moved to the protection of a boatyard months, a floating bungalow, in which the owner luxuriated when the blizzards blew snow over ice a foot thick that gripped the hull. As a "land craft" the Driftwood has also proved excellent. Mr. Brown last Spring made his daughter a wedding present of the houseboat, together with an automobile to furnish the power. Just at this time Miss Brown was in the midst of preparations for her approaching marriage to Ira J. Ingraham and it occurred to her that Driftwood would be just the thing on which to spend their honeymoon. Mr. Ingraham agreed that it would. But the daughter, not wishing to undertake a long trip at once, thought it would be a good plan to try the boat on land first; so the houseboat was drawn up high and dry on the wide lawn of Mr. Brown's home, and when the young couple returned from their wedding trip, they moved into the vessel. With every convenience of a cozy, modern, steam-heated apartment, and with a hand location next door to Mrs. Ingraham's parents, they lived in the boat as snug as a bug in a rug for several weeks before taking a water journey.

The roof garden, now perched in the air amid the large, leafy branches of numerous shade trees, has been a delightfully cool haven during the present Summer, while the spacious veranda has frequently been the scene of pleasant, informal entertainments. Keeping tidy the pretty living-room and the chambers has given the couple an enjoyable initial experience in housekeeping.

"It is an ideal way to spend one's honeymoon," said Mrs. Ingraham. "The whole boat is just as comfortable as can be, and we wouldn't think of changing it for a real house. It will seem like a perpetual honeymoon to live in such a place. We plan to take a trip down the Mississippi River this Fall and as we will have the automobile at ways at hand, ready for duty at a moment's notice, we will be able to test the surrounding country at any time we wish."

Originally the Driftwood was built not alone to be the Summer home of a banker, but to demonstrate a proposition, advanced several years ago by its builder, that our water front and rivers can accommodate a floating population running up into the million living in houseboats. One does not need an elaborate craft, a fairly good barge or scow will do provided it is properly caulked. Take one of these and build on it a house with ventilated walls, so that the fresh air can blow through and the wet sunshine enter, and you have an ideal Summer home. A string of these houseboats could be built cheaper than you could buy the land on which to build a house that would not accommodate many people as you could put on one houseboat. And their advantages in the way of healthfulness and peaceful, sleep-compelling quiet could never be equalled by any structure on land.