

# Experience of Middies at Poughkeepsie a Novelty in Naval Annals

**T**HE oarsmen from the Naval academy who were at Poughkeepsie this year to take part for the first time in the intercollegiate regatta had about the most training quarters of the lot. They camped out in one of the best houseboats owned in the country.

Colonel Robert Means Thompson, Annapolis, Md., turned over to the use of the middies the Everglades, the big craft from which he fishes down in Florida ordinarily. The Everglades was tied up at Krum Elbow, a half mile or so above the

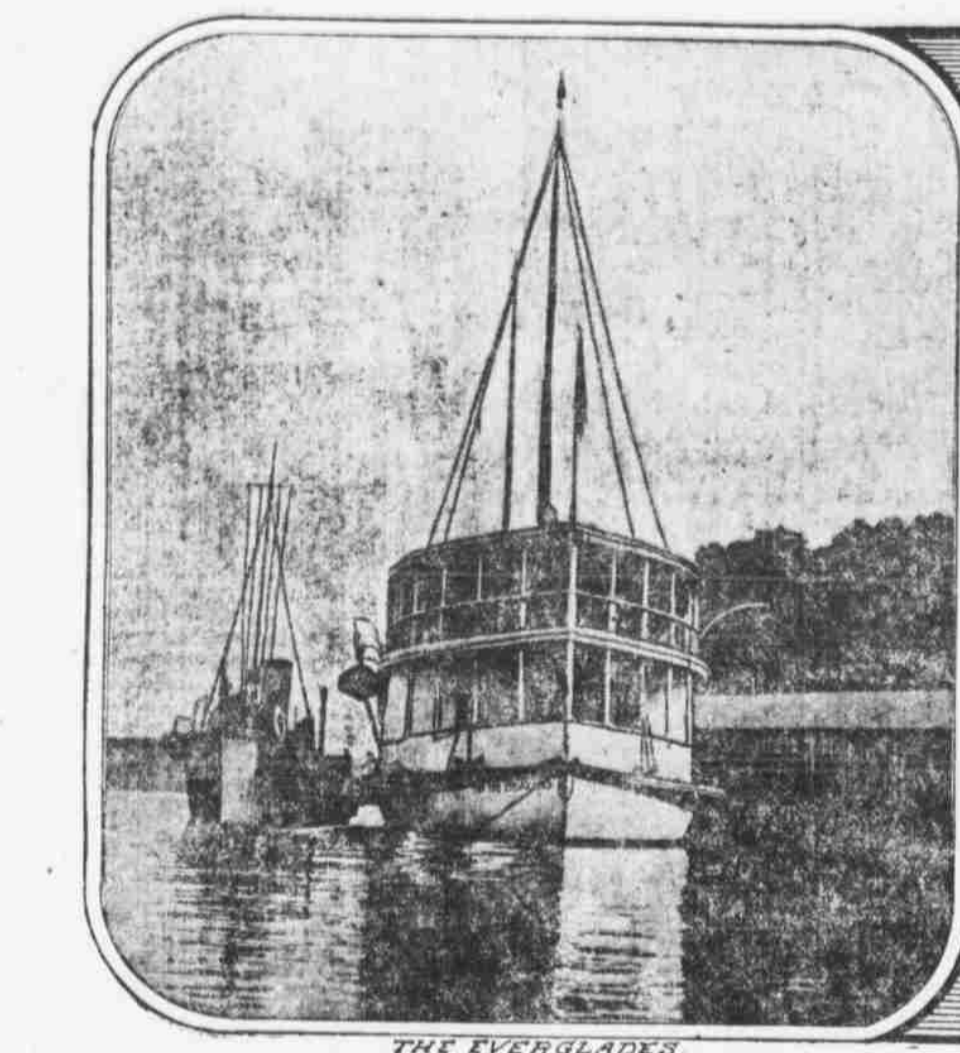
hard work of the crews is ordinarily finished by the time they get to the Hudson for the last few weeks.

Coach Glendon had his men out twice a day throughout the training period at Krum Elbow. The navy crews did a great deal of hard work over the course the first few days, but later they stayed up above and rowed toward Hyde park instead of going down the river where the others were.

After the morning row when the boats were put back into the house, there was a brief wait and then the oarsmen had luncheon. They had another lay spell

up the monotony of loading. After the afternoon row there was dinner, of course; then more loading around on the upper deck. It was very pleasant, indeed, up there, because the Highland side of the river was much cooler than the Poughkeepsie side and a pleasant breeze swept along where the Everglades was tied up every evening.

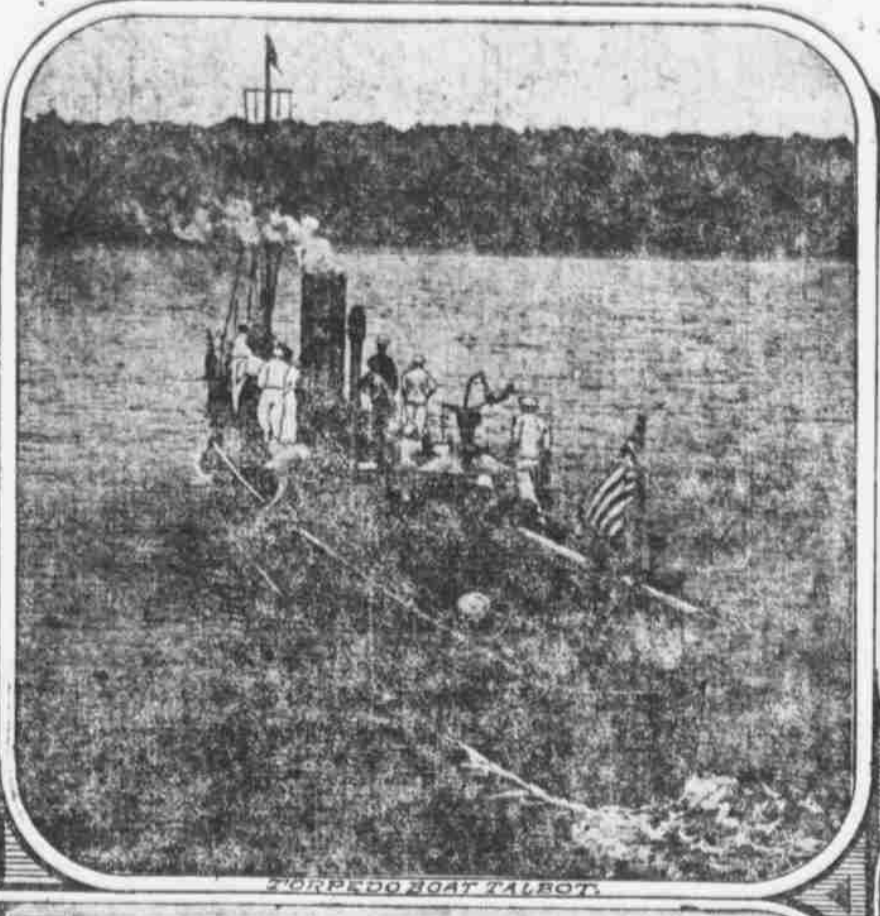
There was no more delightful spot for the crew than the deck of the Everglades.



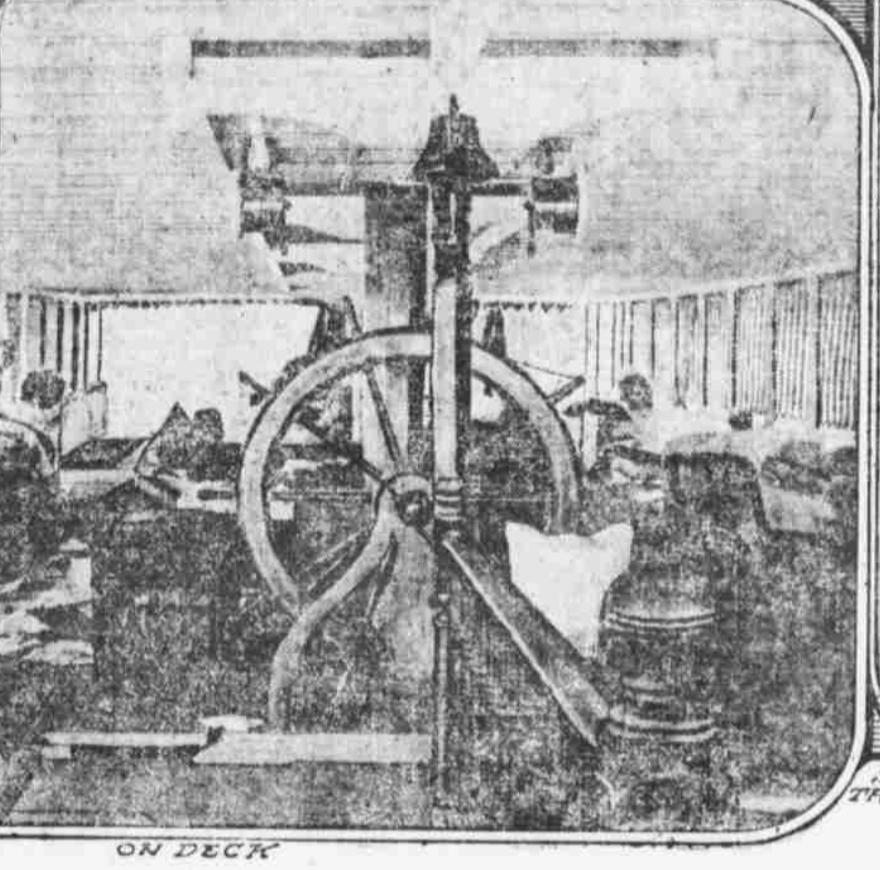
THE EVERGLADES.



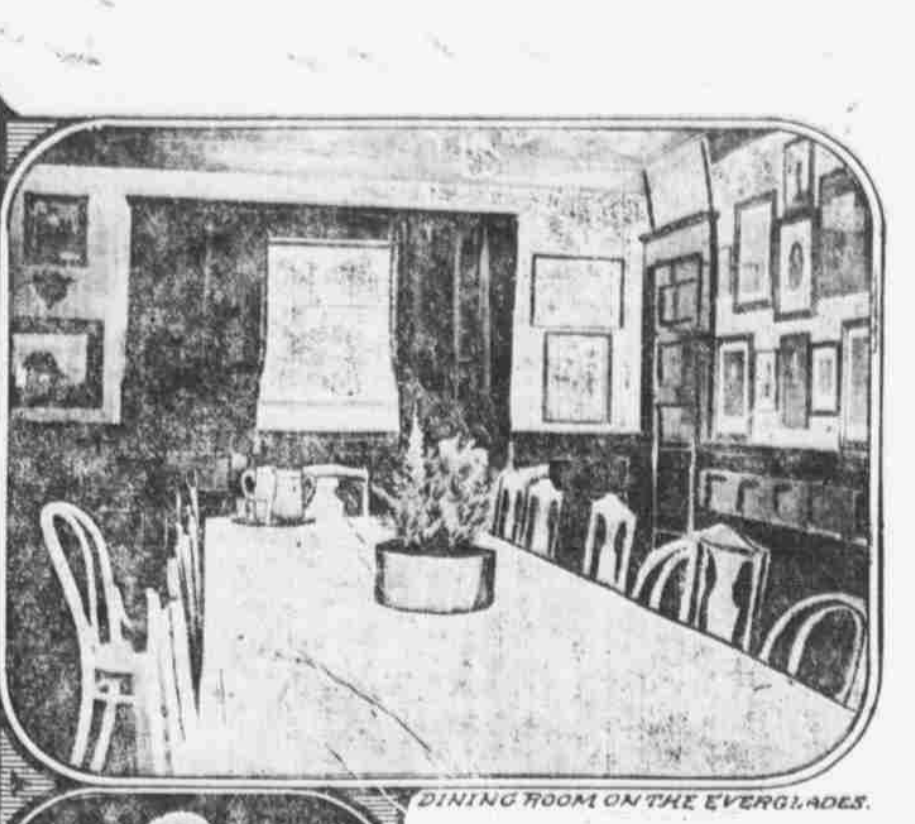
RICHARD GLENDON, COACH OF THE NAVY CREWS.



TORPEDO BOAT AT ANCHOR.



ON DECK.



DINING ROOM ON THE EVERGLADES.



SCOTTY McMAISTERS, TRAINER OF THE NAVY CREWS.

start of the 'one-mile course. There is always difficulty about getting suitable quarters for a crew, either at Poughkeepsie or at Highland. The local real estate men seize the opportunity and demand high prices for the few weeks that the collegians have to spend in preliminary work on the Hudson.

There is not a great deal of money to spend for rowing at the Naval academy, chiefly because the only income for sport is derived from subscriptions by 'midshipmen and navy officers. When the Naval academy people started out to look for quarters near the course they found that prices were away up. At this juncture Colonel Thompson offered them his houseboat.

This was a great piece of luck, because it would have been absolutely impossible to get for money accommodations such as were furnished on board that craft. The Everglades is comparatively a new boat, having been built only about three years ago from designs made by Colonel Thompson. There are accommodations on board for twenty persons. The dining room is large enough to hold a very big crew

then, waiting for the afternoon work, done, of course, in the cool of the day.

Writing letters, playing cards—solitaire mostly—playing mandolins or guitars or the like filled up the afternoon. The average college oarsmen has a very lazy time of it in his training.

The navy men did not have much of a chance to do any walking after meals. The country directly up from the river is very hilly and the road is very far away. Walking on railroad ties is not of much use to a man in training.

The afternoons were hard to wear away, especially to men accustomed to hard work every minute of the day in the academy. The oarsmen were very glad to get in their boats and do a bit of hard rowing to break

A light here and there just relieved the darkness outside. Singing and music helped to fill in the interval before bedtime.

Down below on either side of the Everglades the protecting torpedo boats were anchored. At night the sailors and others

were out on deck singing too. The negro others treated the midshipmen and themselves to all the melodies they could think

of, and there was some very good music distributed to the night air. Oarsmen do not stay up very late. They

get pretty tired in the course of two hard rowing workouts in a day and they are only too glad to get to bed early. At about 10 o'clock things were quiet on board the Everglades. The boys who slept on deck had turned in there and the others were sleeping in the cabins.

Coach Glendon, Scotty McMaisters and some of the others in charge did not turn in so early. Coach Glendon is a great smoker, and he and the others naturally had things to say about the coming races. Eventually, however, they, too, succumbed to the quiet and the effects of the day in the open air and turned in, and the whole navy fleet was in quietude.

Colonel Thompson is well known to all navy men. He has a wide acquaintance in other countries beside the United States, as the walls of his dining room in the Everglades testify. Pictures of about all the men prominent in the United States navy are there.

Admirals Dewey, Evans, Schley, Sigbee, Chadwick and others who antedated the Spanish war all have their signed photographs on the wall. King Edward, Sir Thomas Lipton and the royalty of other countries also are to be seen there. It may have acted as a sort of inspiration to the midshipmen to sit there beneath the pictures of the great men in their own service.

The trip to Poughkeepsie was a fitting reward for the long training work of the midshipmen, and it is expected that a larger number of oarsmen than ever will come out for the crews at the academy next season. Those who were on the trip this year will have only to tell of the luxurious life of ease aboard to make the others anxious to have a taste of it, too. It is regarded more as a sort of premium for the men in the second crew, who, of course, had no chance, barring accident, to get a place in the regular eight.

Colonel Thompson's generosity in turning over the Everglades to the navy oarsmen is only part of what he has done for the cause of athletics in the academy. He gives a large sum of money annually to the Navy Athletic association, the rest of the funds coming, as has been said, from subscriptions.

Colonel Thompson is the donor of the medals for the intercollegiate fencing championship, in which the navy takes part. These medals were worn by the Annapolis oarsmen this year. He presents a foot ball trophy for the annual army-navy game and golf foot balls to the navy players if they defeat the army. He also gives a cup for the best all-round athlete of the navy academy.

Although a graduate of the academy, his title is colonel. He got that as a member of the staff of one of the governors of New Jersey. The navy oarsmen were sorry that Colonel Thompson was not at Poughkeepsie to see the race in which they rowed. He was in Europe at the time.

The Manly, a Yarrow built boat, bought several years ago for use in the navy, was the coaching launch of the crews. It is a black boat, moves with great speed and makes a pretty sight dashing along level with the crews with black smoke pouring out of the stack.

The Talbot is a bigger boat and was used mostly for messenger work. The two boats tied up alongside the Everglades gave quite an air of protected rowing camp to the scene.

On board the Talbot was a hero quite unsung, Napoleon Johnson, president of the Annapolis Coal and Wood company, and incidentally all the other officers and staff of that great corporation, was so attached to the navy crews that he enlisted in the navy just to be near them at Poughkeepsie. He was employed as an electrician on the Talbot. Johnson is six feet tall and much blacker than the ace of spades.

When volunteering to a reporter the information as to himself and what brought him to Poughkeepsie, he also intimated that if a good cut were printed about him he would pay \$2. By "cut" it developed later he meant a piece in the paper. Later on Napoleon said: "Ah! give yo' three dollars if you g' me a good cut," and discharging down he produced a small and oily roll, adding: "Heah's a dollah to bind de bargain." (N. B.—This cut was printed gratis.)

The Everglades was arranged for comfort. The boat is 120 feet long over all, with a breadth of twenty-eight feet over the guards. There is thus a very roomy top deck, all set forth with cushions and seats and tables.

Down below there is a small reception room, with tables and a desk. The state-rooms run on either side of a passageway back to the dining room, which runs crosswise of the boat and is very light and airy. Back of that room is the commissary department. The navy oarsmen had more servants around than any college crew had by a great majority.

The trip made by the navy oarsmen was their first. They obtained permission to come to the Hudson through Victor Howard Metcalf, secretary of the navy, himself an old Yale oarsman. The fact that the navy came to the river this year is, of course, no guaranty that the 'midshipmen will be back again, but it is considered almost inevitable that they will take part in the regatta next season.

If they had won on the Hudson they might not necessarily have come back. Now, however, it is considered that they are sure to be back for the sake of regaining their prestige. Next year there will be a navy four-oared crew in the race. This year there was only a 'varsity eight-oared crew.

## Features of Life in Heart of the Libyan Desert

(Copyright, 1907, by Frank G. Carpenter.)

**T**RIPOLI, July 18.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—I have just returned from Mechia, the great oasis which lies on the edge of the Libyan desert, east of Tripoli. It faces the Mediterranean and is an island of green on the edge of this mighty ocean of sand. It contains more than 1,000,000 date palms, fully as many olive trees, and vast groves of oranges and lemons. The oases is cut up by roads, much like the streets of a city. Each little farm has walls six or eight feet high, and everywhere are to be seen the tall frameworks of the wells by which the land is irrigated. The motive power for raising the water is cows, camels, donkeys and women. In many places tunnels or long inclined ditches, beginning at the wells and sloping downward for several hundred feet, have been dug, and in these are tracks, the cow, donkey, camel or woman trots up and down, dragging the rope, running over wheel on the top of the framework, which raises the water. At the end of the rope is a huge ball of skin open at both ends. This is dropped into the well, and, when it fills, the lower end is pulled up, thus forming a high up into the well, and the whole is dragged released, and the water pours out into a trough, which carries it off into a reservoir. One of these buckets will hold about thirty gallons; and, as the work goes on all day, the supply is enormous.

**An Oasis Farm.**  
During my stay I visited some of the gardens. They are of all sizes, and are beautifully kept. One I remember was cut up by cement conduits, running along on the top of the ground, so arranged that every little tract could be irrigated at will. Under the pink, orange, green, red, and beautiful flowers were to be seen here and there, and in most places three crops were growing on the same soil. Over the whole date palms, with their ragged trunks their wide-branched fan-like leaves quivering in the breeze and their yellow fruit shining like gold under the sun. The trees below were loaded with oranges, pale yellow lemons, flaming pomegranates and even with peaches and pears. On the ground itself vegetables were growing, and I saw even alfalfa and grain of different kinds. This garden was in the charge of a Bedouin and several of his wives. The women were boiling dates in a pot, about the size of an apple butter kettle, over a fire, out in the open. I don't know whether they were making date butter or date honey, or whether they were merely cooking dates, for sale in the markets. The women were loaded with jewelry. I bribed one with a franc, and she let me take her photograph. The others were more bashful, and they wrapped themselves up in their shawls whenever the camera was pointed their way.

**Oases of Barbary.**  
The oases of Tripolitania, or Barbary, as it is often called, contain only its whole population. They are scattered over a territory one-ninth as large as the United States, and they have altogether about 1,000,000 people. A large number of them, such as Mechia, are found along the shores of the Mediterranean; others are further south in the desert, in a great depression known as the Fezzan, and in addition there are others in the beds of dry rivers, where the water supply comes from springs or artesian wells. There are caravan routes leading from Tripoli to all of these oases and also routes crossing the desert to the Sudan from oases to oases.

Tripoli is, in fact, the commercial metropolis of the eastern Sahara. It lies almost directly north of Lake Chad, and its

routes across the desert are the shortest, although by no means the safest. The roads over the Sahara lead not only to Lake Chad, but also to Tuat and Timbuktu, so that Tripoli gets much of the trade of the French Sahara as well.

The French decidedly object to this, and they are now making special inducements for the caravans to land their wares at Ghabes in southern Tunisia. They have posted the Sahara with their camel soldiers, and are now sending expeditions with such of the caravans as pass that way. So far they have not created the requisite market at Ghabes, and within the past few months the reputation of that port has been greatly injured, because it has no merchants at hand ready to buy out a large caravan when it arrives. The caravans often carry goods to the value of tens of thousands of dollars, and a big capital is required to handle their trade. The last caravan which called at Ghabes had to put its wares upon the steamers there and ship them to Tripoli.

In Tripolitania, all such companies must have their armed escorts, and every individual I see in this part of the desert has a gun strapped to his back. I passed several caravans coming in and going out during a ride which I took on a camel along one of the caravan routes a few days ago. The only roads I could see were the fresh camel tracks, but these must be obliterated by every sand storm, and, in some places, for quite a long distance, there were no tracks at all. Nevertheless the Arabs and Bedouins can travel 5,000 miles over such wastes, and not once lose their way. The journey to the Sudan takes many months, and the freight must be valuable to stand the cost.

I have heard much about the great oases centers from the merchants of Tripoli.

They tell terrible stories of the horrors of the desert, and of the gloomy villages scattered through it. Between here and the Fezzan there is a wide plain of hot stones, upon which travelers almost faint as they hurry across. This plain, known as the Hammada, is about as big as Kentucky, and its altitude is near that of the Blue Ridge mountains in Virginia.

The Fezzan, which lies on the other side of the Hammada, also covers a large territory. It is a shallow depression in the desert, spotted here and there by oases. It lies just about 80 miles north of Lake Chad, and the chief caravan routes to Kuka and Bornu pass through it.

The transsahara trade of the past has largely consisted of slaves, and slaves are carried from the Sudan by that route through the Fezzan to Tripoli today. From here they are smuggled to Tunisia, Algeria and Turkey, finding a ready market in the harbors of those cities. They are often taken on the steamers, as the nominal wives of their masters. No Mohammedan will tolerate any inquiry into his family arrangements, and such a statement prevents investigation. Not long ago the number of slaves carried across the desert through the Fezzan amounted to as many as 50,000 per annum, and it is said that the route from there to Lake Chad can even now be followed by the bleaching bones of the human beings who have died on the way. The capital of the Fezzan is Murzuk, a gloomy city containing about 7,000 people. It depends almost entirely upon the caravan trade.

**Ghat and Ghadames.**  
Another important caravan center is the oasis of Ghat, which lies in the bed of a dry river, and a third is Ghadames, in an-

other dry river some distance away. Ghat is famous for its great fair, which is held once a year, bringing together traders from all parts of the Sahara. In ordinary times the town has only about 4,000 population, and the fair has to be held on a great plain outside. The city is surrounded by walls and entered only by gates. Its streets are dark passages, with houses built over them, so that going through it is like traveling through the tunnels of a mine.

Gha-dam-es—I hesitate to write the word. It sounds so much like swearing—is another oasis center of about the same character as Ghat. It has been a thriving place since the days of the Romans, and the caravans of the Fezzan, Tuat, Timbuktu and Lake Chad all pass through it. Ghadames is twice as big as Ghat. It is surrounded by a wall three miles in length, but the people live in only one corner of the inclosure. The houses are box shaped and are so laid out that the women can walk from one to another on the roofs, which are reserved for their use.

**Captured by the Americans.**  
Some of the interesting parts of this region are along the Mediterranean sea. Here in Tripoli we have 60,000 people. Farther eastward, in Barka, is the town of Benghazi, which was a thriving city in the day of the Phoenicians and Romans, and still further east is Derna, the only place on the African continent ever occupied by Americans. It was captured by our fleet in 1815, and the ruins of a battery which was then erected on the heights are still to be seen. I am told there are other traces along the Mediterranean coast which might be cultivated, if properly handled, and that the ruins of many Roman settlements still exist there. It is through that



A MAGAHITE FAMILY.



ONE OF THE OULED NAIL DANCING GIRLS.

When the oarsmen did not get up to Poughkeepsie until June 15, the Everglades came up from Bayonne under its own power about three days before. It is equipped with two gas engines of three cylinders each.

With the Everglades came Scotty McMaisters. He had a busy time for two or three days looking around for sources of food supply, because oarsmen are equipped with large appetites. When Scotty had his craft all provisioned it was time for the oarsmen to get there. He had some anxious moments while waiting for the arrival of the West Shore train, which bore the crews to Highland station.

It was more than an hour late. Scotty stood on the station platform bewailing that fact, chiefly because he was afraid that the roast beef he had prepared for dinner would be too well done.

When the oarsmen did get there they tackled Scotty's provender in great style. All they had to do was to go aboard the Everglades, which was tied up alongside the pier, and get to work on the food. Some of the college crews have to hustle to get the shore boats in attendance, and into the houseboat before there is any thought of eating. The Navy men weren't bothered that way. They simply ate their dinners and then after a time went to sleep on their boat.

There was some overflow naturally from the sleeping rooms, which did not hold all the men brought along. Some of the midshipmen slept out on the decks from choice. In the morning they got the shells out of the baggage car, and after a somewhat difficult launching they rowed up to Krum Elbow. The Everglades followed and soon tied up near the houseboat.

The Columbia crews used to be quartered up at Krum Elbow, but they had a house away up on the bank, called Red Top, because the Harvard crews once stayed there and had the roof painted red. They used a houseboat down on the shore. The Navy men stored their shells in that houseboat. The helpers on board the Everglades lived in the houseboat, too; that is to say, they slept there nights. The Everglades has Japanese servants, so that the Navy men got themselves right at home.

Life on board the houseboat was vastly different from the round of hard work of the academy. The midshipmen naturally were up early in the mornings, but they did not have any recitations to attend. After breakfast all they had to do was to lie around on the pleasant upper deck, waiting for the time for the morning row.

The newspaper brought up from Poughkeepsie on either the Manly or the Talbot, the two torpedo boats in attendance, were eagerly grabbed up. It is a curious thing that although college oarsmen naturally know more about what is going on in their own crews than any one else can, they like to read what is written about them.

They scan the papers too for the news of the other crews, although they know that whatever is done at Poughkeepsie is very likely to be unimportant, because the

midshipmen were up early in the mornings, but they did not have any recitations to attend. After breakfast all they had to do was to lie around on the pleasant upper deck, waiting for the time for the morning row.

The newspaper brought up from Poughkeepsie on either the Manly or the Talbot, the two torpedo boats in attendance, were eagerly grabbed up. It is a curious thing that although college oarsmen naturally know more about what is going on in their own crews than any one else can, they like to read what is written about them.

They scan the papers too for the news of the other crews, although they know that whatever is done at Poughkeepsie is very likely to be unimportant, because the

midshipmen were up early in the mornings, but they did not have any recitations to attend. After breakfast all they had to do was to lie around on the pleasant upper deck, waiting for the time for the morning row.