

[Page 12 - The Birch-bark Canoe](#)ISSUE : [Issue 10](#)

Published by Ronald Caplan on 1975/3/31

needed" • then tied as in the drawing to set while drying. The bark and lashing is thoroughly wet with boiling water. Ribs are placed in working from the ends toward the center. Each rib is cut to a length slightly more than would permit the rib to be forced upright v;hen in place. The ends of the rib are set in place betx-jeen the outer edge of the gunwale and the bark cover, in the space made in the lashing, the bottom of the rib slightly inboard, "Then, with one end of a short batten placed against its inboard side, the rib is driven tovrard the end of the canoe,...,(See the photograph; If the rib drives too easily it is removed and laid aside; if too hard, it is shortened. It must go home tightly enough to stretch slightly the bark cover by bringing pressure to bear on the whole ividth of the sheathing...,The ribs are set one by one, working to within 2 or 3 frames of the midship thv'art; then the other end of the canoe is begun. The last 3 or 4 ribs to be placed are tliu6 amidships," R//55 /' /'/'" Rig SHeATHI"G- The maple headboards are made, shaped as in the drawing to fit snugly against the bark sides just beyond the last rib. The ends are stuffed with dry moss or cedar shavings • as much of it as the ends can hold • and then the frog is carved and set io, the bottom, lapping the last rib. The frog is notched to receive the foot of the headboard, which is then pushed back against the stuffing and lashed, its shoulders supporting the gunwales. The gunwale cap is shaped • 1/4 to 3/8 inch thick, rounded somev'hat on top, the thickness tapering slightly totvard the ends. The cap is fasten? ed to the gunwale with pegs and short lashing groups near the ends. And finally all seams on the outside are covered with gum and a narrow strip of bark, the strip it? self faired with gum around its edges. This entire article is essentially a reduction from Edward Tappan Adney and Howard I. Chapelle's beautiful book. THE BARK CANOES AND SKIN"BOATS OP NORTH AMERICA. We are grateful to Gordon Hubel, Director of the Smithsonian Institution Press, for" his permission to use this material. The book can be obtained for \$6.00 from Super? intendent of Documents. U.S.Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Our thanks' to J.L.Martin, Director, and Barbara Shaw, Publications, of the Nova Scotia Museum, for photographs of Harold Gates. Middleton. making a Micmac birchbark canoe. STONES in Baddeck is proud to announce the publication of Memoirs of a Cape Breton Doctor byDcCLMacMillan We will be happy to mail the book Anywhere in the World \$7.95 plus 75