

## Bill Barrows July 12, 1951

A handsome racing yawl rocked gently at its Rochester Yacht Club moorings one day two summers ago. Wet sailing gear covered its decks and blanketed some of its beauty; a steady stream of spectators paused to relish the trim lines of the sailing yacht, and to call congratulations to its skipper.

He worked on the deck, a slender, greying man with lined features; a tired-looking man, performing the rite expected of every yachtsman, that of never leaving his boat until it is shipshape. He had a right to be tired. By the wizardry of his touch, and for the honor of the Rochester Yacht Club, he had just won the world's longest fresh water sailing race, a great circle around Lake Ontario, nearly 350 miles of scorching calms and palm-skinning squalls.

A reporter, an old friend of his, approached to add a word of praise. There was a clasp of hands. The skipper grinned his thanks. Then the reporter said, "Now, if you'll just come over by the wheel we'd like to get your picture."

The skipper's smile vanished. Courtously, but with a steely firmness, he replied: "You'll get no picture of me unless my crew is with me—they really won the race, I just went along for the ride."

That incident was a passing one at the time; now it is recalled to serve as a humble, fitting tribute to the memory of Bill Barrows. It bespoke the character of the man who has sailed his last race.

As a businessman, as a leader in Scouting, William P. Barrows was an outstanding figure in the community. But in yachting, his hobby, he was a living legend. For decades, crouched over a tiller, his fingers making magic of every slightest touch of breeze and sea, he brought glory to Rochester.

Time and again, with skill and with daring, he retained two of the most famous of all fresh water racing trophies, the international Canada's Cup and George Cup. He turned that same skill to promoting the sport; his word was respected, his advice was valued even in the haughty environs of the famous old-line yacht clubs of the Atlantic seaboard.

The trophy cases, the records, the very traditions of his home club at the mouth of the Genesee River, all bear his permanent imprint.

As long as Great Lakes racing yachtsmen gather in quiet moments to spin yarns, there will always be one to start his story with:

"I remember one race when Bill Barrows . . ."