

WEE ROB CANOE

design

no.34

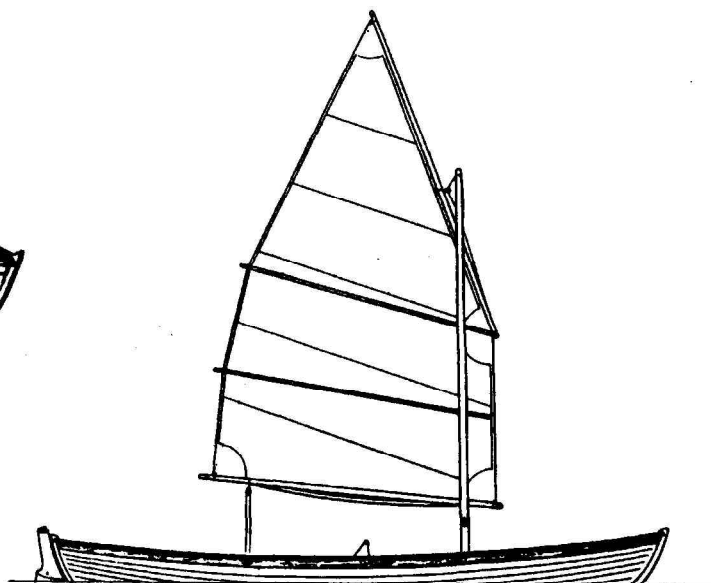
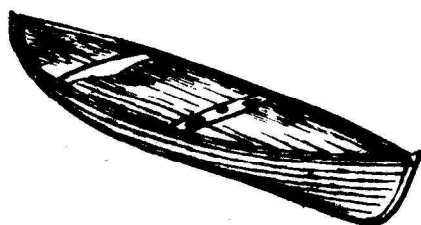
LOA: 12' - 1/2"
3.67m

Beam: 28"
710mm

Depth: 11' - 1/4"
285mm

Weight: 30lbs
13.5kg

Sail area: 34sq ft
3.15sqm



Type: paddling/sailing canoe Capacity: 1, sometimes 2 Optional rig: balanced lug with leeboard

BUILDING INFORMATION

Construction: glued lap clinker plywood

Options: traditional planking – strip plank – cold-moulded. Variable length

Building time: 100 hours Rig + 48

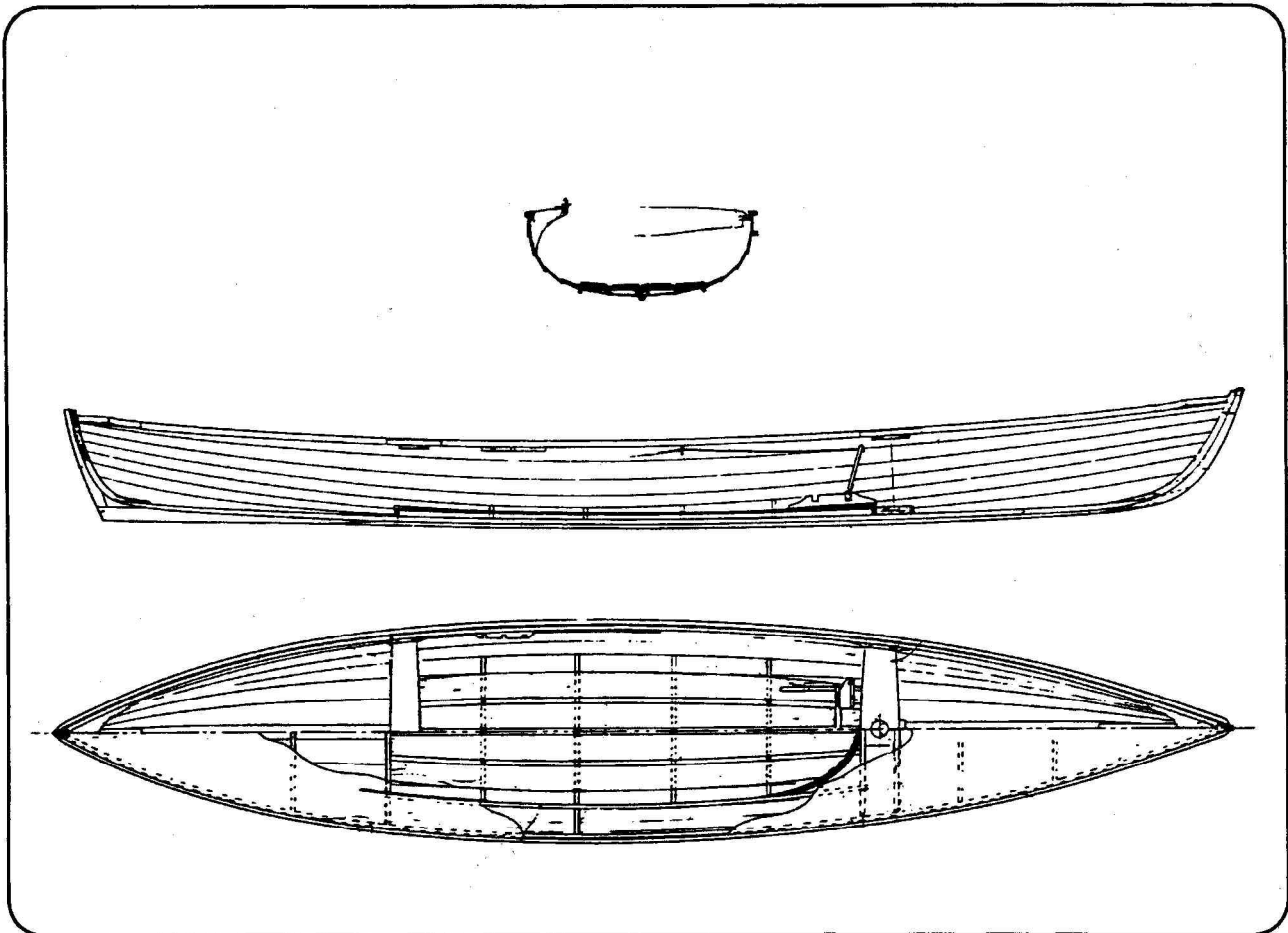
COST

Materials £350 Rig + 300

Plans: 5 sheets with instructions

The Scotsman John MacGregor was largely responsible for the great popularity of canoeing around 100 years ago. He went to North America, studied some of the Eskimo kayaks, and returned to design his famous Rob Roy canoe, in which he made many remarkable voyages in Europe. His books inspired many canoe builders in Britain and America, as they realised how immensely practical these little boats were. They could easily reach many areas which were quite inaccessible to bigger boats; when they ran out of water they could be carried to the next lake or river. A vast amount of fascinating research went into sailing rigs; it was essential with such light and narrow hulls that the area was kept low, and that sail could be shortened or lowered away altogether at a moment's notice - all from a sitting position.

These days a lot of sailors are again beginning to realise that a light and simple boat, which is easily stored and transported, may tend to get used a lot more than a larger and far more expensive one - for which mooring space is becoming harder to find every year. Canoes such as these can travel happily on top of a car, ready to explore quiet stretches of water that will never see a skier or jet



ski. Yet they can easily carry sufficient gear - with careful planning - for a week or two of cruising.

The WEE ROB and MACGREGOR designs have nothing about them which would have caused any surprises in the 1890's. Except perhaps for the leeboards. But a closer look will reveal a few features designed to handle better the confused and lumpy seas we often have to deal with, now that there are all these power boats rushing frantically about with nowhere to go. A little more freeboard; a good sheer; plenty of flare and buoyancy to keep the water out, combined with longer ends and a little keel rocker and a cutaway forefoot, which helps the manoeuvrability and sensitivity under sail. WoodenBoat has described the hulls as being "like baby whaleboats", and indeed the basic form has a lot in common with some of the most seaworthy vessels in history.

For all their limitations of size, these little boats are actually very versatile, and can be adapted to a wide variety of uses and conditions. With this in mind, the designs include several options. In length, for a start: The WEE ROB can be built 12' overall as drawn, or extended to 13' - 7" (4.14) by increasing the spacing of the stations and using the revised stem patterns supplied. The longer hulls can be paddled a little faster, while retaining the moderate beam of 28-1/4", which is generally believed to be ideal for efficient operation of the paddle.

The MACGREGOR can be built 13' - 7", or 15' - 8" (4.14/4.77). The shorter length is obviously the most practical when space is limited.

Otherwise, the 15' - 8" size may be the most useful for all-round cruising, sailing, and general messing about, if she is to be used fairly often with a crew of two, but still has to be easily manageable by a single-hander, both in and out of the water.

Both boats can be built open, or half-decked with watertight bulkheads and a low cockpit coaming. This adds considerably to the construction time, but adds a lot to the rough-water capability. A good compromise possibly would be a snap-on canvas cover over the bow.