



Sharptown Barge

By ROBERT M. STEWARD

SOMETHING a little different in the field of small craft was recently seen by the writer during a visit to Bishops Head on the Maryland eastern shore of Chesapeake Bay. Believing this boat to be of interest, the lines were taken off and are reproduced herewith together with a construction section and deck plan.

The writer was told by the owner of one of these boats, Dr. Richard H. Burkhart of Bishops Head, that they are used by the shad fishermen of Sharptown on the Nanticoke River and are built in various lengths. The hull might be said to be a flat bottom sharpie modified to include a stern

reminiscent of a banks dory. A bushed hole for a rowlock was provided in one side deck only, about midway between the forward and midship seat. When propelled by the armstrong method, one man rows with one oar while another aft paddles on the opposite side. Today, however, most of these so called barges are powered by outboard motors.

This particular boat is 22 feet overall with a beam of 4 feet 9 inches, and each side was gotten out of a single wide plank. All parts are of native pine with the exception of oak stem and transom, and, typical of Chesapeake construction, very few of



the seams are caulked. Construction is on the heavy side, resulting in a workboat capable of withstanding much abuse.

The writer found the boat heavy and stable, and quite dry in a chop when driven by a 3.3 horsepower Evinrude Sportwin. The fishermen generally use 10 horsepower motors and such power should drive the boat at a smart pace.