

April 17, 1942

Mr. Ed. Leader  
Head Rowing Coach  
Yale University  
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Ed:

This letter is probably an echo from an almost forgotten past. However, I hope it is not a past of which you have unpleasant memories as I am out to try to get your cooperation in obtaining some equipment for a rowing crew which I have started. I know that you have long been interested in furthering the cause of rowing as a sport and I think you may be pleased to know that I have started a group of boys rowing here at Clark University. We started the season with about 25 boys; the number has dwindled down to 16. When we started we had the promise of the rowing equipment of a high school in the city. However, as things have turned out, the equipment proved to be unavailable because the man who takes care of it has taken almost all of it apart, apparently because he is a little bit jealous of having anyone use rowing equipment unless he coaches the oarsmen. We have managed to get along so far with one old 8-oared shell which I borrowed from Ken Burns who is the man who has made crew a very popular sport at the Shrewsbury High School (Shrewsbury is a town on the outskirts of Worcester).

Now to come to the direct point of my letter. I was told by Ken Burns that he was donated at least one 8-oared shell by Yale some years ago, and he thought it very possible that Yale might again help the cause of rowing by donating a shell to Clark. As the sport at present has no official status, we are unable to obtain any funds for buying equipment. However, the boys who are interested in rowing have proposed to put on a dance with which they hope to raise enough funds to pay for transportation. I wonder if you would be kind enough to ask the athletic authorities at New Haven about the possibility of our obtaining a shell which is no longer used by Yale, plus any other old equipment such as oars, riggers, slides---any or all of which I could use very handily in the near future. I made this request to Tom Bolles at Cambridge and I have just heard from him that Harvard can give us a shell next year, but he has no equipment that is available now which is not already promised to other struggling institutions like our own.

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As you probably know we have here in Worcester a very fine place to row, Lake Quinsigamond. Rowing has a great tradition in Worcester among club enthusiasts but, for some reason which I have not yet discovered, it has died out to the point where practically nobody uses the lake except for Ken Burns and his Shrewsbury High School oarsmen. I would sincerely appreciate knowing of anything you might do in our behalf in the very near future. If I cannot obtain at least one shell within the next 10 days, I am afraid crew is going to have to wait another year before it has a chance. Since I got a very enthusiastic group of boys out for it on the promise of equipment which is not materializing I hate to let them down without making every effort first to obtain a shell.

In the introduction of this letter I stated that the letter was an echo from the distant past. It happens that you were my coach out at Washington, back in 1921 and 1922 when I was a freshman in college. You probably will not remember me as I was not one of the outstanding oarsmen of the squad. However, I finished at Washington and rowed under Rusty Callow for several years. Since then I have been in the teaching profession, but I have always had in the back of my mind a desire to promote the sport of rowing whenever I had an opportunity. Here at Clark it has seemed that everything was favorable except the school authorities whose reluctance is based merely upon the lack of wherewithal to start the sport. The concensus of opinion has been that crew is an extremely expensive proposition. I think that if we can get it started in a modest sort of way without any school financial contribution, the authorities may come to realize that crew is one of the least expensive rather than most expensive of college sports.

Please remember me to Don Grant and Bob Butler if they are still with you at Yale. Also, I should like to be remembered to any other former Washington men whom you may happen to see in the near future.

With very best wishes for a successful season for Yale's rowing, and kindest regards to you,

Cordially yours,

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Associate Professor  
of Economics and Sociology

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