

got down to his drawing board with an artist's eye and practised skill.

The biggest curraghs currently in use are twenty-four feet long and carry a crew of four. We had to carry thirteen men and about a hundredweight of gear for each. Looking back, it is hard to realize that at one stage we were so uncertain as to the practicability of a large curragh that we were seriously considering going in two small ones.

The question of size and in particular of beam is closely tied up with the system of rowing to be used. Most west coast curraghs scull to-day with each man having two oars, one on each side. The maximum beam for this system is about five feet six inches, so it would have forced on us an impractically long narrow boat. It is also more difficult for amateurs to row this way efficiently, so we decided on a beam of six feet, and one man pulling a thirteen foot oar on each thwart. We were unwilling to go above thirty feet overall length, so seven rowing benches were all that could be fitted in and this, of course, meant a maximum of seven oarsmen in action at one time. A third system known as double-banking which has two men on each bench, each with an oar on his own side, requires a beam of seven feet at least. At this early stage we were greatly concerned with having a boat light enough to be picked up easily and handled in surf by thirteen inexperienced hands, and also with minimum windage and wetted area for pulling to windward. In the light of experience we should certainly have double banked. The extra foot or eighteen inches of