

NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK NOMINATION

NPS Form 10-900

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

**Modesty (sloop)**

**Page 1**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**1. NAME OF PROPERTY**

Historic Name: *Modesty*

Other Name/Site Number: Long Island Sound Scallop and Oyster Dredging "south-sider" Sloop *Modesty*

**2. LOCATION**

Street & Number: Waterfront, Long Island Maritime Museum, 84 West Avenue

Not for publication: N/A

City/Town: West Sayville

Vicinity: N/A

State: NY

County: Suffolk

Code: 103

Zip Code: 11796

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

Ownership of Property

Private: X

Public-Local:     

Public-State:     

Public-Federal:     

Category of Property

Building(s):     

District:     

Site:     

Structure: X

Object:     

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing

  1  

  1  

Noncontributing

     buildings

     sites

     structures

     objects

  0   Total

Number of Contributing Resources Previously Listed in the National Register:   0  

Name of Related Multiple Property Listing: N/A



**Modesty (sloop)****Page 3**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**6. FUNCTION OR USE**

Historic: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

Current: Transportation

Sub: Water-related

**7. DESCRIPTION**

ARCHITECTURAL CLASSIFICATION: N/A

**MATERIALS:**

Foundation (lower hull):	wood
Walls (upper hull):	wood
Roof (deck):	wood
Other (superstructure):	wood

**Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance<sup>1</sup>**

*Modesty* is a classic Long Island Sound "south-sider" shellfish dredging sloop, home-ported in West Sayville, New York. She was built in 1923 at the Wood & Chute Shipyard, Greenport, New York. *Modesty* is 35 feet, 9 inches long, with a 12-foot, 2-inch-maximum beam, and a 2-foot, 8-inch draft.<sup>2</sup> Her wide beam and shoal draft are ideally suited to dredging shellfish from the flats of Long Island's bays and river estuaries of the Connecticut shore. *Modesty* is believed to be the last commercial, sailing work boat build on Long Island Sound.

**Hull**

*Modesty* has a round-bottomed hull, with a centerboard, clipper-type bow, and rounded-wine-glass-shaped counter stern. *Modesty* exhibits the low freeboard necessary for the hauling of heavy dredges onboard. The stem is made from a natural knee of hackmatack. Oak transverse frames steamed into place run full from the strake. Fourteen cedar planks are screw fastened on each side. Deck beams are oak. The centerboard trunk is made from cypress bed logs and sugar pine sides. The centerboard can be raised by a line attached through a pulley set on the end of a 48-inch-long wooden arm on the deck just aft of the cabin. The bowsprit is 10 feet long, and at the bow end, measures 7 inches long, 5¾ inches wide at the top, and beveled to 3¼ inches at the bottom. The bevel begins 3 inches from the top and is 3¼ inches wide on each side. The

<sup>1</sup> The description below is based on a site visit made by Eshelman on 26 September 1993 and line drawings believed to be prepared by Philip Shelton. Eshelman's notes are on file at the National Maritime Initiative office in Washington, D.C.; there are several copies of line drawings of *Modesty* in the files of the Long Island Maritime Museum.

<sup>2</sup> These are the measurements given for *Modesty* prior to her 1980 renovation. Measurements taken in 1981 are length, 36 feet; beam, 13 feet, 2 inches; and draft, 2 feet, 3 inches.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

bowsprit is 8 inches wide and 6 inches deep at its maximum dimension where it intersects with the stem. It tapers fore and aft from this point. The bowsprit is painted white except for a natural section running from 13 inches aft of the tip and continuing aft another 36 inches. A very crudely carved bird head is attached to the billet. The beak is white and the tongue red. There is evidence that it was gold gilded at one point. It is reputed to be carved by an "old timer" in the Wood & Chute yard and possibly represents a gannet.<sup>3</sup> The hull is painted white with a red bottom from the waterline down. The name *Modesty* is painted in black letters along the upper bow portion of the hull. "New York" is painted in black on the stern.

**Deck**

The king plank is 12½-inch-wide oak, extending from the stem to the hatch coaming behind the mast. Covering boards above the sheer strake are cedar seated in bedding compound. Decking is fore and aft, is 1⅝-inch-edge grain Douglas fir, laid parallel to the curve of the hull. Decking is secured to the king plank, covering boards, and deck beams. The deck is left natural. The king post is 3⅞ inches long, 5½ inches wide, and 19 inches high. Cabin and hatch coamings are of oak drifted to the deck beams. Hatches are of cedar, while cabin planking is of 2-inch pine. The rail cap runs completely around the deck and is 6 inches off the deck, 4 inches wide, and 1¼ inches thick. The first three stanchions on each side from the bow aft are wooden, sided 2 inches. The remaining stanchions are bronze pipe set on approximately 30-inch centers.

The hatch coaming is 108 inches wide and 104 inches long at the aft end, forward end rounded, and 4½ inches high. The hatch cover is made of six planks, three on each side of the centerboard truck, each 101 inches long and 6½ inches wide. The cabin trunk is 11 inches aft of the hatch, 111½ inches wide at the forward end and 81 inches wide at aft end, 96 inches long, and 23 inches high. On each side of the cabin is a 16½-inch-long and 9-inch-high opening covered by a sliding door of the same size; there is no glass covering. The companion way, located on the aft end of the cabin trunk is 30 inches wide, 26 inches long, and 20 inches high. Three removable planks form the vertical opening and a sliding hatch fit into wooden grooves on top of the cabin and open by sliding forward, covering the horizontal portion of the companion way. The engine is housed within this cabin.

**Rig**

*Modesty* carries a gaff-rig sail plan. The mast is a single-trimmed pine tree measuring 9 inches in diameter at the deck and is located 32 inches aft of the king post and 9½ inches forward of the hatch. The mast is stepped through the king plank and into an oak box framing fastened to the keel. The mast is painted white along the upper one third and the rest left natural. Standing rigging consists of three wire galvanized shrouds with spreaders. Tension is controlled by deadeyes. There is a forestay and jibstay, which are wire. The boom is 30 feet, 4½ inches long; the gaff, 23 feet, 3 inches long; and the jib club, 138 inches long. The mast carries wooden hoops for fastening the sail. The original canvas sails have been replaced with Dacron. There are two chain bowsprit shrouds to a side and one chain and one wire bobstay.

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<sup>3</sup> Notes made by Theodore Haupt, first owner of *Modesty*, between 1973 and 1977 on drawing of *Modesty* by H.C. Adamson drawn in 1973. Original in vertical files of Long Island Maritime Museum; copy in files of National Maritime Initiative.

***Modesty* (sloop)**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

**Page 5**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**Changes in Physical Appearance**

The Long Island Maritime Museum acquired *Modesty* in 1974 in good condition; but, because of hogging and alterations made over the years, the museum began restoration of the vessel in 1975 and re-launched her in 1980. Because there were no known building plans or half model of *Modesty*, boatbuilder Philip Shelton documented her appearance before work began to ensure accuracy of the restoration. He also supervised the building crew. Restoration was conducted using the techniques of her original construction and in accordance with these plans. *Modesty* was restored to her 1923 physical appearance including lifting the stern six inches to correct the hogging. This, in part, explains the differences in her measurements before and after restoration.

Sometime about 1936 a wheel was installed to replace the original tiller. While the tiller was traditionally used by scallopers on the south side of the Sound, most oyster dredgers on the Connecticut side of the Sound used a wheel. This conversion probably took place when *Modesty* was sold in 1936 for oystering.<sup>4</sup> A new tiller 64 inches long was put back during restoration. An iron stove originally provided heat in the cabin. It was vented through a hole on top of the cabin trunk. She originally carried a bilge pump in a box on the starboard side. *Modesty's* original name boards were black and white. Her name was carved in the transom by the yard and painted yellow. The hull was painted white for two to three years and then painted black with yellow cove. The deck was varnished. The hatch covers and cabin top were painted light gray. *Modesty's* original engine was a 16-horsepower, 2-cycle John S. Gafka engine used for auxiliary power. She carried a gas tank on each side at the forward end of the hold; one of 30 and the other of 25 gallon capacity.<sup>5</sup>

Her original hardware, mast, bowsprit, and her wire standing rigging were reutilized. The documented restoration efforts, carried out using traditional boatbuilding technology and skill, have returned the vessel to working condition while maintaining her historic physical appearance. *Modesty* like all working vessels was subjected to heavy wear and deterioration, requiring constant maintenance and repair throughout her career. The workmanship of Wood & Chute and the care of her subsequent owners are testimony to her survival today.

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<sup>4</sup> John Kochiss, "The *Modesty*" (unpublished report prepared for Suffolk Marine Museum, now Long Island Maritime Museum, 1986), p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Notes made by Theodore Haupt, first owner of *Modesty*, between 1973 and 1977 on drawing of *Modesty* by H.C. Adamson drawn in 1973. Original in vertical files of Long Island Maritime Museum; copy in files of National Maritime Initiative.

**Modesty (sloop)**

**8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Nationally: X  
Statewide: \_\_\_ Locally: \_\_\_

Applicable National Register Criteria: A X B \_\_\_ C X D \_\_\_

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): A \_\_\_ B \_\_\_ C \_\_\_ D \_\_\_ E \_\_\_ F \_\_\_ G \_\_\_

NHL Criteria: 1, 4

NHL Theme(s): III. Expressing Cultural Values  
5. Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Design  
V. Developing the American Economy  
1. Extraction and Production  
3. Transportation and Communication  
4. Workers and Work Culture

Areas of Significance: Maritime History  
Transportation  
Commerce  
Architecture (Naval)

Period(s) of Significance: 1923-1948

Significant Dates: 1923

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Wood & Chute, Greenpoint, New York

Historic Context: XIV. Transportation  
B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and other Structures  
XII. Business  
A. Extractive or Mining Industries  
5. Fishing and Livestock

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 7**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**State Significance of Property, and Justify Criteria, Criteria Considerations, and Areas and Periods of Significance Noted Above.**

*Modesty* is a classic Long Island Sound shellfish dredging sloop. Although *Modesty* was built at the end of the age of commercial vessels working under sail and after the peak of the local shellfish industry, she is a nearly unaltered example and typical of the hundreds of sloops engaged in the northern oystering and scalloping industry during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. *Modesty* is described a true "south-sider," or sloop from the southern shore of Long Island Sound, and as "the best possible example of the northern oyster sailing dredger," the New York type.<sup>1</sup> It is believed *Modesty*, which operated as a scallop dredger from 1923 until at least the early 1930s, is the last extant scallop dredger which operated under sail power. The property is eligible for listing under NHL criteria 1 and 4 and is part of an overall theme study on the "Oyster Fisheries of the United States."<sup>2</sup>

One other oyster sloop has been previously designated a National Historic Landmark, *Christeen*, built 1883 and located in Oyster Bay, New York. She is the oldest surviving working example of an oyster sloop in the United States and an outstanding representative of the early form of oyster sloop, a type that dates to the 1830s. Oyster sloops listed in the National Register include *Hope* (1948) and *Rebecca T. Ruark* (1886, hull with skipjack rig).<sup>3</sup> Other survivors include *Excel* (1892, Delaware Bay), *Nellie* (1891, Long Island Sound, has unusual round stern), *Priscilla*<sup>4</sup> (1888, Long Island Sound, sloop hull with schooner rig), and *Lucy E. Smith* (1882, Noank sloop). No sailing scallop dredges are currently listed in the National Register, in fact, no others are known to survive.

**Types of Sloops**

Of the some four hundred species of scallops found throughout the world, there are only three important commercial species in the United States; the sea, bay, and calico scallop. Unlike most bivalves, the scallop can not close its shell completely so loses moisture quickly when taken out of the water. Fresh and frozen scallop is considered about equal in quality so most scallops are shipped frozen, yet most markets thaw them before selling. Scallop meat is sweet, mild, and nut-like, and its texture firm when cooked. Some commercial distributors will soak the meats in freshwater for several hours which increases the bulk about one-third and improves the appearance to a more uniform whiter color. Soaking, however, also depletes the flavor of the meat. For this reason the shipping of scallops on ice was recognized as early as the 1880s as a problem because it "spoils their flavor and swells them up." The meat of the scallop can vary in

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<sup>1</sup> John M. Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops" (1968), n.p. (but under *Modesty* section) report prepared for Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., copy on file at National Maritime Initiative Office.

<sup>2</sup> See Associated Historic Contexts section of the National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form for "Oyster Fisheries of the United States" (National Register History and Education, National Park Service, 2001) for more information on the oyster fisheries and its associated property types.

<sup>3</sup>*Rebecca T. Ruark* will be the subject of a future National Historic Landmark nomination.

<sup>4</sup>*Priscilla* is the subject of another National Historic Landmark nomination.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

color from a creamy white to tan to orange and is not an indication of quality.<sup>5</sup> A large portion of the scallops eaten in the United States are imported from many countries including Canada, Japan, Peru, Iceland, and New Zealand.

The Atlantic sea scallop, or *Placopecten magellanicus*, also called the ocean scallop, is found in the Gulf of St. Lawrence south to North Carolina. Those from the Bay of Fundy, often called Digby scallops, are well known. The major United States sea scallop port is New Bedford, Massachusetts. The sea scallop can reach sizes of up to 8 inches across its shell and the muscle up to 2 inches in diameter.<sup>6</sup>

The Bay scallop, *Argopecten irradians* and *Pecten dislocatus*, is also called the Cape Cod scallop and is found in bays, harbors, and salt ponds from Massachusetts to Long Island. The *Pecten* bay scallop ranges in the south Atlantic. Their limited habitat and distribution make them relatively scarce and expensive, but their sweet taste a gourmet's favorite. Bay scallops as well as calico scallops may be harvested by dredges, scrapes, push nets, tongs, rakes, and dip nets. Bay scallops are usually sold fresh. The bay scallop can reach 4 inches across its shell and the muscle about ½ inch in diameter.<sup>7</sup>

The calico scallop, *Argopecten gibbus*, is slightly larger than the bay scallop and often sold as bay scallops, but they are not as sweet and flavorful. Calico scallops get their name from their pretty mottled colored shells. Most calico scallops are harvested from Florida and are shucked by mechanically steaming them, thus partially cooking them.<sup>8</sup>

### Sea Scallop Harvesting Methods and Gear

There are several methods of harvesting scallops including rakes or dredges, otter trawls, and diving. For the offshore beds, large draggers between 60 and 100 feet in length carry two scallop dredges which are dragged on the bottom, one on each side of the vessel. The rakes consist of a steel ring mesh and sash cord webbing on top to form a bag which is attached to a rigid metal frame. The angle of the scraping bar on the frame is adjustable to meet varying bottom conditions. The rakes are attached by a cable called a warp through blocks attached to the gallows onto a hoisting drum operated by a powered winch. Once the rakes are retrieved, booms are used to lift the rakes onto the deck for emptying. Inshore draggers are smaller, typically around 50 feet long, and drag a single bar on which are attached 6 or 7 steel mesh bags. This rig is towed on the bottom from the starboard side which is protected by 3-inch hardwood sheeting. Once the bags are dumped on deck by use of a boom, the scallops are shucked on a shucking board which can be tipped to dump shells, small illegal scallops, and other debris.

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<sup>5</sup> *Fish & Shellfish*, edited by Phyllis Elving, (Menlo Park, California, Sunset Publishing Corporation, 1991), p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> *Fish & Shellfish*, p. 56.

<sup>7</sup> *Fish & Shellfish*, p. 56.

<sup>8</sup> *Fish & Shellfish*, p. 56.



**Modesty (sloop)****Page 9**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Small stern draggers of around 60 feet may be rigged for scallop dragging as well as rigged for long-lining and otter-trawling for finfish.<sup>9</sup>

Scallops were once harvested with scoop nets on the ends of long poles, but by the 1880s, dredges were the common gathering method. Boats under sail once dragged from six to eight dredges at a time depending on wind conditions. By the late 1870s overharvesting had depopulated the natural scallop beds on the Bay of Fundy, Long Island Sound, New York harbor, Sandy Hook area, and most of the New Jersey coast with greatly declining conditions in most other parts of the county such as Connecticut and Massachusetts.<sup>10</sup>

### Scallop Processing

While scallops are comparatively easy to shuck, they were usually shucked on shore because the offal was considered degrading to the scallop beds. In the 1880s, 11 scallop shucking houses were located along a quarter-mile stretch of shoreline at "New Suffolk," Long Island, New York. Each house employed a boat with crew of two with five to 15 shuckers, the average being around ten. The largest house was 20 by 30 feet and had a shelf running down both sides at waist height with holes cut into at regular intervals. "Openers," generally women of all ages, stood opposite the holes and by use of a steel knife with wooden handle and protective leather palm shucked the scallops piled up against the wall on the shelf. The knife is inserted between the valves, given a twist to separate the shell valves and then a second cut to separate the muscle from the shell. Barrels under the holes received the offal and shell. A opener at this time received about 12½ cents per shucked gallon. A slow or beginning shucker could make between 80 cents and one dollar a day while a fast experienced shucker could make between \$1.20 and \$1.50 a day. Shucking 30 scallops in a minute was the record during this time. The shucked scallop meats were then washed, placed in clean boxes, and shipped to market. A shipper during this period was getting between 50 cents to \$2.50 a gallon for scallops in 1879. It took about two bushels of scallops to make a gallon of scallop meat.<sup>11</sup>

### The Long Island Scallop Industry

Scallops were abundant along the Connecticut and New York shores of Long Island Sound prior to about 1878 when about 10,000 bushels were harvested. By 1880 only Peconic Bay remained a major scalloping center for the region, replacing the oyster culture and clamming industry as the principal means of income. The industry began in 1857 when the sloop *Tradesman* of Norwalk, Connecticut, came across the Sound in search of scallops. After several unsuccessful attempts in Gardiner's Bay, they tried Peconic Bay, and when they hauled in their dredges they, "found them solid-full of scallops." The next morning they continued working and took up 750 bushels. A few days later a second sloop took away 1,000 bushels in a day. Next summer locals

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<sup>9</sup> Murray Barnard, *Sea, Salt and Sweat: A story of Nova Scotia and vast Atlantic Fishery*, Second Edition (Halifax, Nova Scotia, Four East Publications, 1986), pp. 64-67; and Sundstrom, pp. 12, 41.

<sup>10</sup> Ernest Ingersoll, "The Oyster, Clam, Mussel, and Abalone Industry," in *The Fisheries and Fishery Industries of the United States, Section V. History and Methods of the Fisheries*, edited by George Brown Goode (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1887), pp. 570-571.

<sup>11</sup> Ingersoll (1887), pp. 572-573, 576.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 10**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

began to compete with the sloops from Connecticut but instead of taking their catch to markets in Connecticut as the sloops did, they sent seven gallons of shucked scallops in a nail keg to Fulton Fish Market in New York City. The consignor did not know what they were and requested some in the shell. Accordingly, a box of unshucked scallops were shipped for which they received \$3. This was the beginning of the New York trade which amounted to \$15,000 to \$20,000 a year in the early 1880s. The 1879 harvest was estimated at 20,000 bushels which sold for as high as \$1.25 or \$1.50 per gallon, but the average price was probably about 75 cents per gallon. The total harvest for Peconic Bay in 1880 was 54,326 bushels, or 32,163 gallons, valued at \$19,491.60. The industry employed 193 men who primarily harvested the scallops and 471 women and children who were openers.<sup>12</sup> It was specifically for this trade that *Modesty* was built.

### **The Development and Importance of the Oyster Sloop**

Sloops used in both the oyster and scallop industries were developed in the 1830s as round-bottomed, gaff-rigged, centerboard, one-masted vessels which usually pulled dredges or, in the oyster fishery, occasionally served as platforms for tonging. The rig consisted of a jib and mainsail and prior to about 1900, when auxiliary power appeared, also used a main gaff topsail. The hull form was basically the same with "subtle regional variations."

The most popular model for this vessel type was the New York sloop. By the end of the American Civil War this style of sloop had reached the western shore of Long Island Sound, Great South Bay, south to northern New Jersey and into the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays. The New York sloop has been called "the most important of the sloop-rigged small boat types used in the fisheries."<sup>13</sup> The oyster sloop became a generic vessel type characterized as beamy, with shoal, centerboard, wide and usually square stern, inboard rudder, and low freeboard. In the 1880s over 300 oyster sloops worked the Connecticut oyster grounds; 122 were built between 1880 and 1885 to work in the Chesapeake. By 1958 none earned their keep by working in the commercial fisheries industry north of New York City. The New York model was ideally suited for clamming, oystering, scalloping, and fishing the inland seas.<sup>14</sup>

Oyster sloops in Delaware Bay were also referred to as "dredgers," "Delaware Bay masthead sloops," "Delaware Sloops," and "New Jersey oyster sloops." Sloops were also used in the oyster industry of South Carolina to northern Florida in the late 1800s and early 1900s. They were shallow, boxy, usually flat-bottomed, smaller craft than typical of the northern sloops. Oysters were generally gathered by an accompanying small bateau. Sloops were sometimes

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<sup>12</sup> Ingersoll, (1887), pp. 577-580.

<sup>13</sup> Howard I. Chappelle, *American Small Sailing Craft* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1951), p. 244.

<sup>14</sup> John M. Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops", report for Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. (1968), p. 11, copy in files of National Maritime Initiative Office; and Kochiss, "The History of PRISCILLA", promotional brochure by Suffolk Marine Museum, now Long Island Maritime Museum, no date or pages, copies in Initiative office.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 11**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

referred to as smacks. New York oyster smacks were used in the northern oyster industry.<sup>15</sup> The sloop in all its numbers, sizes, and, uses was equivalent to the what the car is today.

### Great South Bay Boat Building Tradition

Boat builders on the south side of Long Island were of Dutch and English heritage, many following the boat building traditions of their ancestors. Their skills and designs were the result of generations of experimentation and were highly regarded by the baymen. They produced "south-sider" sloops of the New York style for over a hundred years. Possibly because of the relatively isolated nature of the Great South Bay, the popularity of the type in the Bay, and the Bay's unique estuarine environment, the boat building tradition lasted decades longer here than in any of the surrounding regions. "The fame of south-side builders was such that when Connecticut oystermen wanted a suitable, well constructed, handsome vessel, they headed directly for Patchogue—the workboat building center of Great South Bay..."<sup>16</sup> The south-sider was consistently found in the oyster and scallop fleets of Connecticut, Rhode Island, and eastern Long Island. As late as the 1930s, exactly half of the sloops working the Connecticut natural oyster beds were built on Long Island.<sup>17</sup>

### Construction and Career of *Modesty*

*Modesty* was built by Wood & Chute Shipyard, Greenport, Suffolk County, Long Island, New York for Theodore Haupt, of South Jamesport, and launched in July 1923. She cost \$4,000 new and apparently was the only sail scalloper they ever built.<sup>18</sup> *Modesty* was named for a yacht seen while sailing on sloop *Honest*.<sup>19</sup> Local tradition has held that *Modesty* was built from the lines of the 1892 sloop *Honest*, built by Jelle Dykstra on the west bank of Greens Creek, West Sayville.

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<sup>15</sup> Howard I. Chapelle, *American Small Sailing Craft*, pp. 245-246; John M. Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops," (manuscript on file, Mystic Seaport Museum, 1968), pp. 4, 6-7, 9; John Kochiss *Oystering from New York to Boston* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press for Mystic Seaport, Inc., 1974), pp. 103-106, 110; Thomas C. Gillmer, *Chesapeake Bay Sloops* (Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, St. Michaels, Maryland, 1982), p. 14; Rusty Fleetwood, *Tidecraft: The boats of lower South Carolina & Georgia* Savannah, Georgia: Coastal Heritage Society, 1982), pp. 153-154, 188; and Maynard Bray, *Mystic Seaport Museum Watercraft*, (Mystic, Connecticut: Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1979), pp. 58-59.

<sup>16</sup> John M. Kochiss, *Oystering from New York to Boston* (Wesleyan University Press for Mystic Seaport Museum, 1974), p. 113.

<sup>17</sup> Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops" (1968), pp. 10-12.

<sup>18</sup> John M. Kochiss "The Modesty" (1986), p. 3, unpublished report for the Suffolk Marine Museum, copy on file at National Maritime Initiative Office. Kochiss on p. 4 lists the following as builders of *Modesty*: Al Terry, Webby Otter, Clarence Holmes, Harry Conklin, and an old man named Kay.

<sup>19</sup> Notes made by Theodore Haupt, first owner of *Modesty*, between 1973 and 1977 on drawing of *Modesty* by H.C. Adamson drawn in 1973. Original in vertical files of Long Island Maritime Museum; copy in files of National Maritime Initiative.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 12**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

The two sloops are too different to confirm this tradition, even though *Honest* was also owned by the Haupt's, and was at the Wood & Chute Shipyard during the building of the *Modesty*.<sup>20</sup>

*Modesty* is believed to be last sailing scallop dredger built. The fact she was even built at end of the age of sail is due to a law enacted before WWI which stipulated only sail power could be used while dredging for scallops. By this time many boats in the fleet had their centerboards plugged.<sup>21</sup>

Theodore Haupt dredged scallops on *Modesty* in Great Peconic Bay during the scallop season September to April, from 1923 until 1936, although in the later years the season was shorted to end in March.<sup>22</sup> In 1936 *Modesty* was purchased by David Menegus who worked her in the Connecticut oyster fleet out of Bridgeport.<sup>23</sup> Menegus owned her from 1936 to 1942 but had others actually work the boat. They included Jim Shaw and brothers, Rod and Jack Singer. *Modesty* was laid up for about a year during WWII.<sup>24</sup> From 1944 until 1948 William Harold Palmer owned her. He changed her name shortly after he bought her to *Halrose*, combining his name and his wife's name Rose.<sup>25</sup> Palmer came from a family with a long line of distinguished oystermen who organized under the oyster company Charles E. Palmer & Sons. Palmer worked *Modesty (Halrose)* for two years and the used her in the planting and cultivation of oysters.<sup>26</sup> Harold also clammed and lobstered.

Dr. Carl Beam, a biochemistry professor at Yale, bought *Halrose* in 1948, renamed her *Modesty*, and used her as a pleasure craft out of East Haven, Connecticut. During the 1960s, Dr. Beam also owned the oyster dredging sloop *Priscilla*, built in 1888. In 1968 *Modesty* was kept at the Yacht Basin at Dead Horse Bay opposite Floyd Bennett Field, in Brooklyn, New York. Leo

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<sup>20</sup> John M. Kochiss "The Modesty" (1986), p. 5, unpublished report for the Suffolk Marine Museum, copy on file at National Maritime Initiative Office. Kochiss includes interviews with a Sidney Smith who once owned *Honest*, and two men from the Hanf boatyard who remember the building of *Modesty*. All confirm the two sloops were very different.

<sup>21</sup> Kochiss "The Modesty" (1986), p. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Notes made by Theodore Haupt, first owner of *Modesty*, between 1973 and 1977 on drawing of *Modesty* by H.C. Adamson drawn in 1973. Original in vertical files of Long Island Maritime Museum; copy in files of National Maritime Initiative.

<sup>23</sup> Kochiss (1968), n.p. but within the *Modesty* section of his report, states a Mr. Davis bought her in the early 1930s. This is based on an oral report by Bill Ciaurro to Kochiss. Ciaurro did not remember Davis' first name but Kochiss did find a George N. Davis who owned 2.9 acres of oyster ground of Norwalk/Darien from 1929 to 1940. This is the only Davis listed in the Connecticut *Biennial Report of the Shell-Fish Commissioners*.

<sup>24</sup> Kochiss "The Modesty" (1986), pp. 7, 8.

<sup>25</sup> Pamela Warrick, "A Matter of Modesty for LI's Pride" *Newsday* (1974) no exact date or page number given; photostat copy of original newspaper article in files of Long Island Maritime Museum.

<sup>26</sup> Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops" (1968), n.p. but under *Modesty* section; and Kochiss, "The Modesty" (1986), p. 8.

**Modesty (sloop)****Page 13**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Fagan, well-known restaurateur of Stratford, Connecticut, bought her in 1970.<sup>27</sup> He had *Modesty* overhauled at a Brooklyn boatyard and intended to use her as a floating cocktail lounge but ended up using her as a floating attraction at his restaurant on Housatonic River until 1974. Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., notified the Suffolk Marine Museum of Fagan's desire to sell *Modesty*.<sup>28</sup>

When *Modesty* was acquired by the Suffolk Marine Museum, Theodore Haupt, her first owner was present to receive her colors.<sup>29</sup> After restoration *Modesty* was relaunched in 1980 by the then Suffolk Marine Museum. She was christened with a bottle of champagne mixed with water from Great Peconic Bay and Great South Bay. A new 1980 penny was placed under the mast along with several pre-1923 coins discovered when the mast was removed during renovation.<sup>30</sup> *Modesty* and *Priscilla* participated in the 1992 OP SAIL Columbus Day Celebration in New York Harbor. Today *Modesty* is berthed next to the 1888 oyster dredger sloop *Priscilla* and the 1908 Rudolph Oyster House.

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<sup>27</sup> Kochiss, "Comparative Analysis of Five Oyster Sloops" (1968), n.p. but under *Modesty* section, and Kochiss "The Modesty" (1986), pp. 8, 9.

<sup>28</sup> "Modesty," (West Sayville, New York: Students of the Offset Lithography Program, Islip Occupational Center for Suffolk Marine Museum, 1980), n.p. a promotional piece published by the museum, copy in files, Long Island Maritime Museum; and Kochiss, "The Modesty" (1986), p. 9.

<sup>29</sup> "Acquisition of 'Modesty' Becomes a Reality, 12:17 P.M. - July 29, 1974" (West Sayville, New York: promotion piece of the Suffolk Marine Museum, 1974), n.p.

<sup>30</sup> "Modesty Launching", *The Dolphin*, 10(1), summer (West Sayville, New York: newsletter of the Suffolk Marine Museum, 1990), n.p.

**Modesty (sloop)**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

**Page 14**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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\_\_\_\_\_. *Oystering from New York to Boston*, Middletown, Connecticut, Wesleyan University Press for Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc., 1974.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Modesty," 1986, unpublished report prepared for the Suffolk Marine Museum, now the Long Island Maritime Museum, in vertical files of same.

"Modesty Launching", *The Dolphin*, volume 10, number 1, West Sayville, New York, Suffolk Marine Museum, 1990.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- \_\_\_ Preliminary Determination of Individual Listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.  
 \_\_\_ Previously Listed in the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ Previously Determined Eligible by the National Register.  
 \_\_\_ Designated a National Historic Landmark.  
 \_\_\_ Recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey: # \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_ Recorded by Historic American Engineering Record: # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

**Modesty (sloop)**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other (Specify Repository): Long Island Maritime Museum, West Sayville, New York

**Modesty (sloop)**

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreage of Property: Less than one (1) acre.

UTM References: Zone Northing Easting Zone Northing Easting

<b>A</b> _____	<b>B</b> _____
<b>C</b> _____	<b>D</b> _____
<b>E</b> _____	<b>F</b> _____

Verbal Boundary Description:

All that area encompassed within the extreme length and breath of the vessel.

Boundary Justification:

The boundary incorporates the entire area of the vessel as she lays at her berth.

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

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Telephone: (410) 326-4877

Date: May 1, 1994

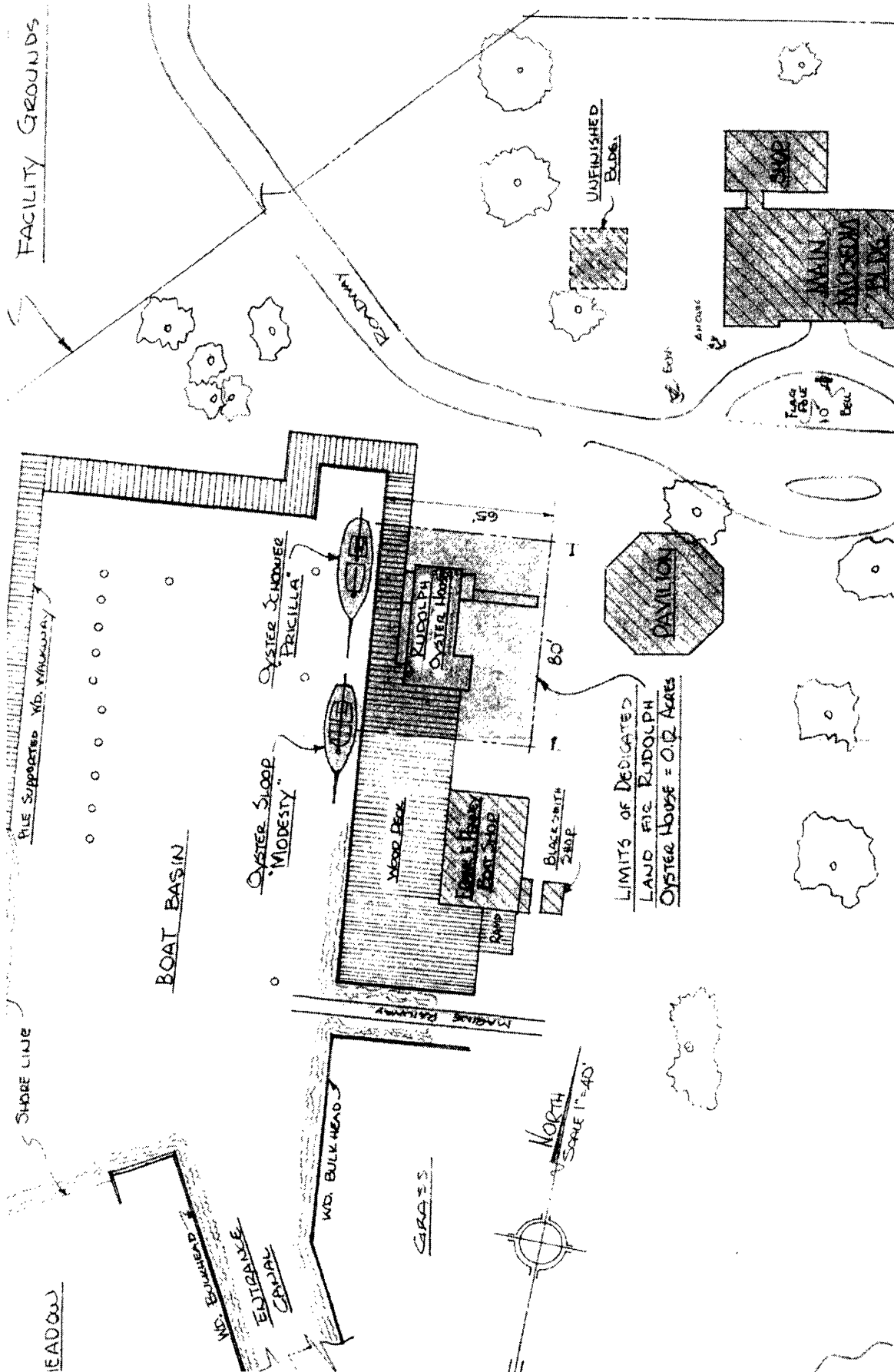


**Modesty (sloop)**

**Figures**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



LIMITS OF DEDICATED  
 LAND FOR RUDOLPH  
 OYSTER HOUSE = 0.12 ACRES

NORTH  
 SCALE 1" = 40'

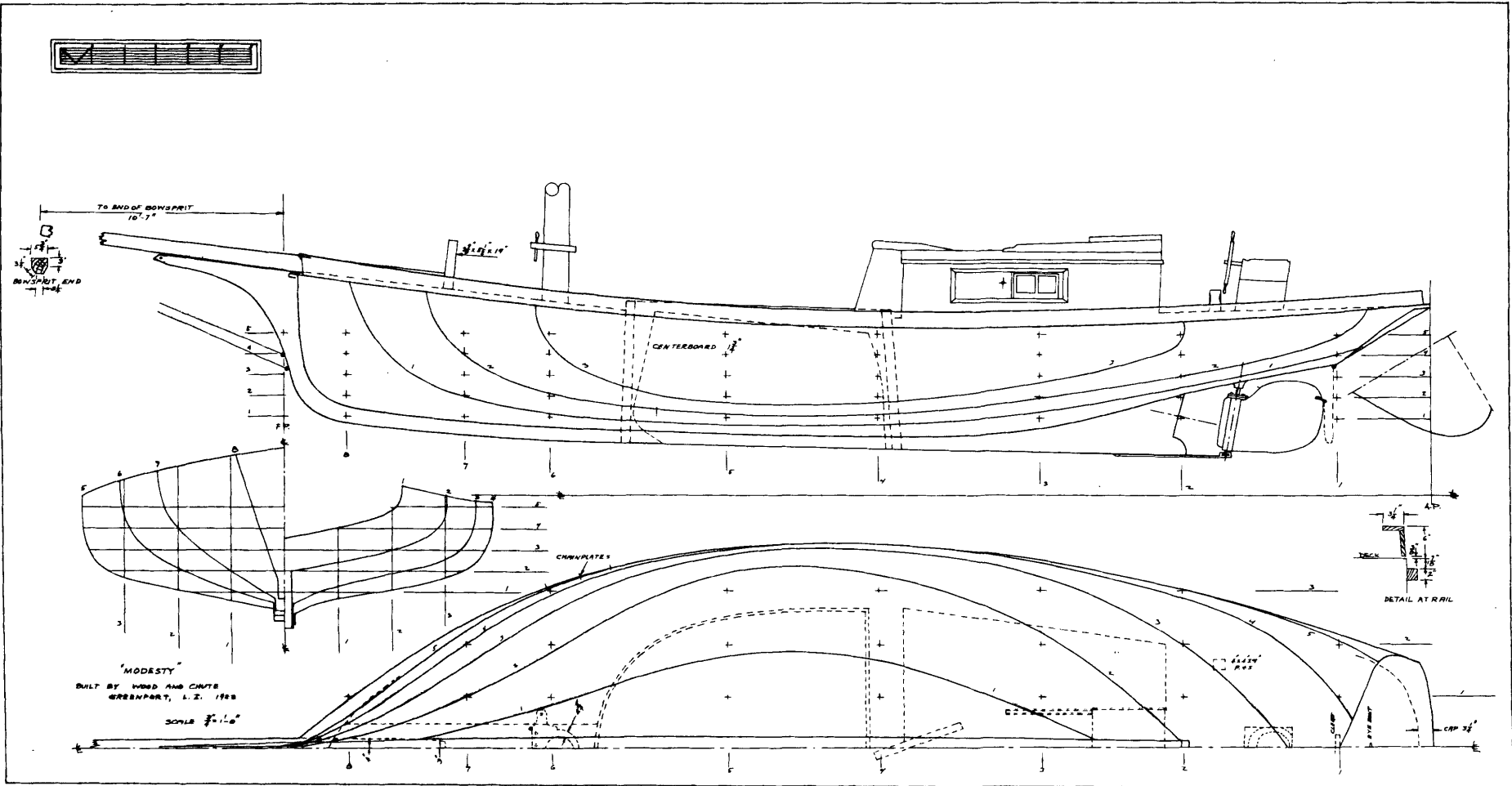
**Modesty (sloop)**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

USD/NPS NRHP Registration Form (Rev. 8-86)

**Figures**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



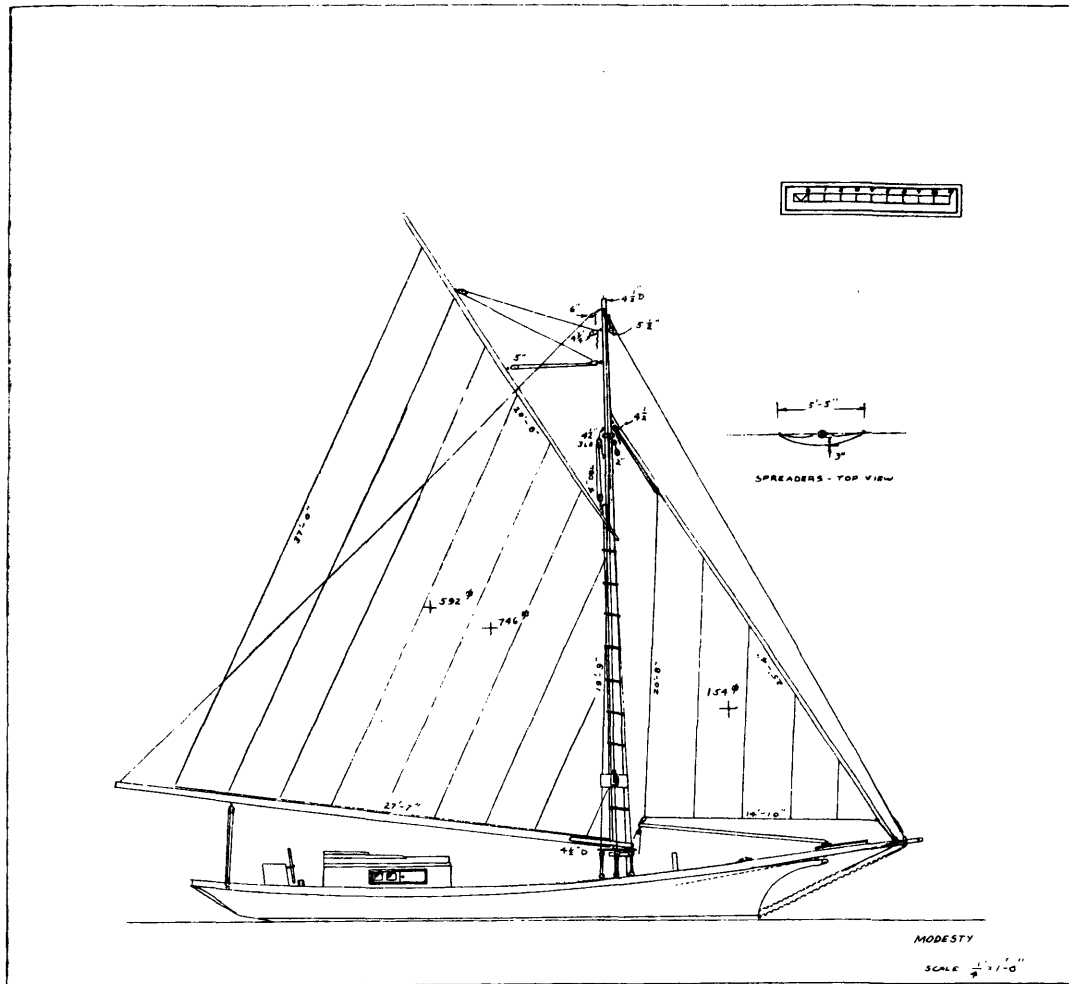
The South-sider *Modesty*, built in 1923

**Modesty (sloop)**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

**Figures**

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



Sail plan of the *Modesty*