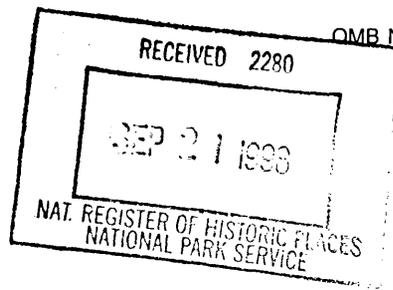


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



1270

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name O. J. Walker, Shipwreck

other names/site number VI-CH-594

2. Location

street & number Burlington Bay N/A not for publication

city or town Burlington N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Chittenden code 007 zip code 05401

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Elva Gilbert National Register Specialist September 18, 1998
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain): _____

Wilson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

10/22/98
Date of Action

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
1		sites
		structures
		objects
1		Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Transportation/water-related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/underwater

Recreation & Culture/outdoor recreation

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: sailing canal schooner, 1862 class

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation

walls

roof

other wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, Vermont

Description OF THE *O. J. WALKER* Shipwreck

Summary

The shipwreck of the *O. J. Walker* rests on the bottom of Lake Champlain in Burlington Bay, Burlington, Chittenden County, Vermont. The *O. J. Walker* is a Lake Champlain sailing canal schooner of the 1862 class, built after an enlargement of the Champlain Canal and its locks (Figure 1). The vessel was built using the chine log construction technique. This construction technique was commonly practiced by Champlain Valley boat builders for many different types of vessels; and was the predominant construction technique used to build sailing canal boats. This vessel has more intact elements than any other known sailing canal boat wreck. The *O. J. Walker's* masts, spars and blocks, largely missing from other sites, aid in reconstructing an accurate sail plan of a sailing canal schooner.

The *O. J. Walker* is 85 ft 8 in (26.1 m) long on deck, almost 14.5 ft (4.4 m) in beam with a depth of hold just over 6.5 ft (2.0 m). The hull form and construction methods for sailing canal boats are similar to those employed on contemporaneous standard towed canal boats. The hulls of sailing canal boats were modified to permit not only negotiation of the Champlain and Chambly canal but also navigation of Lake Champlain. Despite the light framing technique, these vessels were well built for the calm waters on which they traded. They had the ability to carry cargoes in their hold or on deck. The *O. J. Walker* was carrying a deck load of bricks and tiles when it sank on May 11, 1895.

The Keel

The *O. J. Walker* lies intact and buried in a soft muddy bottom (Figure 2). The sediments have filled the interior of the vessel to a great extent. The only attempt by archaeologists to uncover the centerline timbers was made at the base of the stem. A small excavation in 1995 was completed on the exterior starboard side of the stem in order to reveal the stem to keel joinery. At this location, the keel was found to have a small molded dimension of approximately 4 to 6 in (10 to 15 cm), and is therefore a keel plank and not a true keel. The sided dimension could not be precisely determined, but the forward end of the keel plank was shaped to meet the base of the stem, which is 7 in (18 cm) wide.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 *O. J. Walker, Shipwreck*
Chittenden County, VT*The Stem*

The stem of the *O. J. Walker* is a single timber with six sides when viewed in section. The stem is 10 ft 4 in (3.10 m) long, and has a maximum sided dimension of 8.5 in (22 cm) above the deck on its interior face. The stem has a maximum molded dimension of 17.5 in (44 cm) at this point. The sided dimension begins to narrow where it meets the hull planking, and continues in this fashion to the forward face of the stem, which is sided 6 in (15 cm). The stem has not been examined on the interior of the vessel. The forward face of the stem is covered from head to keel by a 6 in (15 cm) wide by 1 in (2.5 cm) thick iron rub plate that is fastened to the stem. An eye is welded at the top of the rub plate and serves as an anchor point for two deadeyes. One deadeye was for the forestay; and the other deadeye was likely for rigging associated with a jib.

Examination of the stem to keel joint was made possible by excavating a shallow trench under the stem. The base of the stem butts against the end of the keel, as indicated by a small gap between these timbers. There is a stop water in the stem to keel joint.

The Sternpost

The sternpost of the *O. J. Walker* is sided 9 in (23 cm) and molded 10 in (25 cm). It is nearly vertical if not completely plumb. Its length has not been determined, but it is composed of two timbers that have been scarfed together over a distance of 1 ft (30 cm). It is crossed by at least one transom piece, which is sided 7.5 in (19 cm) and molded 11 in (28 cm). In the after cabin the sternpost is contained within an enclosure that also encases the rudder post.

The Chine Logs

A small excavation on the starboard outboard side revealed that the *O. J. Walker* is a flat-bottomed chine boat. This conclusion arises from observations of lines of hull fastenings that hold planks to individual futtocks. These lines of fastenings do not extend down to the lowermost timber on the side. Further excavation beneath the hull proved that this timber was approximately 10 in (25 cm) square, and is therefore a chine log. Time constraints during an archaeological survey in 1995 prevented archaeologists from locating the ends of the chine log. These locations could be easily determined by future researchers by excavating a shallow trench near the transition point of the vessel's side where it begins to taper towards the bow and stern. Beyond the end of the chine log will be iron fastenings for a plank that follows the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

curvature of the hull toward the posts.

The Framing

A great deal of framing information was recorded on the site in 1988 and 1989. Very little work was undertaken in this area during a 1995 survey, due to safety concerns. Work inside the vessel in 1995 was restricted to areas around the hatch openings and limited to the starboard side. The *O. J. Walker's* futtocks have a room and space of 20 in (51 cm) on average. The spacing is closer in the bow, where framing timbers average 12.5 in (32 cm) from forward face to forward face. No direct evidence has yet been uncovered regarding the configuration of the *O. J. Walker's* floors. The fastenings through the starboard chine log may indicate that the floors are spaced between futtocks instead of being in line with them. This would agree with findings on the *General Butler*, another sailing canal schooner sunk in Burlington Bay, and on plans of a sailing canal schooner drawn by Orson Saxton Spear, the architect and builder of the *O. J. Walker*.

The *O. J. Walker* has five hanging knees on each side of the vessel. The knees are spaced from stem to stern by distances of 13 ft 2 in (4.01 m), 15 ft 8 in (4.78 m), 18 ft 10 in (5.74 m), and 5 ft 5 in (1.65 m), respectively. All but one are located at the forward end of either a cargo hatch or the cabin hatch. The exception is the second knee from the stern, which is located at the after end of the last cargo hatch.

The Clamps

The clamps of the *O. J. Walker* run the entire length of the vessel from stem to stern. They are sided 2.5 to 2.75 in (6.4 to 7.0 cm) and molded 5 to 6 in (13 to 15 cm). The clamps support the deck structure, and are fastened to the tops of the futtocks.

The Hogging Truss

The *O. J. Walker's* hogging truss begins approximately 6 in (15 cm) below the clamp (Figure 3). It is fastened over the ceiling planking, and is covered by the hanging knees. The truss's top member is composed of two timbers butt-joined together with an overall length of 11 ft 10 in (3.60 m), sided 10 in (25 cm) and molded 2 in (5 cm). The forward diagonal is 18 ft 5 in (5.61) long, while the after diagonal is 19 ft 2 in (5.84 m) long. The truss members are fastened to each framing station by either spikes or bolts, with spikes predominating. All truss

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 4*O. J. Walker*, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

members have 1 in (2.5 cm) diameter holes that indicate that these timbers served another purpose before being placed in the *O. J. Walker*. Iron tie rods, 1 in (2.5 cm) in diameter, run vertically from the top member's ends down toward the chine log, holding the structure in tension. The truss is similar in configuration to that of the *General Butler*, but differs in that the lower ends of the *O. J. Walker*'s diagonal members stop well short of reaching the chine log.

The Hull Planking and Wales

The *O. J. Walker*'s side planking consists of three wales and approximately six other planks over the dead flat run of the vessel's sides (Figure 4). One wale is located directly beneath the deck and is between 5.5 to 6 in (14.0 and 15.2 cm) wide and approximately 3 in (7.6 cm) thick. The next plank down is 6 in (15 cm) wide, but 1 in (2.5 cm) thinner than the wale. Next are two 6 in (14 cm) wide wales approximately 3 in (7.6 cm) thick. Then there are five planks between 7 and 9 in (18 and 23 cm) wide and about 2 in (5 cm) thick before the chine log is reached. None of the bottom planking on the *O. J. Walker* has been examined. The planking is attached with iron nails; however, none have been investigated other than to note their rusty heads.

The Decking and Bulwarks

The *O. J. Walker*'s deck structure is supported by stanchions that rise up from the floor of the vessel, presumably from the keelson. Seven wooden stanchions have been examined and their dimensions are very irregular. Two stanchions are 4 in (10 cm) square, while the remainder are 2 by 3 in (5 by 8 cm), 2 by 6 in (5 by 15 cm), 3.25 by 6 in (8 by 15 cm), and 6 in (15 cm) square. Five 1.5 in (4 cm) diameter iron tie rods were noted in addition to wooden stanchions. The purpose of the iron rods was not to support the deck, but to keep it in tension. The iron tie rods pass through the deck beams and are fastened on top of the beams.

The average deck beam spacing is 25.5 in (65 cm) between their forward faces. The deck beams are generally 4 in (10 cm) square timbers, but some support hatch coamings are slightly larger with the largest molded 6.5 in (17 cm) and sided 7.75 in (20 cm). The deck planking is 1 in (2.5 cm) thick and on average each plank is 5 in (13 cm) wide, with planks of 5.5 in (14 cm) and 6 in (15 cm) predominating. The waterway, a 2 in (5 cm) thick plank directly beneath the bulwarks, varies between 11 and 13 in (28 and 33 cm) in width. Many of the deck planks could not be examined, as much of the deck cargo of brick and drainage tile

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5 *O. J. Walker, Shipwreck*
Chittenden County, VT

remains on the port side. Each deck plank is fastened to each deck beam by two iron nails.

The bulwarks of the *O. J. Walker* are typical of sailing canal boats. The forward bulwark is formed by extending the futtocks above the deck level with planking on each side. The tops of the futtocks are then capped with a rail. The after bulwark consists of barks drift-bolted through the waterway and into the wale. The forward bulwarks are 7 in (18 cm) wide beginning at the stem and ending just after the second companionway in the bow. The after bulwarks run for the remaining approximately 75 ft (22.87 m), and are composed of three timbers. There are two scarf joints that are each approximately 3 ft (91 cm) long. For the final 16 ft 8 in (5.08 m) the bulwarks are composed of two timbers stacked upon each other. The after bulwark's height is 9.5 in (24 cm), except for the last 16 ft 8 in (5.08 m) where it varies between 11 and 18 in (28 and 46 cm). The scuppers are formed from notches cut in the lower face of the bulwarks' timbers. There are fifteen scuppers on each side; all are approximately 3 in (8 cm) high and 2 ft (61 cm) long.

The Centerboard

The *O. J. Walker*'s centerboard is contained within a trunk fashioned from 2.5 in (6 cm) thick planks that are drift-bolted together and fastened to deck stanchions at either end (Figure 5). The centerboard trunk is 16 ft (4.88 m) long, 10 in (25 cm) thick, and consists of five planks on each side. The four upper planks on the port side, beginning with the top plank, are 9.5, 10.5, 10 and 10.5 in (24, 27, 25 and 27 cm). The centerboard pivots on a point 4 ft (1.22 m) from the forward end of the trunk and 3 ft 11 in (1.19 m) from beneath the deck planking.

The Rigging

The *O. J. Walker* has the remains of both masts and booms. The forward mast is permanently stepped through the deck. This indicates that late in its life, the *O. J. Walker* was restricted to service on the lake only. The masts survive from heel to mast tops; and the main mast has remnants of the flagstaff. The hardware and holes in the spars assist in a reconstruction of the vessel's sail plan. The main mast tabernacle consists of mast stanchions rising up through the deck. These stanchions are joined by a third plank on the forward edge to create a three sided box. The mast was fastened to the stanchions by a 2 in (5 cm) diameter iron pin just above the deck. An iron band was then wrapped around the top of the tabernacle. The deck and the area around the vessel are littered with other rigging elements, including

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

pulley blocks, wire cable and brass sail grommets.

The Steering Mechanism

The wheel of the *O. J. Walker* can still be seen angled toward the port side and tight against the transom (Figure 6). The vessel's rudder was steered by a system of tackle that led from the forward end of the tiller to the vessel's bulwarks and back to a shin-cracker wheel. The wheel is fixed to a drum on an axle that is supported by two stanchions rising from the tiller. A rope originally ran around the drum and down to blocks at the sides of the tiller. From here, the rope led to another set of blocks attached to the vessel's sides by iron eye bolts. The rope then led from these blocks to an iron collar with eyes on the forward end of the tiller. The wheel has seven spokes; each shaped in an hourglass fashion and joined by two circular pieces around its outer perimeter. The tiller is mortised into the top of the rudder post and secured by two iron arms running from an iron band around the top of the rudder post diagonally down to the tiller.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

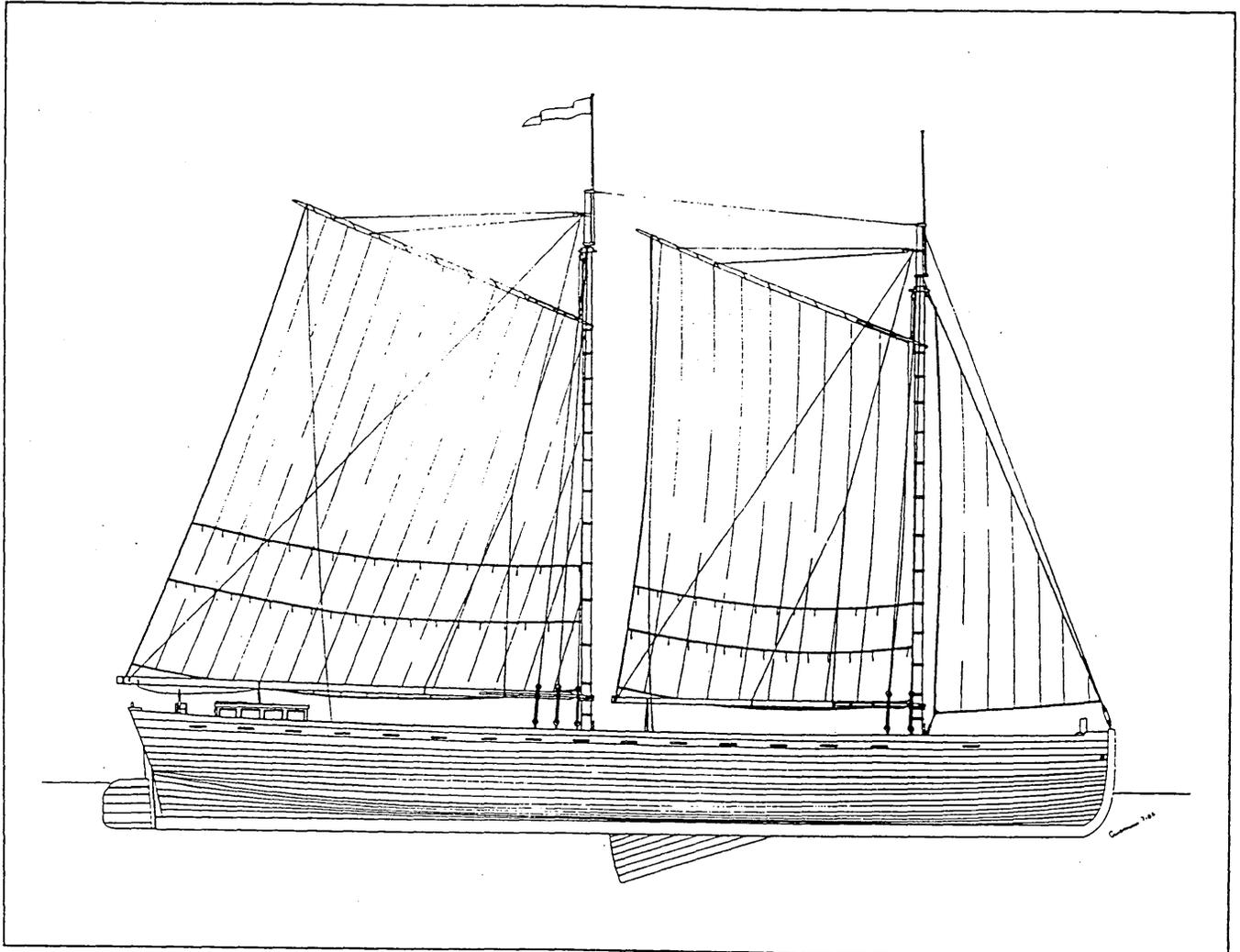


Figure 1: A reconstructed view of a sailing canal schooner very similar to the *O. J. Walker* (drawn by Kevin J. Crisman, 1985).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

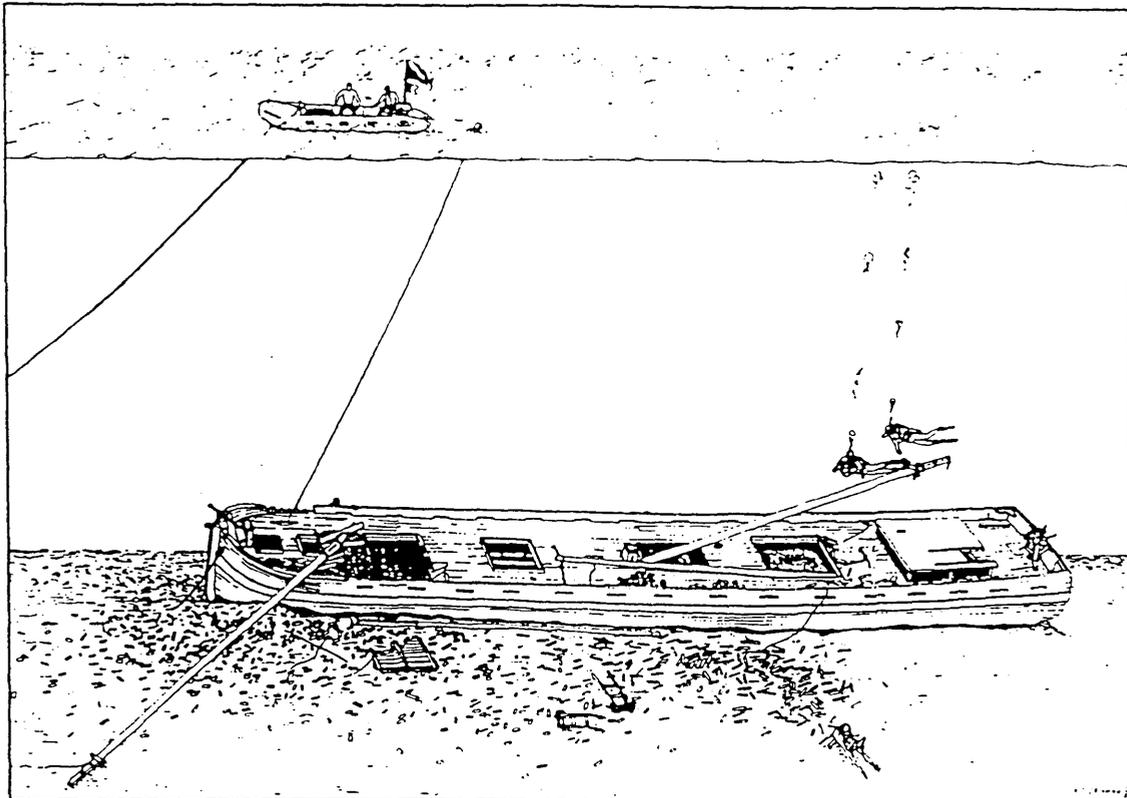


Figure 2: Archaeological survey being conducted on the *O. J. Walker* (drawn by Kevin J. Crisman, 1989).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

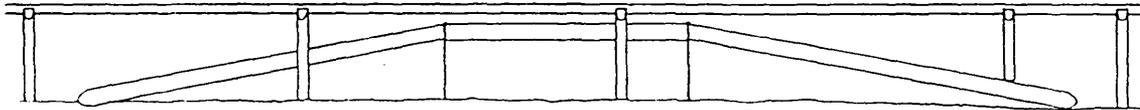


Figure 3: The *O. J. Walker's* hogging truss as seen in an interior profile of the starboard side (drawn by Joseph R. Cozzi, 1995).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

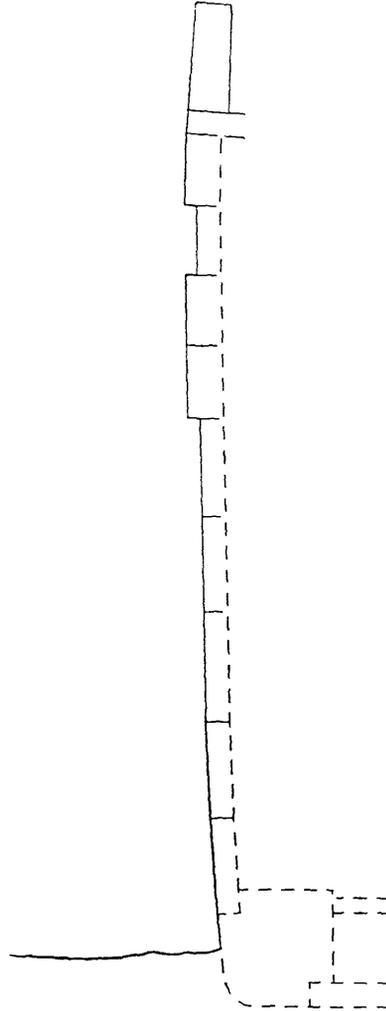


Figure 4: A section of the *O. J. Walker's* hull (drawn by Joseph R. Cozzi, 1995).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 11

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

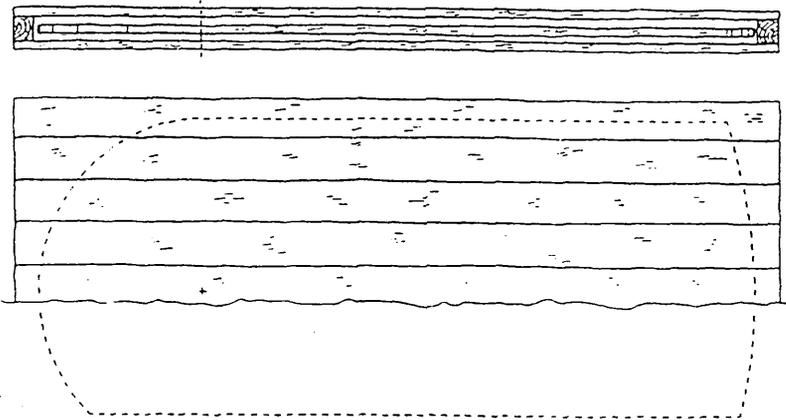


Figure 5: The *O. J. Walker*'s centerboard trunk with the centerboard outlined in a dashed line (drawn by Joseph R. Cozzi, 1995).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 12

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

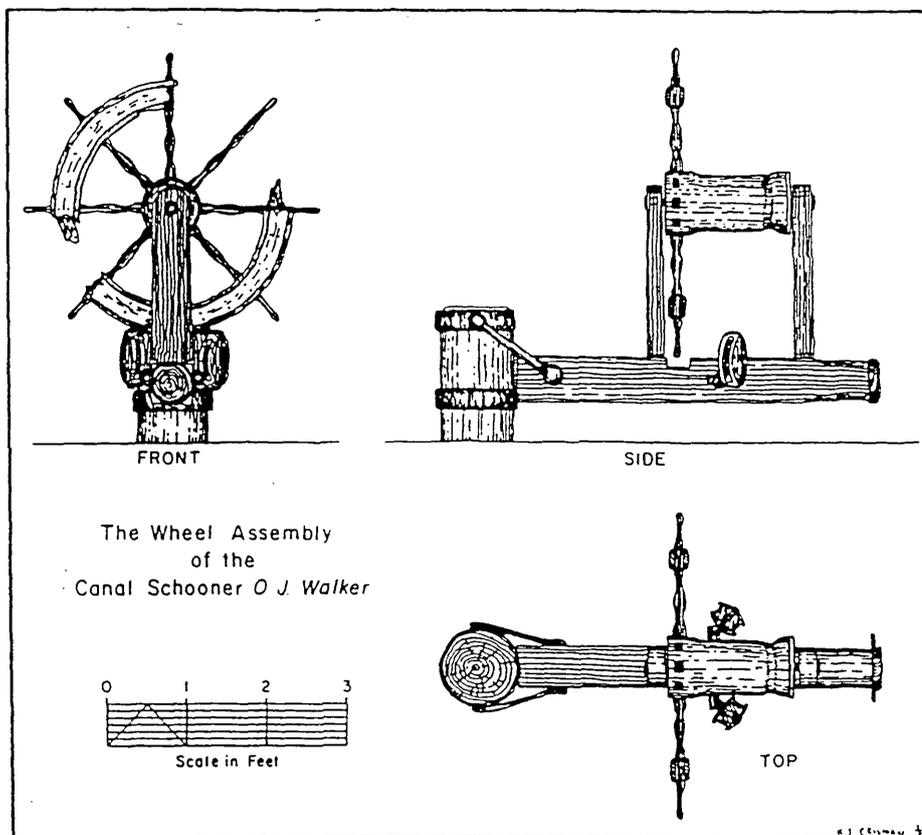


Figure 6: The *O. J. Walker's* shin-cracker wheel (drawn by Kevin J. Crisman, 1989).

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Archeology: historic/non-aboriginal
- Architecture
- Maritime History
- Transportation

Period of Significance

1862-1895

Significant Dates

1862

1895

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Spear, Orson Saxton

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Lake Champlain Maritime Museum

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Name of Property

Chittenden County, VT
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 2.88

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1

1	8	6	3	9	9	0	0	4	9	2	6	3	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

3

Zone		Easting				Northing								

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Scott McLaughlin, Underwater Archeologist

organization Lake Champlain Maritime Museum date February 20, 1997

street & number RR #3, Box 4092 telephone (802) 475-2022

city or town Vergennes state VT zip code 05491

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Vermont Division for Historic Preservation

street & number National Life Building, Drawer 20 telephone (802) 828-3051

city or town Montpelier state VT zip code 05620-1501

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Summary

The shipwreck of the *O. J. Walker* is an important vessel in the history of the Champlain Valley, Vermont, and the nation. The *O. J. Walker*, located in Burlington Bay, Burlington, Vermont, is eligible for National Register listing under criteria A, C, and D. The vessel retains all aspects and qualities of integrity regarding these criteria. The areas of significance within these criteria are archaeology, architecture, maritime history and transportation.

Criteria A: Sailing canal boats like the *O. J. Walker* were an important element in the North American transportation network during the nineteenth century. These vessels transported millions of tons of cargo between the Eastern Canadian, Great Lakes, and New York City markets, greatly effecting the economy of the United States and Canada.

Criteria C: The *O. J. Walker* embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type and method of construction used during the nineteenth century. The *O. J. Walker* is a Lake Champlain sailing canal schooner of the 1862 class. The vessel was built using a chine log construction technique, which was commonly practiced by American boat builders for many different types of vessels and was the predominant construction technique used to build sailing canal boats. The vessel was constructed by naval architect and master shipwright Orson Saxton Spear, who was a very influential Lake Champlain mariner.

Criteria D: The archaeology and historical research conducted to date on the *O. J. Walker* has yielded a tremendous amount of information about the construction, function, operation and life aboard sailing canal boats. By no means has this research been exhausted. There still remains a large amount of data to be analyzed and a large section of the vessel has yet to be excavated or documented.

Archaeology

The archaeology of the *O. J. Walker* has been the effort of a number of researchers. This research has been vital to the understanding of how a sailing canal boat was designed, constructed, functioned and operated. The *O. J. Walker* is the best surviving example of a 1862 class Lake Champlain sailing canal schooner. The wreck was discovered in 1984 during a side-scan survey of Burlington Bay conducted by the Champlain Maritime Society (CMS).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

Since the vessel's discovery, the *O. J. Walker* has been under sporadic investigation by the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum, Ferrisburgh, Vermont (LCMM).

These investigations have yielded significant information about the overall dimensions, rigging, lines and features of the 1862 class of sailing canal boats. The vessel is likely to yield even more information with a more detailed archaeological survey. This information is made possible as a result of the vessel's quick, but gentle sinking in 1895. The people aboard were unable to remove anything before they abandoned the vessel. The site will allow future archaeologists to view the ship's contents, condition and organization at the exact moment of the vessel's sinking.

Architecture

The *O. J. Walker* is one of thousands of sailing canal boats that once were involved in the commercial carrying trade on Lake Champlain. The *O. J. Walker* is a largely intact example of a Lake Champlain sailing canal schooner of the 1862 class. The vessel was one of the first lake craft built of this class and is the most intact vessel of its kind. The vessel represents the finest features of sailing canal boats developed by local shipbuilders. The ship was designed and constructed by naval architect and master shipwright Orson Saxton Spear in South Burlington, Vermont.

Maritime History/Transportation

Sailing canal boats are a significant vessel type in the maritime history of the United States and in the development of nineteenth century transportation. They filled a need to transport large, bulky cargoes relatively quickly and cheaply from inland ports to major shipping and economic centers during the age of American expansion. The sailing canal boat was able to move cargoes from a lake port to a canal or river port quickly and inexpensively without the need to transfer the cargo to a standard canal boat. Sailing canal boats were built in New York, Vermont, and Eastern Canada. The *O. J. Walker* is one of the thousands of sailing canal boats that were once involved in the commercial carrying trade on Lake Champlain. These wooden vessels carried millions of tons of cargo each year from 1823 to about 1900. Their construction peaked between 1845 and 1875, and then declined in the following decades as the railroads consolidated their hold on the inland transportation system. The longevity of sailing canal boats attests to their success.

The sailing canal boat was essential to Lake Champlain's commercial trade, which

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

connected the Eastern Canadian, New York City, and Great Lakes markets. The sailing canal boat played an important role in the local Champlain Valley economy and the greater economies of the United States and Canada. The *O. J. Walker* was part of this commercial activity from 1862 to 1895.

The *O. J. Walker* is the most intact example of a Lake Champlain sailing canal schooner of the 1862 class. The *O. J. Walker* was among the first vessels built of this class and is an excellent example of a sailing canal boat from the end of Lake Champlain's commercial period. The vessel represents the finest features developed by local shipbuilders. The *O. J. Walker* operated on Lake Champlain and its connected canal systems, although later in life it was committed to lake trade with a foremast stepped permanently through the deck.

The vessel's architect and builder, Orson Saxton Spear, was at the center of the design and construction of commercial vessels on Lake Champlain. He was an important influence on the carrying trade and shipbuilding throughout the Champlain Valley and its connected canal systems. Spear became one of the regions most prolific designers, builders and repairers of vessels of all sizes and shapes. Spear assisted in perfecting the designs of numerous lake craft. Of all the shipbuilders in the Champlain Valley, Spear possibly had the most impact on the industry.

As Burlington, Vermont was prospering as a commercial center on Lake Champlain, Spear became the principal builder and repairer of all commercial watercraft on the lake. Spear had been born in Shelburne, Vermont, in 1808, to one of the founding families of the community (Spear 1988:151). He was born the same year Lake Champlain's first steamboat, the *Vermont*, was built. By the time Spear was in his twenties, he had already demonstrated a talent for both mathematics and mechanics. He was employed as a surveyor by Vermont surveyor John Johnson (Johnson 1836) and as a boat builder by master builder Lavator White (Spear 1836). During these formative years, Spear had traveled to the thriving lake-canal junction town of Whitehall, New York, where he worked in the shipyard of Peter Comstock (Spear 1835). Spear proved his skillfulness as a shipwright by building numerous canal boats and steamers between 1840 and 1862. He built many new boats, repaired dozens of working vessels and was willing to travel for special clients to build and repair boats for them.

It is during the 1850s that Spear apparently made the transition from traveling boat builder to a shipwright with an established base of operations. The shipyard he worked out of was at the northern end of Shelburne Bay owned by Captain Napoleon Bonaparte Proctor. Little is currently known about the relationship between Spear and Proctor, but the association

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

apparently lasted until Proctor's death in 1888 and appears to have been beneficial.

Spear was contracted to build one of the first 1862 class sailing canal boats at Proctor's shipyard. The contract to build this new and expanded 1862 class of sailing canal boat has not been found; however a number of documents in Spear's papers provide information on the vessel's construction. From April through June 1862, Spear purchased from the firm of Van Sicklin & Walker in Burlington a total of nineteen kegs of ship spikes, four bales of oakum and one barrel of pitch (Spear 1862b). An invoice from the Machine Shop at Pioneer Building in Burlington has detailed references for supplies purchased for a boat. The supplies were acquired from April 15 through early July and included: 105 lb. (47.6 kg) of nuts and bolts, 51 lb. (23.1 kg) of castings, forging long boat iron, four eye bands and other hardware (Spear 1862a). The supplies were almost certainly purchased for the construction of the *O. J. Walker*.

An informative invoice gives detailed information about the sails and rigging for a sailing canal boat. It is uncertain, for the lack of a date, whether this invoice was for the *O. J. Walker*. Considering the number of 6 in (15.2 cm) deadeyes ordered, it can be presumed that the order was for a schooner-rigged vessel (Spear ca. 1862). The bill lists:

4	sails No. 8 US Pilot duck	\$145
	blocks, rigging hooks and thimbles consisting of:	\$150
2	main sheet blocks with iron bushings 11 in (27.9 cm)	
3	single patent blocks for tackle 14 in (35.6 cm)	
2	double patent blocks for [illegible] 9 in (22.9 cm)	
3	single patent blocks for [illegible] 8 in (20.3 cm)	
1	double sheave block with iron bushings 7 in (17.8 cm)	
3	single sheave blocks with iron bushings 7 in (17.8 cm)	
2	blocks for fancy[?] line 4 in (10.2 cm)	
1	block for topsail halyard 6 in (15.2 cm)	
10	6 in (15.2 cm) deadeyes	
2	5 in (12.7 cm) deadeyes for spring stay	

The enrollment papers of the *O. J. Walker* note that the first owner and master of the vessel was Joseph H. Kirby of Burlington, Vermont. Kirby enrolled the *O. J. Walker* as required in the Customs District of Vermont on July 7, 1862. Spear, the builder, certified that the vessel had one deck, two masts in a schooner rig, possessed no figure head, had a moulded bow and stern, measured 86 ft 8 in (26.42 m) long, 14 ft 8 in (4.47 m) beam and 6 ft 6 in

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 5O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

(1.98 m) in depth and measured 78 tons (Kirby 1862).

The new boat was named after Obadiah Johnson Walker, a Burlington merchant, with the firm of Van Sicklin & Walker. The firm was so pleased that they presented Kirby with a set of colors for the vessel (BFPT 1935). The relationship between Walker and Kirby is unknown. It is, however, interesting to speculate on the reasons for naming the new vessel after one of the region's leading merchants. Kirby may have hoped that this act would assure him a steady cargo, working for the firm of the vessel's namesake. Walker may have loaned Kirby the money needed to commission the new boat. Kirby and Walker may have had a mutual friendship and connection in the maritime trade of the day, as suggested in a newspaper article written some sixty-five years after the vessel's launch.

Obadiah Walker was from an old New England family that moved to Vermont before the American Revolutionary War. In 1790, the family re-located to Ferrisburgh, Vermont. At age fifteen, Walker moved to Burlington to work for his uncle Solomon Walker. Obadiah Walker demonstrated a great skill in business affairs and had a distinguished career. Walker was a partner with F. M. Van Sicklin for many years in the firm of Van Sicklin and Walker. From 1873 until Walker's death, he was a partner in the firm of O. J. Walker & Brothers (Carleton 1903).

Kirby and his father cut the oak timber for the *O. J. Walker* themselves. After the vessel was launched, it hauled thousands of tons of lake gravel into Canada to be used in roofing. The washed gravel came from Camp Watson, Camp Rich and Camp Wright on the Vermont shores of Milton and St. Albans (BFP 1935).

References in the Master Abstracts of enrollment papers suggest that in 1863 a new enrollment was filed listing Thomas Steele and Joseph Kirby as co-owners of the *O. J. Walker*. Kirby was still listed as the master. The partners owned the vessel until 1881, when they sold it.

The *O. J. Walker* was sold to another lake mariner, Alexander Breyar of Crown Point, New York. Breyar properly enrolled the *O. J. Walker* in the Port of Plattsburgh, New York (Breyar 1881). He owned the *O. J. Walker* for a little over two years. From primary documents provided by descendants of Breyar a partial picture of the vessel's operations emerges. Masters and owners of coastal, lake and river vessels were required to keep a log book that kept track of all seaman's time aboard the vessel. Masters or owners had to pay to the Collector of Customs the sum of forty cents per month for every officer or seaman

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 6O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

employed on board the vessel. These funds were used to support the operations of Marine Hospitals, which were available for the care of anyone who had paid into the fund.

The *O. J. Walker's* Seaman's Time Book still exists for the period from May 1, 1881 until June 30, 1884. According to the log, the schooner began work on May 1, 1881, and worked until December 1 of that year when the vessel was laid up because of ice forming over the lake. During the seven months the vessel worked the crew consisted of: Thomas Edgar Weatherwax, Master; Joseph Goyette, seaman; Henry Maple, seaman; and Laura Goyette, cook.

In 1882, the schooner again came out on May 1 with Weatherwax still in command; Joseph Fell, seaman; Henry Maple, seaman; and Mrs. Joseph Fell, cook. That season they were laid up on November 25 because of ice.

On April 26, 1883, Weatherwax paid up the hospital dues from the previous year and also for 20 days of April 1883 for himself and his new wife, Matilda Breyar. According to their descendants, Weatherwax married Breyar's fourteen year old daughter Matilda during the winter of 1882-1883 and purchased the *O. J. Walker* from his father-in-law. New enrollment papers for the *O. J. Walker* were issued to Weatherwax of Peru, New York, as the new owner and master on April 26, 1883 (Weatherwax 1883). For the 1883 season, Weatherwax was master; Oliver King, seaman; Joseph Goyette, seaman; and Matilda Weatherwax, cook. They operated the *O. J. Walker* until they were forced off the lake by ice from November 25, 1883 until April 12, 1884. The Seamen's Time-Book notes that the 1884 operating season began on April 21, with Weatherwax as master; Joseph Fell, seaman; and Matilda, cook. The hospital dues for the crew were paid through June 30, 1884; and then the records of payment end.

The remaining pages of the Seaman's Time-Book have a few interesting annotations. One page lists Captain Weatherwax's wife and all his children by name and birth date. Another entry indicates that on March 14, 1892, the Weatherwax family moved ashore and began to fix up a house (Weatherwax 1892). Family history suggests that the oldest boy, Walter, had respiratory problems. The family left the dampness of the *O. J. Walker*, which had been their home for nine years, and moved ashore (Carolyn Weatherwax Burakowski and Janice Breyer Brown, personal communication with Arthur B. Cohn, 1988). Weatherwax continued to operate the vessel for the 1892 navigation season. At the season's end, the *O. J. Walker* was sold and Weatherwax began a shore-based maritime career as the captain of the steam ferry *G. R. Sherman*. The *G. R. Sherman* was a 75 ft (22.9 m) screw steamer built in Champlain, New York in 1890 and ran between Chimney Point, Addison, Vermont and Port

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 7O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

Henry, New York (Hill 1990:35).

Weatherwax, having moved on shore in the spring of 1892, probably spent the season trying to find a buyer for his thirty year old schooner. Given the *O. J. Walker's* age, the declining state of maritime business opportunities on Lake Champlain and Weatherwax's family responsibilities, Weatherwax would have been what we call today a motivated seller. The newspaper states that the *O. J. Walker* was in Malletts Bay, Colchester, Vermont in early August 1892 to carry a load of tile to Dr. William Seward Webb's estate in Shelburne, Vermont (Burlington Sentinel 1892:4). The tile probably came from the Malletts Bay Brick and Tile Yard owned by John W. and Henry W. Brown. Perhaps this is the time that Weatherwax interested Carter Field into purchasing the *O. J. Walker*.

The *O. J. Walker* was purchased by Carter Moses Field of Colchester and registered at the Port of Burlington on November 18, 1892. Field indicated that he was both the sole owner and master of the vessel (Field 1892). Field owned the *O. J. Walker* for only about six months. By the opening of the 1893 navigation season, he had sold his newly acquired schooner to John W. Brown of Milton, Vermont.

The new enrollment papers for the *O. J. Walker* list both John W. and Henry W. Brown, father and son, respectively, as partners owning equal shares of the *O. J. Walker*. No master for the vessel was listed (Brown and Brown 1893). The Browns were well-known brick and tile makers who had manufacturing operations at Malletts Bay, Milton and Burlington. These were large operations with the Malletts Bay and Milton yards capable of producing a total of 4 million bricks a season in 1882. The bricks from the Malletts Bay yard were chiefly sold on the New York side of the lake, while the Burlington manufactured bricks were mostly sold for use within the city. The Browns employed about fifty men during the manufacturing season at the Malletts Bay and Milton yards in 1882 (Child 1882:241, 275 and 355).

The Browns were also inventors and John Brown held United States' patents for both improvements in brick kilns and in water conductors (Brown 1872 and 1875). With an operation in Malletts Bay, the Browns were dependent on water transport as the most economical means of getting their products to the towns along the New York shoreline of Lake Champlain. This necessity was perhaps their motivation for purchasing the *O. J. Walker*.

While the schooner *O. J. Walker* was owned by the Browns, it was operated by hired

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

masters and perhaps managed by a third party, Obadiah Walker himself. A newspaper article that appeared on July 18, 1893, leads to this speculation. Entitled "The Oldest Boatman," it reports the death of Captain Shell Parkhurst while in command of the *O. J. Walker*.

Capt. Shell Parkhurst, the oldest boatman on the lake, died of old age while at his post of duty near Mechanicsville, N.Y. Saturday. He was 75 years of age. Nearly his whole life was spent on a canal boat. For years he had captained the boat *O. J. Walker* for O. J. Walker and Brothers of this city [Burlington], and it was on this boat that he died, he being in transit with a cargo of merchandise from New York. Messrs. Walker Bros. frequently advised him to retire, but the very thought of it seemed to wound the faithful old captain's feelings, and so he was permitted to end his life as he would have it. Two daughters survive him. The remains reached here [Burlington] on the steamer *Vermont* [II] yesterday. Funeral services were held in the chapel at Lake View cemetery [Burlington], Rev. T. G. Thompson officiating (BFPT 1893).

It is reasonable to suppose that the Browns would have been able to schedule deliveries of brick and tile at very specific times. This left the *O. J. Walker* free to earn her keep by carrying general cargo when not in use by the Browns. Merchants like O. J. Walker & Brothers would have needed commercial vessels for their businesses. The merchants would have been much more able to serve as the dispatch agent in directing the boat's movements to pick up and deliver cargoes. It seems likely that Captain Weatherwax would have also needed a shore-based agent to direct his freighting movements when he owned the *O. J. Walker*. A reference in one newspaper article, while somewhat vague, suggests that his agent may also have been O. J. Walker & Brothers.

Boatman are feeling justly discouraged over the situation on the canal and O. J. Walker & Bros. have advised the captain of the canal boat *O. J. Walker*, to tie up and wait for a more promising outlook. The spare time is being occupied by

giving the boat a coat of fresh paint (BFPT 1890).

The death of Captain Parkhurst did not stop the *O. J. Walker* in its appointed rounds, but instead led to an interesting transition. "Mrs. Rock, the daughter of Capt. Shell Parkhurst, who met death while in command of his boat last summer, is the only woman captain of a canal boat plying between New York and this city [Burlington]. She has full charge of the boat

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

O. J. Walker" (BFPT 1893). That responsibility nearly ended in August 1893; when after losing an anchor, the *O. J. Walker* was driven ashore into the bay at Gordon's Landing, Grand Isle, Vermont. The vessel had to be pulled to safety by the steamer *Chateaguay* (BFPT 1893).

On Saturday, May 11, 1895, the thirty-three year old schooner *O. J. Walker* left the Browns' brick yard in Malletts Bay heavily laden with a load of bricks and tile with Captain W. J. Worthen at the helm. On route to Dr. William Seward Webb's estate in Shelburne, the vessel encountered a severe storm, strong enough to merit a significant mention in a local newspaper.

The severe wind storm which visited this section on Saturday made it extremely hazardous for small craft on the lake. Boatman no doubt took warning by the blackness of the western sky which presaged the coming of a storm of more than usual severity, and sought a place of safety before the storm struck. Those who were on shore in position to see the storm-swept lake, uninfluenced by considerations of personal security, pronounced the scene magnificent in its wildness, and that old Champlain is seldom disturbed as it was then. Considerations of an entirely different nature occupied the minds of those who were out in boats and subjected to the violence of the elements (Essex County Republican 1895).

Not only was the *O. J. Walker* subjected to the violence of the elements; but its crew had made a fatal mistake before leaving shore. They had loaded a cargo of bricks and tiles on the deck of the vessel. It is easy to guess what happened after examining the volume of bricks and tile scattered around the sunken hull, and the neatly stacked bricks still on the vessel's deck. The *O. J. Walker* left Malletts Bay with a fair sky and a heavy load on deck. Loading the cargo on the deck would have saved time and energy on both ends of the trip; but would have been much more stressful on the hull of the old schooner. The deck load increased the

height of the vessel's center of gravity, making it more unstable. The decision was undoubtedly made anticipating fair weather, something that the *O. J. Walker* could have handled. Unfortunately, the severity of the storm and the position of the cargo caused the old schooner to spring a leak.

Captain Worthen had just enough time to drop an anchor to hold the *O. J. Walker* into the wind, and to get his wife and a crewman into a small boat. As the *O. J. Walker*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

turned on her side, most of her cargo was dumped to the bottom. The vessel momentarily righted itself. Then the *O. J. Walker* filled with water and sank to the lake bottom in about 65 ft (19.8 m) of water. Captain Worthen and his crew were without oars but managed to drift safely to shore (BFPT 1895).

In the aftermath of the sinking, a newspaper reported that John Brown was looking for salvage options from James W. Wakefield.

J. W. Brown of Milton, owner of the sunken schooner, *O. J. Walker*, was in the city yesterday consulting with J. W. Wakefield in regard to the raising of the schooner. Mr. Wakefield said it would cost more than the boat was worth to raise her so the idea was abandoned but Mr. Wakefield will begin at once to secure the anchors, chains, rigging, etc. (BFPT 1895).

James Wakefield was the principal Burlington ship chandler. He was also a local hero for rescuing the passengers and crew of the *General Butler* off the Burlington breakwater during a severe storm in 1876 (BFPT 1876). It appears that upon closer inspection by Wakefield, the salvage of the *O. J. Walker*'s old spars and anchors was also deemed not cost effective. Instead, the shrouds holding the masts were cut and the spars were dropped to the bottom to prevent them from becoming a hazard to navigation.

The *O. J. Walker* is now part of Vermont's underwater historic preserve system. Due to the fragile nature and archeological sensitivity of this site, registration is required for every dive.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 2

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 3

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 4

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

O. J. Walker, Shipwreck
Chittenden County, VT

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The *O. J. Walker* is located in 65 ft (20 m) of water in the northern portion of Burlington Bay, Burlington, Vermont. The vessel is approximately 2900 ft (884 m) west of the northern end of the Burlington breakwater and approximately 4000 ft (1220 m) southeast of Lone Rock Point, Burlington.

Latitude: 44° 28.72' N

Longitude: 73° 14.44' W

Loran Coordinates: N442874 W731451

A circle, with a 200 ft (61 m) radius around the *O. J. Walker*, is designated as the outer limits of the site boundary. The shipwreck lies in the center of this circle, which is an area of 2.88 acres (1.17 hectares).

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The *O. J. Walker* struck the bottom of the lake spilling some of its deck cargo as it descended. This cargo is spread over a small area around the vessel, the exact limits of which have not been fully investigated. Following the vessel's sinking, its rigging rotted and broke away, causing some of the spars and other rigging elements to fall along side the vessel. A 200 ft (61 m) radius around the wreck will ensure that any scatter of artifacts associated with the wreck will be included within the site boundaries. The 200 ft (61 m) radius is also the State of Vermont designation as the safety zone around any diver's down flag. The boundary is sufficient to convey the significance of the site.