

Survey No. T-528

Magi No.

DOE  yes  no

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic E.C. COLLIER

and/or common skipjack

## 2. Location

street & number Gibsontown Road n/a not for publication

city, town Tilghman n/a vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland 024 county Talbot 041

## 3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mrs. Polly Cummings

street & number telephone no.:

city, town Tilghman, state and zip code 21671 Maryland

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. n/a liber

street & number folio

city, town state

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Survey of Surviving Traditional Chesapeake Bay Craft

date 1983-1984  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Maryland Historic Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

## 7. Description

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<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move <u>          </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			<u>          </u> n/a

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This vessel is a 52' long two-sail bateau, or V-bottomed deadrise type of centerboard sloop, commonly referred to as a skipjack. She has a beam of 17.9', a depth of 4.5', and a registered net tonnage of 14 tons. She was built using traditional Bay cross-planked construction in 1910 at Deal Island, Maryland, for the oyster dredging fleet. The boat has a typical skipjack rig --a jib-headed mainsail laced to the boom and carried on wooden mast hoops, and a large jib with a club on its foot. The vessel is painted white.

The E.C. COLLIER is among the larger skipjacks. She has a longhead bow and a square, or transom, stern. She has a straight, slightly raking stem with a longhead, or clipper bow, and a round bowsprit with added runners or rails for grip. Her transom stern is squared with a shallow "tuck"--in other words, the transom meets the chine just above the waterline. There is a rudder mounted on pintles on the transom and skeg.

The vessel is flush-decked, with several deck structures. From the stern forward these include: a box over the steering gear on the afterdeck; a main cabin trunk with a slide; a small deck hatch; a tall plywood box over the winders; and a main hatch. The vessel is fitted out for oystering with winders, rollers, dredges, and a pushboat suspended from davits over the stern. There is a jig for the pushboat on the starboard side of the transom. The deck is surrounded by a pinrail, lower forward than at the afterdeck and open at the dredge-rollers.

The mast is well raked aft, about 20°, and is set up with double shrouds and turnbuckles, a forestay, and a jibstay. A topping lift leads to the end of the long boom, which is jawed to the mast. The bowsprit is rigged with double bobstays of chain and cable, and chain bowsprit shrouds. Both mainsail and jib are fitted with lazyjacks.

The white-painted hull is decorated with brightwork accents on the cabin and spars, except for the bowsprit, which is painted. There is an eagle billethead, painted black, white, and tan, on the longhead. The trailboards have the name E.C. COLLIER painted in tan on a white ground surrounded by vines; red, white, and blue-painted shields, also surrounded by tan vines; and an eagle/shield/arrows motif. The vessel's name is also painted in yellow letters on varnished boards mounted on the sheer at the bow.

# 8. Significance

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Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates	1910	Builder/Architect	Unknown
check: Applicable Criteria:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D
and/or			
Applicable Exception:	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> B	<input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> none
Level of Significance:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> national	<input type="checkbox"/> state	<input type="checkbox"/> local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the 35 surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay skipjacks and a member of the last commercial sailing fleet in the United States. Out of a fleet of hundreds of skipjacks that worked Bay waters in the early years of this century, today only this small number remain to carry on the tradition of working sail.

The skipjack evolved as a distinct type of Bay vessel in the 1890's as a cheaper-to-construct alternative to the earlier bugeyes and other traditional framed craft, in a period when shipbuilding costs were rising and the oyster catch was diminishing. The type was devised by enlarging (to 25 to 60 feet) the hull of the ordinary, unframed, square-sterned Bay crabbing skiff, and giving it a deadrise bottom, a-deck, a cabin, and a sloop rig. The result—with its unframed, hard chine, cross-planked, v-bottom—proved inexpensive to build, easy to repair, and could be constructed by a competent house carpenter. Skipjacks were specifically designed as oyster dredge boats, with wide beams and low freeboard lending stability and providing a large working space on deck. The single masted rig, with sharp-headed mainsail and large jib, was easy to handle, powerful in light winds, and handy in coming about quickly for another pass over the oyster beds.

The Maryland oyster season begins November 1 and ends March 15. Skipjacks must dredge under sail on all days except Mondays and Tuesdays, when they are allowed to use their motorized pushboat for dredging. The pushboat, normally carried on davits at the stern, is lowered into the water and literally "pushes" the skipjack along from behind, the nose of the pushboat resting against a "jig" on the stern of the skipjack. The pushboat can also legally be used to get the skipjack to and from the oyster beds each day. Each skipjack's crew is made up of the captain, who is often also the owner, and five crew members.

E.C. COLLIER is of interest as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1910 at Deal Island, Maryland, following traditional Bay-area design and construction methods. She has worked in the oyster-dredging fleet

See Thematic Group nomination cover form, Continuation Sheets No. 8-13.

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name Tilghman, MD

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 18 384240 428550  
 Zone Easting Northing

B           
 Zone Easting Northing

C         

D         

E         

F         

G         

H         

Verbal boundary description and justification

This working vessel is usually docked at the location indicated in Item 2. Historic boundaries are coterminous with the hull.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M. E. Hayward

organization Radcliffe Maritime Museum  
Maryland Historical Society

date May, 1984

street & number 201 West Monument Street

telephone (301) 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
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 21 State Circle  
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