

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0683566

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED AUG 30 1978
DATE ENTERED DEC 9 1 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC Elmer S. Dailey

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Bridgeport Harbor, just south of Stratford Avenue Bridge

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeport

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
4th - Stewart B. McKinney

STATE

Connecticut

CODE

09

COUNTY

Fairfield

CODE

001

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

George W. Koenig

STREET & NUMBER

221 Anton Drive

CITY, TOWN

Bridgeport

VICINITY OF

STATE

CT

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

United States Coast Guard
Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection

NOTE: Vessel has been out of
documentation since 1972

STREET & NUMBER

Battery Park Building

CITY, TOWN

New York

STATE

NY

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Connecticut Statewide Inventory of Historic Resources

DATE

1975

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

CT

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Elmer S. Dailey (U.S. Registry # 166315) is a wooden canal boat built for service on the Erie Canal and later fitted with Diesel power for pushing other barges. One of a group of three related vessels now sunk at their moorings in Bridgeport Harbor, it is completely below the surface of the water, even at the lowest tide. While nothing definite has been arranged, efforts are underway to raise the vessel and find it a permanent setting.

The Elmer S. Dailey measures 105.2' long, 17.9' beam, 9.9' depth of hold, and had a net capacity of 101 tons. The hull is almost rectangular in both section and plan, with bluntly rounded bow and stern. The profile of the hull is nearly as prosaic; the bulwarks, perforated by scuppers, rise upward to the stem which is slightly raked back. There are prominent strakes in the bow and topside along the sides of the vessel. A coaming about 2' high frames the single large cargo opening which occupies about two-thirds of the boat's length. This was covered by a series of convex hatch covers. Aft is a small, boxy pilothouse the width of the coaming and behind, a low cabin with companionway. A short stack protrudes from the cabin roof. There is a small mast with lights and signal lines and a boom for lowering the dinghy which rested on the cabin roof.

The Elmer S. Dailey was built by William H. Follette in 1915 at Tonawanda, New York. In 1928, the Claire B. Follette, as it was originally known, was rebuilt by Brown Drydock on Staten Island. Two Fairbanks-Morse in-line six-cylinder Diesels were installed, the pilothouse and stack were added, and the name changed. At some later date, one of the engines was removed. A large compressed air reservoir was used to start the direct-drive engine, which was variously rated at 180 or 210 horsepower. In its final version, the vessel was manned by a crew of three.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1915 - built

BUILDER/ARCHITECT William H. Follette

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Elmer S. Dailey is the only known surviving Erie Canal boat. One of only a few wooden-hulled canal boats remaining, it is an artifact of America's most famous canal. It perfectly typifies the genre: simple lines, shallow draft, dimensioned to barely fit the 18' wide locks, rounded ends and strakes to minimize damage from collisions with other vessels or with the sides of the tight locks. Although the 100-ton capacity of the Elmer S. Dailey reflects the enlargement of the Erie Canal during the 19th century, its form is essentially the same as that of earlier, smaller canalboats.

The modifications of 1928 have not seriously compromised the historic value of the vessel, since the distinctive hull shape remains. Moreover, such a rebuilding was common after the Erie was replaced by the New York Barge Canal, as owners converted some of their old barges into tow- or push-boats.¹ The damage done to the boat and the amount of material lost due to its submersion can only be assessed when it is raised, but current opinion is optimistic that structural damage is slight.

The Elmer S. Dailey was built at the end of the Erie era, in 1915, by William H. Follette, a prominent shipbuilder and mayor of Tonawanda, New York. One of his junior partners at the time was Stewart Dailey, son of Irish immigrants and former mule driver on the Erie. Shortly after Follette's death around 1917, Dailey moved a number of canalboats to New York City where he established his own lighterage company, moving material around the port and between New York and nearby New Jersey and Connecticut harbors. The Elmer S. Dailey was used in this trade as a barge until 1928 when the Diesel power was added, so that in addition to carrying cargo in its own hold, it could be used to push another barge.

Although its service on the Erie Canal was brief, the Elmer S. Dailey's significance is great because of the part played by the Canal in American history. The Erie Canal was the first important step in the transportation revolution which transformed the American economy by creating a national market. In addition to its economic effect from linking the Midwest with the East Coast, the Erie Canal inspired the public to undertake numerous other (generally less successful) canal projects. It trained a whole generation of engineers. And it added to American folklore a wealth of anecdotes, songs and tall tales.

¹Four of the fifteen canal boats in an undated but probably early 20th-century view of New York have pilot houses similar to Elmer S. Dailey's. See Francis P. Kimball, New York - The Canal State (Albany: Argus Press, 1937), opp. p. 27.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Interview with Elmer S. Dailey, Bridgeport, February 15, 1978.
- Kimball, Francis P. New York - The Canal State. Albany: Argus Press, 1937.
- McKelvey, William. "Canal Boat Remains," American Canals, No. 18, August, 1976, p. 7.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Not Applicable

UTM REFERENCES less than 1 - per John Horgan 12-20-78 JH

A	1,8	6,5,2,0,6,0	4,5,5,9,9,6,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Bruce Clouette, Consultant

ORGANIZATION Connecticut Historical Commission DATE February 16, 1978

STREET & NUMBER 59 South Prospect Street TELEPHONE (203) 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN Hartford STATE CT

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL STATE LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.


STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE 

TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission

DATE August 23, 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:  DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 12-21-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 12/21/78

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE

Elmer S. Dailey
Bridgeport, CT

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one

U.S. Coast Guard, Officer in Charge, Marine Inspection (New York). General Index or Abstract of Title. Manuscript in Battery Park Building, New York.

U.S. Treasury Department, Bureau of Customs. Merchant Vessels of the United States, 1943. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1943.