

MAY 16 1985

Survey No. S-234

Magi No. 2002345 33

DOE yes no

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SKIPJACK FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic F.C. LEWIS JR

and/or common

2. Location

street & number LOWER THOROFARE n/a not for publication

city, town Wenona n/a vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 024 county Somerset 039

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" 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	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<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 checked="" 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 Captain Stanford White

street & number telephone no.: 784-2135

city, town Wenona state and zip code Maryland 21870

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 Historical Trust, 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state MD 21401

MAY 17 1985

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move 1907-d.c.c.

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

The F.C. LEWIS JR. is a two-sail bateau (skipjack), or V-bottomed deadrise type of centerboard sloop, built in Bay style using cross-planked construction. Built in 1907 in Hopkins, Virginia, she remains active today in Maryland's sail oyster fleet. She measures 39' long, with a beam of 14.6' and a register depth of 3'; her register tonnage is 6. The vessel carries a typical skipjack rig, consisting of a jib-headed mainsail laced to the boom and carried on wood hoops at the mast, and a single, large, self-tending jib with a club on its foot. The vessel has a longhead bow and a square stern. Based in Wenona, Maryland, the boat is painted the traditional white.

In shape, this skipjack exhibits an almost plumb stem, with headrails running from the end of the longhead back to the bow planking. Her square transom stern is boxlike, and sits "tucked" above the waterline where it meets the chine. The rudder is hung out-board on pintles mounted on the flat, slightly raking transom and skeg. There is a chock for the bow of the pushboat mounted on the starboard side of the transom.

The single mast is raked aft; it is set up with triple shrouds with turnbuckles as well as the more traditional deadeyes. Other rigging includes a jibstay, forestay, topping lift, and lazyjacks (for furling the sails quickly). The bowsprit is set up with double chain bobstays as well as chain bowsprit shrouds and wooden headrails leading back to the bow from the longhead. The long boom is jawed to the mast.

The hull is of cross-planked wooden construction, with some repair work done over the years; it is currently sheathed with metal as ice protection at the waterline. There are long guards on either side of the hull to protect from bumping dredges. The hull is painted white.

The vessel is flush-decked, with several deck structures. From the stern forward, these include a wheelbox, a trunk cabin with an added doghouse and a full-length door providing access to the cabin below, a deck hatch, and a forward cabin with a slide, providing access to the forepeak. The cabins have round ports. The "doghouse" raises the height of the trunk cabin, and is designed to protect the skipper from the weather; it has windows on three sides and a small slide in its roof. The vessel is fitted with oystering gear including dredges, winders, a winder engine, a pushboat suspended on davits over the stern, and rollers mounted on the hull where the dredges come over the sides.

The decks are painted white, with dark brown trim on the sheer rail along the sides and on the pinrail, which surrounds the deck aft. The wheelbox is painted green, with the ends of the wheel tipped in red; there is brown trim on the cabins. The spars are bright, while mast hoops are painted white. The name F.C. LEWIS Jr is painted in black on nameboards mounted on the bows, and WENONA MD. on a nameboard on the transom. The longhead is decorated with trailboards sporting the name F.C. LEWIS Jr. in gold on a dark green background, with traditional motifs of eagle, flag shield, and arrows in red, white, and blue, along with scrolls and vines in gold.

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 1907 **Builder/Architect** UNKNOWN

check: Applicable Criteria: A B C D
and/or

Applicable Exception: A B C D E F G none

Level of Significance: national state 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.

F.C. LEWIS, JR. is also significant as being one of the older skipjacks still dredging in the Chesapeake fleet. She was built in 1907 in Hopkins, Virginia following traditional Bay-area design and construction methods. She joined the oyster fleet in the heyday of skipjack building, just before World War I, and has dredged ever since working out of Wenona, Maryland. F.C. LEWIS, JR. is one of the 21 surviving working skipjacks to have been built previous to 1912, although like the other members of the fleet, she has been much repaired over the years in true Chesapeake fashion.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No.

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

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre
Quadrangle name Deal Island, MD Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

1	8	4	1	6	8	7	0	4	2	2	0	2	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

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

Radcliffe Maritime Museum

organization 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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