

MARITIME HERITAGE OF THE UNITED STATES NHL THEME STUDY--LARGE VESSELS

NPS Form 10-900

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

OMB No. 1024-0018

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)

Page 1

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. NAME OF PROPERTY

Historic Name: J. & E. Riggin

Other Name/Site Number: Two-masted schooner J. & E. Riggin

2. LOCATION

Street & Number: Rockland Harbor

Not for publication: _____

City/Town: Rockland

Vicinity: _____

State: ME County: Knox

Code: 013

Zip Code: 04841

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

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)

Page 2

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

4. STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.

Signature of Certifying Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of Commenting or Other Official

Date

State or Federal Agency and Bureau

5. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- _____ Entered in the National Register _____
- _____ Determined eligible for the _____
National Register
- _____ Determined not eligible for the _____
National Register
- _____ Removed from the National Register _____
- _____ Other (explain): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)

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:	Wood
Walls:	Wood
Roof:	Wood
Other Description:	Wood

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 4**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

Describe Present and Historic Physical Appearance.

The two-masted schooner J. & E. Riggin, official number 226422, is a historic vessel homeported in Rockland, Maine. The vessel is operated in the unique passenger coasting trade of Maine as one of the "Maine Windjammers" of Rockland and Camden. From June to September of each year, Riggin sails from Rockland every Monday to spend a week cruising the rugged Maine coast from Boothbay to Acadia National Park, "visiting picturesque fishing villages and historic towns."

J. & E. RIGGIN AS BUILT AND MODIFIED

As built in 1927, J. & E. Riggin is a wooden-hulled vessel. Riggin was and remains a single-decked centerboard schooner 76.4 feet long between perpendiculars, 90 feet long on deck, and 120 feet long overall with a 22.3-foot beam and a 6.1-foot depth of hold. The schooner was originally registered at 57 gross and net tons when admeasured; it is now registered at 61 tons.¹ The ship has double-sawn white and red oak frames, and is planked with spike-fastened white and red oak. The centerboard trunk is built up with red oak logs notched, drifted, and bolted to the frames and to each other. The ceiling is both hard pine and red oak.²

Riggin has a cedar deck laid over hard pine deck beams. The white oak keel has a cast-lead keel shoe added in 1977. The keel shoe is made up separate sections of lead scarphed together and attached with 3/4-inch bolts. The hull is reinforced with a red and white oak hog clamp made up of four pieces held together by drifts and 3/8-inch boat nails, and drifted through the ceiling to the frames with 5/8-inch drifts.³

J. & E. Riggin was built as a two-masted, gaff-rigged topsail schooner. The vessel remained rigged as a schooner until 1946, when the mainmast was pulled and a 200-horsepower Diesel engine installed that drove a single screw.⁴ Riggin remained a motor vessel, with a portion of her galley converted into the engine room, surmounted by an elevated pilothouse until 1976. Between 1976 and 1977, the vessel was restored. The engine was

¹ Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), entry for J. & E. Riggin. Also see subsequent years up to 1946, when Riggin changed to a motor vessel.

² Midships Plan, J. & E. Riggin (1977), drawn by David Allen. Collection of David Allen, Rockland, Maine.

³ "Hull Construction, Schooner J. & E. Riggin," plan (1977) drawn by David Allen.

⁴ Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States (1947), entry for J. & E. Riggin.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 5**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

removed, and the mainmast was reinstalled. J. & E. Riggin is traditionally rigged and now carries sail in the same configuration she did from 1927 until 1946. The sail plan includes a mainsail, main topsail, foresail, staysail, and jib, or 3,287 square feet of canvas.⁵

A low deckhouse aft leads into the cabin. A 16-horsepower, Diesel-powered yawl boat hangs from davits over Riggin's elliptical stern. A hatch fitted with a forward deckhouse leads into the forecastle, which is illuminated by a skylight set abaft the windlass and the bowsprit, which is stepped inboard. A cargo hold amidships has another low deckhouse fitted over it. A ladder leads below into the hold. The hold, separated by the centerboard trunk, is now subdivided into passenger accommodations. Riggin has ten twin-berth and two triple cabins for passengers. The interior joinery is varnished pine, with gleaming brass lamps and fixtures. Wash basins with cold running water are provided below, as are the heads. The construction of the accommodations below deck, completed in 1977, do not impact the integrity of the hold, which has its area and construction characteristics unimpaired and merely covered by the joinery.

⁵ Plans of J. & E. Riggin, drawn by David Allen, showing her lines and sail plan as restored, 1977. Additionally, discussions at Rockland aboard the vessel on May 19, 1989 with David Allen were helpful in assessing the restoration.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 6**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 X

NHL Criteria: 1, 4

NHL Theme(s): XII. Business

- A. Extractive Industries
 - 5. Fishing and Livestock

- L. Shipping and Transportation

XIX. Transportation

- B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, & Other Structures

XXXIII. Historic Preservation

- G. Federal Gov't Enters the Movement 1884-1949

XXXIV. Recreation

- E. General Recreation
 - 3. Other

Areas of Significance:	Period(s) of Significance	Significant Dates
Maritime History	1886-1986	1886
Historic Preservation	1972-Present	1972

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Stowaman's Shipyard, Dorchester, New Jersey

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**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.

The most common American vessel type was the two-masted schooner. Tens of thousands of these vessels were built and operated on the Pacific, Atlantic, and Gulf coasts, and on the Great Lakes in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Large numbers of these schooners were also built to work in the fisheries of the United States in a variety of trades, including oystering on inland sounds and bays. From the 1880s through the 1930s oystering was a national industry with thriving centers on San Francisco, Mobile, Chesapeake, Delaware, Narragansett, and Great Sound Bays, as well as on Long Island Sound. At the turn of the century, oysters were the chief fishery product of the United States.

There are now only five oyster schooners known to survive in the United States, all of which were employed on Delaware Bay--Isaac H. Evans (1886); Nellie and Mary (1891); Richard Robbins, Sr. (1902); Clyde A. Phillips (1928); and J. & E. Riggin (1927). J. & E. Riggin is the youngest of the surviving oyster schooners in the United States and is an outstanding representative of the late and final form of oyster schooner, representing the introduction of modern naval architectural theory and design. Isaac H. Evans and Nellie and Mary are early form oyster schooners. Evans is the subject of a separate nomination. Robbins represents an intermediate design oyster schooner, but the embodiment of the changes that are first, partially seen in her are better represented by Riggin. Clyde A. Phillips, the other representative of the late, final form of oyster schooners, awaits restoration.

After a half-century in service, including time as a motor-powered vessel, Riggin was restored to her sailing rig and placed in service as a "Maine Windjammer," in 1977, carrying passengers in commercial recreational service as part of a "dude fleet" that dates to the 1930s and was and remains unique in the annals of marine recreation and maritime preservation as part of a fleet that first introduced the concept of adaptive use to historic vessels.

The preceding statement of significance is based on the more detailed statements that follow.

THE AMERICAN OYSTER INDUSTRY UNDER SAIL

The harvesting and later the cultivation of the oyster was one of the earliest fisheries industries in North America. Native Americans harvested the rich oyster beds that proliferate along the coast from Texas to the Gulf of St. Lawrence, as well as on San Francisco Bay. Colonial interest in oystering led to widespread and intensive harvesting, and ultimately, by the 18th century, to government efforts to regulate the industry and conserve and nurture oyster beds. Oyster cultivation began in

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 8**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

the 1820s, and gradually reinvigorated a flagging industry at a time when demand for oysters was increasing.¹

As early as 1800, "the widespread desire for oysters on the half shell at home or in public eating places kept the shell trade alive."² A century later, oysters were "the chief fishery product of the United States and the most extensively eaten of all shellfish ... Everyone, especially those living along the shore, knew all about this wholesome, nutritious bivalve and the multimillion dollar industry it spawned."³ Tens of thousands of acres of seabed were cultivated and harvested--on New York's Great South Bay, for example, 50,000 acres alone were under cultivation in 1916.⁴ Fleets of hundreds of schooners, sloops, and oyster boats worked the beds, and thousands of men and women were employed afloat or ashore, tonging, dredging, shucking, canning, or serving oysters.

The vessels used to harvest and bring oysters to market generally fit into three categories: 1) the oyster tonging boats, usually canoes, skiffs or sharpies in which one man used wooden tongs to pluck the oysters from the seabed; 2) the oyster sloops, round-bottomed, gaff-rigged, centerboard one-masted vessels that pulled oyster dredges or served as platforms for tonging, and; 3) the sailing oyster freighters, the two-masted centerboard schooners. These vessels, developed in the mid-19th century, were stout and rugged. Additionally,

Centerboarders possessed considerable versatility. Their shallow draft and long straight keel allowed them to rest on a beach between tides to load cargoes...and for repairs. Such a capacity to beach gave them greater ability to get cargoes. And light draft had the added advantage of permitting the schooner to sail in shallow inlets and bays.⁵

Regional variations in the oyster schooners were basically few, though changes in the schooners began to be introduced after 1848, when Chesapeake Bay centerboard schooners "became characterized by exaggeratedly long and pointed cutwaters; this

¹ John M. Kochiss, Oystering from New York to Boston (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1974), pp. 8-14, pass.

² Ibid., p. 48.

³ Ibid., p. xix.

⁴ Ibid., p. 28

⁵ Ibid., pp. 26-127.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

soon became a traditional finish in all the Bay sailing craft...."⁶ Elsewhere, on the other oyster beds,

New Jersey schooners were based upon those of the [Chesapeake] Bay and it was not until after 1900 that they departed much in appearance from the Chesapeake Bay centerboard oyster schooner. In about 1910, stems round in profile came into fashion in the Jersey schooners. The Long Island oyster schooners were also like the Chesapeake Bay and Jersey centerboarders and were basically on the same model, although at times the oyster schooners at the western end of Long Island were much influenced by contemporary schooner yachts, particularly in the 1870s. The Cape Cod oyster schooners were usually keel fishing vessels employed in summer in the mackerel fishery. A number of centerboard schooners were employed...the model being essentially that of the Long Island Sound oyster schooners.⁷

The advantages of the two-masted schooner in the oyster trades were wide decks that provided stability and space to stow large numbers of oysters on deck instead of in the hold. While some larger sloops worked as freighters, their large rigs made them difficult to work. "The equally large or larger two-masted schooners with smaller, handier, easily-managed sails, however, remained the favorite rig until the end of commercial sail."⁸

Changes in the form and lines of the oyster schooners came about in the early 20th century as principles of naval architectural led to finer-lined vessels with an emphasis on better hydrodynamic characteristics. These late, or final form oyster schooners were distinguished from their older, logier predecessors, many of which remained in service, through their ability to efficiently and rapidly dredge under sail. Many of the oyster schooners actively raced each other, culminating in an organized "Great Schooner Race" on Delaware Bay in August 1929. Harold Franklin Turner epitomized the difference between the old and the new oyster schooners that month, writing in Fishing Magazine that

The Delaware Bay oyster schooner fleet provides unquestionably the finest racing material among the sailing vessels of the Atlantic Coast. Nowhere is to be found even a fleet of yachts which can compete in

⁶ Howard I. Chapelle, The National Watercraft Collection (Washington, D.C.: The National Museum of American History, 1960), p. 176.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Kochiss, op.cit., p. 127.

number of entrants of similar classes and seasoned skill of skippers.⁹

CONSTRUCTION AND CAREER OF J. & E. RIGGIN

J. & E. Riggin was laid down and built at Dorchester, New Jersey at Stowaman's Shipyard in 1927 for use as an oyster dredger and freighter.¹⁰ Owned by Charles Riggin, the schooner was named for Riggin's sons, Jacob and Edward. J. & E. Riggin worked the oyster beds of Delaware Bay under sail until 1946, homeported at Dorchester, New Jersey.

J. & E. Riggin gained fame among the oystermen in August 1929. During the only formal schooner race on the bay, Riggin, with owner and master Charles Riggin at the helm, won the event, covering 24 miles in four hours, 38 minutes and 30 seconds. The Bridgeton, New Jersey, Evening News of August 24 noted that "this schooner of about 50 tons outstepped three larger boats of class A, which was open to craft of more than 95 feet, and she did it in an emphatic manner, with her captain at the helm and a crew of twenty-five men."¹¹

Riggin continued under sail until 1946, when a change in the laws of New Jersey allowed oyster dredging under power. That year, Riggin, like many other surviving oyster sloops and freighters, was converted to a motor vessel. She continued to work through the decline of oystering, which was marked by the destruction of many of the fleet in the Great Hurricane of 1938 and the Second World War. The introduction of boom and later hydraulic dredges changed the need for the older style boats after 1950, and despite period "booms," oystering declined because of pollution and decreased consumption. By the early 1970s, the New England oyster fleet was described as consisting of a "small varied assortment of ancient and near ancient craft. No known conventional style oyster boat has been built in the last twenty years."¹² Conventional style boats remaining in service had all been converted to motor vessels, except for the small, sailing skipjacks of Chesapeake Bay, which remain in use harvesting oysters into the 1990s.

The only reason for the survival of Riggin, as well as several other historic 19th and early 20th century schooners, is that they ultimately earned their keep in a new maritime trade. During the Great Depression, scores of old vessels were laid up,

⁹ As cited in Don Rolfs, Under Sail (n.p., n.d.) p. 107.

¹⁰ Annual List of Merchant Vessels of the United States (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1929), entry for J. & E. Riggin.

¹¹ Rolfs, op.cit., pp. 108-109.

¹² Kochiss, op.cit., p. 153.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 11**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

and left to slowly rot in every cove and mudflat along the coast. In 1935, artist Frank Swift, then living at Bucksport, Maine, conceived the idea of saving the rapidly vanishing schooners. While watching a coaster unloading pulpwood at a mill on the banks of the Penobscot River near his home, Swift thought of chartering a schooner for extended passenger cruises. While several vessels, including the schooner Stephen Taber, were available for day-long sails, a prolonged cruise similar to the "dude" ranch experience in the west was a new concept. It was also the first time the concept of an operating, adaptive use of a historic vessel was applied to maritime preservation. Swift's first vessel, the 1881-built schooner Mabel, was chartered in 1936, with a Deer Island skipper as captain and his wife as ship's cook.¹³

At first the concept was slow in catching on, but by 1939, Swift purchased the schooner Annie F. Kimball and began operating her out of Camden, Maine, on six-day cruises at \$32 a head. Around that time, Swift advertised one or two-week cruises:

These schooners are not yachts--just picturesque down-east sailing vessels, clipper-bowed and able, with billowing sails and hempen rigging. Each Monday, from July 4th until September 10th, the Annie Kimball and the Lydia Webster will sail from Camden, Maine for a week's cruise--not to follow an exact itinerary but to use the winds and tides to make the cruise most interesting.¹⁴

Other entrepreneurs and vessels followed Swift's lead, and by the late 1940s several schooners, saved from oblivion, were part of the "Maine Windjammer" fleet, otherwise known as the "dude fleet" or the "head boats."

The trade was declining in the mid-1960s when a new group of entrepreneurs, young men and women who had crewed and skippered the schooners, took over the business. At the same time the old vessels themselves were wearing out, and only a handful were left. In the early days of the trade, with an over-abundance of schooners, Swift and the other owners had usually run a ship hard, stripped and sank her, and bought another. Now, in order to survive as demand increased for the "windjammer experience" in an age of few surviving historic schooners, the young entrepreneurs turned to building new schooners on the lines of the old vessels, with a few modern improvements, and rescuing laid-up or soon to languish schooners, some of them former fishing vessels, for the trade.

¹³ Christina Tree, "Windjammer Days," Historic Preservation, vol. XL, no. 4, July/August 1990, p. 24.

¹⁴ Pamphlet in the collection of Nicholas Dean, Edgecomb, Maine.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 12**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

In 1974, J. & E. Riggin was purchased by David and Susan Allen of Rockland, Maine, and restored to serve in the windjammer fleet after serving as a dragger out of Cape Cod. Riggin joined the fleet, which includes Isaac H. Evans, restored in 1971, and Lewis R. French, restored between 1973 and 1976. To do the work, John Foss and Doug and Linda Lee purchased an old shipyard at the north end of Rockland. Joined by J & E. Riggin, the fleet, collectively run out of the "North End Shipyard" as "Maine Windjammer Cruises," was augmented by the arrival of the Gloucesterman American Eagle, bought and restored by John Foss in 1986 to replace French, which he sold that year to his brother-in-law, Dan Pease.¹⁵

There are now some 15 "windjammers," (seven of them historic vessels) including Isaac H. Evans, operating along the Maine coast. The schooners no longer carry loads of wood or granite, but, as owner/captain Doug Lee remarked, "the only cargo that loads and unloads itself."¹⁶ The windjammers are unique in the nation in their offering of marine recreation. They do not provide "sail training," but instead instill a relaxed sense of the sea and travel under sail, in which the passengers are encouraged, not required, to lend a hand as needed. The North End Shipyard continues to maintain and restore the schooners as needed, and offers its services to other historic vessels on the coast. Thus, skills are preserved along with the historic fabric of the vessels themselves--the vanishing trades of shipwrightery and, in the operation of the schooners, the skills of seamanship.

¹⁵ Tree, op.cit, p. 25.

¹⁶ Nicholas Dean, interview with Capt. Doug Lee, Rockland, Maine, May 1990.

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Footnotes in text.

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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State Agency
- Federal Agency
- Local Government
- University
- Other: Specify Repository: National Maritime Initiative

J. & E. RIGGIN (Schooner)**Page 14**

United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing

A 19 491490 4883580

Verbal Boundary Description:

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

Boundary Justification:

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

11. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title: James P. Delgado, Maritime Historian

Organization: National Park Service

Date: 31 October, 1990

Street & Number: P.O. Box 37127

Telephone: (202) 343-9528

City or Town: Washington

State: DC

ZIP: 20013-7127