Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED 5/15/84
DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
CHESTER A. CONGDON ~~(U.S. Registry #204526)~~

AND/OR COMMON
(Previously SALT LAKE CITY 1907 to 1912)

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
[redacted]

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

X VICINITY OF

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Michigan	26	Keweenaw	083

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
__DISTRICT	X PUBLIC	__OCCUPIED	__AGRICULTURE	__MUSEUM
__BUILDING(S)	__PRIVATE	X UNOCCUPIED	__COMMERCIAL	X PARK
__STRUCTURE	__BOTH	__WORK IN PROGRESS	__EDUCATIONAL	__PRIVATE RESIDENCE
__SITE	**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**	**ACCESSIBLE**	__ENTERTAINMENT	__RELIGIOUS
__OBJECT	__IN PROCESS	X YES: RESTRICTED	__GOVERNMENT	__SCIENTIFIC
Unit within	__BEING CONSIDERED	__YES: UNRESTRICTED	__INDUSTRIAL	__TRANSPORTATION
Thematic Group	N/A	__NO	__MILITARY	X OTHER Sport SCUBA diving by park visitors

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
NPS, Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER
1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN
Omaha

__ VICINITY OF

STATE
Nebraska 68102

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Duluth Customs Office, Registrar of Shipping

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Duluth, Minnesota

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
None (see note)

DATE

__FEDERAL __STATE __COUNTY __LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

NOTE: The shipwreck location is known as a result of informal isolated searches by private individuals and/or by common knowledge of Isle Royale park staff and island inhabitants. No systematic surveys have been conducted.

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
__EXCELLENT	__DETERIORATED	X UNALTERED	X ORIGINAL SITE
X GOOD	__RUINS	__ALTERED	__MOVED DATE_____
__FAIR	__UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Original Description

Hull number 74 was built by the Chicago Steam Boat Company of Chicago, Illinois, and was registered into service under United States number 204526 in 1907. Originally christened Salt Lake City, this vessel was owned by the Home Steam Ship Company and managed by W. A. Hawgood of Cleveland until 1912. She was sold to the Continental Steamship Company of Duluth and in April, 1912, was renamed Chester A. Congdon, after a prominent Duluth mining and real estate millionaire. Continental Steamship Company retained ownership of the vessel until her sinking on a southerly reef of Canoe Rocks on November 8, 1918.

The single screw bulk freighter was 532-feet long, 56.2-feet in beam, 26.5-feet in depth, 4,843 net tons and 6,530 gross tons. From keel to rail she was constructed of steel, her only wooden construction was her ornate birdcage style pilothouse atop wooden crew's quarters on the forecastle and her aft deckhouse. She was open amidships to facilitate loading of her 32 hatches. Her single stack sat aft, atop the stern deckhouse, with fore and mizzen masts completing her upper deckworks.

A triple expansion (23 1/2", 38", 63" diameter cylinders by 42" stroke) steam engine capable of 1,765 hp was powered by two Scotch boilers 14-feet 6-inches in diameter by 11-feet 6-inches long. Both the engine and boilers were built by the American Shipbuilding Company of Cleveland, Ohio.

Present Description

Chester A. Congdon [redacted]. There is no site number currently assigned to this vessel either by the State of Michigan or the Park. Water visibility on the site is variable, averaging 30 to 50 feet.

The vessel lies broken into two major sections [redacted] The bow section, broken vertically aft of the pilothouse, is intact with the pilothouse, deck rail and officers' quarters intact. The bow [redacted] This vessel is penetratable by divers due to its intact condition. The fore mast is still attached and a rope ladder is attached and in a good

state of preservation. The pilothouse has been striped of all machinery, presumably during the salvage efforts in 1918. A portion of the midships is also present [redacted].

The stern and remaining midships sections of the vessel [redacted]. Large portions of the vessel aft to the screw are intact and penetratable.

Post-depositional Impacts: Prior to the storm of November 8, 1918, salvage crews from A. B. Conmee and Empire were able to remove 30,000 bushels of wheat. Forward end equipment and machinery and an additional 50-60,000 bushels of wheat were salvaged after the storm. The captain of Congdon visited the wreck on November 10 and was able to retrieve a number of personal effects from the bow.

Subsequent storms during the winter of 1918 and spring of 1919 finished the job of breaking the vessel apart. Although salvage rights to the vessel were purchased by James Playfair, when the crew arrived at the site in the spring of 1919 to begin operations the vessel had sunk out of sight and was beyond reach.

The National Park Service Submerged Cultural Resources Unit visited the site briefly in June, 1980, and again in June, 1983, to assess it for study as part of the ongoing underwater cultural resource inventory being carried out at Isle Royale. No other known research has been conducted at the site.

Sport diving occurs regularly at the site, with Congdon ranked as the fourth most visited wreck at the island (Stinson 1980:15). It can be reasonably assumed that in the past divers have removed or moved many smaller items from their original location. A complete survey of the vessel has not been completed to determine the extent of damage that has been done as a result of natural and human impacts.

Description of Loss - The Wreck Event

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

Chester A. Congdon, carrying 380,000 bushels of wheat, cleared Fort William (now Thunder Bay), Ontario, at 2:28 am on November 6, 1918, downbound for Port McNicoll, Ontario. Encountering a strong gale after clearing Thunder Cape, Captain C. J. Autterson turned the vessel back at 4 am and ran 7 or 8 miles to more protected waters. The voyage was resumed at 10:15 am although there was some sea running and a persistant heavy fog. At 10:40 am a course was set for Passage Island at a speed of 9 miles per hour. The captain's intention was to run 2 1/2 hours then stop and anchor in deep water if the fog continued. [redacted]. Canadian Towing and Wrecking Company vessels arrived late on the 6th of November or early on the 7th and rescued the crew.

Although badly damaged by the stranding, the vessel could have been released and saved but for a 55 mph southeast gale that set in on November 8. The ship received a pounding from the gale sufficient to break her in two aft of the 6th or 7th hatch.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
__PREHISTORIC	__ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	__COMMUNITY PLANNING	__LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	__RELIGION	
__1400-1499	X ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	__CONSERVATION	__LAW	__SCIENCE	
__1500-1599	__AGRICULTURE	__ECONOMICS	__LITERATURE	X SCULPTURE	
__1600-1699	__ARCHITECTURE	__EDUCATION	__MILITARY	__SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
__1700-1799	__ART	X ENGINEERING	__MUSIC	__THEATER	
__1800-1899	X COMMERCE	__EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	__PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION	
X 1900-	__COMMUNICATIONS	__INDUSTRY	__POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	__OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		__INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1907-November 6, 1918 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Chicago Steam Boat Company, Chicago, Illinois

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Significance Summary

Chester A. Congdon was a bulk freighter used in the grain trade on the Lakes between 1907 and 1918. The vessel is significant because: 1) it is representative of the continuum of steel bulk freighter development and construction on the Great Lakes around the turn of the century; 2) it is an example of a transitional vessel size; 3) study of this vessel is likely to yield significant information on the details of American bulk freighter construction of the period; 4) at the time of her loss it was reported to be the greatest monetary loss from a single shipwreck and the greatest loss in net register tonnage up to 1918; 5) Congdon is one of only two vessels known in her size, class, and tonnage range still available for study in the entire Lake Superior shipwreck population (Heden 1966:60-80); and 6) together with the other bulk freighters in the Isle Royale assemblage she clearly demonstrates the early development of Great Lakes bulk carriers.

Supporting Data

Congdon is significant because it is representative of the continuum of steel bulk freighter development and construction on the Great Lakes at the turn of the century. Spokane (1886) at 310-feet long and a carrying capacity of 3,000 to 3,800 tons was limited to a 14-foot draft by the Welland Canal. By 1895, the first 400-foot bulk freighter was launched, Victory, at a 5,800 ton carrying capacity but still on a 14-foot draft. John W. Gates and James J. Hill were the first 500-foot bulk carriers, launched in 1900. These vessels were capable of carrying 8,200 long tons on the 18-foot maximum draft of the Welland Canal in 1899 (Ericson 1968:18). The 532-foot Congdon, although reaching 10,400 tons carrying capacity, was still limited to an 18-foot draft by the Welland. It was not until after 1930, when the canal was again deepened, that vessels of 22-foot draft could pass through the interconnecting channels and locks. The increases in the size of vessels traveling between the Lakes was tied to major channel, lock and canal improvement; as the size and depth was increased

shipbuilders quickly constructed vessels capable of carrying maximum payloads while still passing through the interconnecting waterways. The growth in bulk freighters between channel depth improvements was directed toward the development of longer vessels with greater carrying capacities; Congdon clearly reflects this pattern of growth. Although a "modern" rivited steel steamer, Congdon also retained some of the traditional elements of earlier vessels with her ornate wooden birdcage style pilothouse. Her fore and mizzen masts were rigged with running lights.

Chester A. Congdon is significant because she is an example of a transitional vessel size which moved from the first 500-foot bulk carriers in 1900 to the first 600-foot vessels by 1906 (Ericson 1968:6). The construction techniques developed on the 400-foot bulk carriers and refined on the 500-footers set the standard for the next class of vessel to appear on the Great Lakes, the 600-foot bulk freighter. These vessels remained the largest vessels on the Lakes for the next 20 years and formed the backbone of the Lake fleets for 35 years (Barry 1973: 173; Ericson 1968:7). Bulk freighter construction changed dramatically with the appearance of the 400-foot Victory which introduced wider spacing of the main deck beams at 8-feet apart (True 1956:8). Although main deck beams with center line hold stanchions were installed for structural reasons, in Victory, neither Victory nor Congdon had an intermediate deck, the cargo being carried entirely on the inner bottom hull. Unlike Victory, Congdon did not have centerline hold stanchions and according to recently discovered construction plans her main deck beams appear to be placed on 12-foot centers; Congdon's hatches measured 9-feet wide. Common bottom hull construction of vessels built between 1882 and 1910 consisted of heavy channels over which were fitted side keelsons, in imitation of wood construction, known as the channel frame system (Great Lakes Register Rules and Regulations, 1908, in True 1956:32). This system remained in general use on Lakes vessels until the advent of longitudinal framing in 1910 (True 1956:32). Chester A Congdon, built in 1907, was constructed using the general channel frame system. Continued study of Congdon is likely to yield significant data on the details of U.S. built bulk freighter construction. Comparative analysis of this vessel with the only slightly smaller and newer Canadian built Emperor may contribute significant information to our understanding of U.S.

versus Canadian shipbuilding development and industry capabilities in the early 1900s.

Congdon is significant in Great Lakes shipping history because at the time of her loss this vessel represented the largest complete loss in registered tonnage to date (10,400 gross tons) and the Lakes' first million dollar wreck (Duluth News Tribune, November 10, 1918). The value of the vessel and cargo lost came to 1.5 million dollars.

The overall number of wrecked bulk carriers has decreased steadily during the first half of this century due to improved safety standards in the shipping industry. Heden has documented the loss of 106 steamers in Lake Superior, of these there are 8 known which are within the 4,000-5,000 net tonnage range of Congdon (Heden 1966:69-80). All of the vessels within the sample are steel bulk freighters, however, of the eight only two are in the 500-foot class, Congdon (532') and Emperor (525'). The other six vessels in the sample range from 420-feet to 451-feet long and are representative of earlier constructon techniques. Congdon and Emperor are significant because they are the only two known 500-foot bulk carriers in Lake Superior which are available for study. Within the Isle Royale assemblage, Congdon is the largest of the bulk freighters and together with Emperor rounds out the picture of bulk freighter construction in the period prior to the standardization of construction techniques represented by the 600-foot class of vessels (Ericson 1968:7).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(see attached sheets)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (see attached sheets)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 91.8

Longitude [redacted]
Latitude [redacted]

UTM REFERENCES

A [redacted]
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [redacted]
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C [redacted]

D [redacted]

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(see attached sheets)

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE
Toni Carrell, Archeologist

ORGANIZATION
National Park Service, Submerged Cultural Resources Unit

DATE
9/83

STREET & NUMBER
1220 South St. Francis

TELEPHONE
(505) 988-6750

CITY OR TOWN
Santa Fe

STATE
New Mexico 87501

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES____ NO____ NONE____

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ____National ____State ____Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

for Jerome B. Stewart DATE 6/12/84

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST: DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

GPO 899-214

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

References

Barry, James D.
1973 Ships of the Great Lakes: 300 Years of Navigation. Howell-North. Berkeley, California.

Ericson, Bernard E.
1962 The Evolution of Ships on the Great Lakes. Part I: Early History. The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers. Niagra.

1968 The Evolution of Ships on the Great Lakes. Part II: Steam and Steel. The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers. Cleveland.

Heden, Karl
1966 Directory of Shipwrecks of the Great Lakes. Bruce Humphries, Boston.

Holden, Thom
1979 "The Stranding and Loss of the Freighter Chester A. Congdon at Isle Royale, Lake Superior in 1918". Unpublished manuscript. On file United States Department of Interior, National Park Service, Southwest Cultural Resources Center, Submerged Cultural Resources Unit, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Stonehouse, Frederick
1977 "The Congdon of Congdon Shoal" in Isle Royale Shipwrecks, 45-50. Avery Color Studios, Au Train, Michigan.

Newspapers:

Daily Times Journal, Ft. William, Ontario; November 11, 1918.

News Chronicle, Port Arthur, Ontario; November 8, 9, 1918; December 13, 1918.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED

Documents:

Annual Report of the Lake Carriers Association, 1918, p. 138-143.

Report of Casualty, U.S. Coast Guard, District 36, Port of Duluth-Superior, December 11, 1918.

Summary of Documents of Enrollment for steamer Salt Lake City (1907). RG-4, NARS, Washington, D.C. Thom Holden, Compiler.

Collections:

Canal Park Visitor Center and Marine Museum, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Great Lakes Ship History Files. Duluth, Minnesota.

Dowling, Rev. Edward J. Vessel Data Sheets, University of Detroit Marine Historical Collection. Detroit, Michigan.

Holden, Thom. Isle Royale and Lake Superior Shipwreck History Collection. Superior, Wisconsin.

Isle Royale National Park. Shipwreck History Files. Houghton, Michigan.

Labadie, C. Patrick. Great Lakes Marine Historical Collection. Duluth, Minnesota.