

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**  
RECEIVED MAY 15 1984  
DATE ENTERED

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

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC  
CUMBERLAND (Canadian Registry)

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Michigan

CODE  
26

COUNTY  
Keweenaw

CODE  
083

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED
- N/A

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: Sport

Unit within  
Thematic Group

**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)  
NPS Midwest Regional Office

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN  
Omaha

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Nebraska 68102

SCUBA diving by  
park visitors

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

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 individual 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   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> GOOD            | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS                   | <input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED              | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____         |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED               |   |   |

---

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

### Original Description

Cumberland was built in 1871 by Melanchthon and Simpson of Port Robinson, Ontario. The Canadian registered vessel, built for Charles Perry and Company, was named after Fred W. Cumberland, general manager of the Northern Railway, a subsidiary of Lake Superior Navigation Company. It was the Lake Superior Navigation Company which operated the vessel between Collingwood, Ontario, on Georgian Bay and the northern Lake Superior ports. Cumberland was 204-feet 5-inches long, 26-feet in beam, with a 10-foot 7-inch depth of hold, and a gross tonnage of 629 (net tonnage 418). From keel to rail she was constructed of wood, as were her cabins and pilothouse. Designed specifically for the passenger trade and supplemental package freight, the side-paddlewheeler was typical of 200-foot lake craft of the late 1840s to the end of the 1880s. She had overhanging guards which ran the full length of the ship and an overhanging main deck supported by triangular struts of iron. Side loading cargo hatches facilitated loading and storage of passenger belongings and miscellaneous package freight.

The vessel's birdcage style pilothouse sat well forward on the uppermost deck; the captain's and some of the crew's quarters were immediately aft of the pilothouse. Two decks of cabins, sitting atop the main deck, contained approximately 60 staterooms, plus a parlor and ladies cabin located aft. Steerage accommodations were located on the main deck.

Cumberland was rigged with one mast, placed immediately aft of the pilothouse. The vessel was powered by a one cylinder vertical beam engine with a 44-inch bore and an 11-foot stroke. This engine, built in 1846 by H. R. Dunham and Company of New York City, was originally placed in Cataract (1846). That vessel was sold and renamed Columbian in 1868 and the engine was rebuilt at the same time. Columbian was sold in 1870 and the 23-year-old engine removed and put into Cumberland in 1871. The engine was placed amidships with her 40-foot high oak A-frame gallows sitting atop the main deck, and her single stack sitting just forward of the engine. The engine remained on the vessel until her loss in 1877. A fire-box boiler, 24-feet 4-inches long and 9-feet 9-inches in diameter, completed Cumberland's power plant.

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Present Description

Cumberland [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Water visibility around the site varies from 15 to 50 feet. There is no site number presently assigned to this vessel either by the Park or the State of Michigan.

The vessel lies in sections [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] contains the major concentration of wreckage. Large portions of the hull bottom, port and starboard hull sides, paddlewheels, boiler, A-frame tops for the engine, and other smaller pieces of wreckage are present on the site which extends for more [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Although the vessel is broken in sections, it is possible to swim under several of the major hull pieces, most of which lie outboard side up. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. The boiler and a possible steam preheater or steam drum, nearby, are in good condition and basically intact. The paddlewheel remains are readily identifiable with several paddlewheel arms and buckets articulated and the wheel flanges nearly complete. Cumberland's wreckage lies adjacent to and in some cases partially buried by wreckage from Henry Chisholm which was lost 21 years later, in 1898, [REDACTED]

Post-depositional Impacts: A severe storm on or about August 6, 1877, caused the vessel to begin breaking up. Several subsequent storms completely destroyed the vessel resulting in it eventually [REDACTED] by September, 1877, the vessel had slipped completely below the surface. During field work conducted in June, 1982, by Submerged Cultural Resources Unit archeologists it was noted that an underwater rock slide and ice scouring may have further damaged the vessel. There are unsubstantiated reports of additional wreckage, attributed to Cumberland, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is a second possible site of Cumberland wreckage. This may actually be

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portions of the old Grace Harbor Lumber Company dock or wreckage of the You Tell, however. Cumberland wreckage was reported to be [REDACTED] (Adams 1909) although this wreckage is more likely to have belonged to Chisholm which was lost in 1898. Another unsubstantiated report was made in the mid-1960s of ribs and planking in the water [REDACTED]

No records have come to light regarding additional historic salvage efforts on the vessel after the unsuccessful attempt by wreckers to relocate Cumberland in September 1877.

The National Park Service's Submerged Cultural Resources Unit underwater archeologists briefly visited the site in June, 1981, (Murphy, Lenihan and Carrell 1982:55-81). A comprehensive examination of the Cumberland/Chisholm site was undertaken during June, 1982, as part of the overall submerged cultural resources inventory currently underway in the Park. A complete base map and thorough photo-documentation of the known wreckage present at the site were completed. The team identified all of the major sections of wreckage present and answered questions regarding the internal support (trussing) system used in Cumberland's construction, the probable paddlewheel configuration and keel construction and design. The Cumberland/Chisholm site has been described by sport divers as a mass of "jumbled timbers." Careful mapping by the archeological team, however, now permits identification of each of the component parts of the two vessels with a high degree of confidence. Cumberland is the 7th (of 10) most frequently visited wrecks at Isle Royale (Stinson 1980:15).

It is highly probable that some smaller items have been removed or moved from their original location on the wreck site as a result of sport scuba visitation. The removal of these materials has not seriously impacted interpretation of the wreck. Unauthorized removal of artifacts from this site has been considerably slowed due to the active cooperation of the charter boat operators at Isle Royale and an increased protection program.

Description of Loss - The Wreck Event

Cumberland arrived on Tuesday, July 24, 1877, at Prince Arthur's Landing (now Thunder Bay) Ontario, after having been delayed for

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several days by a snow storm somewhere on the Northshore between Nipigon Bay and Silver Islet on the Canadian side. Although the vessel took on several feet of water she was able to reach port early on the 24th; she cleared for Duluth later that same day. In spite of clear weather and a modest south-southwest breeze Cumberland was reported to have run aground so hard [REDACTED] "that all the forward half of the vessel [REDACTED] (Duluth Minnesotian, August 4, 1877). It was rumored at the time of stranding that the [REDACTED] and this contributed to the vessel's loss.

Cumberland remained [REDACTED] for several days with wrecking tugs trying unsuccessfully to release her. The sidewheeler Frances Smith took the vessel's crew back to Collingwood, Ontario, arriving on August 6, 1877. Salvage efforts were abandoned on August 6 in the face of a developing storm. By September all signs of the vessel had disappeared and wreckers were unable to relocate her (Duluth Minnesotian, September 8, 1877).

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER                   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE            | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION |
| <input 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 October 1871-July 24, 1877 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Melanhton Simpson, Port Robinson Ontario; R. H. Dunhan and Company, New York (engines)

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

#### Significance Summary

Cumberland was a wooden, side-paddlewheeler used in the Great Lakes passenger trade between 1871 and 1877. The vessel is significant because: 1) it is a representative example of this type of vessel which flourished on the Lakes between 1835 and 1895; 2) study of this vessel is likely to yield significant information, not otherwise obtainable, on the details of wooden side-paddlewheel construction; 3) the vessel is the oldest wreck and the only paddlewheeler in the Isle Royale shipwreck assemblage; and 4) it is the only known remaining example of this type of vessel in her size and class range available for study in the Lake Superior shipwreck population.

#### Supporting Data

Cumberland is significant because it is a representative example of the side-paddlewheel passenger vessel which flourished on the Great Lakes between 1835 and 1895. Great Lakes sidewheelers developed along parallel lines to the Eastern and Western river steamboats but exhibited many regionally adapted characteristics unique to the Lakes vessels. For example, the classic Western riverboats were designed to be very shallow draft, flat bottomed vessels with a boxy bow to meet the demands of a riverine environment (Hunter 1969:65-80). Lakes craft, however, were not as limited by draft considerations and exhibited deeper, displacement hulls and steeper, sharper bows more like Eastern river and marine vessels. The Lakes paddlewheelers, unlike marine vessels, did not have as well a defined keel but were flatter bottomed more similar to the Western steamboats although riding deeper in the water. Like other Great Lakes vessels the pilothouse on the Lakes sidewheeler sat well forward on the uppermost deck. The location of the pilothouse far forward on the vessel is a unique characteristic found only on Great Lakes water craft. Cumberland shared all of these features with her sister ships on the Lakes.

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Sidewheelers continued in use on both the Eastern and Western rivers until the 1860s when the classic sternwheeler appeared and gained rapidly in popularity following the Civil War (Hunter 1949:99). Sternwheelers, however, never made a large impact in the Great Lakes. Instead, the sidewheeler, used primarily in the passenger trade, continued to evolve on the Great Lakes reaching a very high level of passenger accommodation and elegance. These vessels competed with each other in such appointments as marble fountains, stained glass domes, hot and cold running water, ornate bars decorated with rare woods and gold moldings and fine carpets (Barry 1973:79). Cumberland was an excellent example of the uniquely adapted, highly evolved, luxury sidewheeler of her day found on the Great Lakes.

Study of the Cumberland's remains is likely to yield significant information on the details of wooden side-paddlewheel construction. Only rarely were full construction plans made for vessels; local shipbuilders worked from sketches adapting basic concepts to meet the particular requirements of the prospective owners. No plans of Cumberland have come to light. Preliminary examination of the vessel remains have already revealed some unusual construction details. For example, the vessel was constructed with two futtocks per frame in the hull, however there is an unusual spacer between the futtocks; there is no readily apparent reason for such an unusual construction technique and the use of split futtocks is not common to marine or western river vessels. It has been suggested (Murphy, Lenihan and Carrell 1982:62) that the split futtocks may have been an experimental design produced by the builders Melancthon Simpson for Cumberland. Additional study of Cumberland and other Melancthon Simpson built vessels may lead to a better understanding of this particular construction technique.

Cumberland is significant within the Isle Royale shipwreck assemblage as it is the oldest vessel presently known within the park, it is the only one which had a vertical beam engine and a firebox boiler and it is the only side-paddlewheeler. There are five known shipwrecks in Lake Superior in the same net tonnage range (300-500NT) as Cumberland (418 net tons). Of these vessels two were package freighters, one a tug, one a bulk freighter and one a passenger sidewheeler, Cumberland. Cumberland is the only

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known remaining example of her size and class of vessel available  
for study in Lake Superior (Heden 1966:69-80).



# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(see attached sheets)

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA (see attached sheets)

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 206.6

Latitude [REDACTED]  
Longitude [REDACTED]

UTM REFERENCES

A [REDACTED]  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [REDACTED]  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C [REDACTED]

D [REDACTED]

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

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

*Therese D. Stewart*

DATE 6/12/84

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Newspapers:

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