

CT-793

Leatherbury sailing skiff

Solomons, Maryland

This vessel is a 19'8" long V-bottomed, deadrise skiff built by Captain Charles Edward Leatherbury on the West River, probably c. 1930. The skiff, typical of Leatherbury's work, is on display at the Calvert Marine Museum. The vessel gains its significance for being an example of an important indigenous Bay craft--the V-bottomed, deadrise skiff that developed in the 19th century for crabbing, fishing, and oystering. It is of special interest for having been built by a well-known late 19th, early 20th century local boatbuilder and for being in an excellent state of preservation, virtually unaltered. The skiff was probably used as a part of the charter business that Leatherbury ran on the West River, renting skiffs such as this to pleasure sailors and crabbers.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. CT-793

Magi No. 0507935833

DOE yes no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic

and/or common Bateau - Leatherbury sailing skiff CMM 76-381

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication

city, town Solomons _____ vicinity of _____ congressional district _____

state Maryland _____ county Calvert _____

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input 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 Calvert Marine Museum

street & number _____ telephone no.: 326-3719

city, town Solomons _____ state and zip code Maryland 20688

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. _____ liber _____

street & number _____ folio _____

city, town _____ state _____

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title _____

date _____ federal state county local

depository for survey records _____

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Survey No. CT-793

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

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

This boat is a V-bottomed or deadrise centerboard sailing skiff with a catboat rig-- a single mast and sail set well up in the bow. Built by Captain Charles Edward "Ed" Leatherbury (1863-1952), probably on the West River at Galesville, Maryland, the skiff is typical of Leatherbury's work. She measures 19'8" long, with a beam of 7'2" and a depth of 1'8". The stem is curved and the transom stern is raking. The wooden boat is painted white with black trim on the rubrail. It is on display at the Calvert Marine Museum at Solomons, Maryland.

The skiff was built using cross-planked construction methods, like most of the Chesapeake deadrise skiffs. The cross-planked bottom is secured to a full-length plank keel, reinforced with "shoes" on the interior of the hull. The planks are fastened to stringers or chine-liners at the chine. There is vertical staving at the bow. At the transom, raked about 15° aft, the bottom planks are "tucked" up above the waterline, where they meet the transom and sides. A rudder is hung outboard on pintles, with the tiller led in over the stern.

The boat is half-decked, with washboards fairing into the foredeck, which is strip-planked with inch-wide planks and a wide central plank serving as a strongback supporting the mast. The centerboard trunk is centered on the plank keel, with wide floorboards set between the trunk and the chine-liners. The interior is open aft of the foredeck, except for stern sheets and washboards.

The sailing rig is a single, unstayed, plumb-set mast, fitted with an aluminum sail slide, and a single dacron sail laced to the boom, which is jawed to the mast. For display purposes, the mast has been cut down. The sail is displayed, furled, along with the boat.

Some repairs were undertaken when the boat was donated to the Museum, but she is essentially unaltered. Bottom boards were re-nailed and the rudder repaired. The boat was re-painted white, with black trim on the half-round rubrail, green interior, and red copper paint on the floorboards and below the waterline.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. CT-793

Howard Chapelle, Chesapeake Bay Crabbing Skiffs (St. Michaels: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, n.d.)

Howard I. Chapelle, American Small Sailing Craft (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1951)

See also, plans by W. Hall at Calvert Marine Museum

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty/ M.E. Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society date 5/84

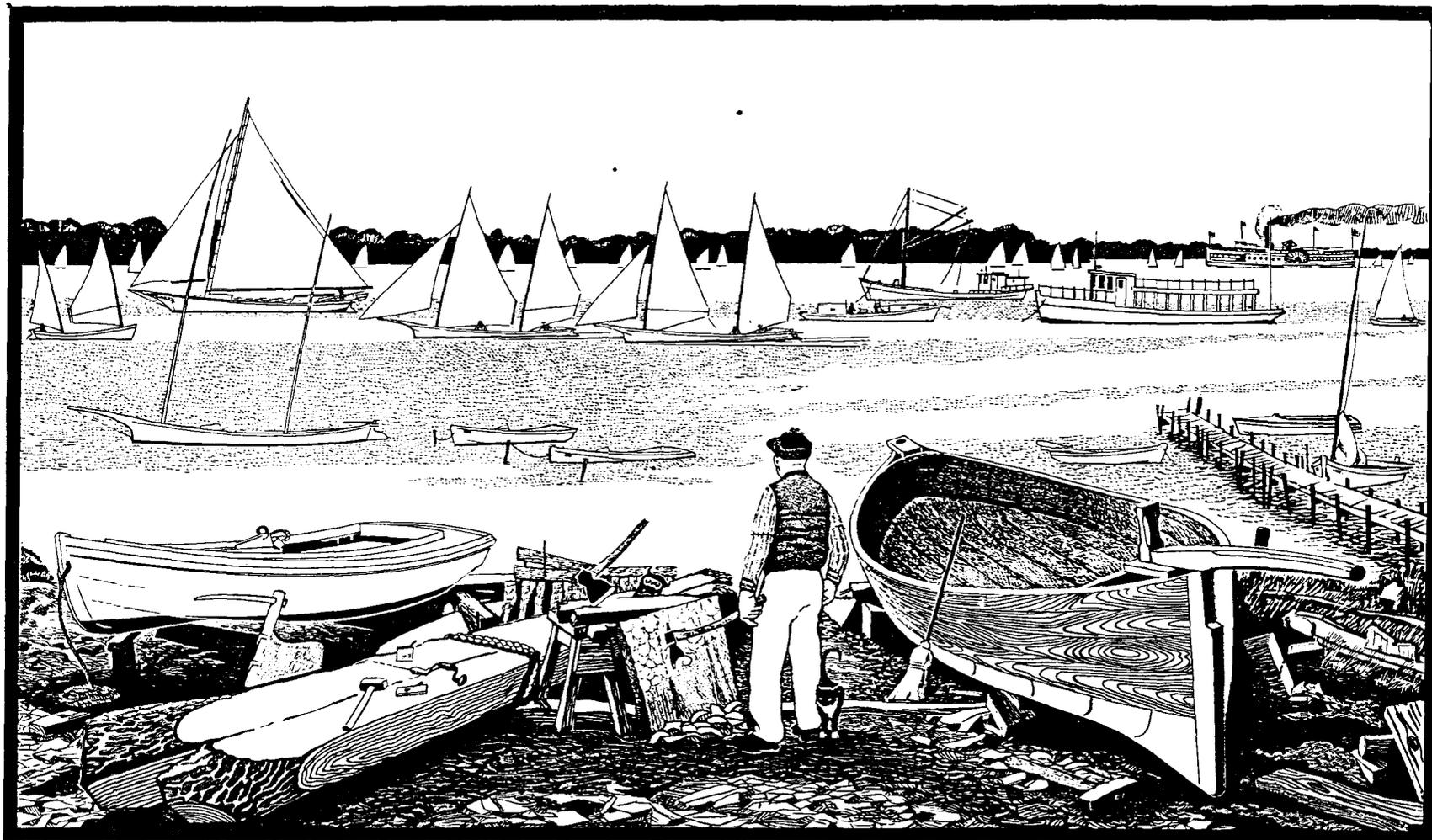
street & number 201 W. Monument St. telephone 685-3750

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
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438



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CAPTAIN ED LEATHERBURY, BOAT BUILDER



CHARLES EDWARD LEATHERBURY, 2ND SON OF KYCHEL DEALE AND CHARLES PURNELL LEATHERBURY, WAS BORN IN SHADY SIDE, MARYLAND JULY 5, 1863. HE HAD 4 BROTHERS; JOHN, WILLIAM, FRANK, AND ROBERT MURRAY, AND ONE HALF SISTER, JENNY, AND ONE HALF BROTHER, TAYLOR.

"CAPTAIN ED" BECAME A BOAT BUILDER OF NOTE AT HIS HOME NEAR THE STEAMBOAT LANDING ON THE WEST RIVER. SCHOOLED IN SHADY SIDE, HE LEARNED CARPENTRY AND HOUSE BUILDING FROM HIS FATHER.

STILL IN HIS TEENS, HE SIGNED ABOARD A BAY SCHOONER HAULING FREIGHT ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, IN ABOUT 1880 HE WAS LURED TO THE EXCITEMENT OF THE STEAMBOAT. HE ROSE TO BE "MASTER OF BAY STEAMERS" ON THE BAY LINE TO NORFOLK.

SOMETIME LATER HE PAID A HIGH PRICE FOR A BUGEYE AND EARNED ITS COST EACH YEAR BUYING OYSTERS AND RUNNING THEM TO MARKET IN BALTIMORE. THIS SEEMS TO HAVE SET THE PATTERN, FOR FROM THEN ON, EXCEPT FOR A HITCH IN THE NAVY, HE BUILT BOATS IN THE MORNING AND BOUGHT OYSTERS IN THE AFTERNOON.

MARRIED TO LILLY HARTOE IN 1886, THE PAIR HAD 3 CHILDREN, PURNELL, HELEN, AND MACK.

THIS DRAWING SHOWS A HANDSOME 54 YEAR OLD NAVY MAN WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR I ABOARD A MINE SWEEPER IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

CAPTAIN ED TOOK PRIDE ON BEING UP WITH THE TIMES AND WAS ONE OF THE FIRST IN THE AREA TO HAVE AN AUTOMOBILE, A BUICK, AND ELECTRIC LIGHTS IN HIS HOME, COMPLETE WITH HIS OWN GENERATOR.

APPARENTLY, CAPTAIN ED HAD BEEN BUILDING LOG CANOES FOR SOME TIME AND NO ONE REMEMBERS HIM USING PLANS. HE BUILT THEM, HE SAID, "BY RACK OF EYE," USING ADZE, BROAD AXE, HAND SAW, BRACE AND BIT, DRAW KNIFE, AND AN ASSORTMENT OF PLANES.

HE TOOK PASSENGERS TO ANNAPOLIS ON HIS MOTOR BOAT "WEST RIVER" AND WHEN IMPROVED ROADS AND BETTER LAND TRANSPORTATION CUT INTO THIS BUSINESS HE REMOVED THE BOAT'S LARGE CABIN AND SHE "BOUGHT OYSTERS."

THE DART WAS HIS LAST CANOE, THE 26TH HE THOUGHT. NINE STRAIGHT LOGS WERE BOLTED TOGETHER AND SHAPED UP TO THE WATER LINE. THEN NATURALLY CURVED WING CHUNKS OR RISERS WERE ADDED UP TO THE DECKING WHICH WAS INSTALLED OVER "NATURAL KNEE" BRACES. THE LOG CANOE'S LOVELY, GRACEFUL LINES AND STIRRING HIGH PERFORMANCE HAVE ENDEARED THEM TO THE FEW LUCKY SAILORS WHO HAVE HAD THE CHANCE TO SAIL ON THEM.

BESIDE THE 26 CANOES HE BUILT 20 OR 30 SKIPJACKS, AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF DEADRISE FISHING BOATS LIKE THE 43 FT. "MILDRED G", A BROGAN NAMED "SNAPPER", ROW BOATS BY THE SCORE, AND A CLOTILLA OF "BATEAUS" THE 15 OR 20 FT. LONG, CAT-BOAT RIGGED SAILING SKIFFS THAT HE MAINTAINED TO RENT TO GREENHORN SAILORS ON THE WEST RIVER. SOME OF THESE BOATS CAN STILL BE SEEN HERE ABOUTS. HIS CANOE THE "FLY" IS IN THE MARINERS MUSEUM AT MISTIC CONNECTICUT AND ONE OF HIS BATEAUS IS DISPLAYED AT THE CHESAPEAKE BAY MARITIME MUSEUM AT ST. MICHAELS, MARYLAND.

CAPTAIN ED LEFT US IN APRIL 1952 - WE LOVE THE MEMORY OF OUR GREAT UNCLE ED - A SPECIAL MAN.





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Leatherbury Skiff
Solomons, Md

bow

M.C. Wootton 4/84



CT-793

Leatherbury Skiff
Solomons, Md

starboard bow
M. C. Wootton 4/84

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