

Preface

The remains of the Norwegian ship *Catharine* were archaeologically documented during the summer of 1998 in the Gulf of Mexico, off Pensacola Beach, Florida. After beginning the study of *Catharine*, I began to realize that the shipwreck was only one link in a chain of events that connected a single site to local, regional, and transatlantic history. Originally christened as *Eliza* in 1870, the ship sailed from its building site in St. John, New Brunswick, to Liverpool, England, where she was quickly sold to British owners and renamed *Carnarvonshire*. Documents indicate that the ship served 20 years in the British Merchant Marine and was eventually sold to Norwegian owners, who she served for four years. Drawn to Pensacola by its growing lumber industry, the newly named *Catharine* attempted to make the pass and grounded on August 7, 1894.

Historical archaeologists are in a unique position in that they have the ability to analyze together historical documents and archaeological data in order to generate hypotheses and draw conclusions. I was fortunate enough to be able to track down much of the history of *Catharine*, from its keel being laid through its wrecking and subsequent salvage. What emerged was not only a vessel with a long and varied history of her own, but one directly linked to the economic, social, and political environments in which the ship was built and employed. This study therefore attempts to utilize the detailed archaeological and historical study of one ship and its demise to gain insight into the broader historical and cultural milieu of 19th-century Norwegian ships and their connection to Norwegian maritime economics.

It has been the fault of shipwreck archaeologists in the past to focus only on the shipwreck and the wrecking event itself. If we as archaeologists seek the regularities of cultural practices, then we must try to understand the reasons behind the sinking and the pre- and postdepositional factors that led to the remains we are studying.

Underwater archaeologist Larry Murphy has noted that often “the ship will show material evidence of structural changes, repairs and alterations, and multiple use, sometimes in different social groups, during its period of operation” (1983). Shipwrecks should not be seen as, “synchronous snapshots frozen in time”; they are, as any archaeological site, part of a culture history that must be put into perspective in order to be fully understood.

Primary sources consulted for this research include ship’s registration information documented in *The Saint John Shipping Register*, *Lloyd’s Register of British and Foreign Shipping*, *Record of American and Foreign Shipping*, and *Det Norske Veritas* (The Norwegian Register). Vessels are classified in ship’s registries for insurance purposes, built to known classification rules, and inspected to conform to these rules. Ship’s registers allow for the tracing of a vessel from its building through its final disposition and provide information such as overall length, breadth and depth of hold, number of decks, building materials used, dates of repairs, and changes of ownership.

United Kingdom Board of Trade crew agreements were also consulted and provide dates and crew information for every voyage between 1870–1890. These agreements were worked out in advance between the shipmaster and his crew and provide information such as dates and times of departures, destinations, and pay and ration schedules for the crewmen. Historical photographs of the vessel and wrecking incident were also analyzed. Oral interviews were conducted with descendants of the historical Norwegian community. In addition, census records and family papers were used to further document Pensacola’s Norwegian community. Finally, United States Life Saving Service records and contemporary newspaper accounts were invaluable in documenting the grounding of *Catharine* and its final days on the beach.

Secondary sources varied from general histories of Canadian shipbuilding, British and Norwegian shipping, and Pensacola history to detailed 19th-century ship construction manuals and specific Norwegian community studies. Esther Clarke Wright’s *Saint John’s Ships and Their Builders*, and Frederick William Wallace’s *Wooden Ships and Iron Men* and *Record of Canadian Shipping* all provide an excellent overview of St. John shipbuilding and Canadian shipping. Bård Kollveit provides a comprehensive overview of Norwegian shipping in *Tradewinds: A History of Norwegian Shipping*, while Knut Gjerset’s study *Norwegian*

Sailors in American Waters focuses on Norwegian shipping in and around North America's East and Gulf Coasts. Wooden shipbuilding and the development of sailing vessels throughout the world are detailed in Basil Greenhill's *Evolution of the Wooden Ship* and Charles Desmond's *Wooden Shipbuilding*. The history of Pensacola during this period is covered by James McGovern's *The Emergence of a City in the Modern South: Pensacola 1900–1945*. David Mauk's *The Colony That Rose from the Sea: Norwegian Maritime Migration and Community in Brooklyn, 1850–1910* and Odd Lovoll's *A Century of Urban Life: The Norwegians in Chicago Before 1930* provide excellent models to follow for Norwegian community studies.

Comparative Norwegian shipwrecks throughout the world were analyzed using a variety of site reports, field season reports, and individual shipwreck evaluations, including Florida State University's *Dog Island Shipwreck Survey 1999: Report of Historical and Archaeological Investigations*, Don Morris and James Lima's *Channel Islands National Park and Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Submerged Cultural Resources Assessment*, Larry Murphy's *Dry Tortugas National Park Submerged Cultural Resources Assessment*, The Western Australia Maritime Museum's Field Expedition Reports for the *Dato*, and the *Gudrun* and the Groupe de Recherche en Archéologie Navale (GRAN) Martinique report on the *Cato*.

By viewing *Catharine* contextually, this research not only focuses on the history and archaeology of a single ship but also expands in Chapter 1 to encompass Canadian shipbuilding and British ownership. Chapter 2 details the Norwegian ownership and Norway's reliance on secondhand sailing ships to dominate ship traffic. Chapter 3 discusses Pensacola's rise as a lumber port, Norwegian shipping within Pensacola, and Pensacola's historical Norwegian community as a whole. Chapter 4 focuses on the 1998 archaeological investigations performed at the site of *Catharine*, including previous research, methodology, and fieldwork. Chapter 5 details the analysis of *Catharine*'s artifact assemblage. Chapter 6, the final chapter, presents the integration of the history and archaeology, details other Norwegian shipwrecks around the world as a basis for comparison, describes the significance of the site within local history, and offers suggestions for other researchers.

This study should be considered as a jumping-off point for additional research, consideration, and expansion of other 19th-century

Norwegian ships. Research designs can be designed to take into account the history of the vessel if it is known and questions can be asked of the remains that may not have been thought of before. This utilization of two independent data sets, archaeology, and documents, to form and test new hypotheses is what makes historical archaeology unique and a whole lot of fun.

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