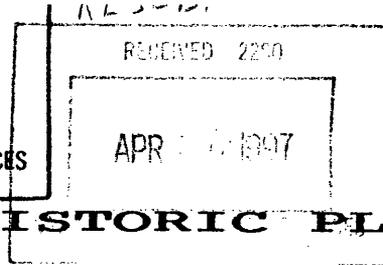
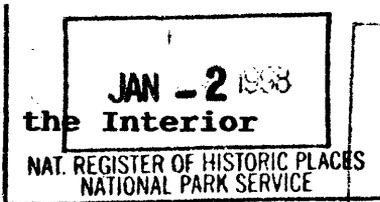


522

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name S.S. William Lawrence Shipwreck (38BU709)

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number _____ not for publication _____
city or town Hilton Head Island vicinity X
state South Carolina code SC county Beaufort code 013 zip code _____

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant X nationally _____ statewide _____ locally.
(____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mary W. Edmonds 4/23/97
Signature of certifying official Date

Mary W. Edmonds, Deputy SHPO, S.C. Department of Archives & History, Columbia, S.C.
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria.
(____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register _____
See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register _____
See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register _____
- removed from the National Register _____
- other (explain): _____

Barbara Zell 2/10/98

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	objects
		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: TRANSPORTATION

Sub: Water-Related

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: VACANT/NOT IN USE

Sub: _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)
N/A

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation _____
roof _____
walls _____
other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

ARCHAEOLOGY

ENGINEERING

Significant Dates

1869

1899

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Euro-American

Architect/Builder

Period of Significance

1869-1899

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property [REDACTED]

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	___	_____	_____	3	___	_____
2	___	_____	_____	4	___	_____
	___	See continuation sheet.				

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lynn Harris
organization S.C. Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology date 3 May 1995
street & number 1321 Pendleton Street telephone (803) 762-6105
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29208

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name State of South Carolina, c/o Attorney General Charles Condon
street & number Rembert C. Dennis Office Building, PO Box 11549 telephone (803) 734-3970
city or town Columbia state SC zip code 29211

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 7 Page 5

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

SITE DESCRIPTION

The iron superstructure of the ship

[REDACTED] The bow area is better preserved than the stern and [REDACTED]. The stern section consists of disarticulated components, including the propeller and rudder skeg. Both the boiler and boiler tube are present and in good condition. 5

In the bow, supporting deck beams provide essential integrity for the hull and protect the cargo which appears to be primarily stowed in the forward section. Exposed artifacts recovered included South Carolina Dispensary bottles, perfume, relish and ketchup bottles, toys, stockings and other fragile organic sundries. Some of the forward deckbeams have been torn apart by irresponsible divers attempting to gain access to the interior and retrieve cargo items. This has exposed certain areas of the interior to the ravages of the tidal environment. It seems apparent that most of the glassware was stowed above softer fabric items. Divers collecting this glassware have further exposed the more fragile fabric, making these items particularly vulnerable to the environment.

There is an abundance of marine life on the site. Soft corals and sponges cover the iron making it impossible to distinguish construction features such as rivetting. Fish species observed on the site include tontate, black seabass, rock seabass, angel fish, sheepshead, and butterfly fish. High concentrations of jellyfish make diving a hazardous experience.

HULL STRUCTURE

The extant hull structure reveals a chicken-beak bow design and transom stern. Recognizable features in the bow include the anchor chain, fuel tank filling port, windlass, galley ventilator, forward companionway, breasthook, shelf, chain tube, pawl bit, and mast hole (see accompanying field drawing). The propeller lies on the port side of the stern area. It appears to be still attached to a section of the aft hull structure which is lying on the seabed with the outer hull bottom facing up. This unusual orientation suggests that stresses and strains placed on the propeller shaft during the bad sea conditions at the time of the wreck resulted in snapping the shaft and thereby contributing to the strange positioning of these components. The propeller is an interesting early design with virtually no pitch. It bears more resemblance to a huge modern-day ceiling fan than a propeller (see accompanying field drawing).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section 8 Page 6

S.S. William Lawrence

name of property

Beaufort County, South Carolina

county and State

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The shipwreck of the SS William Lawrence (1869) is of local, state, and national historical significance. The hull structure of the wreck and its well-preserved cargo contents yield information about nineteenth century technology, transportation, and commerce. The vessel incorporates milestone features of iron shipbuilding in the United States and Southern commercial consumption patterns.

The Lawrence is eligible under Criterion A for its association with the broad patterns of our history, under Criterion C as embodying characteristics of a type, period, and method of construction, and under Criterion D for its potential to yield information important to history.

TECHNOLOGY AND TRANSPORTATION

The ship was built by the Atlantic Ironworks in Boston in 1869. She was ordered by the Merchants and Miners Transportation Line, whose passenger and cargo steamers had been running up and down the East Coast since 1852. In February 1869, the Transportation Company commissioned the Atlantic Iron Works to build the SS William Lawrence, which was one of the notable iron vessels built by the shipyard. The SS William Lawrence was the first to be equipped with a surface condenser and the company's first iron screw propeller steamer.¹

The Atlantic Ironworks was one of the principal iron shipbuilding yards in the country during the latter half of the 1800s. Other ships built by the Atlantic Ironworks included some for Russian and Chinese waters: the Kilauea, for the Sandwich Islands; and the Pembroke for American owners. During the Civil War, the Company produced several of the monitor-class vessels for the United States Navy. Other vessels built by Company included tugs, ferries and lighters for the port of Boston and components such as turrents for several iron clad ships and engines for American frigates.²

The Civil War had in many respects been disastrous to shipping and shipbuilding industries. In one aspect, however, it was advantageous: the iron-clad warships produced during the war did much to stimulate the rolling of iron plates, the development of tools to work them and the education of workmen in their fabrication. Thus, much wider use of this material for shipbuilding became possible. The SS William Lawrence is an excellent national example of the small iron screw steamer of the early postwar period.³

The SS William Lawrence was a iron steamship still retaining a small sailing rig as an auxilliary means of propulsion. The vessel was 207.8 feet in length with a 25.1 foot beam. The gross tonnage was 1,049 and the net register of 576 tons. The hold was 20 feet in depth and the hull shape is referred to as a chicken-beak bow design.⁴

¹Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, Tales of the Coast and a Brief History of the Merchants and Miners Company (Baltimore: Merchants and Miners Transportation Company, 1927), pp. 1-5.

²M.F. Sweetser, King's Handbook of Boston Harbor (Boston: Kings Publishing Company, 1882).

³Cedric R. Nevitt, "American Merchant Steamships," The Society of Naval Engineers and Marine Architects Transactions 1893-1943 (New York: Society of Naval Architects, 1945), p. 65.

⁴Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 7

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

The use of iron in shipbuilding, although introduced in the 1820s and 30s, only became widespread in late nineteenth century at the time the Lawrence was built. The science of engineering had yet to perfect a method of bending iron to a desired shape. The only methods available at the beginning of the nineteenth century were casting in a mould or working when red hot by hammering. These methods frequently led to fractures because of the uneven quality of the iron. There was no knowledge as yet of any means to prevent rusting, which was accelerated by contact with seawater. It was quickly discovered that encrustation of the bottom by barnacles and weed occurred considerably faster on an iron hull than a wooden one. There was also the effect of the iron hull on the magnetic compass. A great mass of hull iron was certain to throw a compass out, and yet there was insufficient scientific knowledge at the time of the behaviour of compasses to provide an antidote.⁵

Two landmark historical commercial ships designed by the famous Isambard Kingdom Brunel in England built wholly of iron were the Great Britain (1843) and the Great Eastern (1858). The Great Britain was the first iron vessel with a propeller of any great size to cross the Atlantic. Several features of her construction became the pattern for future shipbuilding in iron, including the division of her hull by watertight bulkheads and the absence of an external keel.

The Great Eastern was a much larger vessel than the Great Britain and incurred many financial and practical problems during the building process. Even during the Atlantic crossing the ship was a commercial failure and she was eventually taken out of commission. Despite these problems, her construction introduced the principle of the cellular double bottom, and she was the first ship to fit a steering engine, at the time a novel means of overcoming the pressure of water on the rudder, now a universal feature in ships of all sizes. Most importantly, she was the first large ship whose underwater shape was designed according to the principles of hydrodynamics.⁶

The Lawrence had a single expansion steam engine, a surface condenser and a screw propeller. The top speed of the vessel was 12 knots.⁷ Built in 1869, the Lawrence is an example of a nineteenth century vessel representing a transitional stage in steamboat technology. Steam was used in these vessels almost entirely as an auxiliary means of propulsion, to keep a ship moving when there was no wind to fill the sails.⁸ The Lawrence shipwreck has the potential to provide unique historical information through archaeological documentation of the mechanical abilities of these often experimental engines, particularly the use of the screw propeller.

Since the inception of screw propulsion in the 1840s, a constant effort has been made to improve the performance of marine propellers. These problems have been addressed by naval architects by: mathematical calculations of pitch of blades, number of blades, and thickness of the blades towards the propeller hub. Dual propulsion by sail and steam, as characterized by the Lawrence, was somewhat inflexible. Favorable or adverse winds affected the revolution of the screw, sometimes causing overspeeding of the engine,

⁵Peter Kemp, The History of Ships (London: Orbis Publishing, 1978), pp. 152-53.

⁶Ibid., pp. 154, 155, 169.

⁷Nevitt, p. 65.

⁸Kemp, p. 147.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 8

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

especially in the case of a sudden squall. Therefore, it was considered desirable by some designers and ship operators to vary the pitch to suit these conditions and to feather the propeller blades. Thus the controllable pitch propeller was developed.⁹

These controllable-pitch developments languished in the latter decades of the nineteenth century at the time the Lawrence was built and used, until the development of the steam turbine was applied successfully to the navigation of ships in 1892. This turbine, an irreversable mechanism, gave new impetus to controllable pitch developments. By rotating the propeller blades to reverse pitch, the full available power of the ahead turbine could be applied for stopping and reversing.¹⁰ The mechanical problems that the Lawrence was experiencing shortly before its wreck are very likely to have been associated with propeller malfunctioning as a result of these early design disadvantages enhanced by the stormy, squally sea conditions at the time.¹¹ Other common problems encountered with propulsion systems throughout the nineteenth century included drag and cavitation of the propeller, hull vibration, vibration in the machine room, steam piping, and condenser turbines--having an effect of the life of the machinery, and increased wear on the inflexible couplings. Longitudinal vibrations caused by propeller drives have always existed, but only recently received attention in twentieth century vessels of high power such as the USS North Carolina, USS South Dakota, and USS Midway.¹²

To date, the only published archaeological project that has been conducted on a commercial steam vessel with a propeller is that of the Indiana, built in 1848, and lost in Lake Superior in Michigan. This wreck was recorded by the Smithsonian Institution in the 1970s and declared eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.¹³ The Lawrence is a later model designed for offshore coastal voyages, instead of inland waters, and could provide a useful environmentally functional and typological comparative study.

The Bertrand, a paddlewheel vessel, is probably the best example of archaeological documentation of either the eastern or western type of inland steamer. Built in 1865, three years earlier than the Lawrence, the steamboat carried a cargo very similar in composition to that of the Lawrence. Archaeologists documented the hull structure which yielded specialized data about the construction of steamboats used on the upper Missouri River. It also provided new insights into the stowage methods for cargo and the types of goods utilized by the mid-nineteenth century economy.¹⁴ Archaeologists have traditionally devoted more attention to iron-hulled steamships of the Civil War such as

⁹J.G. Hill, "The Design of Propellers," The Society of Naval Engineers and Marine Architects Transactions 57 (1946), 143-192.

¹⁰Lewis A. Rupp, "Controllable-Pitch Propellers," The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers 56 (1948), 272-358.

¹¹Savannah Morning News, 15 February 1899.

¹²J.R. Kane and R.J. McGoldrick, "Longitudinal Vibrations of Marine Propulsion - Shafting Systems," The Society of Naval Engineers and Marine Architects Transactions 56 (1948), 193-252.

¹³P.F. Johnston and D.S. Robinson, "The Wreck of the 1848 Propeller Indiana: Interim Report," The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology 22 (August 1993), 219-236.

¹⁴J.E. Petsche, The Steamboat Bertrand: History, Excavation and Architecture (Washington DC:: National Park Service Publications, 1974).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 9

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

the Iron Age, John F. Winslow and the Monitor.¹⁵ The construction plans, engine trials and other pertinent historic data about these vessels are more frequently available through naval records than those of commercial ships. The North Carolina State Underwater Archaeology Unit in Kure Beach has in fact nominated a Cape Fear Civil War Period Shipwrecks District which contains 20 wrecks including 4 Union vessels, 15 steamers and one sailing blockade runner.¹⁶

The attention devoted to steamboats by archaeologists, historians and preservationists in other parts of the United States highlights the importance of nominating the SS William Lawrence to the National Register. It is apparent that this particular ship fills an important technological gap in the national archaeological and historical record. The Lawrence's design incorporates all these milestone features of iron shipbuilding and is a example of a success story in commercial iron shipbuilding in the United States. In this respect, the ship's hull and machinery embody characteristics of a type, period and method of construction (Criterion C) and is likely to yield information important to history (Criterion D).¹⁷

COMMERCE

The Merchants and Miners Transportation Company was involved primarily in shipping water hides from leather tanneries in Baltimore, mine products and various raw materials from the manufacturing plants of New England; and to bring back from Boston the finished products. These products, particularly shoes and clothing, were absorbed by the southern markets in large quantities.¹⁸

Preliminary archaeological investigations on the SS William Lawrence in 1990 by the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology (SCIAA) indicate that the vessel was carrying a cargo of merchandize containing a high volume of leather shoes, rolls of fabric and a variety of clothing items. The cargo also included quantities of glassware and containers still filled with medicines, pickles, and preserves. Goods such as toys, identical dolls, ornaments sets, artwork and comic books form an important component of the cargo.¹⁹ These items reflect the formative years of commercial consumption in the

¹⁵Gordon Watts, "The Civil War at Sea: Dawn of an Age of Iron and Engineering," in George Bass, ed., Ships and Shipwrecks of the Americas: A History based on Underwater Archaeology (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1988), pp. 207-225.

¹⁶Mark Wilde-Ramsing, "National Register Districts as a Management Tool for Underwater Resources," ed. Paul F. Johnston, Proceedings of the Sixteenth Conference on Underwater Archaeology No. 4 (1985): pp. 130-133 and Gordon Watts, "Towards Establishing Research and Significant Criteria for Civil War Shipwreck Resources," Ibid., pp 133-137.

¹⁷James Delgado, "Nominating Historic Vessels and Shipwrecks to the National Register of Historic Places," National Register Bulletin 20 (1985).

¹⁸William B. Taylor, "A Brief History of the Merchants and Miners Transportation Company," Journal of the Steamship Historical Society of America 38 (June 1951), 1-3.

¹⁹19 State Site Inventory File for SS William Lawrence (38BU709) and Slide Catalog of the Underwater Archaeology Division, South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, S.C.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 10

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

South and bulk manufacture of luxury goods in the North which started taking place in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The cargo of the Lawrence can be compared to that of another commercial steamboat river wreck investigated by SCIAA, the SS Robert Martin lost on the Pee Dee River at Cheraw, dating to the mid-1800s. The Robert Martin carried essential supplies such as hardware, building supplies and crockery.²⁰ The Lawrence carried non-essentials, representing economic trends on the eastern seaboard in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. These trends included, first, an increase in the per capita income of the population, and second, decreased working hours and a related increase in leisure time to enjoy these items. The presence of bottled pickles and preserves on the shipwreck site is also typical of the late nineteenth century when there was a growing demand for out-of-season vegetables, as well as concerns about the adverse effects of fresh fruit and vegetables on health.²¹

Each bottle of pickles recovered by divers from the Lawrence contains vegetable items which are carefully arranged, colorful and visually appealing. In every receptacle the pattern is duplicated--the cauliflower heads in the center, dills alongside and carrots at the top. This apparent concern with the aesthetics of these products substantiates the presence of a consumer marketing strategy designed to make the preserves look attractive to the potential buyers. Newspapers of this time contain numerous advertisement listing pickles and preserves indicating that it was a competitive market in the South.²²

Many of the medicine bottles, like the pickle bottles, still contained substances. The contents of a bottle labelled "Dr. De Witt's Liver Blood and Kidney Cure" was analyzed by SCIAA Conservation Laboratory. The mixture was demonstrated to be very high in alcoholic content. DeWitt's International Corporation is now Church and Dwight of Greenville, South Carolina. They no longer make analgesics, but instead dental care products for Arm and Hammer.²³

Glassware historically associated with the South Carolina Dispensary System was also found aboard the wreck. From 1893 to 1907, South Carolina bottled and sold all liquor in the state as part of the pre-prohibition era attempts to limit alcoholic consumption. This system was the brainchild of Governor Benjamin Ryan "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman, one of South Carolina's most illustrious and controversial governors. South Carolina Dispensary bottles were manufactured in states such as Maryland, New York and Pennsylvania. Cargoes of bottles were brought ships to be filled at Dispensary warehouses around South Carolina. The empty bottles aboard the Lawrence were evidently being shipped to the port of

²⁰Lynn Harris, "The SS Robert Martin: A Preliminary Historical and Archaeological Investigation," Proceedings of the Conference on Underwater Archaeology (1990), 153-155.

²¹Alice Ross, "Health and Diet in 19th-Century America: A Food Historian's Point of View," Health Sanitation and Foodways in Historical Archaeology, Historical Archaeology 27:2 (1993), 42-56.

²²Olive M. Jones, "Commercial Foods," Health, Sanitation and Foodways, 25-41.

²³Mr. Volz, Church and Dwight, Inc., Greenville, S.C., Interview by author 20 April 1991.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 11

S.S. William Lawrence

name of property

Beaufort County, South Carolina

county and State

Savannah, where they would be transported inland up the Savannah River to the Dispensary warehouse in North Augusta.²⁴

The well-preserved cargo of the Lawrence shipwreck represents an time capsule of a variety of consumer goods utilized by the South, especially South Carolina and Georgia, in the latter part of the nineteenth century. It also fits Criterion A of the National Register by virtue of association with commercial events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of history.

THE WRECK

The Savannah Morning News includes a series of news updates from the date of the Lawrence wrecking in an ice storm in early February 1899 through the end of the month when the majority of the crew had been rescued. The wrecking incident occurred in the vicinity of Port Royal. A Port Royal pilot boat assisted the Lawrence's crew who experienced severe suffering as they attempted to make their way in frail lifeboats to Port Royal Harbor. The newspaper articles describe the horrors of their many hours of offshore buffeting by icy blasts. The situation was so desperate that the party discussed suicide as an option to end their extreme physical distress. When rescued by the Pilot Boat they were in critical condition with frost bitten hands and legs.²⁵

The one boatload of survivors described the personalities of individuals during this life-threatening ordeal such as John Montgomery, an Irishman who told stories and jokes to keep his companions awake and alive. When despair settled over some and they spoke about death he would claim he saw a light in the distance and approaching rescue boats. In fact, he was the first to spot another boat and signal it to come to their rescue. Heroic individuals on the other lifeboats are also described in detail--including activities and songs they initiated to keep their spirits up and their cold limbs moving.²⁶

When the survivors reached Port Royal Harbor they were warmly welcomed. Captain A.L. Willis of the Lawrence spoke highly of Sergeant Smith and Dr. Edwin P. Shattuck, the government surgeon at Hilton Head, who spent time attending to the needs of the wreck survivors. Many were permanently maimed by frost bite injuries incurred in over 50 hours in the snow storm without food or shelter. Only one member of the Lawrence's crew did not survive--Edward Roach, the chief engineer.²⁷

The location of the shipwreck and subsequent events link the commendable rescue operation to the community of Hilton Head, especially pilot boat operators and the government surgeon's office. From this perspective the Lawrence is of local historical significance to Hilton Head area. It is currently an extremely popular fishing and scuba diving site, particularly for the Beaufort and Hilton Head community.²⁸

²⁴Philip Huggins, The South Carolina Dispensary: A Bottle Collector's Atlas and History of the System (Columbia: Sandlapper Press, 1971).

²⁵Savannah Morning News, 15 February 1899.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Savannah Morning News, 16 and 22 February 1899.

²⁸Anne Lewis, Hilton Head Dive and Travel, Hilton Head, S.C., Interview by author, 6 June 1992.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 12

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 13

S.S. William Lawrence
name of property
Beaufort County, South Carolina
county and State

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