

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Mississippi	
COUNTY: Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.9.28.0008	DATE 9/3/71

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
U.S.S. Cairo

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Ingalls Ship Yard, P. O. Box 1267

CITY OR TOWN:  
Pascagoula

STATE <u>Mississippi</u>	CODE <u>39567</u>	COUNTY: <u>Jackson</u>	CODE <u>059</u>
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**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Comments <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Remains in storage</u>

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board

STREET AND NUMBER:  
P. O. Box 849

CITY OR TOWN:  
Jackson

STATE: <u>Mississippi</u>	CODE <u>39205</u>
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**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board

STREET AND NUMBER:  
P. O. Box 849

CITY OR TOWN:  
Jackson

STATE: <u>Mississippi</u>	CODE <u>39205</u>
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**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

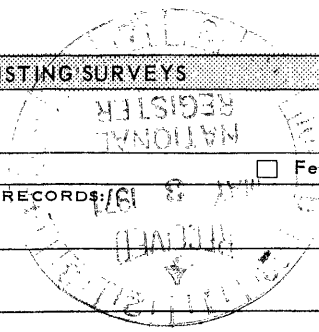
TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  Federal     State     County     Local

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: Mississippi  
COUNTY: Jackson  
ENTRY NUMBER: 71.9.28.0008  
DATE: 9/3/71  
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

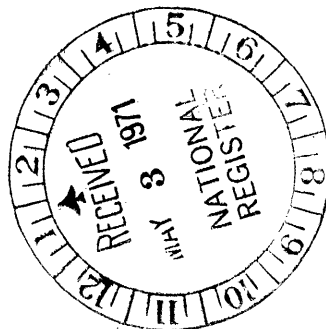
CONDITION	(Check One)				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins
	(Check One)			(Check One)	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Originally, the U.S.S. Cairo measured 175 feet in length, fifty-one feet in width, and fifteen feet in depth. The vessel had seven hull compartments, and its plate armor was two and one half inches thick. This armor (charcoal iron) was supported by white oak, with the thickness of the wood varying throughout the boat. It had five boilers, two engines fired by coal, and two chimneys (smokestacks) that were painted in colored bands for identification purposes. The exterior was painted black, while the interior was white washed.

At the present time, the structure of the Cairo is being stored at Ingalls Ship Yard, Pascagoula, Mississippi. However, due to a lack of space the vessel has been divided into two roughly equal sections. The boat is securely held together by the use of cranes, wires, and wooden props. The white oak timbers have undergone a water treatment for preservation purposes. The metal portions of the boat have been sprayed with a protective paint, and they are being stored in a warehouse at the ship yard.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**B. SIGNIFICANCE**

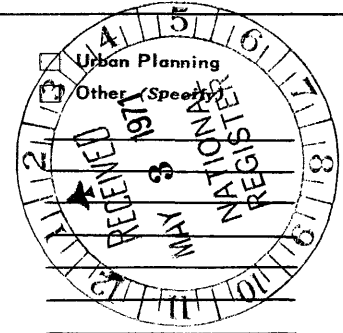
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian |  16th Century |  18th Century |  20th Century  
 15th Century |  17th Century |  19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1861-1862

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |  |



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The U.S.S. Cairo was built at Mound City, Illinois, in the fall of 1861 for the U. S. Army, and was commissioned January, 1862. It was one of seven ironclad boats contracted to James B. Eads, who believed that the first and most important step in restoring the Union was to gain control of the Lower Mississippi from the Confederacy. His plan called for the construction of a fleet of gunboats for the government. The U.S.S. Cairo, the lightest and fastest of the seven Eads ironclads, was one of the first ironclad warships to be built in the western hemisphere.

The U.S.S. Cairo had been active in the battle of Memphis and in the winter of 1862 participated in the campaign to take Vicksburg. On October 1, 1862, it was transferred from the army to the navy. Captain Henry Walke, who was commander of the Federal flotilla, was ordered to keep the Yazoo River clear of Southern forces. Captain Walke received news that the Confederates had a timber barricade about twenty-three miles above the mouth of the Yazoo. After investigating this report, it was discovered that the Confederates had laid a number of hidden mines (torpedoes) below the surface of the water. Captain Walke sent the Cairo, the Pittsburg and the Queen of the West to protect the Marmora and Signal while they destroyed the mines. While on this mission, the Cairo was struck by two Confederate mines on December 12, 1862, about sixteen miles north of Vicksburg. Thus the Cairo became the first victim of an electrically activated torpedo (mine) in naval history.

After the surrender of Vicksburg, Rear Admiral David Porter made several attempts to raise the Cairo but was unsuccessful in locating the vessel. In 1880 J. H. Bofinger of Saint Louis, Missouri, was contracted by the Treasury Department to salvage the Cairo; however, this work was never undertaken.

Since the Yazoo River is one of the muddiest rivers in the country, the Cairo was hidden and submerged in about twenty feet of water for almost a hundred years. There had been many rumors that the boat had exploded, or had already been raised. However, on November 12, 1956, the Cairo was located by Edwin C. Bearss, historian, Vicksburg National Military Park, National Park Service, and Warren Grabau, geologist, Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg. Plans were made for the boat's raising which took almost three years. The vessel, raised in sections, was severely damaged during the salvage operations.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bearss, Edwin C., Hardluck Ironclad. (Baton Rouge, La., Louisiana State University: 1966).

Bearss, Edwin C., "The Destruction of the Cairo," Journal of Mississippi History, XXIII, 1961, 141-163.

Subject file, The U.S.S. Cairo. Collections of the Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

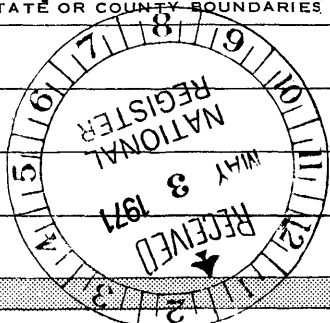
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES													
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE											
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds									
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	30	°	21	'	30	"	88	°	33	'	44	"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"												
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"												
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"												

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Approximately one-fourth acre.

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Clinton I. Bagley, Junior Historian**

ORGANIZATION: **Mississippi Department of Archives and History**      DATE: **12/11/70**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**120 North State Street, P. O. Box 571**

CITY OR TOWN: **Jackson**      STATE: **Mississippi 39205**      CODE: **28**

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: *R. A. McLemore*  
**R. A. McLemore**

Title: Director, Miss. Department of Archives and History

Date: 12/11/70

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

*Ernest A. Cannally*  
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

**SEP 3 1971**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

*William Bennett*  
Keeper of The National Register

Date: **SEP 2 1971**

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Mississippi	
COUNTY	
Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
71.9.28.0008	9/3/71

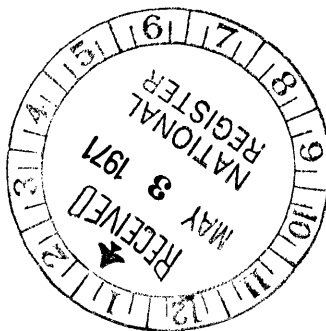
(Number all entries)

8.

The Cairo's pilothouse and one of its cannons were salvaged on September 14, 1960, by Ken Parks and James Hart, who helped to spearhead public interest in the project. Other valuable artifacts were recovered during the various phases of salvage, including guns, the ship's bell, and assorted sailors' personal gear such as combs, toothbrushes and family photographs. These artifacts have been preserved by the National Park Service at the Vicksburg Military Park.

At present, the basic structure of the ship is in storage at Ingalls Ship Yard, Pascagoula, Mississippi. Title to the Cairo is held by the Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board, which has sought cooperation from the National Park Service in securing the restoration of the boat.

Legislation which gives the Department of the Interior the authority to restore and exhibit the Cairo has been introduced in the 91st Congress by the Mississippi delegation.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

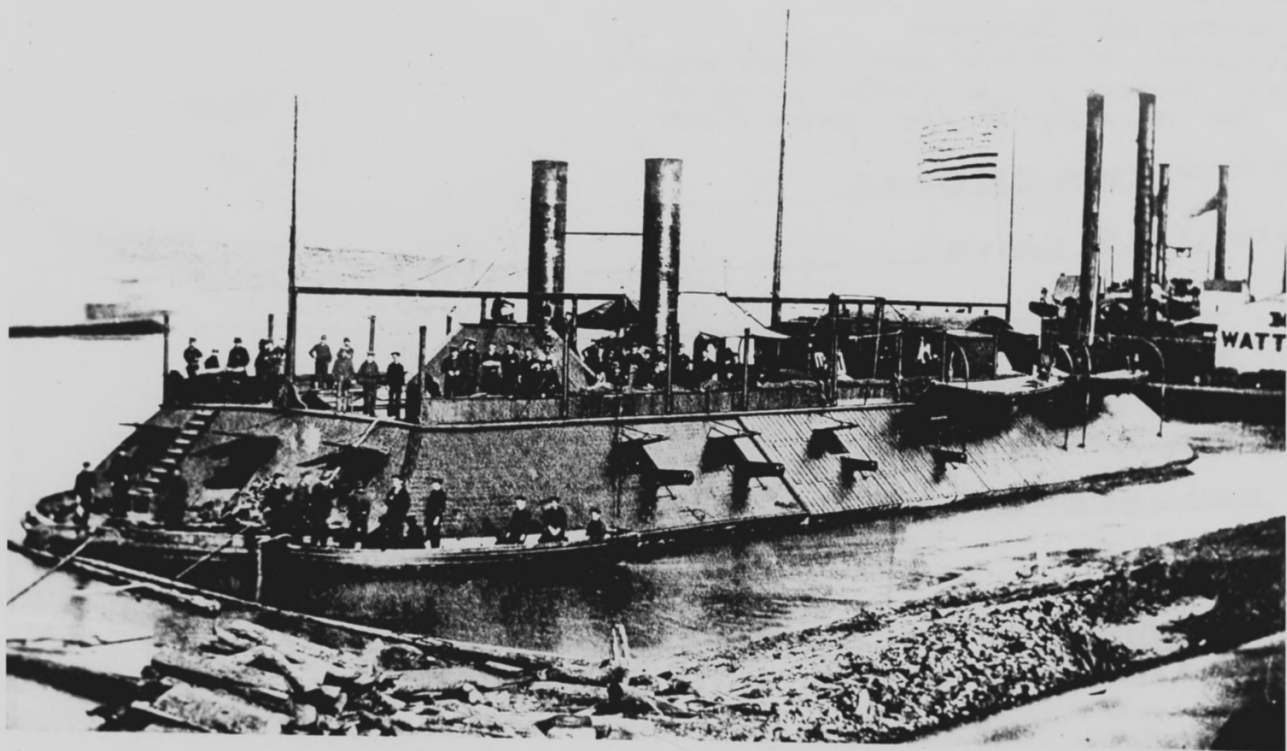
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USS CAIRO

Jackson County to Warren County, MISSISSIPPI

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION  
(NEW LOCATION)

Keeper Amy Federman 12/23/89



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Mississippi	
COUNTY Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 41.9.28.0008	DATE 9/3/71

1. NAME

COMMON: U.S.S. Cairo

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:

Ingalls Ship Yard

CITY OR TOWN:

Pascagoula

STATE:

Mississippi 39567

CODE

28

COUNTY:

Jackson

CODE

4058

3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Library of Congress, Division of Prints and Photographs

DATE OF PHOTO: ca. 1861

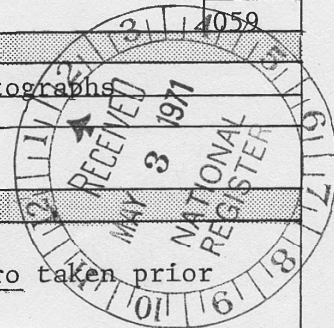
NEGATIVE FILED AT:

Library of Congress, Washington D. C.

4. IDENTIFICATION

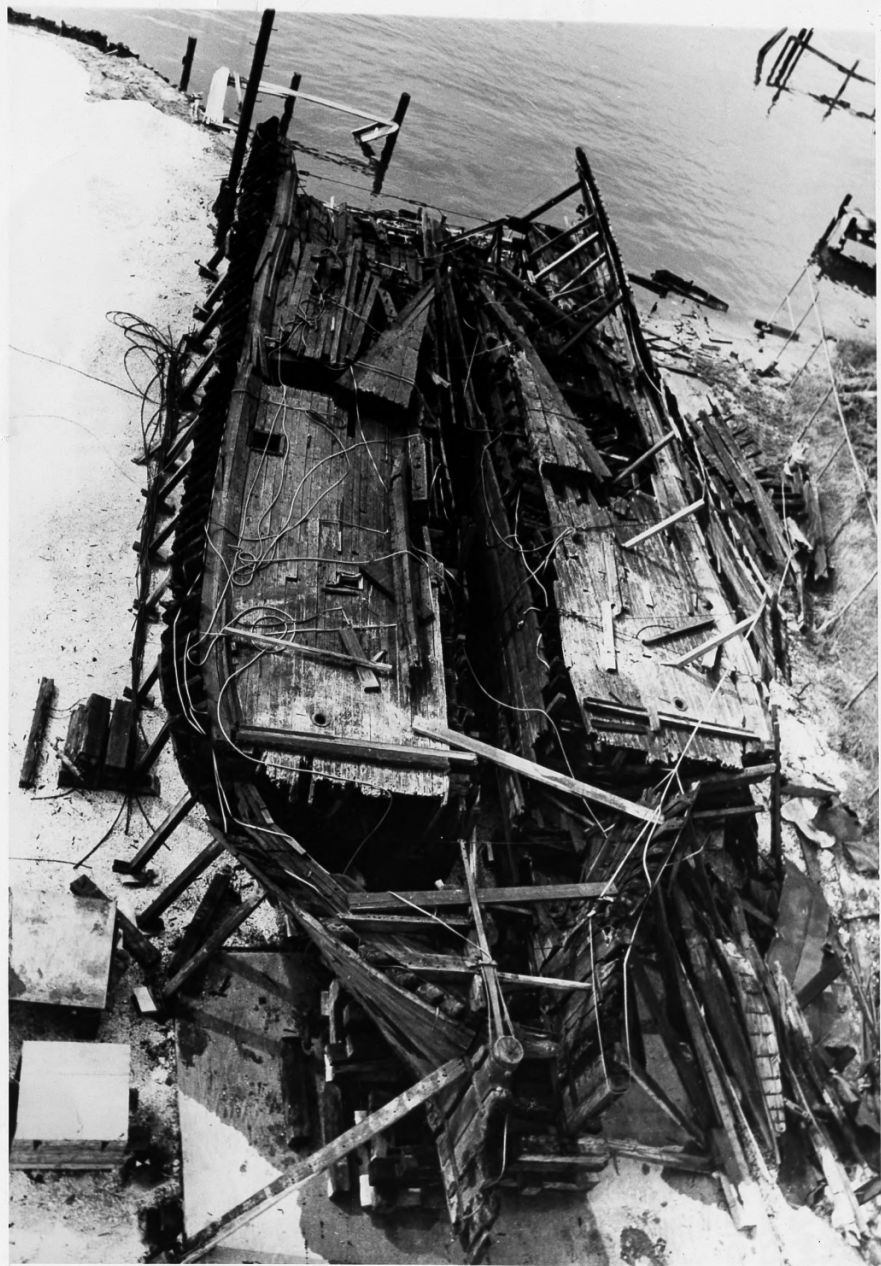
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

This is the only known photograph of the U.S.S. Cairo taken prior to her sinking in the Yazoo River.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Mississippi	
COUNTY Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71,928,0008	DATE 9/3/71

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: U.S.S. Cairo  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Ingalls Ship Yard

CITY OR TOWN:  
Pascagoula

STATE: Mississippi 39567	CODE 28	COUNTY: Jackson Warren	CODE 059
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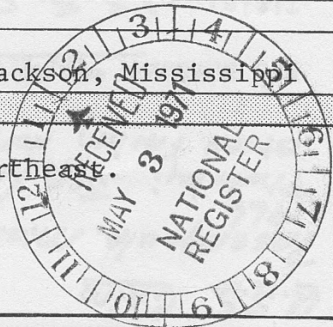
3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Joe Moore  
DATE OF PHOTO: 1966

NEGATIVE FILED AT:  
Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board, Jackson, Mississippi

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.  
This is the stern of the U.S.S. Cairo, facing Northeast.







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

STATE Mississippi	
COUNTY Jackson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.9.28.0008	DATE 9/3/91

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME

COMMON: U.S.S. Cairo  
AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Ingalls Ship Yard

CITY OR TOWN:  
Pascagoula

STATE: Mississippi 39567	CODE 28	COUNTY: Jackson	CODE 059
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3. PHOTO REFERENCE

PHOTO CREDIT: Joe Moore  
DATE OF PHOTO: 1966  
NEGATIVE FILED AT:  
Mississippi Agricultural and Industrial Board, Jackson, Miss.

4. IDENTIFICATION

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

The bow is in the lower left of the photo, and the stern is in the upper right, from the Southeast.

