THE TUGBOAT EDWARD E. GILLEN (47-MI-0497): URBAN ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE EPA

Edward E. Gillen, Fall 2005 (USACE)

Mark J. Dudzik, DNR Archaeologist

February 2008

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

101 South Webster Street, Madison, WI 53703-7921

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ABSTRACT

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the US Environmental Protection Agency have proposed to dredge a section of the Kinnickinnic River (Milwaukee) to remove river sediments and river margins which have been contaminated with a variety of toxic industrial chemicals. Resting largely above the current water line, the salvaged, well-weathered wreck of the tugboat the Edward E. Gillen, site ***47-MI-0497****, is located within the area to be dredged. The proposed dredging would remove and destroy the remnants of the vessel.*

The tug is well-documented in records and photographs maintained by the Wisconsin Maritime Historical Society at the Milwaukee Public Library. Mired in contaminated sediments and water, the vessel itself is contaminated. Given these considerations, it is recommended that the joint DNR/EPA contamination remediation project (including the removal and destruction of the wreck of the Edward E. Gillen tugboat) proceed without further efforts to preserve or document the vessel.

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INTRODUCTION

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are planning to dredge a section of the Kinnickinnic River within the City of Milwaukee. This dredging plan aims to remove river bottom and river margin soils which are demonstrated to be significantly polluted with a variety of toxic contaminants, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and heavy metals (DNR: 2008). Funding for these improvements is being provided by the EPA and the State of Wisconsin.

The wreck of the tugboat Edward E. Gillen (ship no.: 227538; state site no.: 47-MI-0497) lies within the dredge area, with much of the vessel visible above the water line (Figure 1). Itself contaminated by the polluted sediments within which it lies, the wreck is scheduled to be removed and destroyed during dredging operations. The State Historic Preservation Office of the Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) previously reviewed and approved this request in November 2001, indicating that no NRHP-listed or eligible sites were reported to occur within the designated dredge area (case no.: 01-1833/MI; cf. Appendix A). DNR review of the project in December 2007 identified the ASI-recorded shipwreck, noting that its NRHP-eligibility status had not yet been assessed.

Following discussions with staff of the WHS about the desirability of obtaining a formal Determination of Eligibility for the wreck, an agreement was made to accept a brief narrative report describing the wreck in lieu of a formal DOE (C. Brown, WHS: personal communication).

FIGURE 1. The wreck of the tugboat Edward E. Gillen, January 2008 (DNR).

THE EDWARD E. GILLEN

The tugboat Edward E. Gillen was built by the Sturgeon Bay (WI) Ship Building and Dry Dock Company, in 1928 (Figure 2; cf. Appendix C for additional photodocumentation). One of only

three Wisconsin-built wooden tugs known (K. Meverden, WHS: personal communication), this vessel, no. 227538, is the "second" Edward E. Gillen per documentation supplied by the Wisconsin Maritime Historical Society at the Milwaukee Public Library (MPL, n.d.; included herein as Appendix D). The "first" Edward E. Gillen, boat registration no. 75591 (originally named the J.J. Hagerman), was built in 1872 in Buffalo, NY, for the Milwaukee Tugboat Line. The New York-built engine from boat no. 75591 (reportedly abandoned in Sturgeon Bay in 1928) was removed to become the engine for no. 227538 when it was built later that year. Shortly thereafter, fire damage required the replacement of this engine with one built in Milwaukee by Sheriffs Manufacturing Company in 1895.

FIGURE 2. Launch of the tugboat Edward E. Gillen at Sturgeon Bay, WI, 1928 (Milwaukee Public Library).

The vessel was originally owned by the Edward E. Gillen Towing Company of Milwaukee (cf. Appendix D for additional descriptive information). The Edward E. Gillen Company is to this day actively involved in marine construction projects, with a facility located directly across the river from the shipwreck. The tug was sold by the Company in the mid-1960s (G. Lubeley, E.E. Gillen Co.: personal communication), and subsequently stripped (salvaged) and then abandoned at its present location.

PHYSICAL SETTING

The wreck of the Edward E. Gillen is located at bend in the Kinnickinnic River in the City of Milwaukee's near south side (Figures 3 & 4; Appendix B). The "KK", as it is known, has a long history as a working river, and the margins of the river have been occupied by a variety of commercial and industrial concerns during that time. Active dredging to maintain the river channel ceased in the 1940s (DNR: 2008).

FIGURE 3. Location of the wreck of the tugboat Edward E. Gillen at a bend in the Kinnickinnic River within the City of Milwaukee (Google).

FIGURE 4. Aerial photo (close-up, from east) showing the wreck of the Edward E. Gillen, Summer 2007; note location below storm sewer outlet (Microsoft).

FIGURE 5. The tugboat Edward E. Gillen, 1932 (foreground; Milwaukee Public Library)

In a phone interview, Peter Scotland, a member of the Wisconsin Maritime Historical Society, indicated that although the Society had photographed the registration number board for the vessel as recently as two years ago, the number board is no longer to be found on the wreck (Figure 6). It was not observed by DNR during a site visit in January 2008.

FIGURE 6. Edward E. Gillen ship registration number board (no.: 227538; WHS: n.d.).

RECOMMENDATIONS

A working boat, the Wisconsin-built Edward E. Gillen had a significant role guiding vessels and providing other river-based support in Milwaukee's inner harbor areas. At the end of its useful life, it was salvaged and abandoned at the Kinnickinnic River's edge, much of it lying above the water line but mired in sediments and bathed in waters heavily polluted with hazardous industrial contaminants.

Apart from adverse impacts caused by salvaging, scavenging, and decades of weathering, the vessel's integrity is further impacted by various toxic contaminants. While an argument may be made that the wreck is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, contamination of the vessel and the need to dredge the area to remove river-bottom contaminants effectively precludes further salvage or preservation efforts. Thankfully, a substantial record (including extensive photodocumentation) of the boat's past life remains, much of it archived by the Marine Historical Society at the Milwaukee Public Library.

Given the above, it is recommended that the joint DNR/EPA contamination remediation project (including the removal and destruction of the wreck of the Edward E. Gillen tugboat) proceed without further efforts to preserve or document the vessel.

Acknowledgements. The assistance of Milwaukee Public Library staff in securing ship records and photodocumentation is deeply appreciated. Thanks also to George Lubeley of the Edward E. Gillen Company, Milwaukee, for background information on the vessel's history, and to Peter Scotland of the Wisconsin Maritime Historical Society for information on the ship registration board.

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REFERENCES

DNR

2008 *Draft Environmental Impact Statement: "Kinnickinnic River Contaminated Sediment Remediation (Dredging/Restoration)"*. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Madison.

MPL

n.d. Ship Information and Data Record (record ID: 2386; Edward E. Gillen [ship no.: 227538]). Milwaukee Public Library, Wisconsin. (*included herein as Appendix D*)

APPENDIX A

WHS (SHPO) 2001 Compliance Letter
Case no.: 01-1833/MI

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Headquarters Building
816 State Street
Madison, WI 53706-1482
608-264-6400

November 7, 2001

RECEIVED
NOV 8 2001
BUREAU OF
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

Ms. Xiaochun Zhang
Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources
101 S. Webster Street
Madison, WI 53707-7921

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO
SHSW COMPLIANCE CASE #01-1833/MI

RE: Contaminated Sediment Remediation In Kinnickinnic River: Milwaukee Estuary

Dear Ms. Zhang:

We have reviewed the above-referenced project as required for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties, the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation governing the Section 106 review process.

There are no archeological or architectural properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places located within the area of potential effect of the proposed undertaking. Furthermore, we are not aware of any properties that may be eligible for the National Register in this area.

We remind you that the regulations of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation include the requirement that you seek information, as appropriate to the undertaking, from parties likely to have knowledge of or concerns with historic properties in the project area - such as Indian tribes, local governments, local landmark commissions and public and private organizations.

If there are any questions concerning this matter, please contact Dan Duchrow at (608) 264-6505.

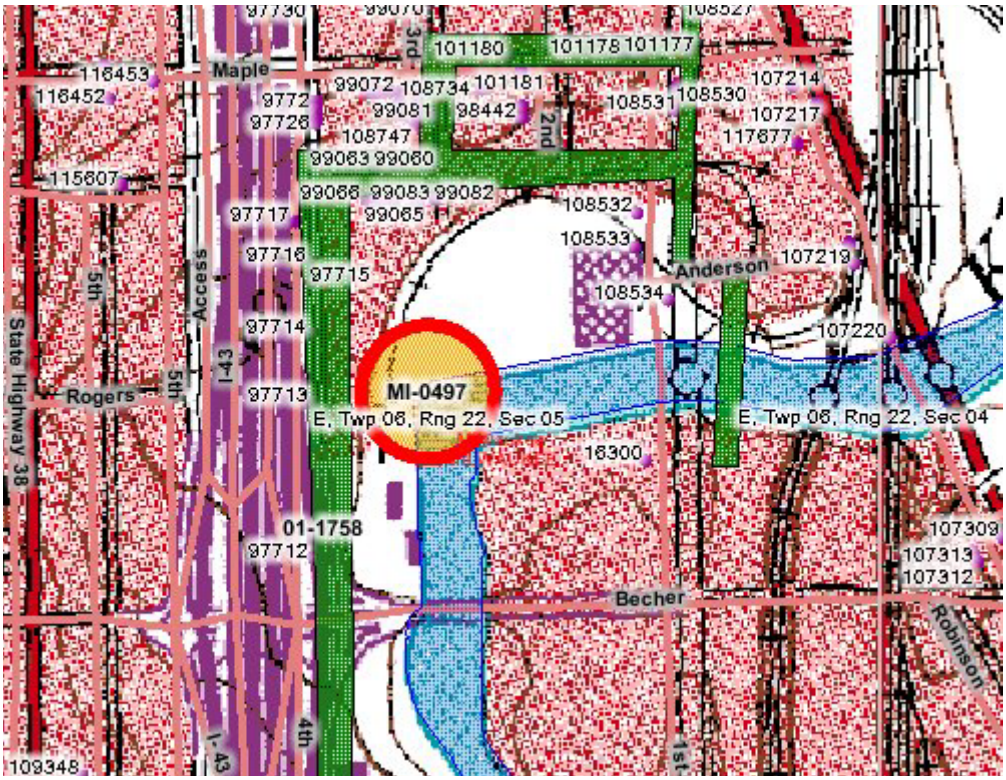
Sincerely,

Richard W. Dexter
Chief, Office of Preservation Planning

RWD/DJD/djd

APPENDIX B

Edward E. Gillen: ASI-mapped Location
(state site 47-MI-0497)



ASI-mapped location of the wreck of the Edward E. Gillen (site no.: 47-MI-0497).

APPENDIX C

Selected Milwaukee Public Library Photodocumentation (thumbnails)
for the
Edward E. Gillen (boat registration no. 227538)

EdwEGillen001 back.tif

EdwEGillen001.tif

EdwEGillen002 back.tif

EdwEGillen002.tif

EdwEGillen003 back.tif

EdwEGillen003.tif

EdwEGillen004 back.tif

EdwEGillen004.tif

EdwEGillen005 back.tif

EdwEGillen005.tif

EdwEGillen006 back.tif

EdwEGillen006.tif

EdwEGillen007 back.tif

EdwEGillen007.tif

EdwEGillen008 back.tif

EdwEGillen008.tif

EdwEGillen009 back.tif

EdwEGillen009.tif

EdwEGillen010 back.tif

EdwEGillen010.tif

EdwEGillen014 back.tif

EdwEGillen014.tif

EdwEGillen015 back.tif

EdwEGillen015.tif

EdwEGillen016 back.tif

EdwEGillen016.tif

EdwEGillen (227538) data sheet.tif

APPENDIX D

Milwaukee Public Library Ship Record
for the
Edward E. Gillen (boat registration no. 227538)

ID: 2386

Name: EDWARD E. GILLEN (1928)

MILWAUKEE PUBLIC LIBRARY
Ship Information and Data Record

Official No: 227538

Other Official No:

Other Name:

Yr. Built: 1928 Built At: Sturgeon Bay, WI Built By: Sturgeon Bay Ship Bldg. & D.D. Co. Hull No:

Built For: Edward E. Gillen Towing Co., Milwaukee Rig: Tug Hull: Wood

OPERATING DATA

ENGINES

Type: High Press. Non Cond.
Cyl St: 22 x 22
H P: 385
Rev: 115
Built By: Pound Mfg. Co.
Built At: Lockport, N.Y.
Yr Built: 1876?
Source:

BOILERS

Type: Fire Box
No: 1
Size: 8 d x 13 l
Press: 150
Built By: Manitowoc Boiler Wks.
Built At: Manitowoc, WI
Yr Built: 1900
Masts:

DIMENSION

Source:
Gross T: 68 Net T: 46
Length: 73.0 Beam: 19.1 Depth: 9.3

HATCHES

No: Size:
Centers: Cap:

COMPARTMENTS

No:
Cap:

[ ] Enrollments are available from the Wisconsin Marine Historical Society

Other Illus: 3- 3 1/2 x 6; 1- 7 x 9; 3- 3 x 4; 1- 3 1/2 x 4 3/4

Illus: 8 x 10 - [ ] 5 x 7 - [ ] 4 x 6 - [4] 3 x 5 - [ ] Post Cards - [ ] Small - [5] 8 x 10 Mounted File Case - [ ] Oversize - [ ] Oversize Flat Case-- [ ]

Sources:

History: The engine described above was the old engine of the Tug J.J. HAGERMAN #75591, and stayed in the hull after it was renamed EDWARD E. GILLEN (1st) on Feb. 18. 1915. When this new hull (#227538) was built in 1928, this same engine was put in. She was severely burned in Milwaukee about Sept. 1928, and the above engine taken out and scrapped because it was badly damaged by the fire, and the second engine - High Press. Non Cond. - 22 x 26; 350 H.P., 120 Rev., by Sherriffs Mfg. Co., Milwaukee, 1895 - was put in. This engine had been removed from the Tug STARKE #116269, when it was dismantled and reported abandoned in Milwaukee Nov. 12. 1919. (Still in the Gillen in 1937). (Runge note)

Merchant Vessels of US 1964 - Owner Edward E. Gillen Co. (Wis.), home port Milwaukee (wood).

Merchant Vessels of US 1965, p. 1009 - #227538 st.s. Edward E. Gillen - gross tons 68 - dismantled.

1st cert. 5-19-1928.

APPENDIX E

ASI Update Form

Wisconsin ASI Update Form

Fill in the following information as it is presently recorded: County Milwaukee

Site # 47-MI-0497 ASI # 28477 Burial Site # na

Site Name Gillen Towing Company Wreck Town/Range/Sec. T6N/R22E/S5

USGS Quad Name Milwaukee 7.5'

Please refer to the ASI form and provide the appropriate headings for the correction or new information. Examples of headings are: QUARTER SECTIONS, USGS MAP, and SITE DESCRIPTION. Provide a justification or reference for any new information. When appropriate, attach a sketch map and copy of USGS quad depicting map changes.

HEADING(S) AND NATURE OF CORRECTION/UPDATE:

SITE NAME: *Edward E. Gillen (no. 227538)*

SITE DESCRIPTION: *Ship identity as the Edward E. Gillen tugboat confirmed by photo record of ship registration number: 227538. The ASI formerly and incorrectly indicated that this vessel may be another vessel, the Knight Templar.*

MJ Dudzik, DNR, February 2008