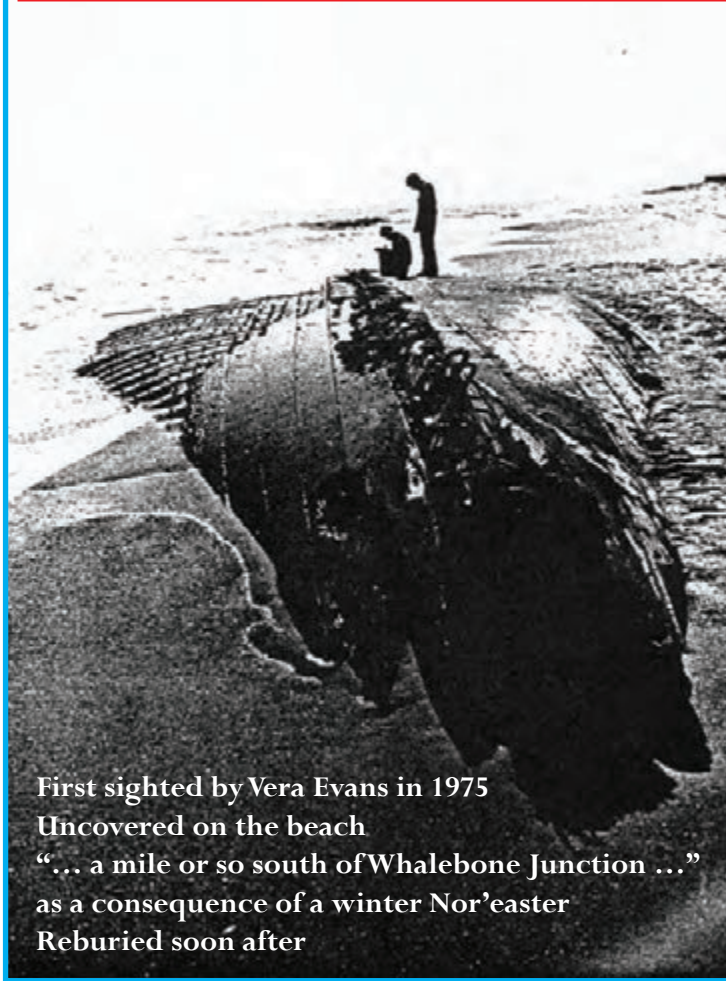


1975: Discovery & loss



First sighted by Vera Evans in 1975
Uncovered on the beach
"... a mile or so south of Whalebone Junction ..."
as a consequence of a winter Nor'easter
Reburied soon after

1977: Re-discovery



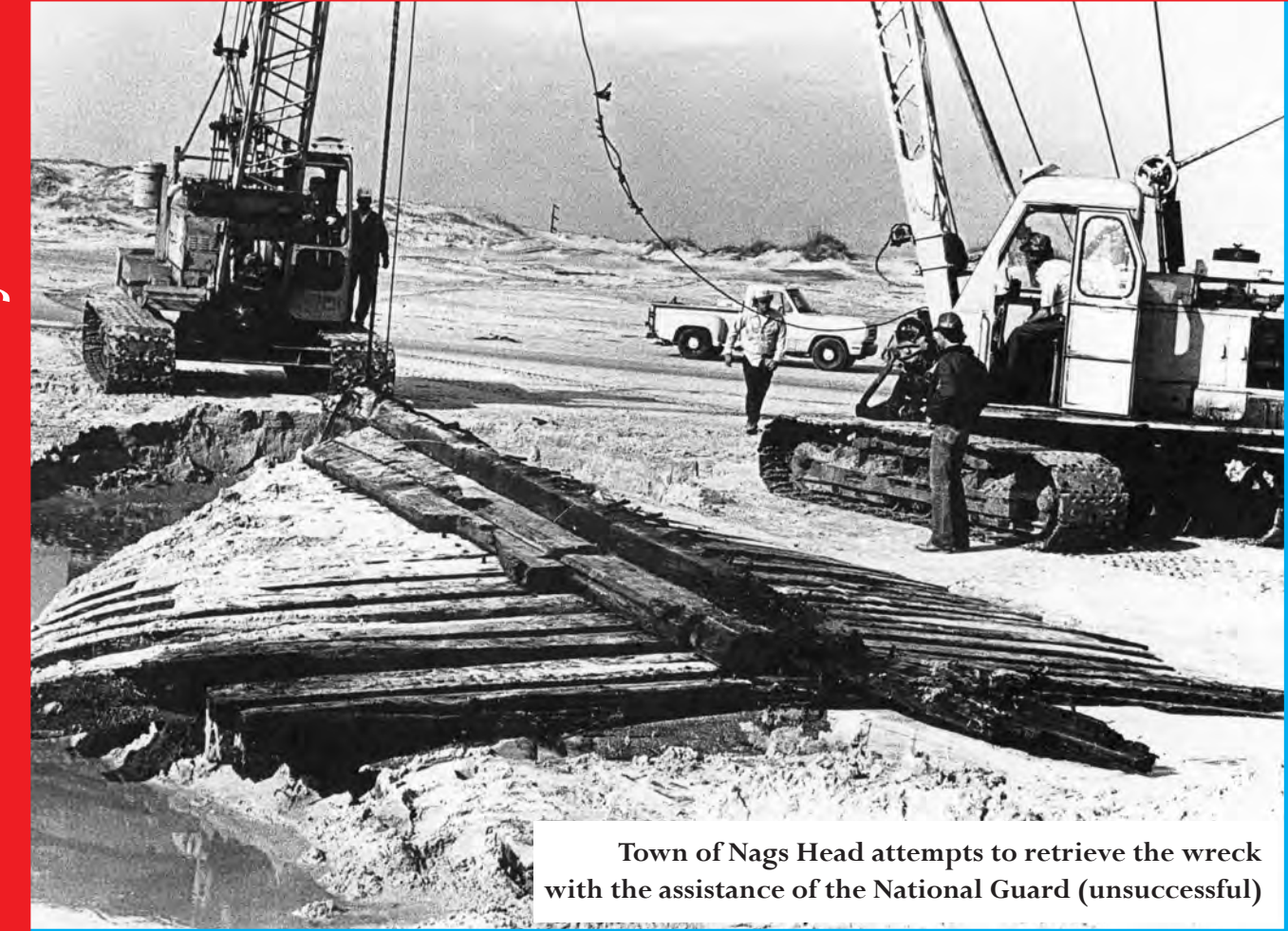
Gradually emerged again in the summer 1977
and continued to uncover through October
Essentially free of sand by December

January 1978: Movement & exposure



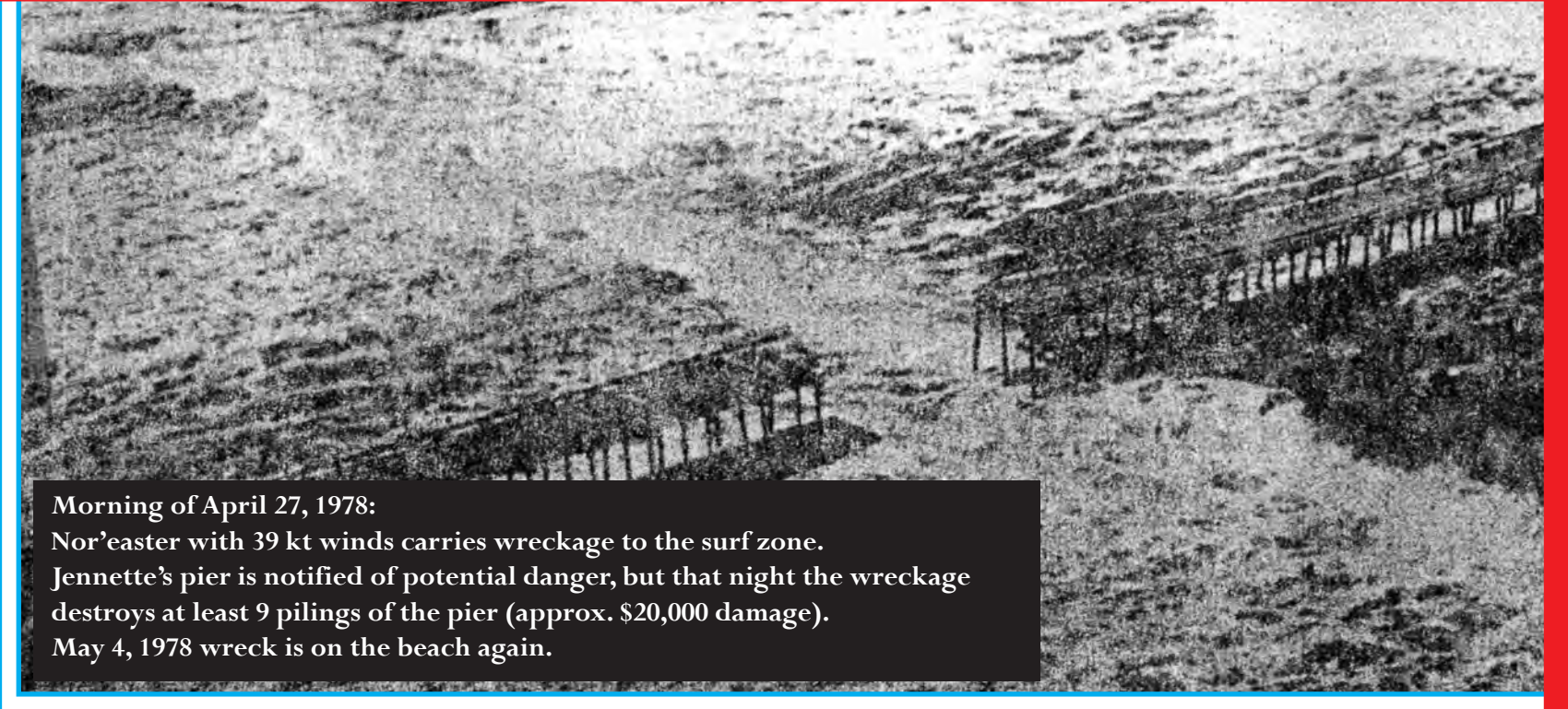
Storm from SW fully exposed wreck again
drifting 2 miles N (around Jennette's Pier)
Redeposited on beach on January 8, 1978

1978: Recovery attempt



Town of Nags Head attempts to retrieve the wreck
with the assistance of the National Guard (unsuccessful)

April 1978: A short journey ...



Morning of April 27, 1978:
Nor'easter with 39 kt winds carries wreckage to the surf zone.
Jennette's pier is notified of potential danger, but that night the wreckage
destroys at least 9 pilings of the pier (approx. \$20,000 damage).
May 4, 1978 wreck is on the beach again.

1978: Retrieval



A cooperative effort of NCDAH and DoT
Supervised by G. Watts and UAB staff

Tentative Identification: Is the BOB0003 Francis E. Waters?

In 1978 archaeologists came up with a list of potential candidates for the wreckage based upon historical records of ships wrecked in the area.
Media sources soon associated one suggested candidate, the schooner *Francis E. Waters* with the wreckage and the name stuck
However, archaeologists suggesting this candidate also noted discrepancies between the archaeological remains and the historical records.
What do you think?

As indicated by its entry (#618) in the 1884 insurance register *The Record of American and Foreign Shipping*, *Francis E. Waters* had the following specifications:

Official Number: 120,512
Signal Letters: JW N Q
Master: G.F. Seward (in 1884)
Rig: Schooner
Nationality: American
Hailing Port: Baltimore
Tons: 141
Length: 99.4 feet
Breadth: 28.1 feet
Depth: 7.4 feet
When Built: November 1882
Where Built: Taylor's Island, Maryland (builder's name not noted)
Owners: T.J. Seward
Remarks: O=Oak; YP=Yellow or Hard or Pitch Pine; I=Iron fastenings
Last survey: New York, March 1883

In 1889, the vessel was on a journey from Georgetown, SC to Philadelphia, PA (under Master Tall) with a cargo of shingles & lumber, when on 23 October 1889 the vessel was lost during a hurricane sometime between sunset and dark, about "2.75 miles NNW of Nag's Head Station." The hurricane was one of the worst on record (at least three other vessels lost in the same storm).

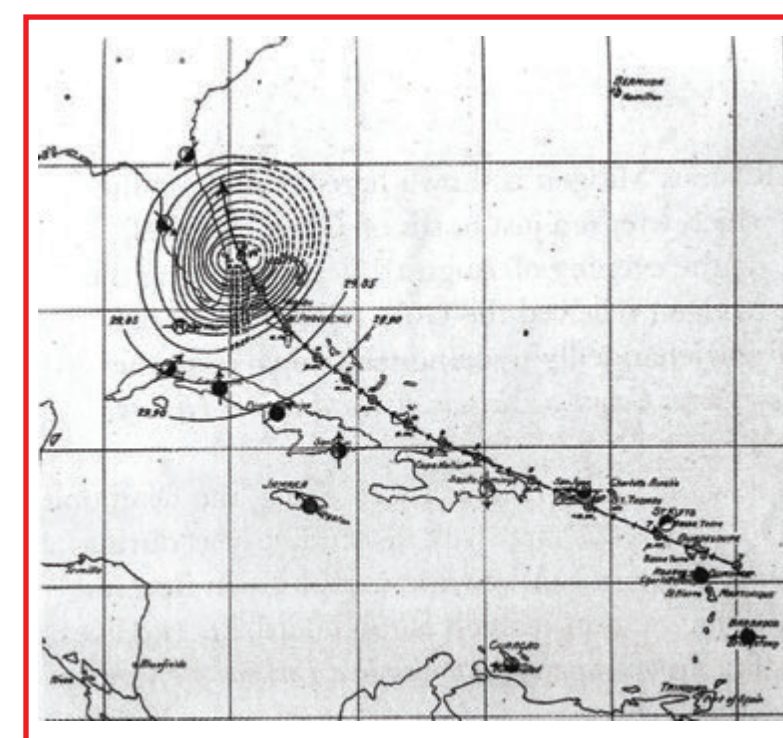
While the wrecking was not witnessed, part of the hull was discovered "half submerged and bottom up" on a sandbar by the Lifesaving Service but could not be reached.

All six lives were lost (two bodies were recovered). Female clothing and a sewing machine found on the beach. The total cost of the event was \$8,000 (vessel) and \$2,425 (cargo).

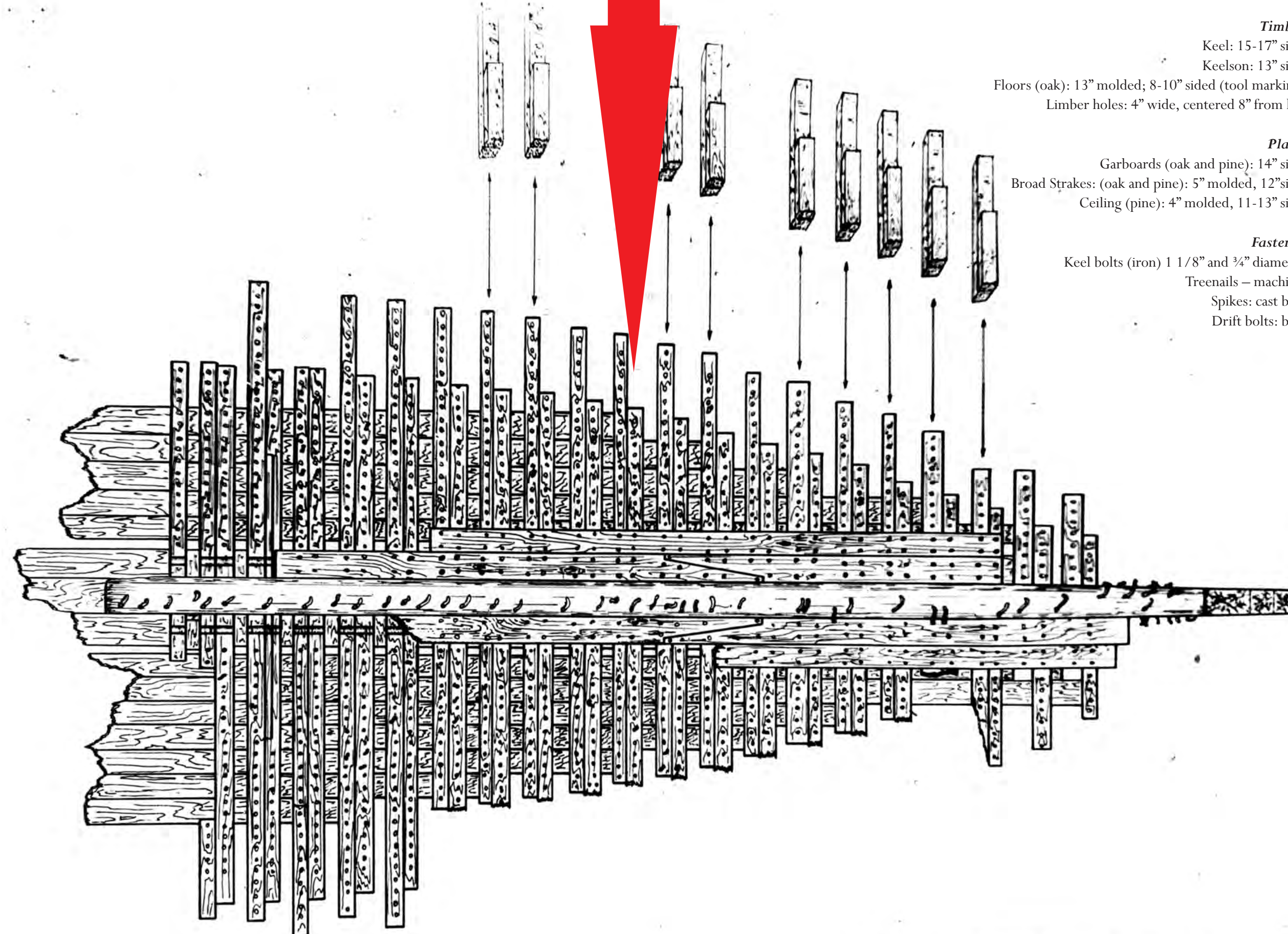
While the wreckage and historical accounts of *Francis E. Waters* and BOB0003 match in relation to the location of wreckage as well as the methods and timber species used in construction, 1882 *Record of American and Foreign Shipping* tells us that the dimensions of the timbers from the debris are indicative a vessel much larger than the 149 tons:

Keel dimensions: >1000 tons;
Keelson dimensions: >500 tons;
Floors dimension: >600 tons;
Ceiling dimension: >900 tons;
Keel bolt dimensions: >300 tons.

THE RECORD, 1884											
No.	Name of Vessel	Tons	Master	Company	Origin	Destination	Date	Status	Remarks	Loss	Value
618	Francis E. Waters	141	G. F. Seward	Schooner	Baltimore	Philadelphia	Oct 23, 1889	Wrecked	Lost during hurricane	Yes	\$8,000
619	Francis E. Waters	141	G. F. Seward	Schooner	Baltimore	Philadelphia	Oct 23, 1889	Wrecked	Lost during hurricane	Yes	\$2,425



1978: State Wreck Inspection (NC UAB)



Recorded specifications (L. Bright, NC Underwater Archaeology Branch):
Recorded as 52' by 28' (estimated as an extra 10' of length buried)

- Timbers**
Keel: 15-17" sided
Keelson: 13" sided
Floors (oak): 13" molded; 8-10" sided (tool markings)
Lumber holes: 4" wide, centered 8" from keel
- Planks**
Garboards (oak and pine): 14" sided
Broad Strakes: (oak and pine): 5" molded, 12" sided
Ceiling (pine): 4" molded, 11-13" sided
- Fasteners**
Keel bolts (iron) 1 1/8" and 3/4" diameters
Treenails - machined
Spikes - cast brass
Drift bolts: brass

NAGS HEAD AT
BEACHED HULK FRAGMENT 16 MILE
MARKER
FORT FISHER PRESERVATION LABORATORY
DRAWN BY LESLIE BRIGHT & JOHNNY SHEED SCALE 1/4" = 1'
DATE: 1-27-78

2010: Relic



The wreck now lies adjacent to the
Town of Nags Head Municipal Offices

Sources:

- NC Underwater Archaeology Branch Archives
- Coastland Times (1978)
- Record of American and Foreign Shipping (1882-1889)
- Virginian Pilot (1978)
- Wilmington Messenger (1889)

Thanks to:

- Monitor National Marine Sanctuary (NOAA)
- (Joe Hoyt, Lauren Heesemann, & David Alberg)
- North Carolina Underwater Archaeology Branch
- (Richard Lawrence, Mark Wilde-Ramsing, & Nathan Henry)
- UNC-Coastal Studies Institute
- (John McCord, David Sybert, Mike Muglia, & Nancy White)



Nags Head Wreck (BOB0003)
(mid-late nineteenth century)
Nags Head (originally Bodie Island Beach), NC
(Lat. 35.9343°N Long. 75.6119°W)

