Weekly work updates from February 2004 through December 2004 on the restoration of the 1895 lumber schooner *C. A. Thayer*

February 9 - 13, 2004

The last of the main deck planking has been picked up. This is 4 inch by 4 inch material, held on with spikes. Most of the planking was pulled off using a hook suspended from the overhead gantry crane. In general, the condition of the deck beams was better than we had expected.

The planking was pulled off the raised poop deck aft. No major surprises here. The beams and the framing in the stern was badly rotted overall, while the half-beams along the house sides were not bad. Most of the framing aft dates from the repair work done in Seattle in 1957, and was not particularly accurate in following original construction methods.

The bulwarks, between the after house and the raised focsle deck were cut off above the waterway timbers. The bulwark was removed in sections 8 to 10 feet long, which will be retained for examination in detail prior to their replacement.

The waterway timbers were removed in this same area. This exposed the tops of the frame timbers, most of which showed severe rot. We noted the fastening pattern holding the waterway timber and the blocking between the bulwark stanchions to the outer planking and the stanchions.

The starboard edge of the after house was cut through and removed, as was the bulwark in this area. We noted that the forward face of the house was solidly timbered in horizontal 4 inch material, drifted down into the coaming. This makes sense, as the bulkhead would have to take the force of boarding seas running along the deck, but this detail had never before been exposed.

The bulwark removal was stopped at the focsle deck. The stanchions here appear solid. We will investigate their condition when the outer planking comes off, and decide where to go from there. These timbers are fairly well protected by the deck above and by the outward flare of the bow. They may well be usable.

We continued to study the fastening pattern of the outer planking and to record the positions of the butts or joints in the planks. It looks like the usual fastening in the wide bottom planks is one spike and three trunnels into each frame. At these butts, it looks like there were originally three spikes on each side off a butt. Most have now been refastened with two oversized spikes on each side. This was probably done by the Army in 1942. Original butts in the narrower topside planking seems to be two spikes on each side of a butt. One spike and one trunnel to each frame through the run of the plank.

The erection of the scaffolding around the hull is just about completed. Next week the topside planking – above the waterline – should start to come off.