

**Welsh Wreck Web Research Project**  
**(North Cardigan Bay)**  
**On-line research into the wreck of the:**  
***Branches***



*A Fully Rigged Ship*

Report compiled by:

**Graeme Perks**

Report Title:

**Welsh Wreck Web Research Project  
(North Cardigan Bay)  
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*Branches***

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## 1.0 Abstract

The “www Research Project” is about, discovering by on line research details of ships, on the MADU data base of wrecks of North Wales, the circumstances of their loss, details of the owners and crew, the cargo carried and their history.

The Branches was built as a fully rigged ship of 452 tons in Quebec, British America in 1826. Branches first owners Osborn & Co., supplied timber to the Royal Navy during the Napoleonic wars and continued to import timber and timber products in Branches from Quebec to London. Branches carried passengers on the return voyage to British America including elements of the British Army.

The new owners in 1834 converted Branches to a barque and continued voyages to Britain from St John, NB. The destinations now also included Irish ports and Liverpool, travelling to Savannah before returning to St John. In December 1841 Branches while seeking shelter from a gale struck one of the St Tudwall Islands and was wrecked, the crew survived, the cargo was salvaged by divers.

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**2.4 Contributors**

Madu

**2.5 Abbreviations**

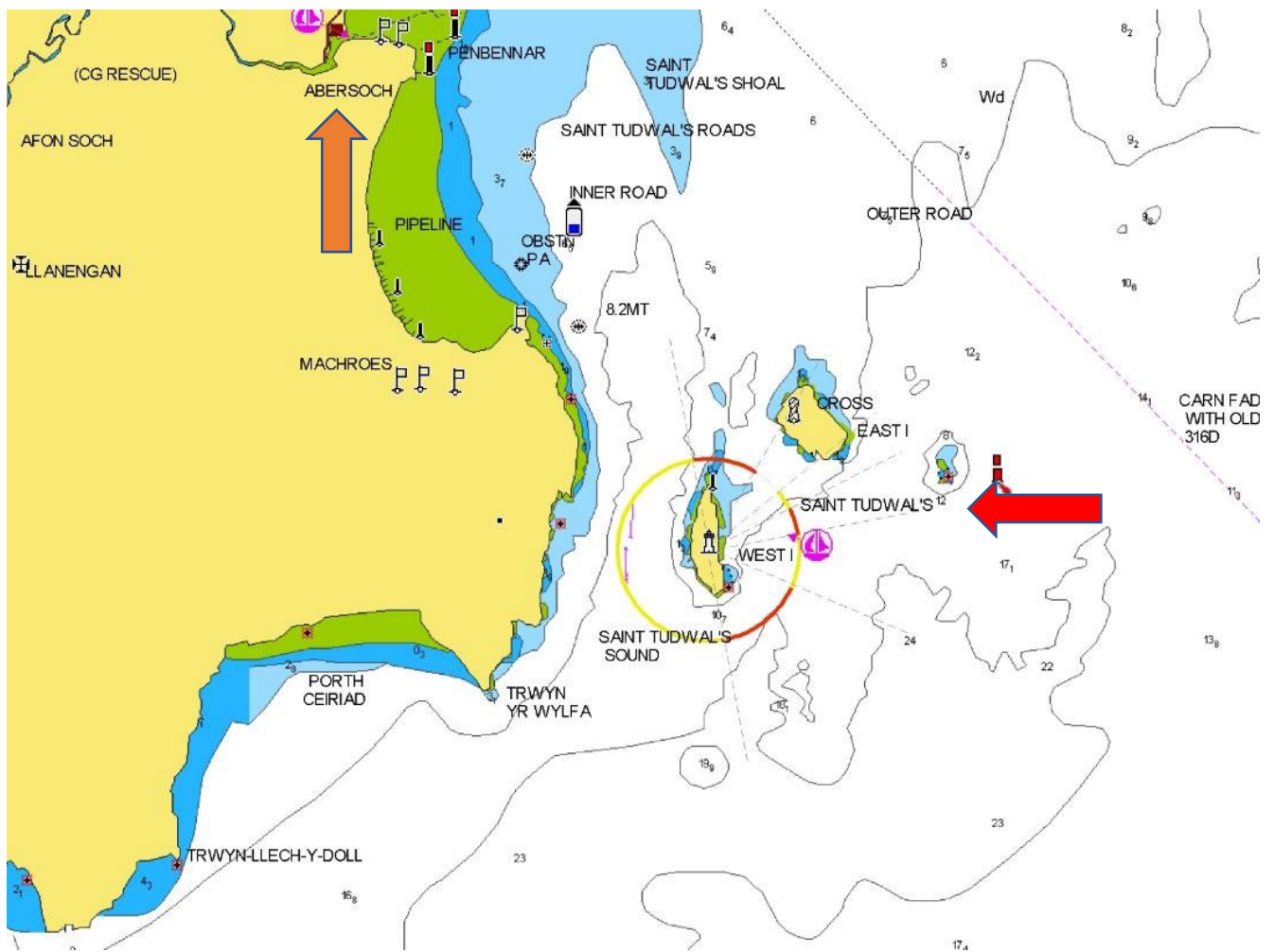
BNA	British Newspaper Archives
CB	Cape Breton, British America
LR	Lloyds Register of shipping
MADU	Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
NB	New Brunswick, British America
MNL	Mercantile Navy List
NAS	Nautical Archaeology Society
NAW	National Archives of Wales
FSM	Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners Benevolent Society
WNL	Welsh Newspapers on Line
w/e	Week ending

### 3.0 Introduction

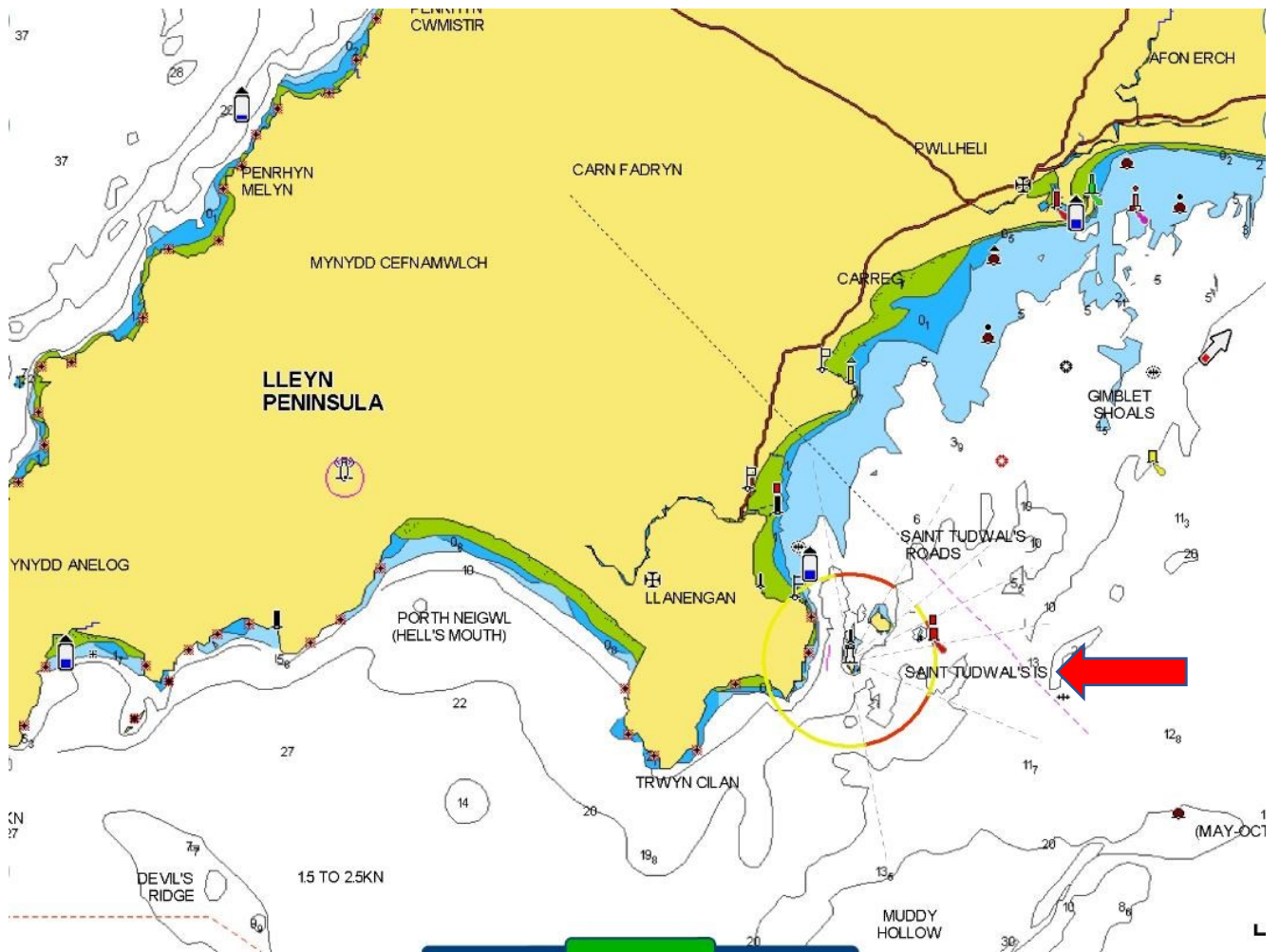
1. I selected Branches to research, because she was recorded as Unidentified in the database and I wished find out her name, to see how much information I could find about her and I wanted to find out what happened and I wanted to discover:
2. The dimensions of the vessel, although for this period of time apart from the draught, they would have only been recorded in on line information if the Lloyd's survey was available or the vessel had been advertised for sale in a surviving newspaper. Who the builder was and when she was built and any other information available about her.
3. Information concerning the voyages, cargo's, any events affecting the vessel, details of its masters, crew and owners.
4. To find out the sequency of events leading up to the loss of the vessel, whenever that was and the event in 1841.
5. To discover the cause of the event in 1841 and if the vessel survived, the cause of its eventual loss.
6. The events that happened after the incident in 1841 and up to and after its loss if it survived.
7. If there were any previous research of the vessel for the 1841 incident and its story.
8. If there was a wreck site for Branches and if it had been identified, dived and recorded.
9. If any salvage of the vessel and its cargo had been carried out
10. If any previous reports had been produced for the Branches.

### 4.0 Background

When I started this project I knew an unidentified wooden fully rigged ship had been involved in an incident onshore at Tremadog Bay, St Tudwall's on 5<sup>th</sup> December 1841.



St Tudwall Islands and Abersoch



St Tudwal Islands and Lynn Peninsula



## 5.0 Research Methodology

I used a Microsoft Pixel laptop with access to my home internet running windows 10 operating system. I also used my Apple I pad for research when I was away from the laptop and to assist in transcribing reports from the British newspaper archives. The new internet provider has now connected my home by a fibre connection so it is very much faster. The Lap top uses bling search engine but I also use Goggle which produces less advertisements and less Americanised content.

I searched The British Newspaper Archives (BNA ) for "shipwreck St Tudwall" in December 1841 and found a match for a barque Branches wrecked on the correct date. I also then searched Welsh newspapers on line for the same words with no match, but using "Branches" found a match.

I searched Lloyds Register of Shipping ( LR ) for "Branches" looking for details of her dimensions, master, builders and owners from 1826 with a match. I then searched yearly until 1842.

I searched LR ships, plans and survey reports for "Branches" with no match.

I searched The British Newspaper Archives (BNA) for "Branches Morrison", "Branches Atkinson", "Branches Forsythe", "Branches Cyrus", "Branches Everett", "Branches Huggins", "Branches Mc Kenzie", "Branches M'Kenzie", "Branches Walker", "Ship Branches", "Branches Quebec" "Branches M'Rae", "Barque Branches", and "Branches London" looking for sailings, arrivals, a launch, owners, builders, mishaps and any details of her loss and found a number of matches. I searched the masters names but only found the same names as masters on other ships, but no connection.

I searched Welsh newspapers on line for ""Branches", " looking for sailings, arrivals, owners, and any details of her loss and found a match for her loss.

I searched Coflein site for ""Branches", " looking for any details of the wreck and a chart with no match.

I searched wreckeu site for ""Branches", " looking for any details of the wreck with no matches.

I searched "Canadian shipping" on Google and found a website archives.gnb.ca, a New Brunswick web site and looked in the ship index and found Branches and opened the list of passengers for 1833 with the original declaration by the master, copy with list. I also searched Wikipedia wrecks in December 1841 and found Branches listed as wrecked at St Tudwall's with a reference to North Wales

Chronicle edition 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1842 and The Times 8<sup>th</sup> December 1842. I was able to search the North Wales Chronicle in WNL and found a match but the Times is not included with BNA.

I search Google for Osborn & Co and found the Usborn family tree with details of Henry Usborn and the company. I also searched " Scofield and Co" with no match.

I searched the Library and Archives of Canada for "Branches" with no matches in Quebec and St John

## 6.0 Results

Vessel	Name/s	Branches	
	Type	Fully rigged ship converted to a Barque	
		Cargo	
Built	Date	1826	
	Builder	Unknown	
		Quebec	
Construction	Materials	Wood	
	Decks	Two	
	Bulkheads	None	
Propulsion	Type	Sail	
	Details	Square rigged - converted aft mast to fore & aft rigged	
Engine	Details	N/A	
	Boilers		
Drive	Type		
	Number		
Dimensions	Length	Unknown ft	ins
	Beam	Unknown ft	ins
	Draught	18 ft	0 ins
Tonnage	Gross	452	
	Net		
Owner	First	Osborn & Co	
		Quebec and London	
	Last	Unknown	
	Others	Atkinson , Scovil & Summers	
Registry	Port	Quebec, New Brunswick	
	Flag	British	
	Number		
History	Routes	London to Quebec	
		Dublin and Liverpool to St John's NB	
	Cargo	Timber. Emigrants and passengers inc British Army, Whale products, Salt, Railway Iron	
Final Voyage	From	Liverpool 27 <sup>th</sup> November 1841	
	To	Savannah	
	Captain	Donald M'Rae	
	Crew	18	
	Passengers	None	
	Cargo	Salt and Railway Iron	
Wrecking	Date	5 <sup>th</sup> December 1841	
	Location	St Tudwall island	
	Cause	Severe gale	
	Loss of life	None	
	Outcome	Total loss and cargo salvaged by divers later	

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Monday 19 May 1828**

For QUEBEC

The fine new Ship BRANCHES, about 500 tons burthen ; will positively sail the 26th Instant; has excellent accommodations for Cabin and Steerage Passengers. Apply to Captain Morison, on board ; lying at the West India Dock Buoy.

**The Ships List 1828**

Quebec 24<sup>th</sup> July 1828 Quebec arrived ship Branches, Morrison from London  
Passengers

The Honourable H M Percival Collector of HM Customs

Mr. Small and wife and mother

Mr. Goldsmith

2 x Mr. Coxwells

Dr. Lyon & family

4 settlers

Consigned to J. Dyke

In ballast

**Sussex Advertiser - Monday 19 April 1830**

**FOR QUEBEC & MONTREAL,  
TO SAIL THE FIRST OF MAY**

**T**HE fine, fast-sailing Ship, **BRANCHES**,  
DONALD **MORRISON**, Commander, burthen  
500 tons, copper fastened, lying in the London  
Dock, has excellent accommodation for cabin and  
steerage passengers. Steerage passage-money for  
Adults £4, and for children under fourteen years  
half-price.

For passage, apply to **JAMES CHAPMAN, No. 2,**  
Principal Entrance, London Dock.

**A Good Situation for a Shop in a General**

This advertisement appeared more than once in the Sussex Advertiser and also in the Bucks Gazette

### **1830 Ships List**

June 5 1830 Portsmouth Cargo ship Branches put in here on Wednesday due to contrary winds carrying elements of 71<sup>st</sup> and 79<sup>th</sup> Foot regiments to Quebec.

### **Cumberland Pacquet, and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser - Tuesday 20 July 1830**

On the 1st of July the Diamond boarded by a boat from the ship Branches, Capt. Morrison, from London to Quebec, with detachments from the 71st and 79th Regiments, and Marines on board, lat.42 56. N. long. 31. 3 W., out 40 days, all well.

### **Morning Post - Monday 30 August 1830**

The Branches, Morrison, Master, with troops from England, had arrived at Quebec previous to the departure of the Britomart.

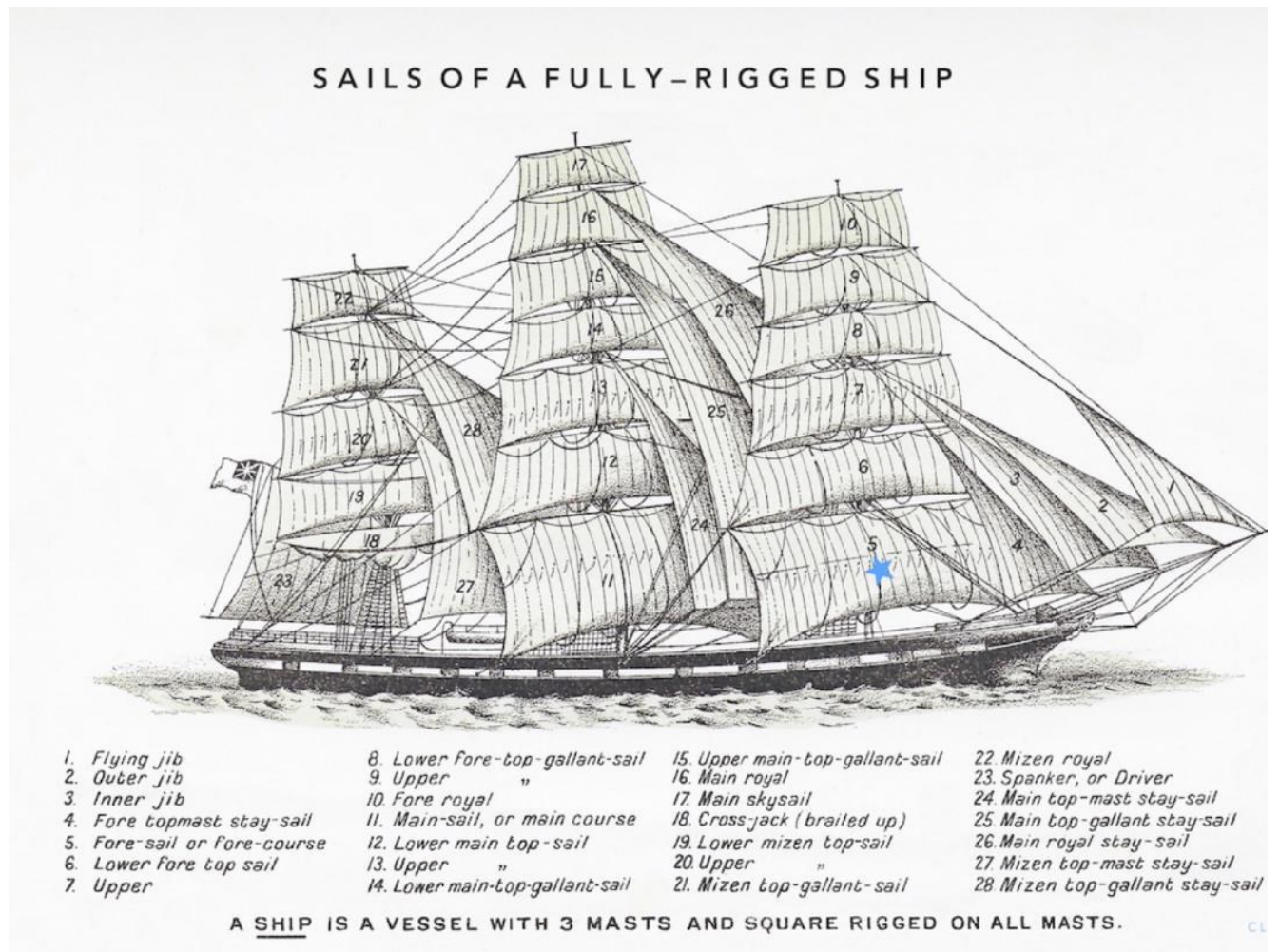



Fig. 1 Sail Plan for a Fully Rigged Ship

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Tuesday 11 January 1831****SALES BY THE CANDLE.**

At LLOYD'S COFFEE-HOUSE, CORNHILL,  
 THIS DAY, January 11, at Half-past Two,  
 THE remarkably fine fast-sailing Ship  
**BRANCHES**, 452.30-94 tons; D. Morrison,  
 Commander; built at Quebec in 1827 of the very best ma-  
 terials, for the present owners; is abundantly found with  
 good and useful stores, stows a large cargo for her tonnage,  
 and can be sent to sea at a trifling expense. Now lying in  
 the Surrey Canal. For further particulars, apply to  
 M'GHEE and PAGE, Sworn Brokers,  
 21, Exchange-buildings.

At LLOYD'S COFFEE HOUSE, CORNHILL,  
 On FRIDAY, January 14, at Two, (on account of the  
 Underwriters,)  
 A ROUIT 96 Fathoms of 1½ Inch Patent Proved

**Morning Advertiser - Friday 20 May 1831**

COURT FOR THE RELIEF OF INSOLVENT DEBTORS. The Matters of the Petitions and Schedules of the Prisoners hereinafter named (the same having been filed in the Court) are appointed to be heard at the Court- House, in Portugal-street, Lincoln's Inn-fields, on Friday, the 9th of June, 1831, at Nine o'clock in the Forenoon.

Dowers, Edward, of Lower John-street, Commercial-road, late first mate of the ship Branches.

**Saint James's Chronicle - Saturday 11 August 1832**

FALMOUTH.—SSE. light. —Arrived Off port, the Branches, Atkinson, from Quebec, with loss of bowsprit, and foremast sprung.

**Royal Cornwall Gazette - Saturday 11 August 1832**

Falmouth Tuesday arrived - Warren, from Plymouth, for Cardiff and Bristol, with loss of fore-top- mast, jib-boom, &c. hull, sails; and rigging injured, having been in contact with the ship Branches. Atkinson, master, from Quebec, for London, off the Lizard ; the latter vessel lost her bowsprit and sprung her foremast.

**Hampshire Advertiser - Saturday 25 February 1832**

FIRST SPRING SHIP, TO SAIL ON THE  
FIFTEENTH OF MARCH,

For QUEBEC, first-class Ship, BRANCHES, burthen 456 tons per register,  
C. Atkinson, Commander.

This fine vessel has spacious accommodation for Passengers, being upwards of seven feet high in the 'tween decks; berths will be fitted up in the best manner, and every attention paid to insure the comfort of Passengers.

Canada Company hold out great inducement to Emigrants wishing to settle their Lands in Canada, and assist forwarding them on their arrival Quebec. The Subscriber will furnish Passengers by this superior vessel with every information on subject. Parish Officers will be treated with for any number Emigrants, on very advantageous terms. For freight or passage, apply to John Shaw, 11, Crutched Friars, London, who has a fine Ship for NEW YORK, to sail the 1st of April.

This advertisement also appeared the Brighton Gazette and Essex Standard

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Friday 15 March 1833**

THE fine Ship BRANCHES, 452 tons register, built Quebec, under particular inspection, in the year 1826, by one of the most experienced Shipwrights, for the private trade of the owners is copper-fastened and English tree nailed throughout. This vessel is well found in stores, and is peculiarly adapted for the Quebec trade, both as regards stowage and passengers, being nearly seven feet high between decks, and having just delivered cargo of above 700 loads of masts and timber. Now lying in the Commercial Dock.

For inventories and further particulars apply to JOHN CHAPMAN and Co. Brokers, 2, Leadenhall Street.



The advertisement appeared weekly from January until April 1833

**Passengers landed at St John 1833 by Ship Branches**

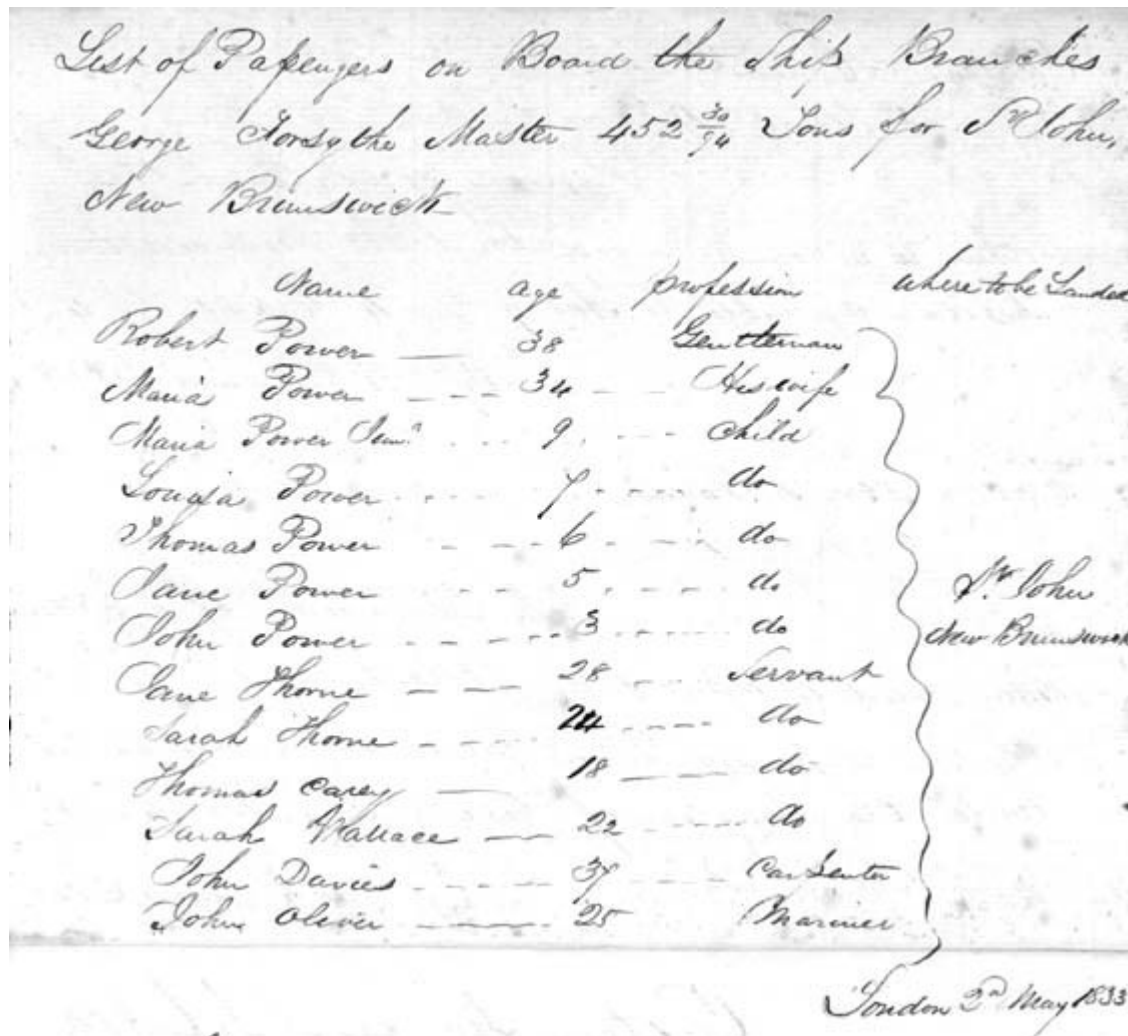


Fig. 2 Passenger List May 1833

	Surname	Given names	Year landed	Age	From County	Country
Details	CAREY	THOMAS	1833	18	-- --	ENGLAND
Details	DAVIES	JOHN	1833	37	-- --	ENGLAND
Details	FORSYTHE	GEORGE	1833		-- --	ENGLAND
Details	OLIVER	JOHN	1833	25	-- --	ENGLAND
Details	POWER	JANE	1833	5	-- --	ENGLAND

Details	POWER	JOHN	1833	3	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	POWER	LOUISA	1833	7	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	POWER	MARIA	1833	34	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	POWER	MARIA JR.	1833	9	--		ENGLAND
Details	POWER	ROBERT	1833	38	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	POWER	THOMAS	1833	6	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	THORNE	JANE	1833	28	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	THORNE	SARAH	1833	24	--	--	ENGLAND
Details	WALLACE	SARAH	1833	22	--	--	ENGLAND

## Occupation

CAREY	THOMAS	Servant
DAVIES	JOHN	Carpenter
FORSYTHE	GEORGE	Crew master
OLIVER	JOHN	Mariner
POWER	ROBERT	Gentleman
POWER	MARIA	Wife
POWER	JANE	Child
POWER	JOHN	Child
POWER	LOUISA	Child
POWER	MARIA JR.	Child
POWER	THOMAS	Child
THORNE	JANE	Servant
THORNE	SARAH	Servant
WALLACE	SARAH	Servant

Some lists are only available for St John in 1816,1833,1834,1838

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Thursday 31 July 1834**

At GARRAWAY'S COFFEEHOUSE, CORN HILL, TO-MORROW, Aug. 1, Half-past Two punctually, The following goods, viz.

About 280 Tuns Southern Whale Oil  
of fine quality

27 Ditto Sperm Oil and Head matter

Ditto

10 Tons Southern Whale Fins,

Being the entire parcels per the Ward, Innes, a Campo Bello, N.B. and the Branches, J. Everett, a St. John's New Brunswick. Landed at F. warehouse, St. Katherine's Docks.

Catalogues and samples GEO. SOANES, 5, Austin Friars.



Fig. 3 Measures used for dry and wet goods

**New Brunswick Courier 30<sup>th</sup> December 1834**

Shipping returning to St John

Barque Branches 452 tons built 1826 sailing to Gt Britain owned by Scovil & Summers.

Scovil and Summers were listed as owning three other vessels, a fully rigged ship and two schooners trading with the West Indies, United States and Gt Britain.

**Southern Reporter and Cork Commercial Courier - Saturday 11 July 1835**

FOR ST. JOHN. NEW BRUNSWICK.

TO SAIL ABOUT THE 18<sup>th</sup> INST. FINE SHIP, BRANCHES, Capt. Huggins—600 Tons Burthen : offers Superior Accommodation for Steerage and Cabin Passengers, and intended to be dispatched as above. For particulars apply to the Captain on Board at Passage West;

or DEAVES BROTHERS, Cork, July 6. Lower Merchant Quay.

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Monday 01 February 1836**

Cove of Cork. Jan. 25. —Marine Intelligence, per Defiance, from St. Domingo and Bermuda:— Bermuda- The barque, Branches, Huggins, 59 days from Cork, bound St. John's, New Brunswick, put into Bermuda, short of provisions and leaky.

**Morning Advertiser - Thursday 04 February 1836**

BERMUDA – Dec.21 arrived Branches, Huggins, from Cork, with damage and leaky, bound to St. John's, N. B.

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Monday 06 June 1836**

Cove of Cork June 1<sup>st</sup>.- arrived off the barque Branches, Huggins, from St. John's N. B., for Belfast, 45 days

**Belfast Commercial Chronicle - Saturday 18 June 1836****NOW in PORT.****FOR ST. JOHN'S N.B. ,**

The fast sailing Ship, BRANCHES, E. H. HUGGINS, Commander,  
 Will Clear on FRIDAY, the 24th June, on which day Passengers will require to be  
 on board. This Vessel being very high and roomy between Decks, will be found a  
 most eligible Conveyance for Passengers, and she will be despatched punctually,  
 early application is recommended.—For Freight or Passage apply to  
 THOMAS G. FOLINGSBY. Belfast, 11th June, 1836.

**Belfast Commercial Chronicle - Saturday 18 June 1836****AUCTION OF New Pine Timber, &c.****THOMAS G. FOUNGSBY**

WILL SELL by AUCTION, at DUNBARS DOCK,  
 on THURSDAY, the 23d inst, Twelve o'clock, the CARGO of the Ship Branches,  
 Capt. Huggins, now landing, from St. John's, NB. consisting of about  
 . 800 Tons White PINE TIMBER superior Quality;  
 . 22 Tons BLACK BIRCH ;  
 . 116 Piece, SPRUCE DEALS;  
 . 9 M. 3 Hd. 0 Qr. ASH Hhd. STAVES;  
 . 9 Cord, HEMLOCK LATH WOOD.  
 GEO. C. HYNDMAN, Broker.

Belfast, June 9, 1836.

**Saunders's News-Letter - Thursday 27 October 1836**

FOR SAVANNAH

THE fast-sailing Coppered-ship ARKWRIGHT, Captain Bernie;  
 and for ST. JOHN, N.B-, direct, the Ship BRANCHES, Captain Huggins.  
 Both Vessels will sail from this port about the 1st November, and will take such  
 goods and passengers as may offer.

Apply W. and J. CARSON, Sir John's-quay.

**Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser - Thursday 13 April 1837**


Kingstown, Bay or Dublin - 9th, Branches, Huggins, from John's (N. B.), for orders ; The Branches. Huggins, arrived in 48 days from St. John, lost bulwarks from bow to gangway, on the larboard side.

**Saunders's News-Letter - Thursday 19 October 1837**

information.

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**FOR SAVANNAH, DIRECT,**



**T**HE fast-sailing Ship "**Branches,**"  
 Captain **Huggins,** 452 Tons Register, will take such Goods and Passengers as may offer, on or before the 26th instant.

Apply to the Captain on board, George's Dock, or to  
**W. and J. CARSON,**  
 Sir John's-quay.

**N. B.**—Should sufficient inducement be given, she would call into Maderia, and land passengers.

---

**FOR LIVERPOOL,**



**T**HE "**Calista,**" Captain Pallot, lying in George's Dock, will take such goods as may offer before Saturday first, at low rates of freight.

**Morning Post - Wednesday 24 October 1838**

THAMES OFFICE.-Assault at SEA.-Capt. Hugh Mackenzie, the master of the ship Branches, from St. John's New Brunswick, was brought before Mr. Ballantine and Mr Greenwood yesterday on a charge of assaulting Thomas Combs, the cook of the vessel, on the high seas. It appeared from the evidence of the complainant, a black man, that one morning in the early part of the present month, the hot

water was not ready in sufficient time for breakfast, and the captain beat him across the back and shoulders with a broomstick in the cabin. He ran upon deck and the captain pursued him and again struck him across the head and arm in a very savage manner. He was marked with the blows. The witness then complained that he had shipped from St. John's to London and not for the return voyage, and the captain refused to pay him off and discharge him.

A seaman stated that he saw the captain chasing the cook, and saw him striking him with the broomstick.

The captain, in defence, said the cook was negligent, and he did touch him up a little with a piece of a stick like a broom, and make him caper ; but he deserved it. The man had kept constantly deserting from the vessel since she had been in this port, and he was under articles to go back to the place where he entered; but he would be glad to pay him off and leave him here, if he was permitted by the Custom-house to do so. The captain was here entering into a long account about the man's wages and other matters, when.

Mr. Ballantine, interrupting, said he had nothing to do with that ; the question before him related to an assault according to his own account and to use his own phraseology, he had touched up the man with a stick like a broom

The Captain – I did sir; you don't know what sort of fellow I have to deal with.

Mr Greenwood – You had no right to do it your conduct is most exceedingly improper.

The Captain— I would pay him off in a minute if I could. If we do not touch them up i sometimes the insurers at Lloyds would suffer.

Mr. Ballantine – Nonsense. I would rather Lloyds suffer than these men. The law does not entrust you with authority to beat men in this manner, because your breakfast was not ready the minute you ordered it.

The cook here said the captain had threatened to kill him and throw him overboard on the return voyage to St. John's

Mr. Ballantine— He won't do that; and if he molests you again you must complain to the authorities. If you have signed articles to go the whole voyage you must return with the ship. We don't want you here, knocking about the streets.

The Captain — I would pay him in a minute if I could, I thought I could give him a knock or two.

Mr. Ballantine — We fancy on this side of the Atlantic that you have no right to beat him and you will pay a fine of 18s. to the Queen.

The Captain — Well, the Queen is welcome to the money ; I'll pay it. I want him to go out and fight for the Queen in the colony. We shall want men there, you know.

Mr. Ballantine— Well, take him back with you, but don't ill use him ; we don't want him here.

Andrew Gray, the mate of the same vessel, was charged with assaulting James Downey, an Irish youth, who stated that in the month of September, at sea, the mate ordered him to clean the mizen chains, but he did not know where to find them, or what they were. The mate then sent him aloft, but he could not go high enough, and when he came down the mate seized him by the arms and beat him with a piece of rope until he was tired, and then he left off. He had marks on his person then.

Mr. Ballantine — You appear to be a clever youth. (A laugh.) What did he tell you to do aloft ?

The complainant— Och, fait, Sir, it was something or other. I could not get so far as the two blocks he sent me to.

Mr. Ballantine— You must be a most extraordinary seaman not to be able to go up aloft.

Davidson, another Irishman, with about the same qualities as a sailor as the last witness, said " Downey could not get more than half way up the rigging, and the mate took a rope and bate him with it."

Mr. Ballantine -How thick was the rope ?

Witness— About half an inch, or thereabouts.

Mr. Ballantine— It was enough to break his bones. Why, you seem to be a most expert seaman ; what are you ?

Witness— An Irishman, born in America, Sir-(Loud laughter)— and brought up in Ireland afterwards, and gone back again.

Mr. Ballantine — Was he sick on the voyage ?

Witness— Sick, very, Sir; it was say-sickness.

Mr. Ballantine— I suppose so. How came you to ship such men as these ?



The mate said it was difficult to procure seamen at St. John's, and they were obliged to take whom they could get. The complainant signed articles as ordinary seaman at £3. 10s., and he looked for him to do some good for that, but he was lazy, filthy, and saucy. He asked him to clean the mizen chains, but he could not do that, and he then told him to go aloft, and he said he might kill him, but he would not. He took up two pieces of spun yarn, and gave him ten or twelve stripes with it. He had prevented the crew beating him fifty times during the voyage.

Mr. Ballantine — You have committed an assault. You must pay a fine of 5s. to the Queen.

### **Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser - Friday 27 August 1841**

#### IMPORTS

#### BRITISH AMERICA

Branches, (452) A White, from St. John, N.B. 662 pecs fir timber :3 fms lathwood. 289 deals, 1½ c 14 w o handspikes, 93¼ c 10 r o hhd staves, Smith and Irvine—B D

### **Liverpool Standard and General Commercial Advertiser - Friday 10 December 1841**

PWLLHELI, Dec. 6.—The large ship, reported yesterday as having struck on one of the Studwall Islands, is the Branches, M'Rae, from Liverpool, for Savannah. Crew saved, but the vessel is a total wreck.

The following are some of the vessels that have taken shelter in Studwall Roads :—Windsor, for Ceara; Liverpool. Taylor, and Horatio, —, for Sierra Leone, and Madras and Parope, for London.

**Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald and North and South Wales Independent  
11<sup>th</sup> December 1841**

SHIPWRECK IN STUDWELL ROADS.—During the severe gale on Saturday last, an unusual number of vessels, of all descriptions, took shelter in these roads, including some ships of very large tonnage. In the afternoon, it being nearly dusk, the barque Branches, of Liverpool, Donald M'Rae, commander, bound from Liverpool to Savannah, with railroad iron and salt, close reefed, in making for the roads, the wind being too short, the vessel missed her stays, and was driven on the rocks. The captain and crew took refuge in the rigging, where they remained for several hours, exposed to the rain and wind, until a fine spirited young seaman waded through the surf, with a line tied around his waist, to a rock, a short distance from the vessel. Having reached the land, he, by means of his line, was enabled to haul ashore a strong rope from the barque, which being hitched round the rock, and fastened to the bowsprit, formed a kind of stay, on which the crew, eighteen in number, descended from the rigging to the land, in perfect safety, the captain and chief mate, being the last to leave the vessel, which was then fast breaking up. Early in the evening were discovered from the island, and, to their great joy, boats were immediately put off to their assistance, from Abersoch. They were in danger of being washed away by the rising tide. We regret to state, that none of the officers or seamen saved a single article, except the clothes they stood in. The captain lost a chronometer, of the value of sixty guineas, two sextants, a barometer, quadrant, and all his charts; his loss in instruments alone amounting to £200. The chief mate lost a sextant, value £15., quadrant, and all his charts. During Sunday, the vessel, which is of 600 tons burthen, broke up, and is now a complete wreck. None of her cargo has been saved. On Tuesday each person was supplied at Pwllheli Custom House with a sum of money from the Merchant Seamen's Fund. On Wednesday the first mate and thirteen of the crew, came to this town. A subscription was made for the poor fellows by Captain Pigou, and other gentlemen, whence a handsome sum was collected, which afforded means of giving food and lodging to the distressed men, and also of defraying the expense of their passage to Liverpool on the following morning. The mate had with him certificates of the vessel having been wrecked, from the ministers of Pwllheli and Llanbedrog. We understand the captain is staying by the vessel until he receives orders from the owners; and that four of the crew have joined the Broad Oak, Mr. Coy, from Liverpool to Bahia, now lying at Pwllheli, short of hands. Later accounts state that, on Monday, several articles came on shore along Crigan and Aberaeirch beach. The agent for Lloyd's used his utmost exertions in taking care of the fragments of the wreck that were tossed on shore. The vessel is insured.

### **The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1842**

St Tudwall's Roads.- Mr Abinett and company of Portsmouth, since the commencement of the present fine weather, have been unremitting in their exertions with their diving apparatus, in bringing up a large portion of the cargo of the barque Branches, Donald M'Key, master, of 600 tons burthen, bound from Liverpool for Savannah, with railroad iron, castings, hardware, &c. and wrecked between the islands, during the gale on the 4th of December last. Two small sloops have already been loaded with cargoes of the above wreck. Should the fine weather continue, it is, expected that much more will be saved.



Fig. 4

A Barque

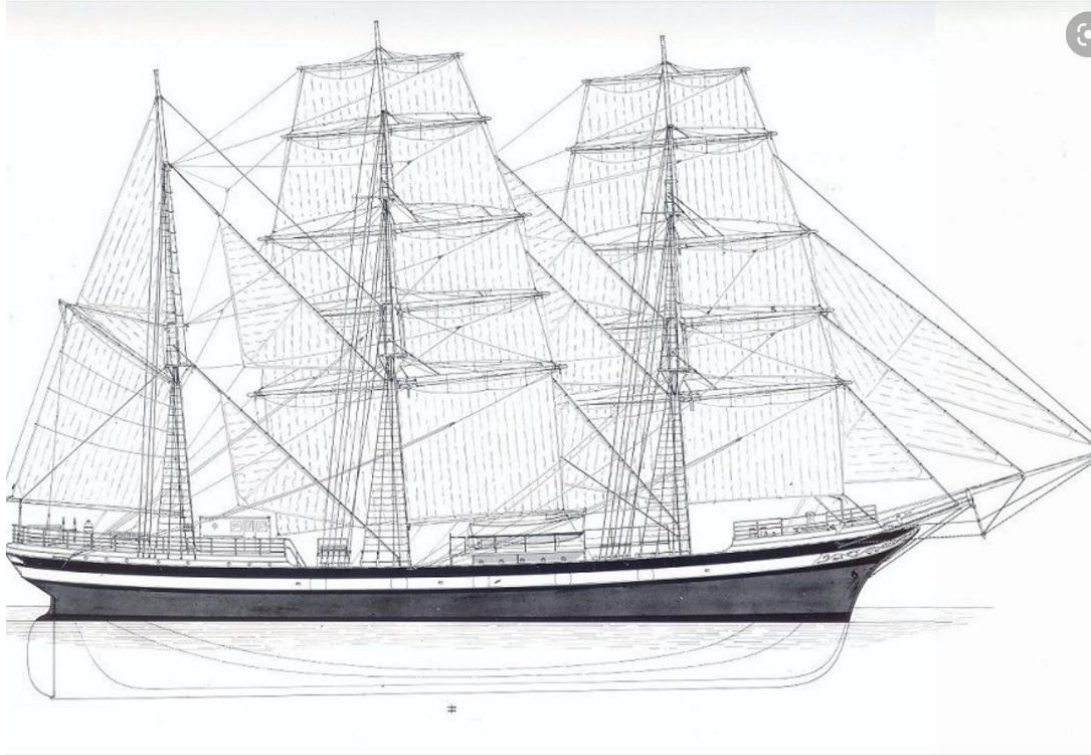


Fig. 5 Sail plan for a Barque

**Osborn & Co Quebec**



Fig . 6      Portrait of Henry Usborne of Branches Park, Suffolk (1820?)

Born May 14th.1778 at Great Amwell.

Lived at Heyden Hall, Norfolk, Branches Park, Suffolk and Portland Place, London

Married August 10th.1816 to Phoebe Anne, daughter of Sir J. Birch Bart. M.P of The Hasles, Lancs. Phoebe born March 6th 1787 at Liverpool.

Henry died July 23rd.1840 at Ryde, IoW and was buried at Cowlinge, Suffolk.

Phoebe died in Torquay October 20th 1875 aged 93.

Henry, was a timber merchant in partnership with his elder brother, John. They traded as Osborne & Co. The firm is first recorded (circa 1799) in Riga, Latvia, supplying masts and oak to the navy. In the first years of 1800's there was a huge expansion of demand by the navy engendered by the war with France. Henry established a pioneering branch in Quebec city in 1801. By 1804 timber supply for the navy was in crisis. Supplies from New England had been cut off by the War of Independence. Napoleon's stranglehold on Baltic ports between 1807-1812 led to the doubling of timber prices. It cost twice as much to import from Canada but this was more than made up by the high taxes and naval blockades in the Baltic. Henry was ideally placed to profit from the shortage. They employed sub-contractors like Peter Paterson who denuded the shores of Lake Champlain and the Thousand Islands of their fine oak. Patterson was to harness the power of the Montmorency falls thereby establishing the largest sawmill operation of its time in the world.

The company built several ships. A ship of 348 tons called the Anna Maria (after John's wife?) was built in 1804. In that year they were filling 20 ships a year with timber for England.

In 1809 Henry, now a very wealthy man, returned to live in England but continued to manage his Canadian interests from London. In 1818 the firm negotiated an exclusive contract (till 1822) to supply Canadian timber to the British Navy. The partnership with Patterson was dissolved in 1823 when Patterson took over Henry's timber interests in Canada.

He was one of the first directors of the Canada Company which was set up in 1824 to clear a million acres of forest (The Huron Tract) adjacent to Lake Huron in Canada and develop settlements. Osborne Township was named after him. The company was dissolved in 1953.

Between 1811 and 1839 Osborne, Benson & Co (merchants) had offices at 2 & 4. Broad St. London.

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Henry and his brother Thomas were in partnership with Thomas Starling Benson. (Thomas withdrew from the partnership in 1825). In 1830 The company invested in an enterprise in Swansea, South Wales smelting copper from ore and recovering copper from slag.

In 1823 he was deputy Lieutenant of Suffolk and High Sheriff .

In 1837 Henry was a director and shareholder of the Northern and Eastern Railway.

He became a member of the prestigious Canada Club, a London based dining club for wealthy returned merchants where friendships were cemented and prospective ventures discussed.

He had a house in Bakers St, London in 1812.

He lived at Heyden hall in Norfolk in 1816 (as a tenant?) and then bought the Branches Park Estate in Suffolk in 1820. In 1834 he was leasing a "mansion house" in Portland Place, London where he kept several horses and carriages.

## BRANCHES PARK

Henry came back from Canada when hostilities with France ceased and moved into a rented property Hayden Hall in Norfolk with his new bride in 1816. He started negotiating to buy Branches Park near Cowlinge in Suffolk in 1817 but did not complete the purchase until 1820. It had around 1,000 acres. In 1828 the property was offered for sale as "one of the finest estates in England; mansion in 200 acres of park, gardens and grounds laid out by Capability Brown; 13 farms; 2,178 acres". The net annual income generated was quoted as £3,712 (£191,000 today). The meadowland produced 2½ tons of hay to the acre, the arable 6 quarters of wheat and 9 quarters of oats to the acre. The sale must have fallen through. In October 1828 Henry and a Mr Partridge were involved in a lawsuit over non-payment of debt in connection with the sale of an estate. In his will dawn up in 1840 still refers to "my capital mansion house and estate called Branches Park in the county of Suffolk with the garden, pleasure ground, offices and buildings".

Atkinson, Usborne & Co. were shipping agents. George Usborne and Henry Atkinson are listed in a Quebec business directory in the 1840's at 38 Peter St.

and Lowndes wharf, Lower Town, Quebec City. There are also newspaper references to an Atkinson, Osborne wharf.

### **Abinett and Company**

#### **Belfast News-Letter - Friday 12 January 1838**

TREASURES OF THE DEEP.-Mr. Abinett, the diver, whose feats to the wrecks of the Royal George and Boyne at Spithead we have frequently recorded, returned to his residence at Gosport, from a most successful expedition off Lisbon. Having heard that a Spanish ship, with treasure, had been wrecked off Peniehe Point, somewhere about the year 1783, Mr. Abinett got his vessel fixed in a proper position, and descended in his diving apparatus; the result of his last three or four months work has been so beneficial that a considerable quantity of doubloons, dollars, &c. have been brought up ; a lump of silver nearly covered with shells, was exhibited in Portsmouth dockyard on Friday; a gold buckle was picked up, the pin and the baser metal entirely gone, but the gold in most excellent preservation, In a cavity of a rock Mr. A. found some quicksilver, but could not bring any up.

#### **Wexford Independent - Wednesday 03 November 1847**

WEXFORD FREE BRIDGE. INQUISITION FOR DECIDING ON THE CLAIMS OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE PRESENT BRIDGE. On Friday, pursuant the provisions of the Wexford Free Bridge Act, and according to the practice established by law in all similar cases, Court of Inquisition was opened at the Court House, Wexford, for the purpose of hearing and deciding, by the verdict of a special jury, the claims of the proprietors of the present tolled bridge compensation for the extinction of their vested interests, as they were not satisfied with the amount offered them by the Trustees appointed by the Free Bridge Act

Mr. George, Q C. for the present bridge proprietor's, said that, according to the understanding with his learned friend, Mr. Hatchell, on the other side, the general question to the Jury was, to ascertain the value of the present bridge, which was afterwards to be divided among the debenture holders according to their respective shares. Mr. Hatchell, Q.C., said he had since received a letter from Lord Rathdowne's agent, Mr. Flood, objecting, on part of his Lordship, to this course. Mr. George said that Lord Rathdowne had given his assent to the



arrangement for proceeding on behalf of debenture holders as a body, and to the appointment of Mr. Little as their law agent. His Lordship was accordingly represented by Mr. Little as his agent here ; and Mr. Little did not object to the proposed course, but on the contrary concurred in it. This point having been arranged, Mr. George, Q.C., proceeded to address the Jury on behalf of the debenture holders. He said that, the preliminaries connected with this inquiry having been gone through, it now became his duty, as counsel, in conjunction with his learned friend, Mr. Brereton, for the debenture holders, who were the proprietors of the existing bridge, to state the nature of their claim, and submit to the jury the grounds which they relied for demanding full and satisfactory compensation.

Making this general apology, would beg to offer some further observations, to state some further facts, in support of his case. The debenture holders had this bridge examined upon more than one occasion by Mr. Abinett, a person of the highest skill and of very great experience in the management of shipping, and in submarine operations. He had been employed in raising vessels in this harbour, and in several others. He had raised a floating dock at Portsmouth which had baffled all previous attempts, and at Liverpool, at Gibraltar, and elsewhere, he had given the most convincing proofs of his superior acquaintance with mechanical powers and appliances. Now, he would read from Mr. Abinett's evidence, given before the Parliamentary Committee on the Wexford Free Bridge Act, on the 28th of June, 1847, a passage which would show his estimate of the expenses sufficient to keep the present bridge in a safe and proper condition, His words were—" If Commissioners will undertake to pay £300 a year, I will, for either of the periods (for 20 or 30 years), undertake to keep the bridge in repair, and guarantee them against all ordinary danger." Mr. Abiuett would be produced as a witness, and he would on oath repeat the statement which he had previously made on oath before the parliamentary committee.

Henry Abinett examined—Is an Englishman ; has been these 16 years employed attending to wrecks, and in submarine works ; was employed by the American government at Gibraltar, to take the stores from the *Missouri* ; has been frequently employed by our own government ; was employed in raising the *Pincher* man of war ; the *Pincher* was in 24 fathoms water; was employed in raising a floating dock at Portsmouth; succeeded in raising it ; 300 men had been before employed, but they failed ; was employed by the corporation of Liverpool upon different occasions, and also frequently employed by Lloyd's ; was consulted upon the case of the *Great Britain*, but was not engaged in it ; believes he has more experience in such matters than any man in England; examined the bridge here ; examined it first about four years ago ; examined since about month ago ; found in much better condition than one might imagine ; it is not at

all in bad condition ; there are spur shoars, and everything that is necessary ; examined all with the assistance of his son, who dived and examined the parts under water observed the manner which the planks are fixed ; there are iron fastenings called knees ; the planks are uneven, some are new and little worn, and others older and more worn, but the fastenings do not appear defective; observed the uprights, the piles ; did not see one of them out of the exact perpendicular ; did not see any of them unduly leaning either towards the bridge or away from it; made measurements and calculations he now submits; they were as accurate as he could ; gave the depth each of the piles ; gave the velocity of the tide ; tried the tide on last Wednesday; has a log ship, large log, by which tried it; 2 knots an hour was the most he found ; the tide was a very high one ; to keep the bridge in repair would require £300 year, whether as a tolled or a free bridge ; for £300. year would undertake to keep it in repair for 20 or 30 years ; should not be any way afraid of ice ; does not believe that any ice will ever come to injure it ; if a ship came against it, and did any damage, should think it belonged to the owners to repair the damage ; ice from brackish water, or ice from fresh water either, would soon rot, and break in pieces upon striking against anything ; whether ice be from salt or from fresh water, it soon rots and becomes soft, knew one place, Herron bay, where a pier was built, a mile and a half long ; when it was built, it was said that it would be carried away, or that the ice would come against it and throw it down ; it is there these years, and it has not been swept away, and not the size of an egg has ever come there.

Cross-examined by Mr. Hatchell—Does not know whether Mr. George flattered him (witness) or not ; was consulted on the case of the Great Britain ; had raised the Pincher ; did not raise the Pennsylvania bonds; was employed by the American government, but not to raise the Pennsylvania bonds ; they were wreck, but not in his way ; was never employed in raising the wind ; served his time as pilot ; the business of pilot is to avoid wrecks ; did not always avoid wrecks; was before the mast; it was not the jury mast ; it was not before the mast he learned how to build bridges ; was not in Herron bay he learned ; it is 30 years since he was pilot.

Mr. HATCHELL—I thought you were not so old.

Witness—Did you think so? I could have went as gunner in an East India ship in 1810.

Mr. HATCHELL— Was it when you were a gunner you learned how to build bridges ?

Witness— I was not gunner. I could have went a gunner in 1810.

Mr. Hatchell O ! you could have gone a gunner. It was pity you did not, until we should see what an explosion should have now. But did you ever study civil engineering ?

Witness—Did not study engineering, but thought he knew as much many of those who did ; could not tell how many chains were in a curve of 16 radii ; did not know difference between curve and a gradient ; thought could build a boat ; was considered at home pretty good half of a shipwright.

Mr. Hatchell.—You are considered so at home. But what are you here? I have nothing do with what you are at home. You are the father of diver.

Witness—Was so; was at Portsmouth when he was home ; has vessels of his own ; has sometimes gone out with them ; has sometimes gone to Jersey with his own vessels ; does not now ; is happy to say he can do without ; is concerned in a shipwright's yard in Liverpool ; believes the ground under the bridge here to be good ; the bottom is smooth ; the water will pass the more readily ; does not believe the bridge likely to be injured by the tide; thinks himself competent judge ; some parts of the bridge would require repairs ; it would be improved having the flooring made even ; some of the caps would require to renewed ; repairs would be required in other particulars ; if witness had the bridge would fasten it with galvanised nails ; knows what galvanised nail is ; cannot tell what it is, only it is a nail that will not rust ; does not know how nails are galvanised ; does not know whether it by Payne's process, or by Cayenne's process ; does not know anything of Payne's process, or Cayenne's process ; has seen planks spring on the bridge ; knows they will spring after a car has passed over them, or after horse or man has passed ; it is not from the looseness of pile that happens, but the bridge is built on that principle.

Mr. Hatchell —Built on a loose principle ?

Witness— Built on the principle that it shall spring.

Mr. Hatchell — Did you observe any lateral motion ?

Witness—I do not know.

Mr. Hatchell—Do you not know what a lateral motion is ?

Witness— I not know what you mean by lateral.

Mr. Hatchell - You not know what I mean by lateral. And yet you have sworn that you have more skill and experience than any man in England, and that you have pulled up ships which 300 men could not pull up.

Witness— It was not ship, but a floating dock ; could not pull up ship with his hands ; had apparatus for the purpose ; does not know what lateral movement is ; knows what it is to go sideways ; did not see the planks, or any part of the bridge, going sideways ; does not believe that any of the piles are loose; two or three are decaying somewhat; knows that there are stones round some of the piles ; should suppose they were put to keep the ground from running away ; they are at the side where the great run of tide is ; there are none at the other side ; there no necessity for them ; it only on one side there is such current to make the ground run away, does not know what *echellon* movement is ; knows what a perpendicular is ; the bridge does not decline from the perpendicular ; did not see any of the piles declining from the perpendicular.

During Mr Hatchell's humorous cross-examination of this witness, the Court, which was densely crowded throughout the proceedings, was frequently convulsed with laughter. The Court, having sat without intermission from eleven o'clock in the forenoon till six o'clock in the afternoon, adjourned until ten o'clock the next morning.

Henry Nicholas Abinett examined – Is the son of Mr Adinett, who was examined yesterday ; acts with his father in making submarine examinations, and assisting in the recovery of property from wrecks; has been these last eight years, since he left school almost, in the habit of going underwater for the purpose of examination, and for the recovery of property from wrecks; about 4 years ago examined at Wexford Bridge: examined again on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September last; went down at one side and came up at the other; came up at the waters edge, and went down to the bottom; he went down, and his father sounded; examined everything ; found the pillars perfect, almost as perfect as the day they were driven; did not find holes, as he was given to understand he would; round the piles, there were hollows naturally formed by the wash; in some places they were 15 or 16 inches deep; in others not near so much; the average depth was 11 inches; found the piles in the same way as when they were driven; some might incline towards the bridge, or from it, but the inclination was very slight, and the perpendicular was generally preserved ; found the bed of the river a sort of boggy clay; it sprang under his feet, but it was tough as a boggy substance would be; it was a good thing to keep the piles in their position; there were stones around some of the piles: they were round 6 or 7 piles on the further side; they were thrown about the piles for 8 or 10 feet round; they were thrown at random; they were of course, thrown to prevent the wash or sweep of the current, from bearing the ground from about the piles, and loosening their hold ; took off the upper layer, which was loose; found a kind of cement under; the stones beneath the upper layer, were held together by this cement; they collected the sediment borne by the current, and it served to hold and bind them

together; was sure the tide would never wash away those stones; the upper layer was covered by something like grass or weed; it was covered by slime which grew or rested upon it; under the layers collected the sediment borne among them by the current; and it became a sort of cement to keep them together; there was no use in throwing stones at any greater distance from the piles; about 30 feet from the piles, on the other side of the bridge the river sank; there was a considerable hole there; from the action of the tide sweeping round the causeway; there would always be a hole there; found a pile with a hole in it; had his hand on every part of the pile to the edge of the water, and for some inches under the water; tore up the ground under the water; found a small hole; it was the size of an inch auger; it did not go through the pile; a rope could not be passed through it to keep that pile in position; there was no necessity for anything of the kind; that pile was as secure in its position as any other; the piles could receive no injury from friction; they could receive no injury from ice; it was not likely that any body of ice sufficient to injure them would ever come against them; examined the joists; examined the overlapping; some were 3 or 4 feet overhand some were only 5 or 6 inches, but these were dovetailed, and had knee or bracket underneath, to form, his opinion, one compact mass ; he believed that such was the effect of the mode of junction. The witness, having handed to him a knee bracket such he had mentioned, explained how it was used in fastening the joints, and then continued. When thus fastened, the head of the joist must be broken off before they can separated ; thinks this could scarcely have escaped the notice of any scientific man, who should have examined it; the planks were not deflected, unless that, whoever built the bridge did not find all the logs alike, and cut according to the sheer of the log ; there was vibration, but it was not such endanger the bridge or diminish its stability ; the vibration could be prevented by putting down spur shoars, as on the other side of the bridge; it could not only be diminished, but the whole of it could be taken away ; the height of the piles to the surface of the water was 25 feet; this was about the height in his opinion ; did not know what depth of water he was in ; the flooring was in very bad state ; that caused good deal of the vibration ; there were some planks only about an inch and half thick, and others were laid down alongside them 4 inches thick; if his father and he got the contract, they would lay down a flooring of American oak, or American elm; they would make that matter of consideration, but they would laydown a new and uniform flooring of one material or the other ; they would not lay it down now; winter would not be the proper time for the work ; but they would lay it down in spring and summer ; it could be done at cost of £300 or £400 for the year ; in his opinion the whole could be done in two years at cost of £600 if they got the contract they would lay down the flooring in two years, and expend so much ; the piles might be scarfed ; a pile might be short, and an addition might be made to the head ; scarfing, or additions made at the head, would not injure the piles; they could not be injured

anything unless what should serve to lessen their power to bear the pressure from above ; it would not do to put piece in the middle of pile, for then it would break ; but scarfing, or any addition made the head, would increase instead of diminishing its power to bear ; for the sum of £300 year, his father and he would undertake keep the bridge in proper repair for 20 or years ; they would first lay down the new flooring, and then make other repairs as they should ; at the end of the period the bridge would be in as good condition at present, or in his opinion better condition ; there would then be little of the present material ; it was like ship; making the proper repairs, as they become necessary, ship can made last for 60 or years ; but at the end of the 60 or 70 years, it will have little of the original build.

Mr. George—It will like the Irishman's knife, that has got a new handle, and two new blades, and is still a good knife.

Witness—Exactly so ; saw piles put down in worse place than there is here ; saw them put down in a much worse place in Liverpool ; the piles can be safely and effectively repaired by putting in graving pieces some graving pieces are put in there ; this done even in building her Majesty's ships ; a pile cannot be injured unless diminishing its power to bear the pressure from the cap ; anything that increases its power to bear the pressure from the cap serves to improve it; the piles under water are as good as when they were driven ; there are 3 decayed ; they could repaired about average cost of 50s, one might cost £5 but the highest average would 50s ; the spur shears are put down before the piles to support them, and keep them in their position ; they also serve to increase the stability of the superstructure, and to prevent vibration ; was told that the piles were driven by an over weight; this is the proper way ; was told that the stones were thrown round the piles to prevent the ground about them from being washed away ; Mr. Willis told him so.

Cross-examined Mr. Hatchell—Examined the stones ; says they not loose, but are a solid mass like cement ; it is of course, not so hard as Roman cement, but the matter formed by collection of sediment is sufficiently hard keep the stones together ; there is green stuff on them. Like grass or moss ; it is the slime which grows or collects upon them; the stones are about the bottom of the piles, and extend from them for some distance ; was under water for three hours, or three hours and half; has been under water for six hours; is supplied with air by an apparatus his father attended upon him here, and worked the apparatus; when he wanted to rise, had a line to give a signal; had a life line; the stones rise about the piles higher than outward from them ; of course, there are more stones about the piles, than outward ; said there were spur shoars before some of the piles ; the spur shoars are fastened in the ground and are fastened to piles at other end ; did not remove a great number of the stones ; removed a few ;

apparatus in which he descends is transparent in clear water, but not in muddy water such as in the harbour of Wexford ; could not see when he was down there ; was groping in the dark his hands were not engaged at all ; had a spear ; of course, he could lay it alongside of him, when wanted to examine anything ; laid it down when wanted to rise to the surface ; could find it again ; laid it at the bottom ; knew where had laid it; could not see ; could not hear.

Mr. Hatchell—Could you speak.

Witness - could speak to myself.

Mr. Hatchell —Or to the fishes. You must made awful appearance among the fishes. If we could draw on the mythology, might find some of the powers of the deep with whom we could compare you. Armed with your spear, and standing among the fishes, you were a powerful Neptune himself.

Mr. J. S. Waddy— Like Neptune with his trident.

Mr, Hatchell —Has any likeness of you in your submarine habiliments ever appeared ? Were you ever in the Illustrated London News ?

Witness—Was not very fond of being exhibited ; was not web-footed ; was lead-footed ; had weights lead attached to his foot.

Mr. Hatchell—With helmet on your head, spear in your hand, and lead your heels, you made your descent on those concrete stones.

Witness—Did not call the stones concrete; said they were joined and kept together by the cement the collection of sand and muddy sediment; in examining the stones did not go further down than about 3 inches ; the cement formed by the sediment came so high ; it was to be found under the upper layer; examined all the piles ; of course, examined all the piles round which the stones , were; and will swear that none of those piles wore loose; there were stones about 7 piles ; examined the stones about all ; those piles ; all were filled up with sand and sediment; the top layer was loose ; it was not in consequence of what appeared in Mr. Farrell's report that examined the piles with the stones about them, nor the pile that had the hole in it ; has not read Mr. Farrell's report; will take his oath that he had never seen that report, nor heard anything of it until after had made the examination ; it was not, of course, in consequence of anything appearing in that , examined the pile which had the hole in it; after he had made his examination, they asked him did he find a pile with hole in it ; he said he did ; they asked him did the hole go through, and he said it did not ; there were 23 tiers of piles ; multiply 23 by 4, and it will give the entire number of piles ; number 92 ; there might be hole in other piles ; there were holes in

some of them ; it appeared to him that they were from "dogs" from what are called "dogs," arising from injury received by the timber in the ship ; talking of graving piece means inlaying a piece ; what are called struts here they call spurs in England ; they take place from the junction; if the spurs were decayed as well as the pile, would put in a new spur, and scarf the pile ; a pile may be weakened by scarfing, but it may also be strengthened by it; you may scarf a tree as to make it weaker, but you may also scarf it to make it stronger; never had contract for building or upholding a wooden bridge ; the proposal for undertaking to uphold the Wexford bridge was not made from his examination of it, but from his general knowledge in respect to such matters; he knew the prices of timber, the manner in which it was to be applied to different purposes; besides his profession or occupation as diver, he is present acting as a shipwright in Liverpool ; could put in piece ; has put a sheet of copper on some of the West Indian mail boats this does not prove his knowledge of wood-work, but states the fact to show that he knows something of mechanical operations; did not serve his time a carpenter or shipwright, or to trade, but can do work as a shipwright ; had calculated what would be the cost of laying new flooring on Wexford bridge ; according to his calculation it could be done in two years, at cost of £600 ; his father and he had contracts for ships by which they sometimes lost; in one case a gale of wind came and destroyed the vessel, and they did not get penny ; the rule was, no cure no payment; they ran the risk in that case, and they would run it in the case of the bridge ; they had contracts with Lloyd's upon their general rule ; the proposal for undertaking the repairs of Wexford bridge was one made in earnest was not certain that the bridge would be pulled down ; but had heard persons here say that it would not ; if he got the contract, he should be very glad.

Mr. Hatchell.—You have told us the perfect state of the piles under water. We cannot contradict you. I have not been down with you. Neither has any of the Jury.

Witness—If you like, we shall take an excursion together.

Mr: HATCHELL—And you would leave this eternal bridge in as good a condition the end of 30 years as it is at present. You have even said you would leave it in a better condition.

Witness—Believed it would be in a better condition; believed they should be able to fulfil their contract and realise their promise; they had now about 30 ships on hands in their building yard Liverpool; it was a ship-building yard, not a graving yard ; the graving dock belongs to the corporation.

Mr. GEORGE —They have 50 men permanently employed. If they get ship which requires additional hands, they employ 200



Mr. GEORGE—I have put those questions, in order to show the respectability of the position occupied by the witness and his father, attempts have been made by other side to represent them unworthy of consideration. From the extreme length to which the proceedings on this inquiry were carried, and from our anxiety to gratify the public wishes giving the entire fully possible, we are obliged to postpone the remainder. The result was, verdict for £10,000 compensation to the debenture holders.

(Edited)

## 7.0 Analysis

The Branches was the only vessel wrecked in St Tudwalls in December 1841 recorded in BNA or the WNL and I could find no other wrecks in this location in a search on line.

The salvage of the cargo was unexpected and the description of commercial diving in the 1840's in the Wexford Free Bridge case illuminating the state of diving at this time. Mr Abinett and son seemed to give a good account of themselves under cross examination and the jury awarded £10,000 as the value of the old bridge, despite a report from a qualified surveyor condemning it as dangerous. It seems they had previously salvaged HMS Pincher a schooner, about five miles S. S. W. of the Owers Light-vessel at Selsey Bill from about 44 metres, an impressive achievement.

Henry Usborn seems to be part of Osborn & Co, and the name of his estate in Suffolk, "Branches Park" is the name of the ship subject to this project. Osborn & Co did build some ships but the builder of Branches is unknown. The next owner Atkinson may be the Atkinson who was in partnership with Henry Usborn as shipping agents.

The Branches lay in the Commercial dock, London until April 1833 advertised for sale and there were no recorded voyages from the previous August. The St Lawrence River is frozen over in winter as late as May, so it is not possible to dock there. She was advertised as a ship but in the 1834 LR this has changed and she was described as a Barque. The difference is the rigging and sails on the third or aft mast, which are no longer square rigged and the vessel requires a smaller crew, but still performs well. The advertisement for the sale of Branches was in Britain but the new owners were based in St John where she was registered. The owners given in LR as Summers but were Scovil & Summers of St John, NB.

The description of the cause of the wrecking " she missed her stays" refers to an attempt to change course into the Roads by turning the front of the barque through the wind. The lack of wind caused this to fail and the barque continued on the same course and struck the island. The modern term is tacking, when sailing vessels are seen zig zaging towards the wind. A sailing vessel will not turn when the rudder is turned, if the wind acting on the sails holds it in position or there is insufficient wind to complete the turn by the wind acting on and pushing the sails and vessel round past the bow pointing to the wind direction, onto the new course.

The records of the sailing of the Branches from Liverpool in November 1841 give the masters name as Issacs but the newspaper reports from Wales give his name

as Donald M'Crae and appear to have interviewed him from the details of his losses. So I have accepted M'Crae is correct.

The description of the losses of the captain illustrates the navigational equipment used on the vessel, and that he was prepared to pay 60 Guinea's for a clock in 1840, how important time is for ocean navigation. A realistic value for £63, is £3806 based on the monetary value (in 2017). This is the wages a skilled man could earn in 315 days in 1840. He also had a barometer used for advance warning of bad weather, storms and hurricanes.

In 1837 the advertisement for passengers and cargo includes an offer to call at Madeira to deliver passengers if "sufficient inducement was offered" and Branches did call there on its route to Savannah. The reason for the offer is unknown although it was taken up.

The prosecution of Hugh M'Kenzie, master of Branches and the mate for assault in 1838 was a surprising, since legal precedent at this time held the master and his officers able to administer corporal punishment to the crew to maintain discipline. The difference in this case was the assault was because the master's breakfast was late and not to efficiently operate the vessel. The mate was also fined and this seemed to be for the weapon used and the fact the sailor did not understand the orders due to lack of experience. The difficulty in obtaining a competent crew in St John was also brought out in the hearing, the master being forced to accept anyone available. The master could not discharge the two men because they were signed on for the return voyage and if they were left behind the owners were still liable for their wages, so that their care did not fall on the local Poor Law rate payers.

The Branches in common with other vessels of the time returning to British America carried emigrants as cargo and also elements of the British Army on occasions. The list from 1833 gives the names, ages and occupation of the passengers carried on Branches. The master George Forsythe may have remained since he was not recorded as the master on the return journey.

In 1835 the Branches left Cork for St John NB on 29<sup>th</sup> October due to the Atlantic storms put into Bermuda on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 59 days later, damaged, leaky and short of provisions, then after repairs arrived in St John in April 1836. A very long, perilous and scenic route to St John.

The BNA produced almost all the records of the voyages of Branches, its mishaps and salvage. A few arrivals at Quebec were from the Shiplist web site, with the WNL providing the detailed account of the wrecking and the story of the crew and how they were rescued.

A Google search provided the details of Osborn and Co and Henry Usborne and the Passenger list for May 1833.

The Port of St John NB was ice free in the winter and this provided an advantage to merchants shipping timber to Gt Britain as they had no competition in the winter or spring when other British American ports were closed by ice. The rates for freight to carry the timber were higher but the sale price was higher and could be sold at the docks without charges for storage. The position of St John on the Atlantic coast rather inland like the other ports is the reason it is ice free in winter, Fig. 7.

The LR entries finish in 1839 when it appears the Branches is surveyed and repairs are required to meet the standard which the owners declined to carryout. The existing owners are deleted and details of a new owner are not included.

## 8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

I have spent about 45 hours on this project with about 95% of the time spent on Line. The ownership of the Branches was held in British America and limited information is available, with only a few articles of newspapers available on line. Usborn and company were the exception but Henry Usborn returned to Britain at the end of the Napoleonic wars although the company continued in NB.

The identification of Branches as the unidentified wreck is clear from the newspaper reports and the salvage report.

The project has answered most of my questions, although no information is available concerning the builders, only a little concerning the owners and the crew and masters even less. The LR entries finish in 1838 so the owners when Branches was wrecked are unknown.

The Branches was smashed on the rocks at St Tudwall's , so a wreck site does not exist. The cargo was recovered by divers in May 1842 so little may still exist at the site.

There is no other research on line concerning the Branches.

The narrative of the Branches is simple, she sailed between British America and Gt Britain carrying timber with emigrants and passengers the usual return cargo. The cargo to or from Savannah is only known for the journey when she was wrecked. The way the cargo of railway iron was salvaged is interesting but the events concerning Branches lack human detail and do not warrant any further publication.

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**Appendices:**

**Appendix A – Table of Lloyd’s Registers entries for the *Branches***

***First entry 1828***

9	Bramin Bg	W Rawson	127	Scrbro	1819	G. Riley	10	Lo Blboa	A	8
	C.B.		<small>SDB</small>				<small>20 IK</small>	2PIConly		
420	— S	Higgin	245	Massa.	1816	W. Twitt	13	Lo Chlsta	E	1
	<small>s.C.1m.25</small>									3
1	— Bg	Whitnay	242	Boston	1820	Thorndik	15	Cs Antw.	A	1
	<small>s.C.22</small>		<small>SDB</small>					PIC		23
2	Bramley Bg	Brown	148	Hythe	1819	Clough	12	Lo Malta	A	1
	<small>s.C.23</small>		<small>SDB</small>					PIC		7
3	Brancepeth Ca	Clark	278	Sndrld	1824	H. Panton	14	Lo Coastr	A	1
	<small>stle Sw C.B.</small>		<small>SDB</small>	<small>len.26</small>						26
4	Branch Bg	W. Taylor	120	Dndee	1821	W. Ogilvie	11	Lh Riga	A	1
			<small>SDB</small>					PIC		26
425	Branches S	Morrison	452	Quebec	1826	Osborn & Co	18	Lo Quebec	A	3
							<small>44 IK</small>	2PIConly		

Branches fully rigged ship, 452 tons, master Morrison, built in Quebec in 1826, owners Osborn & Co, 18 feet draught, 2 decks, iron Knees, surveyed in London in March 1828, classified A , sailing London to Quebec, (44 Iron Knees, 2 Proved Iron Cables only)

1829

Underwriters copy - single deck, Iron Standards & Knees, 2 proven iron cable, 1 hemp cable, owners Usborne & Co, draught now 16, new survey London May 1829, still A1

Ship owners copy No changes, new survey London May 1829 still A1

1830

Ship owners copy new survey London March 1830, no changes to previous

Underwriters copy – new survey London May 1830, no other changes

1831

Ship owners copy - master and owners amended to Atkinson, new survey London March 1831 still A1, no other changes

Underwriters copy – master amended to Atkinson, new survey London April 1831 still A1, no other changes

1832

Ship owners copy - master and owners Atkinson, new survey London March, 1831 still A1 no other changes

Underwriters copy – master and owners Atkinson, new survey London August 1831, still A1, no other changes

1833

Ship owners copy - master amended to Forsythe and owners to Summers, new survey London March, 1831 still A1, no other changes

Underwriters copy – new survey London March 1831 still A1, no other changes

1834 only one copy on line

Now a barque, master Everett, owners Scofield & Co., registered in New Brunswick, sailing London to St John, new survey London July 1834 now AE, .O & P, new deck, wales and topsides 1834, built of Oak and Pine, no draught given.

1835 no changes



1836 master amended to E Huggins, damage repairs 1837, now sailing Dublin to St John, new survey Dublin June 1837 now AE2

1837 Master Everett again, damage repairs not listed, now sailing London to St John no other changes

1838 master Hoggens crossed out, now Mc Kenzie, owners crossed out, damage repairs 1837, now sailing Liverpool to St John classification crossed out and wants repairs written in.

1839 master M'Kenzie, no owner listed, no classification, wants repairs

1840 no changes, no classified last survey 1838

1841 no changes

1842 no entry.

## **Appendix B – The Timeline for the *Branches***

### **1826**

July 6 1826 Quebec cleared *Branches*, Morrison for Portsmouth

September 13 1826 Portsmouth sailed *Branches*, Morrison for London

September 15 1826 Gravesend arrived *Branches*, Morrison from Quebec

### **1827**

May 9 1827 Portsmouth arrived *Branches*, Morrison for Quebec

May 30 1827 London Customs house cleared *Branches*, Morrison for Quebec

May 30 1827 Gravesend sailed *Branches* for Quebec

June 7 1827 Portsmouth sailed *Branches*, Morrison for Quebec

July 7 1827 Spoken to *Branches* from Portsmouth to Miramichi Long 46 Lat 56

July 20 1827 Quebec arrived ship *Branches*, Morrison from London & Portsmouth  
· - ballast

September 14 1827 Off the Start arrived *Branches*, Morrison from Quebec

September 19 1827 Deal arrived *Branches*, Morrison from Quebec

September 21 1827 Gravesend arrived *Branches*, Morrison from Quebec

September 25 1827 London Customs house entered in *Branches*, Morrison from  
· Quebec Agent Jordan

**1828**

May 28 1828 London sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

May 30 1828 Deal came down river and sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

June 9 1828 Portsmouth arrived Branches, Morrison for Quebec

June 12 1828 Portsmouth off port Branches, Morrison for Quebec

July 22 1828 River St Lawrence arrived Branches from London

July 24 1828 Quebec arrived ship Branches, Morrison from London

August 21 1828 Quebec cleared Branches, Morrison for London

September 26 1828 Gravesend arrived Branches, Morrison from Quebec

**1829**

May 7 1829 London Customs house entered outwards Branches, Morrison for  
Quebec

June 14 1829 London sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

June 14 1829 Gravesend sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

June 15 1829 Deal came down river Branches, Morrison for Quebec

July 13 1829 Spoken to Branches London to Quebec Lat.44 Long 38

August 14 1829 Quebec arrived ship Branches, Morrison from London -  
general cargo

September 14 1829 Quebec arrived ship Branches, Morrison from London

September 17 1829 Quebec cleared Branches, Morrison for London

October 22 1829 Off Dover arrived Branches, Morrison from Quebec

October 26 1829 Gravesend arrived Branches, Morrison from Quebec

**1830**

May 11 1830 London sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

May 24 1830 Gravesend sailed Branches, Morrison for Quebec

June 5 1830 Portsmouth put in Branches, Morrison for Quebec with contrary  
winds

July 1 1830 Branches, Morrison for Quebec at Lat 42 56N Long 31 3 W – Troops  
boarded Diamond by boat

July 1 1830 Spoken to Branches London to Quebec Lat. 43 Long 34

July 24 1830 River St Lawrence arrived Branches, Morrison from London

July 24 1830 Passed Neva RN transport off Anticosti Branches, Morrison from  
London

August 3 1830 Quebec arrived Branches, Morrison from London -  
Goods J Dyke & Co

October 28 1830 Deal arrived Branches, Morrison from Quebec

November 3 1830 Gravesend arrived Branches, Morrison from Quebec

### **1831**

April 6 1831 Deal came down river and sailed Branches, Atkinson for Quebec

May 20 1831 Quebec arrived Branches, Atkinson from London

August 1 1831 Off the Start arrived Branches from Quebec

August 6 1831 Gravesend arrived Branches, Atkinson from Quebec

August 22 1831 London Customs house entered outwards Branches, Morrison for  
Quebec

August 25 1831 Deal came down river and sailed Branches, Atkinson for Quebec

August 26 1831 Deal put back Branches, Atkinson for Quebec

October 17 1831 Quebec arrived Branches, Atkinson from London

December 21 1831 Margate arrived Off port Branches, Atkinson from Quebec

December 23 1831 Gravesend arrived Branches, Atkinson from Quebec

**1832**

March 27 1832 London Customs house entered outwards Branches, Morrison for  
· Montreal

March 27 1832 London sailed Branches, Atkinson for Quebec

May 18 1832 Quebec arrived Branches, Atkinson from London-97 settlers-ballast

August 8 1832 Falmouth arrived off Port Branches, Atkinson from Quebec -  
· damaged

August 14 1832 Gravesend arrived Branches, Atkinson from Quebec

**1833**

May 2 1833 London sailed Branches, Forsythe for Quebec

May 6 1833 Deal arrived Branches from the river and sailed for Montreal

June 10 1833 St Johns NB arrived Branches, Cyrus from London

**1834**

July 14 1834 Deal arrived Branches, Everett from Quebec and proceeded  
· for the river

July 15 1834 Gravesend arrived Branches, Everett from St John's, NB

July 16 1834 London Customs house entered inwards Branches, Everett from  
· St John's, NB

August 4 1834 London Customs house entered outwards Branches, Everett for  
· St John's, NB – in ballast

October 12 1834 St John's arrived Branches, Everett from London

**1835**

January 19 1835 Gravesend arrived Branches, Everett from St John, NB

January 22 1835 London Customs house entered inwards Branches, Everett from  
· St John, NB

March 17 1835 London Customs house entered outwards Branches, Everett for  
. St John, NB – in ballast

March 20 1835 Deal arrived Branches, Everett from river and remains for  
. St John, NB

March 20 1835 Deal sailed Branches, Everett for St John, NB

July 3 1835 Cove of Cork arrived Branches, Huggins from St John, NB-  
. Timber for orders

July 21 1835 Cove of Cork sailed Branches, Huggins for St John, NB- Cordage &C

August 22 1835 St John, NB arrived Branches, Huggins from Cork

October 10 1835 Cove of Cork arrived Branches, Huggins from St John, NB -  
. Deals

October 29 1835 Cove of Cork sailed Branches, Huggins for St John, NB -  
. Cordage & C

December 21 1835 Bermuda arrived Branches, Huggins from Cork – damaged for  
. St John's NB

## **1836**

Previous April 6 1836 St John, NB arrived Branches from Bermuda after repairs

April 17 1836 St John, NB sailed Branches, Huggins for Belfast

June 1 1836 Cove of Cork arrived Off port Branches, Huggins from St John NB for  
. Belfast 45 days

June 7 1836 Belfast arrived Branches, Huggins from St John NB – Timber, Deals

June 26 1836 Belfast sailed Branches, Huggins for St John's NB

August 15 1836 St John, NB arrived Branches, Huggins from Belfast

October 8 1836 Dublin arrived Branches, Huggins from St John, NB - Timber

November 13 1836 Dublin sailed Branches for St John, NB – General cargo

November 14 1836 Kingstown arrived Branches from Dublin for St John. NB –  
. General cargo

**1837**

January 5 1837 St John, NB arrived Branches, Huggins from Newry

April 9 1837 Kingstown arrived Branches from St John, NB-for orders, damaged

June 21 1837 Dublin sailed Branches, Hogerty for St John, NB - passengers

w/e August 5 1837 St John, NB arrived Branches, Huggins from Dublin

October 11 1837 Dublin arrived Branches, Huggins from St John NB

November 20 1837 Madeira arrived Branches, Huggins from Dublin

November 21 1837 Madeira sailed Branches, Huggins for Savannah

December 29 1837 Savannah arrived Branches, Huggins from Dublin

**1838**

March 25 1838 St John arrived off Branches

June 2 1838 Liverpool arrived Branches, M'Kenzie from St John NB

June 27 1838 Liverpool cleared outwards Branches, M'Kenzie for St John NB

June 30 1838 Liverpool sailed Branches, M'Kenzie for St John NB

September 29 1838 Spoken to Branches, from New Brunswick, lat, 49. lon. 9.

October 15 1838 London Customs house entered inwards Branches 452,  
M'Kenzie from St John, NB

October 25 1838 London Customs house cleared outwards Branches, M'Kenzie  
for St John's, NB – in ballast

October 30 1838 Deal arrived from River Branches, M'Kenzie for St John NB

**1839**

March 16 1839 Off Cork arrived Branches, M'Kenzie from St John NB

March 20 1839 Dublin Bay arrived Branches, M'Kenzie from St John NB

March 28 1839 Dublin arrived Branches from St John NB

May 2 1839 Dublin sailed Branches, M'Kenzie for St John NB

May 28 1839 St John, NB arrived Branches, M'Kenzie from Dublin

September 5 1839 Demerara arrived from Branches, Walker from St John NB

November 10 1839 St John NB arrived from Branches, Walker from Demerara

## **1840**

January 24 1840 Liverpool arrived Branches from St John's NB

March 19 1840 Liverpool entered outwards Branches, Gray for St John's NB

March 24 1840 Liverpool entered loading Branches 452, Gray for St John's NB

April 21 1840 Liverpool cleared outwards Branches, Gray for St John's NB

April 24 1840 Liverpool sailed Branches, Gray for St John's NB

June 4 1840 St John's arrived Branches, Gray from Liverpool

August 14 1840 Off Cork arrived Branches, Petrie from St John's NB

September 15 1840 Waterford arrived Branches, Petrie from St John's NB-Timber

September 17 1840 Waterford sailed Branches, Petrie for Liverpool – ballast

October 7 1840 Liverpool entered loading Branches, W Petrie for Sydney CB

October 11 1840 Liverpool sailed Branches, Petrie for Sydney CB

November 22 1840 St John's arrived Branches, Petrie from Liverpool

## **1841**

January 16 1841 Dublin arrived Branches, White from St John's NB

February 11 1841 Liverpool entered loading Branches 452, A White for Savannah

February 18 1841 Liverpool sailed Branches, White for Savannah

April 12 1841 Savannah arrived Branches, White from Liverpool

July 2 1841 St John's arrived Branches, White from Savannah

August 20 1841 Cove Of Cork arrived Off port Branches, White from St John's NB



August 22 1841 Liverpool arrived Branches, White from St John's NB

w/e November 12 1841 Liverpool entered loading Branches 452, A Issacs for  
Savannah agents Smith & Irvine

November 27 1841 Liverpool sailed Branches, Issacs for Savannah

December 5 1841 St Tudwall Islands wrecked Branches, M'Rae for Savannah

### **Appendix C Locations of ports and explanation cargo**

**Cove of Cork** now Cobh known from 1849 until 1920 as Queenstown, is a seaport town on the south coast of County Cork, Ireland.

**Kingstown** It was known as Dunleary until it was renamed Kingstown in honour of King George IV's 1821 visit, and in 1920 was renamed Dún Laoghaire. On the coast near Dublin, built as the port to serve Dublin.

**Sydney** is a community on the east coast of Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, Canada

**Hhd staves** – the stave parts of a hogshead barrel before assembly

**Whale brain matter** - Spermaceti is a waxy substance found in the head cavities of the sperm whale (and, in smaller quantities, in the oils of other whales). Spermaceti is created in the spermaceti organ inside the whale's head. Spermaceti forms brilliant white crystals that are hard but oily to the touch, and are devoid of taste or smell, making it very useful as an ingredient in cosmetics, leatherworking, and lubricants. The substance was also used in making candles of a standard photometric value, in the dressing of fabrics, and as a pharmaceutical excipient, especially in cerates and ointments.



Fig. 7 Canadian Atlantic coast