

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



A Quebec Fully Rigged Ship.  
(Believed to be similar to the *Danube*)

Report compiled by:  
**Malcolm Whitewright**

Report Title:

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

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## 1.0 Abstract

This project is to discover information relating to the reported wreck of the Full Rigger Ship *Danube* (MADU Ref. 155. Fig. 1) for which there are several newspaper archived reports of it having gone aground on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1861 on St Patrick's Causeway, Cardiganshire, Wales.

The objective is to establish the facts relating to the wreck report and discover the circumstances leading up to the wrecking and the outcome, together with any other relevant information.

The research is limited to information available on-line as access to libraries and record offices was not possible at this time due to the lockdown for the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Table 1, Extract from MADU data base.**

MADU Ref. No.	Date Wrecked	Name	Location 1	Location 2	Details
155	06/03/1861	Danube	Cardiganshire	Cardigan Bay, Causeway	ran aground and broke up

Vessel Type	Mats	Ref.	L	Gross Ton	Net Ton	Year Built	Additional Notes	MADU Ref. No.
Fully Rigger Ship	wood	rl,rc,le, ch		1,104		1854	ACD F & ym over pt IB A1cotton	155

## 2.0 Index

<b>2.1 Table of Contents</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1.0 Abstract</b> -----	3
<b>2.0 Index</b> -----	4
2.1 Table of Contents	4
2.2 List of Tables	5
2.3 List of Pictures	5
2.4 List of Figures	5
2.5 Contributors	6
2.6 Abbreviations	6
<b>3.0 Introduction</b> -----	7
<b>4.0 Background</b> -----	8
<b>5.0 Research Methodology</b> -----	10
<b>6.0 Results</b> -----	11
<b>7.0 Analysis</b> -----	28
<b>8.0 Conclusions &amp; Recommendations</b> -----	29
<b>9.0 References</b> -----	29
 <b>Appendices:-</b>	
<b>Appendix A - Specification for the <i>SV Danube</i>.</b>	30
<b>Appendix B – Extracts from Lloyds Register for <i>SV Danube</i>.</b>	31
<b>Appendix C - Extract from Mercantile Navy Lists 1857 to 1885.</b>	33
<b>Appendix D - The Timeline for the <i>Danube</i>.</b>	34
<b>Appendix E - Extracts from contemporary newspaper reports.</b>	35

## 2.2 List of Tables Page No.

Table 1, Extract from MADU data base.	3
Table 2, Extract of Information; 'Diamond site investigation by Nigel Nayling'.	26

## 2.3 List of Pictures Page No.

Front Cover: A Quebec Fully Rigged Ship (taken from a painting)	1
Picture 2, Shipyard on the St Charles River, Quebec.	12

## 2.4 List of Figures Page No.

Figure 1, Copy of the Coflein report.	7
Figure 2, First registration of the <i>Danube</i> .	11
Figure 3, Extract from the Lloyds Appropriation List.	11
Figure 4, Location of Quebec shipbuilding	12
Figure 5, Extract from 'The Ships of Old Quebec'	13
Figure 6, Extract 'WOODEN SHIPS AND IRON MEN'	13
Figure 7, Location of Mobile, departure point of final voyage.	14
Figure 8, Location of Tusker Rock.	15
Figure 9, Deduced route into Cardigan Bay.	15
Figure 10, Extract from Ceredigion & District Herald 16 <sup>th</sup> March	16
Figure 11, Cardigan Bay Reefs.	17
Figure 12, Map of Cardigan Bay showing Reefs	18
Figure 13, St Patricks Causeway, Cardigan Bay.	18
Figure 14, Extract Ian Cundy (MADU).	19
Figure 15, The Danube Wreck position (Jan Lettens).	20
Figure 16, Map location of Grid Reference SH 49339 18559.	21
Figure 17, Extract from reports in Welsh Journals.	21
Figure 18, Report of Danube stranded but stable on the Causeway.	22
Figure 19, Extract from a report in The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 16 <sup>th</sup> March 1861.	22
Figure 20, Newspaper extract relating to cargo.	23
Figure 21, Report of Danube as total wreck.	23
Figure 22, Transcript of the Board of Inquiry.	23
Figure 23, Lloyds Wreck list 1861 6 <sup>th</sup> March	24
Figure 24, Suspension of William Heasley Master certificate.	25
Figure 25, Copy Neal McAuley Masters certificate.	27

## **2.5 Contributors**

Thanks to:-

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Dr J Whitewright

## **2.6 Abbreviations**

Abbreviations used in this report,

WA	Wessex Archaeology
IJNA	International Journal of Nautical Archaeology
MADU	Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
NAS	Nautical Archaeology Society
NPRN	National Primary Resource Number
OS	Ordnance Survey
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

### 3.0 Introduction

The Ship *Danube* was selected as one of many vessels wrecked on the infamous St Patrick's Causeway in Cardigan Bay. The *Danube* was also one of several ships engaged in the transatlantic trade in cotton and timber from New Orleans to Liverpool. A fully rigged sailing ship built in Quebec in 1854, it was owned and operated by David A Grainger & Sons of Belfast. The ship, on passage from Mobile, Alabama to Liverpool, after some inexplicable errors of navigation, struck reefs in Cardigan Bay on the morning of 6<sup>th</sup> March 1861. All but one of the crew were saved but after a period of time, lodged on the reef, the badly damaged vessel slipped into deeper water and sank as a total wreck.

The position of the wreck site is given by Larn & Larn as 52.20 N, 04 08 30 W – this position is in the area known as the "Cynfelyn Patches" – offshore from Aberystwyth. The ship actually made some way north after the initial grounding having ridden clear but severely damaged and flooding then grounded on the St Patrick's Causeway.

The following aspects were included in this research:-

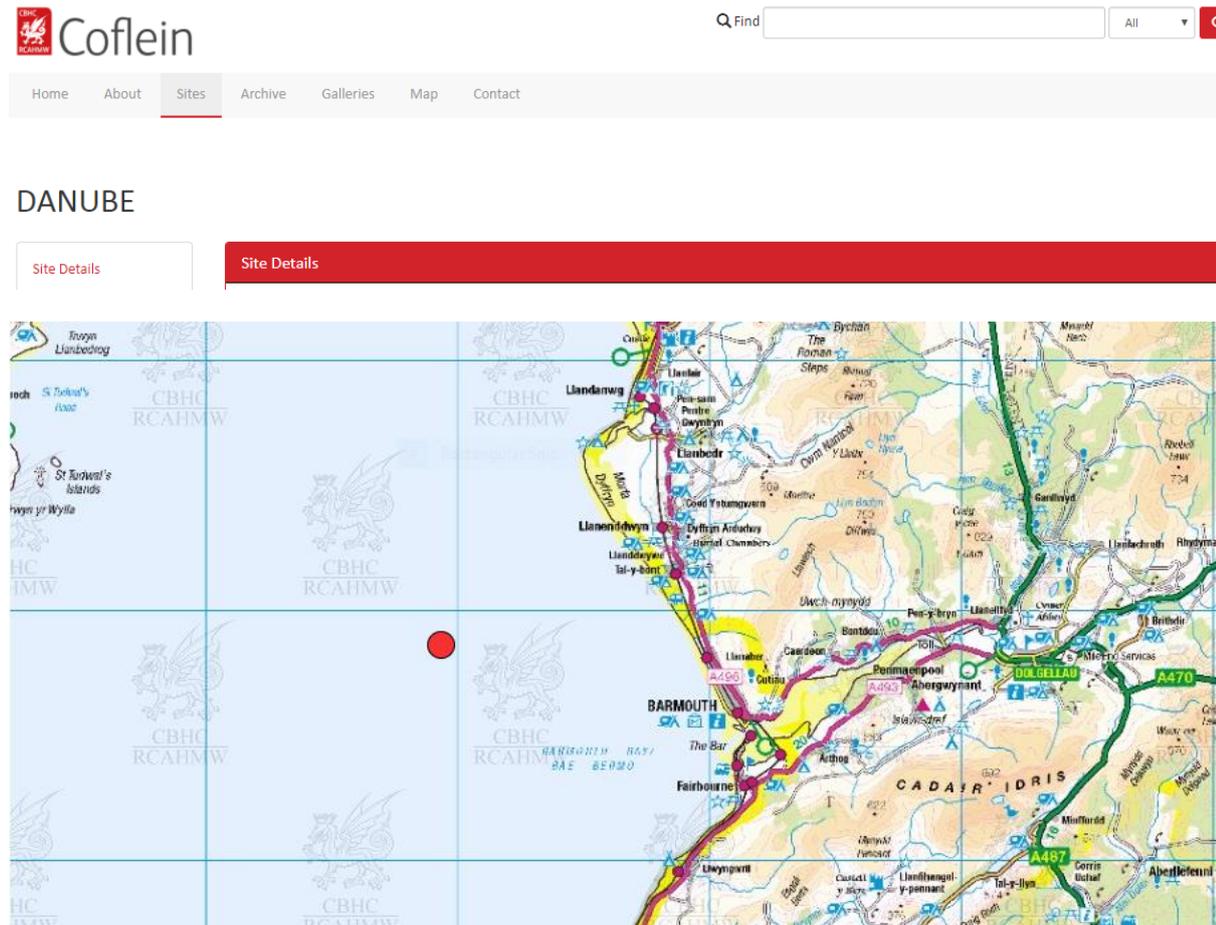
- What were the vessel's specifications?
- What historical information is available relating to the vessel?
- What was the story leading up to wrecking?
- What caused the wrecking?
- What has happened since the wrecking?
- Has anyone previously investigated or researched the vessel back story?
- Has anyone dived, recorded, surveyed or worked on the site?
- Has any salvage, etc. been carried out?
- Have there been any previous reports produced relating to the vessel?

## 4.0 Background

A considerable amount of information pre-exists in relation to the Danube. Most has been disseminated in selected parts from the Board of Trade Inquiry Report into the loss of the ship.

This information is largely summarised in the Coflein report (Fig. 1)

### Figure 1, Copy of the Coflein report.



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**NPRN** 272469

**Map Reference** SH41NE

**Grid Reference** SH4933918559

**Unitary (Local) Authority** Maritime

**Old County** Maritime

**Community** Maritime

**Type of Site** WRECK

**Broad Class** MARITIME**Period** Post Medieval

**Site Description** Archaeological remains associated with the loss of this vessel are not confirmed as present at this location, but may possibly be in the vicinity.

**Event and Historical Information:**

The DANUBE was a 987ton full rigged ship built in Quebec in 1854. Lloyd's Register notes that the vessel was sheathed in felt and yellow metal in 1857 and that it was fastened with iron. The vessel was owned by David Grainger and Son, Belfast who were one of the largest shipowners in Belfast at that period with ships that worked almost exclusively in the New Orleans cotton and Australian passenger trade. The company began shipowning in the 1840s with several full-rigged ships of 500-600tons. By the end of the 1850s, the company had five full-rigged ships of over 1,000 tons register as well as a number of smaller vessels, all built at Quebec. Technical specifications for the DANUBE are given as 1103tons; 171ft 1/10th in length x 20ft 9 1/10th breadth; three masts; one deck; poop deck; ship rigged with a standing bowsprit, square sterned, carvel built, scroll head; wooden planking and frames. First registered at Quebec on 19 August 1854 (no 75 in that year). The DANUBE left New Orleans on 2 February 1861 with a cargo of staves and nearly 3,000 bales of cotton. At the enquiry into the loss, the master McAuley that the ship was abreast of the Tuskar Rock (17 miles off) at noon on 5 March 1861 (by dead reckoning). From noon until 8pm, the ship was steered on a proper course for Liverpool for a distance of 50-55 miles. At 8 pm., for reasons which the Master was unable to explain further than the supposition that he was approaching the Irish Coast too close, he wore ship and stood back to the south, and then east, on which course he continued until 6 am on 6 March when land was sighted which the 1st Mate considered to be Strumble Head. From 4-6 am, the boson took charge of the watch, the 1st Mate being ill. At 6 am instead of going on the port tack to weather Bardsey Island, she bore up on an north-easterly course, running further into Cardigan bay until a red buoy was seen. All sail was set to work out of the bay but when breakers were seen, an anchor was let go but the ship immediately struck. During the afternoon, the DANUBE drove over the Sarn Badrig reef and was once more afloat, but with bulwarks gone, masts cut down and with 5-7ft feet of water in the hold. Seven of the crew landed at Dwffrun Beach in their longboat. One man was drowned when the boat capsized. A second anchor was then let go, but the ship grounded again on the causeway, and became a total wreck. The cargo was reported as likely to be strewn all over the bay. The remainder of the crew were taken off by the Criccieth lifeboat.

**Sources include:**

Anderson, E B, 1950 (?), *Sailing Ships of Ireland*, pg11-13

Larn and Larn Shipwreck Database 2002

Lloyd's List 8 March 1861

Lloyd's List 9 March 1861

Lloyd's Register of British and Foreign Shipping 1st July 1859 to 30th June 1860, entry 37 under D

Public Record Office Northern Ireland: Port of Belfast Shipping Register 1854

Maritime Officer, RCAHMW, August 2008

Similar information is summarised in the Larn & Larn entry West Wales (EG) Volume 5 Section 7.

However both contain inaccuracies and important omissions which I hope to expand on and clarify in the development of this report.

## 5.0 Research Methodology.

The following were used in this research:-

Acer Laptop with fast fibre wireless internet connection, I-phone.

Search engines used were

Google Chrome

AVG Secure Browser

Microsoft Office

Windows 10

Snip & Sketch

**Methodology:** first step to check out Coflein.

Then Lloyds Register. Mercantile Navy Lists. Newspaper records. Crewlist.

### List of sources,

Coflein: <https://www.coflein.gov.uk/en/site/search> comprehensive record on this ship wreck.

Lloyds Register of shipping: <https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archive-library/lloyds-register-of-ships-online> - Lloyds Register, starting point.

Library of Wales: <https://newspapers.library.wales/view/3310679/3310687/68/> - excellent for local news reports on the wreck, rescue, salvage, sequence, names and places.

[The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard Archive](#) - nothing on this ship.

<http://www.maritimearchives.co.uk/> - good to identify ships and for crew lists but no detail available for this ship.

Crew lists and other documents: <http://www.crewlist.org.uk/about/findingoncrewlists> - good for dates but no crew information available

<http://shipbuildinghistory.com/shipyards/emergencylarge/foundation.htm>

[https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/cchm\\_photo/id/6983/](https://content.libraries.wsu.edu/digital/collection/cchm_photo/id/6983/)

<https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?33705>

<https://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsalpha?>

<https://southampton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/FULL/WPAC/BIBENQ/>

<http://coraweb.com.au/Contents/Item/Display/2710> nothing available for the dates  
[Rhiw.com](http://Rhiw.com) no info.

## 6.0 Results

- The *Danube* was built in 1854 at Lauzon, Quebec, Canada. Commissioned by the Belfast Company of David Grainger and Sons. It was a large fully rigged ship 171ft long and 1104 Gross Tons. Built of wood with iron frame reinforcement. One deck with substantial holds, bulkheads and a Poop deck, three Masts, ship rigged with a standing bowsprit, square stern, carvel built, scroll head; wooden planking and frames. First registered at Quebec on 19 August 1854 (no 75 in that year). It was first registered with the Canadian Official number 13011 (Fig. 2). The registered at Lloyds with the number 14362 (Fig. 3). Coflein has the *Danube* at 20ft 9 1/10th breadth – it is difficult to believe that a ship of 171 ft. length would only have a breadth of 20 ft. I believe that this dimension relates to the depth. The breadth or beam would have been approximately 35ft. The ship was built under Special Survey by Lloyds at Quebec. Classed A1, 7years.

**Figure 2, First registration of the *Danube*.**

### Results: Ship Registration

Search term(s)						
1 result(s) found for "13011".						
Item Number	Name of Ship	Year of Registration	Type of Ship	Port of Registry	Where Built	Official Number
<a href="#">14480</a>	DANUBE	1854		Quebec, Quebec	Quebec	13011

**Figure 3, Extract from the Lloyds Appropriation List.**

Registered at Lloyds 25<sup>th</sup> March 1854 – note in margin 'Lost'

clip Home CLIP databases Contact CLIP

Appropriation Books, Official Numbers 14351 - 14400 (14362) Image source clip CLIP images

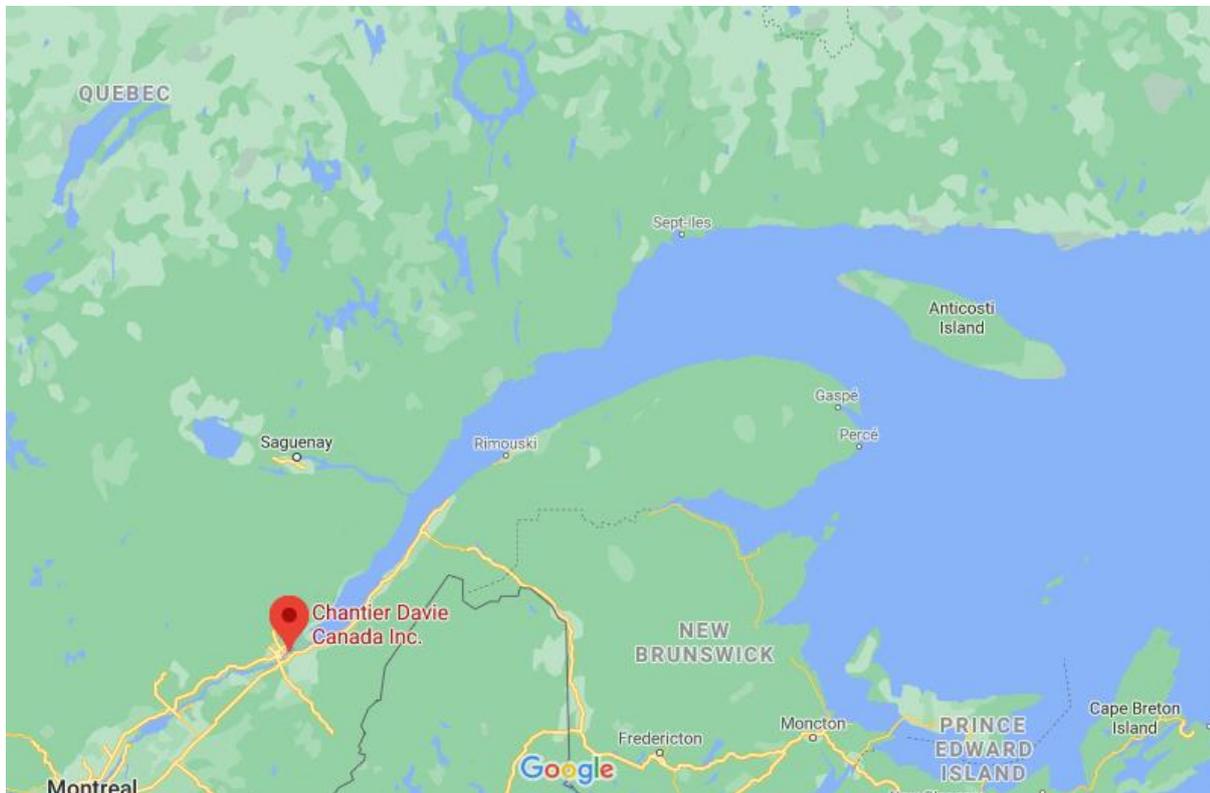
Official Number.	Name of Ship.	Tonnage.	Whether Steam or Sailing Ship.	Port of Registry.	Date of Registry.	Occasion of Appropriation.	Date of Appropriation.
14361	<i>Admiral</i>	60			36 - 1850		26
14362	<i>Danube</i>	1100		Belfast	05 - 1854		24
14363				Bristol	26 - 1856		

The period when the *Danube* was built was a boom time for the ship building yards on the St Lawrence River at Quebec. The Davie shipyard was founded in 1825 by Mr Allison Davie (May 4, 1796 – June 1836), an English ship captain; the construction record, however, only dates to 1897. The company was established on the south shore of the St Lawrence River across from Quebec City in the community of

Lauzon. Davie's father-in-law, George Taylor, had begun a shipbuilding business in 1811 and Davie apparently purchased those assets as well. Following Allison Davie's death, the company was headed by his wife Elizabeth Davie until 1850, when it became "George T. Davie & Sons" under Davie's son George Taylor Davie (1828–1907)

The shipyard in Lauzon, Quebec was designated a [National Historic Site of Canada](#) in 1990

#### **Figure 4, Location of Quebec shipbuilding**



**Picture 2, Shipyard on the St Charles River, Quebec.**



### **Figure 5, Extract from 'The Ships of Old Quebec'**

**FREDERICK WILLIAM WALLACE NOVEMBER 1 1932**

These timber ships were large vessels, ship and barque rigged, and equipped with ports in the bows and stern which could be opened to allow the stowing of squared logs into the hold. The logs were hoisted up from the water and shoved into the ship through the ports by gangs of men who specialized in that business. As the vessel sank deeper in the water, the lower ports were closed and caulked tight, and loading went on through the upper ports. This was the only way in which long timber could be stowed, as it was impossible to get it into the vessel through the small deck hatches.

The Crimean War broke out in March, 1854, and there was a demand for transports to carry troops, horses and munitions to the Black Sea. Coupled with the Australian trade, this created boom times in Quebec shipyards. In the summer of 1854 forty builders went into the game, fifty large ships were launched from local yards, and the business gave employment to fully five thousand men, whose families represented nearly one-half the population of the Ancient City and Levis.

### **Figure 6, Extract 'WOODEN SHIPS AND IRON MEN' by Frederick William Wallace**

In comparing the old wooden ships with the modern ones of steel, one is struck by the enormous size of the timbers and the thickness of the planking in the wooden craft. In a moderate-sized ship the deck-beams would be 14 inches square and the planking would range from 5 inches to 10 inches thick, according to position. In superior ships, the frames would be spaced such a little distance apart that the vessel appeared as a solid mass of timber ere the ceiling and planking were bolted on. With such ponderous timbers and beams and heavy planking, bolted in every direction, and braced by great wooden knees and further re-inforced by long iron knees and straps, it is difficult to comprehend the terrific power of a boarding sea that was able to break such beams and burst asunder the stoutly braced and bolted timbers. Yet this was a common happening. SHIP TIMBER Great Britain built her wooden ships of oak and teak principally, with some softer woods for decks and interior fittings; American ships were also constructed largely of hard woods. The Canadian ship was invariably classed as a "soft-wood" vessel, as soft wood entered very largely into the construction of nearly all of them. The principal wood used for ship construction in Canada in the 'forties was tamarac, also known as hackmatack, American larch, cypress, or juniper. Light and durable, some authorities claimed that a tamarac-built ship, being extremely buoyant, was better suited for the carriage of heavy cargoes than a vessel built of oak. Proof of its durability could be found in ships built of this timber being thirty and even forty years old and afloat and still sound and tight. An old authority states, "Few descriptions of wood, if any, are superior to it for ship planks and ship timber, and the clipper ships of New Brunswick, built almost wholly of this larch wood (tamarac), have attained a world-wide celebrity for speed, strength and durability." In the later years of Canada's wooden ship-building era, the large tamarac was difficult to secure owing to the prodigal manner in which it had been cut, and it was used principally for knees. When tamarac failed, spruce took its place for ship timbers and planking.

**Tamarack** is a softwood species that belongs to the Pinacea family. ... At the age of 30, this resinous species can yield up to 194 m<sup>3</sup>/ha. Its virtually rot-proof **wood** is ideal for outdoor use, not only as shingles, but also for patio furniture and decks. It is a very high quality **wood** that is handsome in appearance.

## Softwood species - Tamarack - Quebec Wood Export Bureau

**Tamarack** is a word from the native Abenaki language, which simply means “**wood** used for snowshoes.”

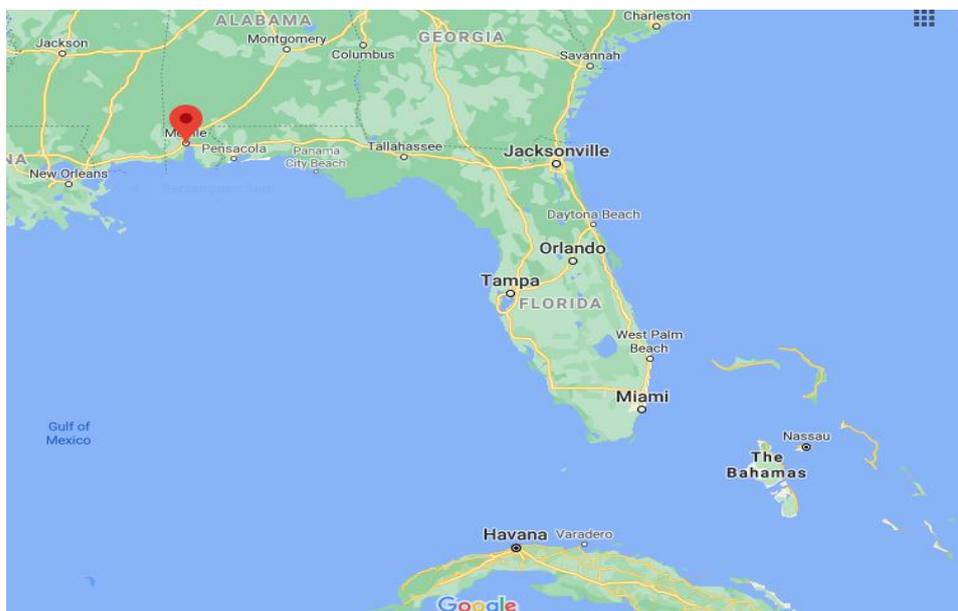
Related Species: · European Larch.

Timber used in the construction of the *Danube*: - Oak, Elm, Red Pine, Spruce and Tamarack.

I believe that Tamarac was used in the construction of the *Danube* (see above and reference in the Lloyds Register – Additional Construction Details Appendix B). Identification of this species at the wreck site may assist in identification of the wreck and elimination of other vessels.

- **Events leading up to wrecking.**

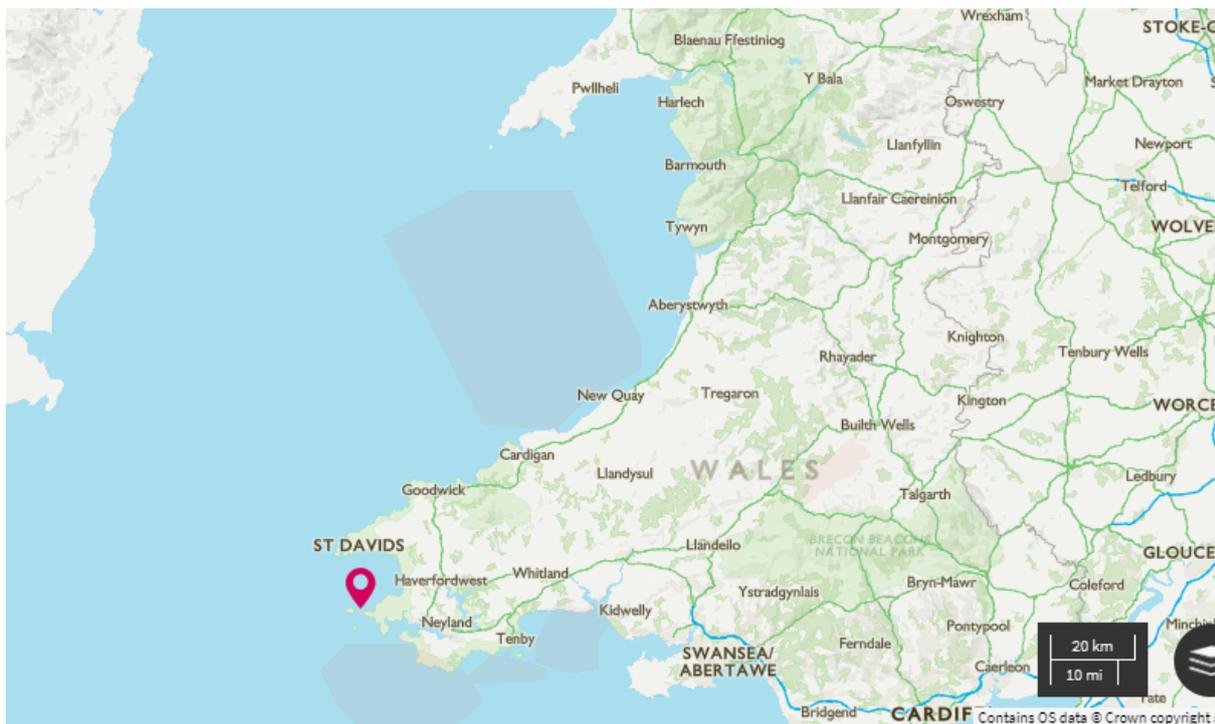
### **Figure 7, Location of Mobile, departure point of final voyage.**



The *Danube* sailed from Mobile, Alabama on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1861 (Fig. 7). Laden with a full cargo consisting of some 3000 staves and 3000 bales of cotton with about 90 bales loaded on the Poop Deck.

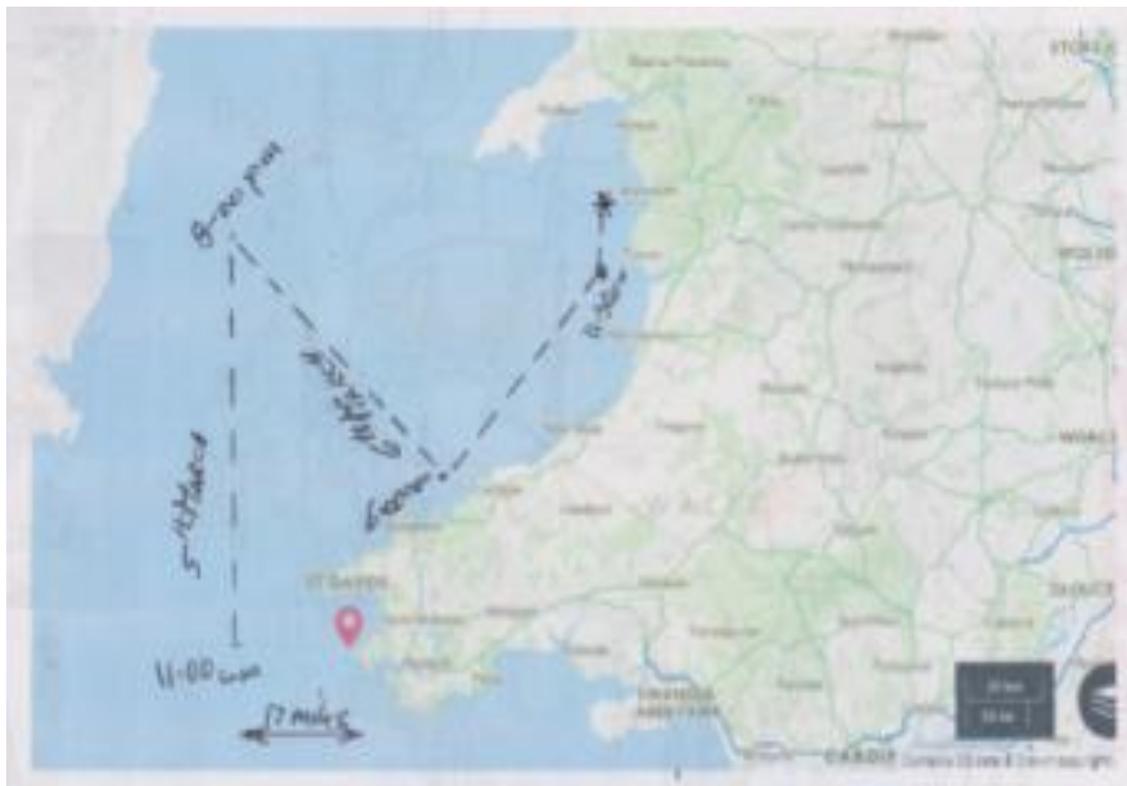
The ship had a “prosperous” Atlantic crossing. The Master was the newly made up Captain William Heasey for whom this was his first voyage as Master. He had sailed on the *Danube’s* previous voyage which was to India as First Mate under Captain Neal McAuley who had skippered the ship from new. At Noon on 5<sup>th</sup> March the ship was according to the Master, by dead reckoning, at a position 17 miles west of the Tusker Rock, Pembrokeshire (Fig. 8).

**Figure 8, Location of Tusker Rock.**



After holding a good course up the Irish Sea fairway channel for 50/55 miles, the Captain Heasey believed they were approaching the Irish coast and altered course to south east taking the ship into the southern part of Cardigan Bay (Fig. 9).

**Figure 9, Deduced route into Cardigan Bay.**



- **The wreck**

At this point a reverse course should have been set to head out of the bay and clear Bardsey. Inexplicably a course was set east north east which took the *Danube* to the south of Cardigan Bay whereupon sighting surf an attempt was made to deploy an anchor. The ship drove onto the Patches at Sarn Gynfelyn (Fig 12), where it grounded and was severely damaged. The ship came clear of that reef and drove to the north. A further attempt was made to anchor only to ground further north on the St Patrick's Causeway (Sarn Badrig) (Fig. 11) approximately 5 miles off-shore. The *Danube* was stuck fast and remained stable there for a several weeks.

During the night the ship's boats were got out and the pinnace moored to the stern of the *Danube* but it was soon swamped by the breaking waves on the reef. The wind had increased blowing almost gale force from the south west. The Boatswain and seven men, who had been in the longboat to bale out the pinnace, were drifted away from the ship, and after a vain attempt to pull up again, made for the nearest land. In effecting a landing the boat was swamped in the surf, and John Milligan, being unable to swim, was drowned. These survivors were looked after by the Lifeboat committee and given food and shelter by the Vicar. The Master and remaining crew stayed on the ship.

### Figure 10. Extract from Ceredigion & District Herald 16<sup>th</sup> March

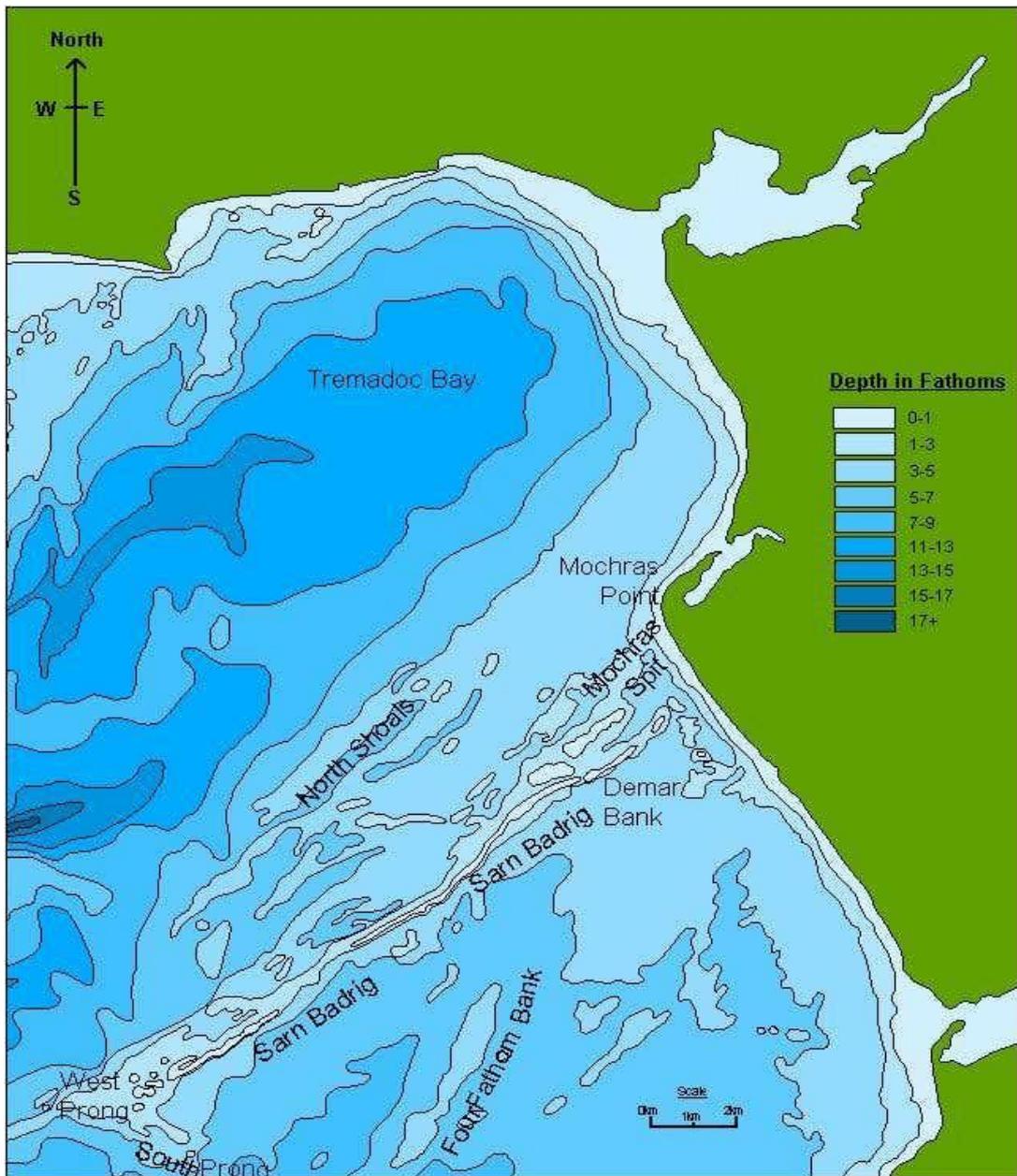
*Wreck of the ship 'Danube', March 1861*

C. & D.H. March 16, 1861:

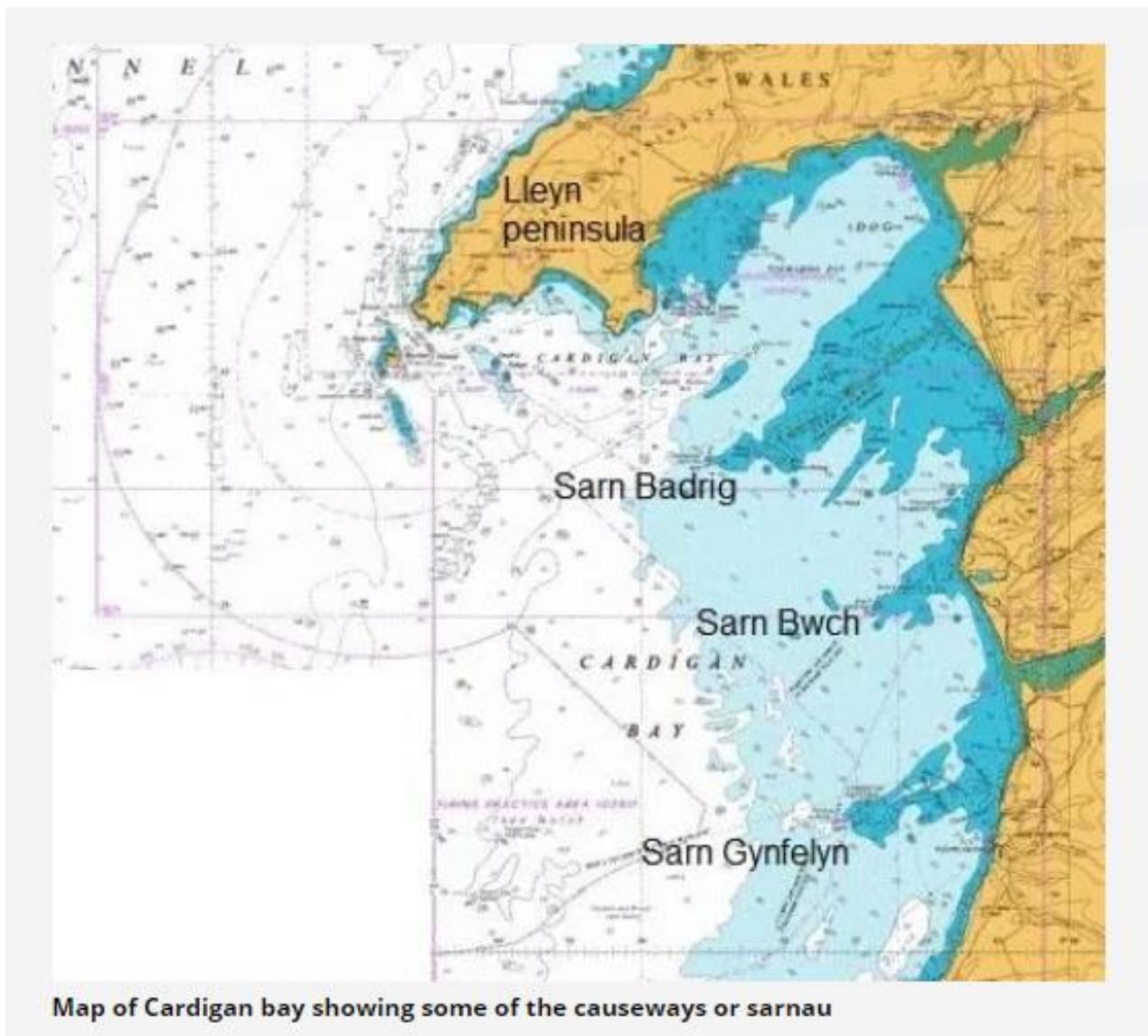
MOCHRAS.—*Wreck*.—As briefly stated in our last, a large vessel was seen beating about near Mochras on the 6th inst. The wind was blowing a gale from the S.W., and it was evident that she had lost her way, and in all probability would be wrecked on the fatal Sarn Badrig. About 6 o'clock p.m. intelligence reached Barmouth that seven of the crew had landed at Dyffryn. The worthy rector, John Jones, M.A., Capt. Evan Edwards (*Emulation*), Mr. Bailey, hon. sec. to the Lifeboat Institution, and Mr. E. Evans, Lloyd's agent, set off immediately to render assistance to the crew, whom they found in a very exhausted state. Each man was kindly provided with apparel and refreshment by Captain Edwards, and they were ultimately lodged by the Rector of Llanendwyn [Llanenddwyn], from whom they received great kindness. The vessel proved to be the *Danube*, from New Orleans for Liverpool, laden with cotton, about one thousand tons burthen, with a crew of 25. Eight put off in the boat, which landed at Dyffryn. One poor fellow was lost in attempting to reach the shore, and his body has not been found. The remaining seventeen of the crew left on board were rescued by the Criccieth Lifeboat, which has on every occasion of danger been the first to put off to the rescue. The vessel is now lying dismasted on the causeway, but it is hoped her cargo to a great extent will be saved. Bales of cotton, &c., are continually being washed on shore. The contract for shipping such, or removing them from the shore to the quay of this port, had been taken by Mr. J. R. Davies, Hotel.

A quantity of the cotton bales from the poop deck were washed ashore and salvaged. The Barmouth Lifeboat was requested but conditions were too severe to attempt to row into the gale for 5 miles along the reef. The Criccieth Lifeboat made it to the scene but could not safely get close enough to effect a rescue. At daylight on the following morning (7<sup>th</sup>), the Criccieth lifeboat succeeded in saving the Master and the seventeen remaining Crew who had remained on the ship. The Barmouth Lifeboat had also launched but arrived after the rescue.

**Figure 11, Cardigan Bay Reefs.**



**Figure 12, Map of Cardigan Bay showing Reefs**



**Figure 13, St Patricks Causeway, Cardigan Bay.**

## Sarn Badrig

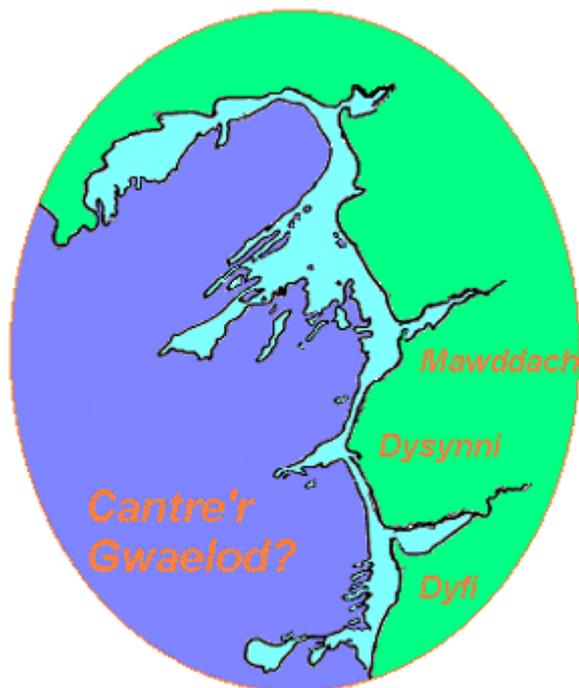


Sarn Badrig, also spelled Sam Padrig, is one of several more or less parallel shingle reefs extending under the sea in Cardigan Bay on the west coast of Wales. The causeway is made of glacial deposits left by receding ice sheets at the end of the last ice age.

[Wikipedia](#)

**Figure 14, Extract Ian Cundy (MADU).**

Showing where the "Sarnau" or causeways jut out for various distances under Cardigan Bay. Land is shown in green, shallow water in light blue, and deeper water in dark blue. Sarn Badrig is the largest, covering a large area north of the Mawddach estuary, Sarn-y-Bwch extends from the Dysynni estuary, and Sarn Cynfelyn/Cynfelyn Patches can be seen south of the Dyfi estuary.



Place names in connection with St Patrick's Causeway:-

The main causeway is commonly referred to as Sarn Badrig (or Badric) stretching south west of Mochras Point.

Tail Patch is to the south of Sarn Badrig

The North Shoals are at the Northern (Landward) end of Sarn Badrig

The eastern end of Sarn Badrig is named West Prong

Cynfelyn Patches lie to the south of the causeway

Sarn Gynfelyn is the southern of the three main reefs

Sarn Bwch is the middle reef off Pen Blch Point, to seaward of Tywyn.

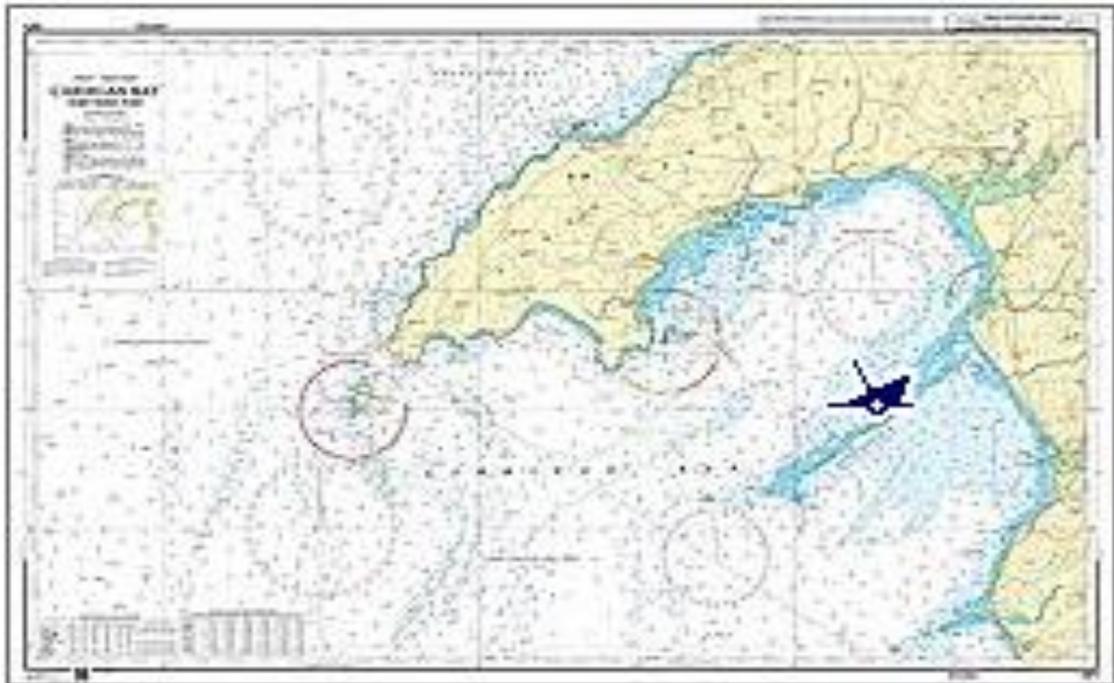
The Mochras,

Mochras Point,

Dwffrun or Dyffryn Beach,

Morfa Bychan beach

The seabed in the area is sand, mud, gravel and shells.

**Figure 15, The Danube Wreck position (Jan Lettens).**

- **The cause of the wrecking** was attributed to poor navigation by the Captain and First Mate. This was compounded by the failure to realise the hazardous position the ship was in and lack of navigating a course to extricate the ship from the Bay whilst avoiding the infamous reefs. (Fig. 14).

Site of the wreck; Coflein have it at **Map Reference SH41NE**

#### **Grid Reference**

**SH 49339 18559**

Grid Reference (6 figure)

**SH493185**

X (Easting) , Y (Northing)

**249339 , 318559**

Latitude , Longitude (decimal)

**52.743599 , -4.2332983**

Latitude , Longitude (degs, mins, secs)

**52°44'37"N , 004°14'00"W**

Larn & Larn gives a position 52.20N 04.08.30W; I believe this relates to the Patches where the *Danube* first struck.

The 'Diamond' wreck site is given as 52 46.531 N 04 11.025W

**Figure 16, Map location of Grid Reference SH 49339 18559.**



**Figure 17, Extract from reports in Welsh Journals.**



**Welsh Journals**  
1,062 results



**Places of Wales**  
0 results

**CRICCIETH.I**

... "**Danube**," Mr. Wni. Hesleys, master, and that she was bound from New Orleans to Liverpool, with a cargo of cotton. She is a large vessel of nearly 1,000 tons bur- den, and had a crew of 26 oil board. It transpired, that before the arrival of the lifeboat, eight of the crew had sailed away in the long boat for the adjacent shore, and it is reported that one of the number was drowned. We are happy to say...

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the... 9th March 1861    News    p.5    305 words

**CRICCIETH. !**

...CRICCIETH. THII WRECK ON SARN BABBW.—We ARE afraid that the ill-fated ship, the **Danube**," which was stranded on the ugly reef, Sam Badrig, on the evening of Wednesday week, is not likely to be got off. A great number of bales of cotton have floated to the shore and have been secured but owing to the very boisterous state of the weather, it has been impossible for a boat to approach the veel up to...

The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the... 16th March 1861    News    p.3    583 words

**ilocat information.**

... h was then read the first time. SHIPWRECK.—The ship reported in our last to have been seen off this place during the gale of the 6th inst., in endeavouring to get clear of the Patches and other dangerous parts in the bay, struck on Sarn Penmochno, where «he has since become a total wreck. She proves to be the **Danube**, of Bel- fast, America, bound from Nsw Orleans for Liver- pool, laden with cotton...

The Aberystwith Observer 16th March 1861    News    p.1    696 words

Sarn Badrig. The Patches. Sarn Penmochno possibly Sarn Penmachno – it is reported that the *Danube* first struck here, possibly a colloquial name for part of the Patches.

Observers at Castle Hill, Criccieth could see the distress signals from the *Danube* even though the weather was overcast and hazy. They lit and maintained a fire to encourage the survivors on the ship and to guide in any boats to the beach: 'Morfa Bychan'.

**Figure 18, Report of Danube stranded but stable on the Causeway.**

## Shipping and Mercantile Gazette - Wednesday 13 March 1861

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**BOTH PROBABLY FOR WATERBORN.**  
**BARMOUTH—March 11:** The American ship Danube, from Mobile, of Belfast for Liverpool (cotton) stranded, (as previously reported) lies on the north side of the causeway bank, in a direct line NW from Barmouth, and about four or five miles seaward, but in a very bad position, but as the wind now is SW, there is no immediate danger of her breaking up. About 90 bales of cotton have been washed on shore and secured—they were chiefly stowed on the poop—some of the stores have been also saved.

It would seem that one other survivor of the wreck made it safely to the beach - according to this report, namely an American turkey, presumably part of the consumable stores on the ship. It made it to safety surfing in on a cotton bale. Upon gaining the beach it was secured by one of the on-lookers and reported as doing well at a local cottage.

**Figure 19, Extract from a report in The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 16<sup>th</sup> March 1861.**

positive fact. On Saturday last (it was said) a curious looking something was seen drifting from the wreck towards the beach at Morfa Bychan. The wind was blowing at the time right on the shore, and the waves were tolerably heavy ones. The "something" was seen rapidly approaching the beach, riding gracefully over the waves, and when it came within a few hundred yards, it was found to be a bale of cotton with an American Turkey riding on the top of it! Of course this discovery was the source of much amusement, and the dexterous manner in which the turkey was stated to have balanced himself on the bale when ascending and descending a wave, was the admiration of all beholders. When his turkeryship safely landed (which he did), he was taken into custody by one of the lookers on, and is now doing well in one of the cottages at Morfa Bychan.

- **Salvage**, The ship's cargo was extensively salvaged during the period when the hull was stuck fast on the reef (Fig. 20). The masts were cut away and salvaged together with much of the cargo by steamers from Liverpool.

**Figure 20, Newspaper extract relating to cargo.**

BARMOUTH.—*Danube*.—Most of the cargo of this vessel has been saved by the Liverpool steamers, and there seems no likelihood of her breaking up. Portions of the articles washed on shore were sold by the Custom House officer of this place, and several good bargains were made by the purchasers (C. & D.H. April 20, 1861).

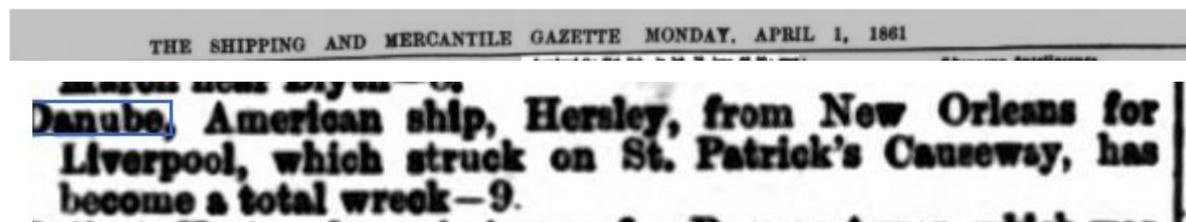
Note the comment in the above report: 'and there seems no likelihood of her breaking up.' – this on the 20<sup>th</sup> April more than six weeks after the grounding.

- **Total wreck**, (Fig. 21). The remaining hull now lighter by removal of the cargo was eventually lifted by increasing spring tides, carried off the reef and foundered in deeper water to the north of the reef. The exact position of final resting place is not identified but cannot be far from the position occupied on the Causeway for several weeks.

**Figure 21, Report of Danube as total wreck.**

Shipping and Mercantile Gazette - Monday 01 April 1861

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**Figure 22, Lloyds Wreck list 1861 6<sup>th</sup> March**

630

UNSEAWORTHY SHIPS COMMISSION:

WRECKS.—SAILING VESSELS.—FOREIGN

Current No.	Date of Casualty.	Name of Vessel.	Official No.	Rig.	Ton- nage.	Built.			Particulars of Class (if known).				
						When.	Where.	Wood, Iron, or Composite.	Class and where classed.	Period for which classed.	Peri- od unexpired at date of Wreck.		
1,129	7 "	HERSCHEL	-	-	1,000	Ship	-	1854	Quebec	Wood	A1. L.L.	7	1
1,130	6 "	Danube	14,362	Ship	989	1854	Quebec	Wood	A1. L.L.	7	...		

- **Since the wrecking**, A Board of Trade inquiry into the loss was convened. A transcript verbatim of the record is given at Fig 23. The online newspaper record being difficult to read.

**Figure 23, Transcript of the Board of Inquiry.****OFFICIAL REPORT**  
-----**LOSS OF THE SHIP DANUBE.****TO THE LORDS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCIL  
FOR TRADE.**

My Lords, - In compliance with your instructions, I proceeded on the 21<sup>st</sup> instant, and the following day, in conjunction with Captain Harris, Nautical Assessor to the Board of Trade, to hold an inquiry at the Police-court, Liverpool, into the circumstances attending the loss of the ship Danube. The Danube was built at Quebec in 1854, and registered at Belfast in that year as a vessel of 989 tons. Her chief owners were Messrs. Grainger, of Belfast, and she was commanded by Captain William Heasley, who holds a certificate of competency as Master, granted in 1856. This was his first voyage in command of any vessel. The Danube left New Orleans on 1<sup>st</sup> February last, in good condition, and well found in every respect, with a crew of 25 hands, exclusive of the Master. She had on board a valuable cargo of nearly 3000 bales of cotton, and 3000 staves, consigned to Messrs. Grainger, Bristow, and Johnson, of Liverpool. The voyage was prosperous until she got into the Channel, when the weather was described as being thick and somewhat stormy. She appears by her reckoning to have been abreast of the Tusker, at a distance of 17 miles, at noon on the 5<sup>th</sup> March. From this point she steered a proper channel course for Liverpool till 8 P.M., when she had made from 50 to 55 miles. At that hour, for some reason which the Master was unable to explain, further than the supposition that he was too nearly approaching the Irish coast, wore ship and stood back to the southward and eastward, upon which course he continued till 6 A.M. on the 6<sup>th</sup>, when land was discovered, which the First Mate considered to be Strumble Head, on the coast of Wales, in the southern part of Cardigan Bay. I may mention, that from 4 A.M. to 6 A.M. the Boatswain was left in charge of the watch, the First Mate being ill. Instead of then hauling the ship up on the port tack to weather the Bardsey Island, he bore up on east and north-easterly courses, running further into the bay till 11-30 A.M., when a red buoy was discovered within two cables' length on the starboard or lee bow. An effort was then made, by making all sail, to work out of the bay, but shortly after breakers were seen on the lee bow. No attempt was made to either stay her or wear, but the anchor was let go, and the ship immediately struck. During the afternoon the ship drove over the reef and was once more afloat, with five and a half feet of water in her hold. The ship began to drive; a second anchor was then let go, and the vessel grounded again on another part of the reef, and eventually became a complete wreck. During the night the boats were got out, and the pinnace, which had been moored astern, was swamped by the sea. The Boatswain and seven men who had been in the longboat to bale out the pinnace were drifted away from the ship, and after a vain attempt to pull up again, made for the nearest land. In effecting a landing the boat was swamped in the surf, and John Milligan, being unable to swim, was drowned. At daylight on the following morning, the Criccieth lifeboat succeeded in saving the Master and the remainder of the Crew who had remained by the ship.

In reviewing the circumstances I am clearly of opinion that the Danube was lost by the default of the Master. I cannot account for the inexplicable conduct of the Master in altering his course at 8

P.M. on the 5<sup>th</sup>, when he was in the fairway to reach his port in a few hours, otherwise, than on the supposition that he was strangely ignorant of his position, which he certainly should have known. And again, I think that the Captain evinced a culpable indifference in leaving the Boatswain in charge of the watch while the ship was gradually shoaling her water, and his subsequent conduct in steering easterly courses, after he had made the land, is equally unaccountable, as by so doing he lost his remaining chance of gaining the fairway of the Channel. The conduct of the Chief Mate was also, in my opinion, most reprehensible, inasmuch as he seems to have been acquainted with the land, and yet did not commend the Master to avoid the fatal courses that he pursued for a space of five hours and a half. I am therefore of opinion, that he aided by his default in the loss of the ship. I have, consequently, considered it my duty to forward to your lordships the certification of the Master and the Mate. The Master does not appear to have had any interest in the ship or cargo. Captain McAuley, who previously commanded the Danube, and with whom Captain Heasley had sailed as First Mate on a previous voyage, spoke favourably of the sobriety and general good conduct of the master.

I remain, &c.,

T.S. RAFFLES, Stipendiary Magistrate.

Liverpool, March 25, 1861.

I concur in the above report,

H. HARRIS, Nautical Assessor.

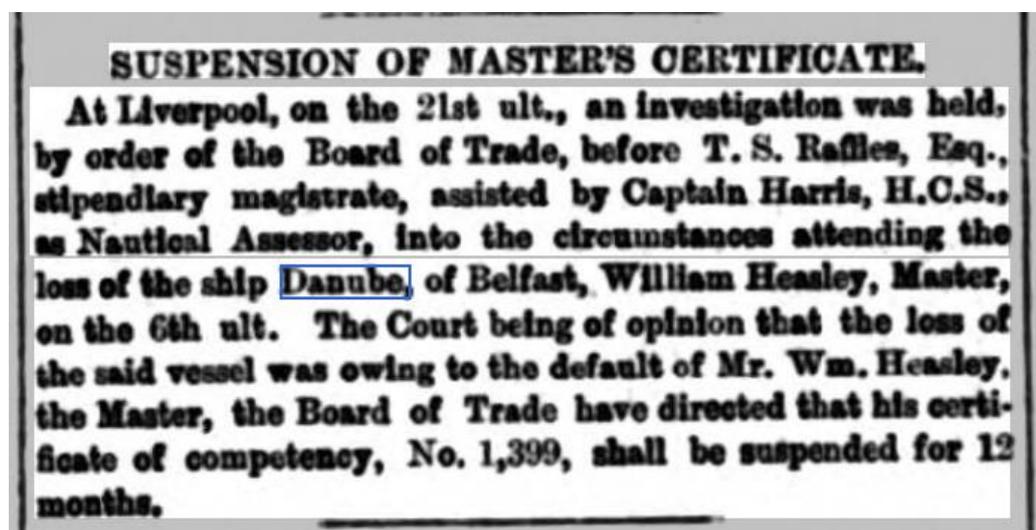
Captain Wm Heasley was blamed for the loss of the Danube and his Masters certificate was suspended (Fig. 23). The first Mate was also criticised but not named.

### Figure 24, Suspension of William Heasley Master certificate.

## Shipping and Mercantile Gazette - Wednesday 10 April 1861

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THE SHIPPING AND MERCANTILE GAZETTE, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 1861.



- Previous investigation has been carried out by Coflein and presented in their report (Fig. ) This does contain some errors and omissions which I have identified during the research for the preparation of this report (See 7.1).

### Additional information:

- **Builder's plans** none are available for the *Danube*. At this time ships were not built from plans but from Half-Models from which principle dimensions were scaled off. Also prior to photography and no known paintings or artist drawings have been discovered.
- **Wreck site location.** The exact site of the remains of the *Danube* is undetermined. However the protected wreck site known as the *Diamond* is a possibility. It has been proven that the wreck at this site is definitely not the *Diamond*. Therefore it is possible that the wreck lying there is the *Danube*. Indeed the dimensions, iron bracings, timber identified, construction detail and Muntz metal sheathing and fastenings are all consistent with the *Danube*. Underwater pictures, details and information that have been taken of the wreck on the site are catalogued in the Wessex Archaeology and MADU reports.
- MADU and Wessex Archaeology together with Nigel Nayling have dived (Table 2), recorded and surveyed the '*Diamond*' site. The '*Diamond*' site has revealed some artefacts e.g. Species identifiable timber, traces of cotton, iron bracing, barrel hoops.

## Table 2, Extract of Information from the Diamond site investigation by Nigel Nayling.

Table 1

Sample descriptions and microscopic identification

Sample	Description	Species Identification
1	Trench 1, outer hull plank?	Elm, <i>Ulmus</i> sp.
2	Trench 1, framing timber	Larch, <i>Larix</i> sp.
3	Trench 1, ceiling plank	Elm, <i>Ulmus</i> sp.
4	Trench 2, scarfed outer hull plank?	Pine, <i>Pinus</i> sp.
5	Trench 2, displaced timber with square hole (former Fe fastening?)	Elm, <i>Ulmus</i> sp.

### MUNTZ METAL HULL SHEATHING

by Dr. E. Lee Spence

#### YELLOW METAL FOUND ON SHIPWRECKS:

The arrangement of the tacks (nails) on the sheets varied considerably between shipyards and over time. On our recovered sheet they were 2-inches apart along each edge (i.e. the overlap) and 4-inches apart on the main part of the sheet and the rows are staggered, which was fairly typical.

- **Owners.** The *Danube* was commissioned to be built and owned by David Grainger and Son, Belfast who were one of the largest ship-owners in Belfast at that period with ships that worked almost exclusively in the New Orleans cotton and Australian passenger trade. The company began ship owning in the 1840s with several full-rigged ships of 500-600 tons. By the end of the 1850s, the company had five full-rigged ships of over 1,000 tons register as well as a number of smaller vessels, all built at Quebec.
- **Masters and crew.**

**Figure 25, Copy Neal McAuley Masters certificate.**

 BT 124 entry for NEAL MCAULEY, Certificate: 50049. Source: BT124/10, recorded service: 1851 - 1860, certificates: 47000 - 50999, image 391, row 2

NAME AND DESCRIPTION.		1851	1852	1853	1854	1855	1856	1857	1858	1859	1860	REMARKS
		Reported Voyage										
No. of Certificate. <i>50048</i>	No. of Reg. Ticket.	<i>237-47</i>	<i>237-47</i>			<i>237-47</i>		<i>237-47</i>	<i>237-47</i>	<i>237-47</i>	<i>237-47</i>	
<i>James Aushwick</i>												
Born at <i>Huntingly</i> Year <i>1812</i>												
County <i>Yuk</i> Cert <sup>d</sup> as <i>Master</i>												
at <i>Goole</i> on <i>15 April</i> 1851.												
No. of Certificate. <i>50049</i>	No. of Reg. Ticket.											
<i>Neal McAuley</i>												
Born at <i>Antrim</i> Year <i>1802</i>												
County <i>Antrim</i> Cert <sup>d</sup> as <i>Master</i>												
at <i>Liverpool</i> on <i>5 Feb.</i> 1851.												
No. of Certificate.	No. of Reg. Ticket.	<i>157-85</i>										

The Master of the *Danube* from commissioning until 1860 was Captain Neal McAuley from Antrim, NI. Born 1802. He was a Captain from 1851 and retired in 1860. In 1859 William Heasley served under him as First Mate and then took over as Master in 1860. In addition to the Master the *Danube's* compliment was a First Mate, a Boatswain and a 23 crew. There were no passengers on board for this (last) voyage. I could not find a copy of William Heasley's Masters Certificate.

- **Previous incidents.** No significant incidents relating to the *Danube* prior to the wrecking have come to light during this research.
- **A timeline** showing the vessel's seven year life from commissioning to wrecking is at Appendix D.

## 7.0 Analysis

A fair amount of information was already known about the *Danube* but apart from Coflein little had been collated. This report has added to the information. An update to Coflein is desirable.

### 7.1 Suggested corrections to Coflein Report on the *Danube*:-

1. 'The DANUBE was a 987ton...' was in fact 1104 Ton Gross / 987 Ton nett as stated in the Appropriation record and in Lloyds register 1854/55.
2. Yellow Metal sheathing; Coflein implies that this was added in 1857. In fact it was listed by Lloyds in the 1854/55 register as YM on felt, which I believe was fitted at construction. Furthermore that the Yellow Metal being fitted at the time in Quebec was Muntz Metal.
3. The vessel was fastened with Iron Bolts but importantly the frames were reinforced with iron bracing fabrications.
4. Under the description of the specification the breadth of the ship is given by Coflein as 20ft 9 1/10<sup>th</sup>. I believe that this dimension refers to the depth.
5. 'First registered at Quebec on 19 August 1854' – actually the *Danube* was registered at Lloyds on 25 March 1854 Official number 14362 and registered previously at Quebec with the Canadian number 13011.
6. 'the Master McAuley' - in fact the Master was Captain William Heasley.
7. 'Tuskar Rock' is incorrectly spelt; should be Tusker Rock.
8. 'stood back to the south then east' I believe the course was south east.
9. 'she bore up on an north-easterly course,' I believe this course was east north east.
10. 'The Danube drove over the Sarn Badrig reef. I believe this is incorrect and at this time the ship bore over reefs in the Patches to the south of Sarn Badrig.
11. 'masts cut down' the masts were certainly in place when the grounding occurred at Sarn Badrig and remained in place until 16<sup>th</sup> March when they and the cargo was salvaged.
12. 'the cargo was reported as likely to be strew all over the bay.' The cotton bales loaded on the poop deck (approx. 90) were washed ashore onto the beach. The remaining cargo was largely salvaged later by 'steamers' sent from Liverpool.
13. The Master, Mate and 16 crew were taken off by the Criccieth Lifeboat on the morning of 7<sup>th</sup> March. Barmouth lifeboat also got to the scene but was not then required.

**7.2** The de-designation of the 'Diamond' wreck site would facilitate the correct identification of the wreck at that position which may possibly prove to be that of the *Danube*.

**7.3** I believe it would be worth surveying the Sarn Badrig Causeway to pin-point other wreck sites where remains are apparent.

## 8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations.

8.1 I have spent approximately 30 hours on this project of which about 15 hours on-line.

8.2 Conflicting accounts. Some of the information given in the Coflein report is in error and I have listed suggested corrections at 7.1

8.3 The exact location of the *Danube's* final resting place is not established. However there is the possibility that it is the wreck that has previously been identified as the *Diamond*. To further investigate this possibility, the 'Diamond' site would have to be de-designated, and this may prove difficult. I know that MADU are looking into this.

8.4 I do not believe that this vessel would lend itself to being adopted as part of the NAS Adopt-a-Wreck scheme, because the wreck site is not established at the present time.

8.5 The information obtained on line is fairly comprehensive. I did fail to find the name of the ship builder. This is normally straight forward usually provided in the Lloyds register information but conspicuously missing in this instance. Access to Quebec state records may reveal this. Indeed Coflein although listing features of the ship's detail (possibly from Anderson to which I have not got access), did not identify the ships builder.

8.6 The objective was to establish the facts relating to the wreck report and discover the circumstances leading up to the wrecking and the outcome, together with any other relevant information. I believe that this has been achieved with considerable additional information recorded.

8.7 Because Sarn Badrig became such a significant site of many wrecks there may be some merit in making it a topic for cataloguing information on this reef as a specific site.

8.8 I do not believe this wreck story is exceptional on the other hand it tells of a very typical wrecking of a large well-built fully rigged sailing cargo ship of the period, high-lighting the perils at that time of rudimentary navigation, lack of navigational aids, and the importance of organised rescue capabilities.

## 9.0 References

Lloyds Registers  
Coflein

Crewlist, Mercantile Navy List, Archive records.  
Newspaper Archives, Library of Wales, National Archive

Crew List, Clip Files.  
Ivor Wynne Jones 'Shipwrecks of North Wales' Ed 3 1986  
Henry Parry 'Wreck and Rescue on the Coast of Wales'  
Larn & Larn

**Appendix A, Specification for the Danube.**

Vessel	Name	Danube		
	Type	Fully Rigged Ship.		
		Cargo.		
Built	Date	1854		
	Builder	Not Known		
		Quebec, Canada.		
Construction	Materials	Wood, Iron Bolted, Muntz Metalled on felt.		
	Decks	One with Poop Deck.		
	Bulkheads	Yes Number not known.		
Propulsion	Type	Sail.		
	Details	Fully rigged ship.		
Dimensions	Length	171ft	ins	m
	Beam	20ft	9ins	m
	Draught	ft	ins	m
Tonnage	Gross	1104		
	Net	987		
Owner	First	David Grainger & Sons		
		Belfast, Northern Ireland.		
	Last	same		
Registry	Port	Belfast		
	Flag	UK		
	Number	14362		
History	Routes	California, India, New Orleans		
		To Liverpool		
	Cargo	Staves and Cotton		
Final Voyage	From	Mobile, Alabama, USA 2 <sup>nd</sup> February 1861		
	To	Liverpool 9 <sup>th</sup> March 1861		
	Captain	William Heasley (from 1860)		
	Crew	25		
	Passengers	None		
	Cargo	Staves and 3000 bales of cotton.		
Wrecking	Date	6 <sup>th</sup> March 1861		
	Location	St Patrick's Causeway, Cardigan Bay, West Wales.		
	Cause	Errors in Navigation		
	Loss of life	One crewman - boat swamped at beach, drowned.		
	Outcome	Total Loss		

**Appendix B – Extracts from Lloyds Register for *SV Danube*.**

1855

3	Danube Bg	WLuh'm	234	Whitby	1854	W Stewrd	Whitby	Wtb. Blk.S	8	A	1
	YM.55overptl.	B.	224								1
4	— S	M'Auley	987	Queb'c	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. Californ	7	A	1
	r.&YM.54overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P.S& Tam.							54
5	— Sw	Newton	332	Sndrld	1846	T Cropton	London	Liv. Varna	8	A	1
	YM.50										54
6	— Scw Bk	D. Reed	829	Gls'gw	1853	J. Bidy	Liverp'l	Cly. Medit.	—	A	1

1856

No.	Ships.	Masters.	Tons.	BUILD.		Owners	Port belonging to.	Destined Voyage.	Classification.		
				Where.	When.				No. Years first assigned.	Character for Hull & Stores.	
2	Danne Brog Bg r.&YM.49	Mogensen	150	Elsinor	1849	P.Holme	Elsinor	Lth. Elsinor			49
7	Dante Bg YM.56c.f	Breaknrdge	226	Gr'nck	1851	Baine&C.	Gren'ck	Cly. Nwfind	13	A	1
8	Danube Sw r.&Z.56	S. Beevor	301	Sndrld	1846	W. Clark	Shields	Liv. BlkSea	8	A	1
				Srprs 56				Cont 54—	3		2
9	— Bg YM.55overptl.	WLuh'm	234	Whitby	1855	WStewrd	Whitby	WtbBlkSea	8	A	1
		B.	224								55
30	— S r.&YM.54overp	M'Auley	987	Quebc	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. Californ	7	A	1
		t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P.S& Tam.							54
1	Daphne S	JGoodwn	842	Sndrld	1854	J.Alcock	Sndrld	Sld. India	13	A	1

1857

5	— S	M'Auley	987	Queb'c	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. Californ	7	A	1
	r.&YM.54overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P. S. & Tam.							54
6	— Bg	D. Major	227	St. Jhn	1856	Saffley &	Liverp'l	Liv. S. Amer	7	A	1
	r.&YM.56overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P. S. & Tam.							54

1858

7	— S	M'Auley	987	Queb'c	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. India	7	A	1
	r.&YM.57overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P. S. & Tam.							57

1859

7	— S	M'Auley	987	Queb'c	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. India	7	A	1
	r.&YM.57overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P. S. & Tam.							57
8	— Bk	J. Raitt	239	Dndee	1856	Johnson& Arbrth	Dun.		8	A	1

1860

7	— S	Hersley	987	Queb'c	1854	Granger	Belfast	Liv. India	7	A	1
	r.&YM.57overp	t.I.B.	1104	O.E.R. P. S. & Tam.							59

1861

2	YM. 59c.1. Danube Bg	R. Barker	201	Nwcastl	1860	C. Tully	Nwcastle	Nwc. Medit.	7	A	1
3	r. & YM. 60 Bg	H. Bacon	160	N. Scot	1856	Jackm'n & Shmptn	Dun. Dumree	Sou. Coaster	4		
4	I.B. Scw	Douille	617	London	1855	Com. Gen	Paris	Lon. Algiers	12	A	1
5	(Iron) Sw	J. Gray	301	Sndrld	1846	W. Clark	Shields	Shl. Medit.	8	E	1
6	r. & Z:60 Bg	E. Archbold	234	Whitby	1855	W Stewrd	Whitby	Lon. Medit.	8	A	1
7	r. & YM. 61 Scw	B.T. Irvine	224	Gls'w	1856	Bibby & C.	Liverp'l	Liv. Medit.	12	A	1
8	Bk (Iron) Bk	J. Raitt	239	Dndee	1856	Johnson & Arbrth	Dun. C. Twn		8	A	1
9	YM. & ptr. 59c.f. Daphne 61S	Foreman	842	Sndrld	1854	Temperleys	London	Lon.	13	A	1

No longer listed

**Appendix C - Extract from Mercantile Navy Lists 1857 to 1885.**

Mercantile Navy List, 1860, page 530 Ship: DANUBE Image source: [clip](#) Crew List Index Project

Year 1860 GO Page 530 GO Notes Search again

Cyn to Dan		Dan to Dar		Dar to Dav		Dav to Def	
Off. No.	Name of Vessel and Port.	Off. No.	Name of Vessel and Port.	Off. No.	Name of Vessel and Port.	Off. No.	Name of Vessel and Port.
1502	Cynthia, Drogheda	3892	Daniel Morris, Carnarvon	21606	Dart, Inverness	6207	David Key, Anstruther
12206	Cynthia, Dublin	21323	Daniel Morris, Carnarvon	7744	Dart, Leith	15010	David Legg, Arundel
13979	Cynthia, Lerwick	21423	Daniel O'Connell, Dublin	1329	Dart, Liverpool	4642	David Lyon, London
1173	Cynthia, Liverpool	36074	Daniel P. King, Halifax, N. S.	9992	Dart, London	2348	David Mc Iver, Liverpool
27515	Cynthia, Sunderland	21567	Daniel Rankin, Greenock	27218	Dart, London	14721	David Malcolm, London
2638	Cynthia Ann, London	39945	Daniel Shattrick, Belfast	27233	Dart, London	2237	David Owen, Shields
1726	Cypress, Liverpool	32515	Daniel Watson, Sydney	35537	Dart, Miramichi, N. B.	17289	David Williams, Beaumaris
26432	Cyprus, London	35673	Daniel Webster, Belfast	39516	Dart, Nassau, N. P.	10368	David and Eliza, Colchester
27810	Cyrene, Windsor, N. S.	32297	Daniel Webster, Sydney	13196	Dart, Newport	5121	David and John, Montrose
10622	Cyrus, Beaumaris	24698	Daniel Wheeler, London	40885	Dart, Penang	26889	David and Maria, Hull
22067	Cyrus, Faversham	12880	Dante, Greenock	30433	Dart, Port Louis	5695	David and Martha, Plymouth
12834	Cyrus, Dundee	3735	Dantzig, Newcastle	9682	Dart, Rochester	19431	David, Perth
3936	Cyrus, Gloucester	10245	Danube, Arbroath	25466	Dart, Rochester	7408	Davidsons, Greenock
8639	Cyrus, Gloucester	14362	Danube, Belfast	34931	Dart, St. Andrews, N. B.	8257	Darlington, Faversham
943	Cyrus, London	16882	Danube, Liverpool	33845	Dart, St. John's, Newfoundland	15571	Dawn, Bideford

630

UNSEAWORTHY SHIPS COMMISSION:

WRECKS.—SAILING VESSELS.—FOREIGN

Current No.	Date of Casualty.	Name of Vessel.	Official No.	Rig.	Tonnage.	Built.			Particulars of Class (if known).		
						When.	Where.	Wood, Iron, or Composite.	Class and where classed.	Period for which classed.	Period of Class unexpired at date of Wreck.
1,129	4 " - 1861.	Ellerslie	1,559	Ship	734	1842	St. John's	Wood	A1. L.L.	4	1
1,130	6 " -	Danube	14,362	Ship	989	1854	Quebec	Wood	A1. L.L.	7	...

## Appendix D - The Timeline for the *Danube*.

- 1854            Launched and registered at Quebec, Canada No. 13011
- 1854    25<sup>th</sup> March, registered at Lloyds No 14362, Owner David Grainger and Sons of Belfast. Port of registration recorded as Belfast. Master Captain Neal McAuley.
- 1854/57        Trading Liverpool to California.
- 1858/1860     Trading Liverpool to India. William Heasley was 1<sup>st</sup> Mate under Captain Neal McAuley.
- 1861            2<sup>nd</sup> February, loaded with Staves and 3000 bales of cotton at Mobile, Alabama. Set sail for Liverpool with Captain William Heasley as Master.
- 5<sup>th</sup> March,     12 (Noon) was abreast of Tusker Rock (next to Skomer Island, Pembrokeshire) by dead reckoning 17 miles off shore. Sailed north mid channel covering 50 to 55 miles by 8-00 pm. When course altered to south east which took her into Cardigan Bay.
- 6<sup>th</sup> March      4-00 a.m. till 6-00 a.m. Passed Strumble Head – south end of Cardigan Bay. Changed course heading east north east.
- 6<sup>th</sup> March,     11-30 a.m. The *Danube* struck rocks at the Patches and was severely damaged but rode clear and sailed until grounding on the St Patrick's Causeway where she stuck fast, becoming a total wreck.
- 7<sup>th</sup> March      The Criccieth lifeboat having attempted to get to the *Danube* the previous evening now succeeded in rescuing the Master and remaining crew.
- 11<sup>th</sup> March     Still lying on the North side of the causeway, in a direct line NW from Barmouth, and about 4 or 5 miles seaward, but in 'a very bad position', with the wind now much less and in the SW there is no immediate danger of it breaking up. 90 Bales of cotton washed ashore (from the poop deck) and salvaged also some stores.
- 16<sup>th</sup> March     Newspaper report comments that the vessel is lying dismasted on the causeway but it is hoped that the remaining cargo will be salvaged.
- 1<sup>st</sup> April        *Danube* reported as having become a total wreck.
- 20<sup>th</sup> April      Much of the cargo now has been salvaged.

**Appendix E - extracts from contemporary newspaper reports.**

Extract from The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser 9<sup>th</sup> March 1861

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**CRICCIETH.**

**SHIPWRECK.**—We are sorry to have to report another shipwreck on the northern shore of Cardigan Bay. During the night of Wednesday last, distress rockets were perceived, being thrown up evidently from some ship in distress, near Sarn Badrig, on the opposite (or Merionethshire) part of the Bay. The lifeboat's crew set off immediately on their errand of mercy; but after pulling a long time against the strong westerly wind, which was then blowing, they were compelled by its violence to return to Criccieth. However, they set off again at 6 o'clock in the morning, and succeeded in reaching the stranded vessel at 9 o'clock on Thursday morning. The lifeboat succeeded in rescuing the whole of the crew, to the number of 18, and shipped them safely on board. It turned out that the vessel was the "Danube," Mr. Wm. Hesleys, master, and that she was bound from New Orleans to Liverpool, with a cargo of cotton. She is a large vessel of nearly 1,000 tons burden, and had a crew of 26 on board. It transpired, that before the arrival of the lifeboat, eight of the crew had sailed away in the long boat for the adjacent shore, and it is reported that one of the number was drowned. We are happy to say the ship's crew were all safely landed at Criccieth, where they were very hospitably received by the inhabitants. The catastrophe was evidently occasioned by the thick and hazy weather which prevailed at the time, and from it being utterly impossible, clearly, to make out the land. The sun had not been seen for available purposes for several days previously. We may add that the inhabitants of Criccieth lighted a large fire on the Castle during the night, in answer to the distress signals from the ship.

## Extract from The North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality 16<sup>th</sup> March 1861

### CRICCIETH.

THE WRECK ON SARN BADRIG.—We are afraid that the ill-fated ship, the "Danube," which was stranded on the ugly reef, Sarn Badrig, on the evening of Wednesday week, is not likely to be got off. A great number of bales of cotton have floated to the shore and have been secured; but owing to the very boisterous state of the weather, it has been impossible for a boat to approach the vessel up to this day (Wednesday). As yet, however, the ship holds its own nobly in spite of its exposed situation and the violence of the wind, and has not yet broken up. We are sorry to say that the report of one sailor being drowned on landing with the boat on the shore was but too true. Indeed, had it not been for the timely arrival of the Life-boat from Criccieth, it is impossible to say what catastrophe might not have occurred, as the crew despairing of succour, were upon the point of launching their last boat, when the Life-boat hove in sight. Two other boats had swamped on an attempt being made to launch them. We are much pleased to have to state that on account of the gallant conduct of the Life-boat's crew being forwarded to the National Life Boat Association, by Captain Mathew, that body at once, by return of post, forwarded £1 each to the crew, which was paid over to them on Monday last by Captain Mathew—£14 in all. Great praise is due to the inhabitants of Criccieth for their humane and kind conduct on this occasion. Many of them never went to bed at all during the whole of that terrible night, but crowded to the castle hill from which they could but too distinctly perceive the distress signals from the ship. They kept up a large fire on the hill the whole of the night—Mr. Williams, White Lion Inn, "Meurig Idris," and others taking a very active part in the matter. When the crew arrived on shore the following morning, wet and wearied, every attention was paid to them, for which the poor fellows were heartily thankful. A very comical occurrence, which happened since the wreck, was related to our reporter by a gentleman connected with Portmadoc, but although we are inclined to believe that there is some truth in it, we cannot give it as a positive fact. On Saturday last (it was said) a curious looking something was seen drifting from the wreck towards the beach at Morfa Bychan. The wind was blowing at the time right on the shore, and the waves were tolerably heavy ones. The "something" was seen rapidly approaching the beach, riding gracefully over the waves, and when it came within a few hundred yards, it was found to be a bale of cotton with an American Turkey riding on the top of it! Of course this discovery was the source of much amusement, and the dexterous manner in which the turkey was stated to have balanced himself on the bale when ascending and descending a wave, was the admiration of all beholders. When his tuckership safely landed (which he did), he was taken into custody by one of the lookers on, and is now doing well in one of the cottages at Morfa Bychan. We have given this "sea-side story" as our reporter received it, but whether it be all true, or merely a tale founded on fact, we cannot undertake to say.

Extract from The Aberystwith Observer 16<sup>th</sup> March 1861

SHIPWRECK.—The ship reported in our last to have been seen off this place during the gale of the 6th inst., in endeavouring to get clear of the Patches and other dangerous parts in the bay, struck on *Sarn Penmochno*, where she has since become a total wreck. She proves to be the *Danube*, of Belfast, America, bound from New Orleans for Liverpool, laden with cotton. Crew saved, with the exception of one, who was drowned.