Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay)

On-line research into the wreck of the steamship:

'GLENOCUM'

formerly known as the

'TORCA'

The wreck of the steamship 'Glenocum', stranded in Aberdaron Bay, North Wales, in May and June, 1883.

Report Title: ***Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay)***

On-line and practical research into the wreck of the steamship:

GLENOCUM

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1.0 Abstract

The Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU) currently has a database of 453 shipwrecks in the north end of Cardigan Bay in north west Wales. These wrecks date from 1590 to 1993 and very few have been investigated in any depth!

The author of this report is an amateur diver who has visited many of the shipwrecks around the Welsh coast between Barmouth and the Dee Estuary. He wrote and published 'The Essential Underwater Guide to North Wales, Volumes One and Two', and co-wrote 'Life and Death on the Royal Charter'.
He is also the licensee of the submarine 'Resurgam', a historic vessel that lies on the seabed off Rhyl after being lost in 1880.

2.0 Index

2.4 Contributors

Chris Holden; John Farley; members of Chester Sub-Aqua Club.

2.5 Abbreviations

A list of any abbreviations used in this report, i.e.

MADU Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

NAS Nautical Archaeology Society

Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. Larne. Volume 5

CPH Chris Holden

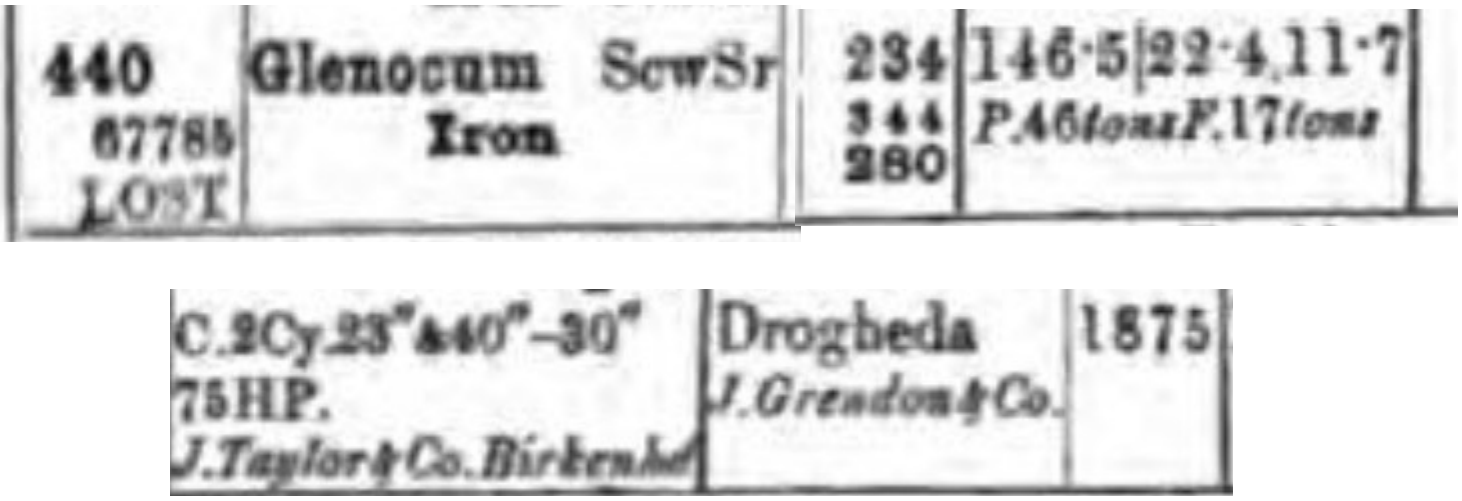
3.0 Introduction

The author became aware of this wreck in the 1980s when he and another diver were asked by a local lobster-fisherman to search for a lost lobster-pot in Aberdaron Bay. He didn't find the lobster-pot, but unexpectedly discovered this shipwreck, and has visited the site on many occasions over the last 30-odd years.

4.0 Background

Having located a steamship of considerable size close inshore off the beach in Aberdaron Bay, the task was to identify the vessel. It was suggested by others that this was the wreck of the 'Priscilla', lost in the devastating 'Royal Charter' gale of October, 1859, but the presence of a boiler means that this wreck is undeniably that of a steamship, whereas the 'Priscilla' was a sailing-vessel.

Measurements of this wreck were taken by the author of this report, and showed that his readings are very close to the information given in the Freeman's Advertiser of March 25th, 1875, for the 'Torca', the original name of the 'Glenocum' and in Lloyd's Register for 1883 - 1884.



440 67785 LOST	Glenocum ScwSr Iron	234 344 280	146·5 22·4 11·7 P.46tons F.17tons
C.2Cy.23"&40"-30" 75HP. J.Taylor&Co.Birkenhd	Drogheda J.Grendon&Co.	1875	

5.0 Research Methodology

Equipment used:

The Mark One Eyeball (The author actually collided with the wreck whilst diving.)

Decca Navigator, GPS, Echo-sounder and side-scan sonar.

Richard Larne's Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. West Coat and Wales.

Gwynedd Archives Record Office, Caernarfon.

Denbighshire Records Office, Ruthin.

British Library on-line newspaper records.

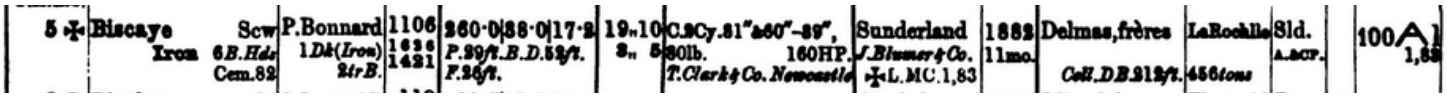
National Library of Wales on-line records.

Lloyd's List records at Liverpool Maritime Museum.

6.0 Details.

Vessel Name/s Launched as TORCA in 1875
Re-named GLENOCUM in 1878.
Type: Steamship
Built at Drogheda in the year 1875.
Builder: Messrs Thomas Grendon & Co. , Drogheda Iron Works.
Construction Materials: Iron.
Length between perpendicular 149 feet;
Breadth moulded, 22 feet 6 inches;
Depth, 12 feet 6 inches;
Weight: Builder's measurement; 352 tons; or 343 tons gross and 233 tons net register.
Cargo-carrying capacity, excluding engines and boilers, 500 tons dead weight.
Engines: A pair of inverted direct-acting compound surface condensing steam engines of 70 or 75 horse-power, but capable of working up to 350 indicated or actual horse-power with a working boiler pressure of 70 pounds.
Masts and spars of pitch and red pine.
Standing rigging of best charcoal galvanised iron wire.
Schooner-rigged, with all the necessary appliances and sails to enable her to act as a sailing vessel independent of her steam power.
Built for: James Shaw Campbell, Esq., Great Brunswick Street, Dublin.

Note. According to the web-site ***www.wrecksite.eu*** , the 'Glenocum' traded under the name of 'Biscaye' for a period of time in 1882 - 1883. However, the entry in Lloyd's Register for 1883 describes the 'Biscaye' as a larger vessel, so the vessel lying in Aberdaron Bay might not have traded under this name..



5 ✠	Biscaye	Scw Iron 6B.Hds Cem.82	P.Bonnard 1Dk(Iron) 2trB.	1106 1626 1421	260·0 P.29/t. F.26/t.	38·0 B.D.52/t.	17·2	19.10 3.5	C.2Cy.81"x60"-89", 80lb. 160HP. T.Clark&Co. Newcastle	Sunderland J.Blumer&Co. ✠L.MC.1,83	1882 11mo.	Delmas,frères Coll.D.B.21/t.	LaRochelle 456tons	Sld. A.SCF.	100A1 1,88

The Launch.

Freeman's Advertiser Mar 25, 1875.
Launch of a New Iron Steamer In Drogheda.
On this day at about one o'clock a most successful launch was witnessed here, when the good ship Torca was launched forth into her watery element from Messrs Thomas Grendon and Co.'s wharf at the Drogheda Iron Works. The day was fine and cheerful, with a warm sun. The Torca is an iron screw steamer, and has been built for James Shaw Campbell, Esq., Great Brunswick Street, Dublin, for a cargo carrying trade of the very best quality materials and workmanship combined, and under the inspection of the surveyors of the Liverpool Underwriters' registry of iron vessels. The vessel classes "twenty years in red" on their registry, which is a much higher classification than the Lloyd's registry for general use.
The dimensions of the Torca are as follows:- Length between perpendicular 149 feet; breadth moulded, 22 feet 6 inches; depth, 12 feet 6 inches; builder's measurement; 352 tons; and cargo-carrying capacity, excluding engines and boilers, 500 tons dead weight. She is to be fitted with a pair of inverted direct-acting compound surface condensing steam engines of 70 horse nominal power, but capable of working up to 350 indicated or actual horse-power with a working boiler pressure of 70 pounds. Her masts and spars will be of pitch and red pine, and her standing rigging of best charcoal galvanised iron wire. She will be schooner-rigged, with all the necessary appliances and sails, etc., to enable her to act as a sailing vessel independent of her steam power. In the run of her fore-hold a large water ballast tank is constructed, with all the requisite appliances for filling and emptying it, so that when unloaded she can always be kept on an even keel fore and aft.
The Torca was designed by Mr Thomas Smith, Eden-quay, Dublin, the well-known naval architect. The launch was effected under the supervision of Mr Wm. Pausing, the foreman shipwright, and the vessel was christened by Mrs Frederick St. George Smith, wife of the principle member of the firm of Grendon and Co. After the launch had been effected, a number of guests were entertained at a dejeuner by the builders. Mr J.S. Healy, solicitor presided, and did the honours, the vice-chair being occupied in turn by Mr N. Andrews and Mr John Duff.

The Working-Life of the 'Torca' / 'Glenocum'.

Belfast Newsletter. January 23, 1877.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES
BELFAST AND LIVERPOOL.
JANUARY, 1877.
Steamers TORCA and ARBUTUS, or other similar steamers,
will sail (with or without pilot, weather permitting, and casualties excepted):-
From Belfast (Dublin Shed, Donegall Quay)
Every MONDAY and THURSDAY
Thursday, January 25 ..... 5.30 pm.
Monday, January 30 ..... 9.00 pm.
Thursday, February 3 ..... 9.30 pm.

From LIVERPOOL (Victoria Dock)
Every WEDNESDAY and SATURDAY
Wednesday, January 24 ..... 5.30 pm.
Saturday, January 27 ..... 9.00 pm.
Saturday, February 3 ..... 11.00 pm
Goods forwarded to London, Manchester, Birmingham &c.
For full particulars and shipping forms, apply to
THOMAS BEVAN & Co.
Tower Chambers, Old Church Yard, Liverpool,
or to HENRY GOWAN. Agent.

Belfast Newsletter Mar 2 1878.
A Belfast Steamer Aground. The Liverpool Daily Courier of Thursday says- The steamer Torca, outward bound from Liverpool to Belfast, took the ground on Taylor's Bank, at the mouth of the river, at noon yesterday, but she floated off by the evening tide without sustaining any damage, and proceeded on her voyage.

Freeman's Journal and Daily Advertiser (Dublin) 13 Sept 1878
Lowestoft – The Torca, s, of Dublin, has changed her name at this port to the Glenocum.

Freeman's Journal and Daily Advertiser (Dublin Sat Oct 12, 1878
Belfast Shipping List – Yesterday At Hamburg, Oct 8 – SS Glenocum of Belfast, from Brake

Liverpool Mercury Thurs Oct 17, 1878
Gloucester, Oct 16 – Arrived Glenocum (ss) from Hamburg.

South Wales Daily News. 28th March 1879
NEATH. VESSELS CLEARED-Mar. 27. Belfast, Glenocum as, B, 400 coal,

Freeman's Journal and Daily Advertiser (Dublin) Mon March 31, 1879
Shipping Intelligence. Swansea, March 29, 11-30 am – Glenocum, steamer, of Dublin, was towed in here last night by steam tug Flying Cloud, disabled; agreement £100.

The Belfast Newsletter Tuesday, April 1, 1879
Arrival of coal-laden vessels. The ss Glenocum, from Neath

The Belfast Newsletter, Saturday April 5, 1879
Arrived at this port on the 4th inst. The ss Glenocum, Harris, from Workington, with steel rails.

The Belfast Newsletter Tuesday April 15, 1879
Arrival of coal-laden vessels. The ss Glenocum, from Neath

Freeman's Journal and Daily Advertiser (Dublin) Tues June 3, 1879
Arrived at Shields, 31st ult, ss Glenocum, of Belfast.

Aberdeen Weekly Journal (Aberdeen)Mon June 9, 1879
Glenocum (s) at Rouen from Shields.

South Wales Daily News. 1st November 1879
NEATH. CLEARED—Oct. 31. Glenocum ss, B, 395 coal.

South Wales Daily News. 17th November 1880 .
VESSELS SIGNALLED AT THE SWANSEA BA Y SIGNAL STATION. SWANSEA, Tuesday. Wind N.W. Weather squally. Steamer Glenocum, of Belfast.

The Loss of the 'Glenocum'. and the Subsequent Enquiry.

Lloyd's List. May 25th, 1883.
Glenocum Liverpool May 23rd 6.50 pm. The Liverpool Salvage Association reports that the Glenocum (steamer), Newport for Liverpool, is ashore in Aberdeen Bay, full of water. *(THIS IS HOW IT WAS REPORTED -- Aberdeen, not Aberdaron)*

Lloyd's List. June 1st, 1883.
Liverpool May 28th 7.55 pm The Liverpool Salvage Association report that the Glenocum steamer floated yesterday morning, but making too much water had to be beached at Aberdaron. Operations continuing next tide.

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald. June 2nd, 1883.
Aberdaron. A steamer sunk. About 6 o'clock last Wednesday morning, the steamer 'Glen Okum' of London, bound from Newport to Liverpool with railway bars, went ashore at Porth Cadlan. She sank soon afterwards. She was 200 tons register and belongs to London. The crew managed to save some of the effects.

Liverpool Mercury. Tuesday June 12, 1883.
BOARD OF TRADE ENQUIRY. THE LOSS OF THE GLENOCUM.
The Board of Trade inquiry into the circumstances attending the stranding of the British steamer 'Glenocum', on 23rd of May last, was opened at St. George's Hall, yesterday, before Mr. Rothery, the wreck commissioner, and Captains Parish and Wilson, nautical assessor. Mr. Paxton conducted the case for the Board of Trade; Mr. Warr, of Bateson and Co., appeared for the owner (Mr. W.E.M. Tomlinson, M.P. for Preston); and Mr. G.B. Horner for the captain (Mr. John Sims). In his opening statement, Mr. Paxton said that the Glenocum was built at Drogheda in 1875. She was an iron screw-steamship, and was rigged as a three-masted schooner. Her gross tonnage was 377, and net 234 ton, with engines of 75 nominal horsepower. She was owned by Mr. W.E.M. Tomlinson, who was described as barrister-at-law, and who was Member of Parliament for Preston. The vessel was classed A1* at Liverpool underwriters. She was originally registered at Belfast under her a present name, but afterwards, in 1878, she was sold to foreigners, and her name was changed to the Biscay. Finally, she came into the hands of the present owner, when she was registered in the London in her original name. In the month of May last, she was at Newport, in Monmouthshire, where she loaded a cargo described as steel crop ends, the quantity being about 372 tons. The master stated in his deposition that her draft was 11 feet 2 inches forward, and 12 feet 3 inches aft. She had a crew of eleven hands, all told, consisting of a master, first and second officers, three deck hands, first and second engineers, and three firemen. There might be a question as to whether, having regard to the nature of the vessel and the trade in which she was employed, and the vessel was properly and efficiently manned, and he (Mr. Paxton), understood that the captain was of opinion that there were not sufficient deckhands. There were on board two compasses, one in the wheelhouse on the lower bridge amidships, and another on the upper bridge. There might also be a question as to whether the compasses were affected by the cargo. The master, Mr John Sims, only joined the vessel about six weeks before the stranding. There was a patent log on board the vessel, but it was out of repair,

and according to the master it was useless; it would also be a question who was to blame for this defect. The vessel left Newport for Liverpool on the 22nd of May last at 8:30 a.m., and at 9.30 the same evening she passed the South Bishops Light. There was some discrepancy in the depositions of the witnesses as to the bearing of this light, but the vessel went close, and the master gave the bearings at 9.30 p.m. as S.S.E., the light being about 2 miles off. He then put the vessel on a N.N.E. course, which was kept until 10. 30, when he changed it to N.E, 1/2 N. According to the master's statement, that course was kept until six a.m. on the following morning. The chief officer had charge of the deck until eleven p.m. on the night of the 22nd, when he was relieved by the second officer, during whose watch there were only on deck himself and the helmsman, the master being on deck only part of the time. At 3.20, the chief officer was in charge, and as the weather was commencing to get hazy, the master was called, and he came on deck about four o'clock. Then there seemed to be on deck the master, the mate, and the man at the wheel, until either shortly before or just at the time the vessel went on-shore. The vessel appeared to have been kept until six o'clock on her course N.N. 1/2 E., and apparently no order was given to the engine room to reduce her speed in any way. At this time those on board the vessel neither saw nor heard any signal from the Cardigan Bay lightship, and at six o'clock, the weather being very thick, the master stated he sent the mate to get the deep-sea lead, and instructed him to prime the well with tallow, so as to get a good sample of the bottom. When the mate was away getting the lead ready, the master observed something black ahead - something looming through the fog. He ordered the helm to be starboarded at once, telegraphed to the engine room to stop, and very shortly afterwards to reverse full speed. The person in charge of the engine room at this time was the second engineer, and the Master's complaint against him was that he did not obey the order. He stated that not only did he telegraph down to the engine room, but the mate shouted down more than once, and that ultimately the chief engineer got out of bed and reversed the engines. This was, however, too late, as the vessel just then struck. It was found afterwards that she was stranded at a small bay called Porth Cadlan, which was within range of the fog signal at Bardsey, which was a siren, and, therefore one which could be heard at some distance. It was suggested by the master, however, that the signal did not sound, and that even after they got ashore they did not hear it. The keeper of the Bardsey lighthouse would be called, and he would state that the signal was kept sounding from 2.40 a.m. until noon on the 23rd. After the vessel got onshore it was found that water was pouring into the forward hold, and that water undoubtedly came into the vessel from a rent which was afterwards discovered in the port bilge, so that the vessel sustained very material damage. Those on board found no difficulty in getting on the shore, and afterwards they jettisoned about 100 tons of the cargo. They were not, however, able to move the vessel. On the 27th, which was a Sunday, a tugboat and divers arrived from Liverpool, under the charge of Captain Archer, as representing the Salvage Association, and at eight p.m. on that day the vessel was floated and beached a short distance off. The vessel was again floated off, but from some cause or other she sank in five fathoms of water, where she now remained. The vessel was a total loss, as well as a large portion of the cargo. Mr Paxton then called evidence to prove his statements, and the further hearing of the enquiry was adjourned until today at ten o'clock.

Liverpool Mercury. Wednesday, June 13, 1883.
Board of Trade Enquiry. Loss of the Glenocum. The Captain's Certificate Suspended.
The Board of Trade inquiry into the circumstances attending the stranding of the British steamer 'Glenocum', on 23rd of May last, which was opened at St. George's Hall, on Monday, before Mr. Rothery, the wreck commissioner, and Captains Parish and Wilson, nautical assessors, concluded yesterday. Mr. Paxton conducted the case for the Board of Trade; Mr. Warr, of Bateson and Co., appeared for the owner (Mr. W.E.M. Tomlinson, M.P. for Preston); and Mr. G.B. Horner for the captain (Mr. John Sims).
The commissioner, in giving judgement, said that although the vessel was not super-abundantly manned, she was, in the opinion of the court, sufficiently and properly manned; and, if the captain had made a proper disposition of the crew, the hands would have been found amply sufficient. The court was also of opinion that the compasses were sufficient in number, and in good order. Regarding the course steered, they held that the courses taken from the Bishop's Light were not the proper courses. The next question submitted to the court was whether the vessel was kept at a moderate speed after the fog came on; and the court believed that the speed of the vessel was not moderate, and not such as she ought to have been kept at after the weather became foggy. They considered it most culpable that the lead was not used sooner. Had a cast of the lead been taken any time after twelve o'clock at night it would have shown the master that the vessel was getting into shallow water; but, as a matter of fact, he ordered no cast to be taken until the vessel was close upon the shore, and then he threw the blame on the second engineer. The cause of the stranding of the vessel was obvious. From the Bishop's Light, the captain laid the course by the steering compass, as though there had been no deviation. The court were of opinion that no blame attached to the owner or to the light-keepers at Bardsey, and that there was no ground either for saying that the casualty was due to the neglect of the second engineer. The court considered that the master was to blame – first, for laying the courses by the steering compass without making any allowance for deviation, although he might have known that there was a deviation of something like 11 to 12 degrees; secondly, for continuing the vessel at full speed after the fog set in; and, above all, for not taking a cast of the lead long before the vessel got aground. He had grossly misconducted himself; and he had added to his misconduct by bringing false charges against a number of persons of undoubted respectability. He had lost a ship worth something like £5,000 and her cargo, for which he could make no compensation whatever. Had he money, seeing the misconduct he had been guilty of, he ought to make good every penny he had lost; and, in the opinion of the court, they were passing a very lenient sentence when they suspended his certificate for twelve months.

Lloyd's List. June 25th, 1883.
Liverpool Salvage Association report continued southerly winds Saturday and yesterday prevented work at ship and also prevented tide ebbing. Fear these springs lost. Part men being sent back.

Lloyd's List. June 29th, 1883.
London June 23rd The Liverpool Salvage Association reports Captain Archer wires last night that trunk-way over hatches fixed yesterday morning but breeze came on with the day obliged him to clear out before noon. Evening - could see woodwork all adrift. No news today. Inclines us to believe weather improved. Work resumed.

Liverpool Mercury. August 11, 1883.
COMMERCIAL SALES. Sails, Copper Pipe, Pitch Pine Planks and Deals. Ex Glenocum. Lying on Quay and in Pump Shed, Canning Pierhead.
MATTHEW HORAN. Broker to the Liverpool Underwriters and Protection of Wrecked Property Associations.

Lloyd's List. 20th September, 1883.
The Liverpool Salvage Association report. The wreck of this vessel together with material has been sold and realised £70 gross. The total quantity of cargo saved is about 246 tons.

Board of Trade Wreck Report for 'Glenocum', 1883
Board of Trade, 1883.

"GLENOCUM" (S.S.)
The Merchant Shipping Acts, 1854 to 1876.
IN the matter of the formal Investigation held at Liverpool, on the 11th and 12th days of June 1883, before H. C. ROTHERY, Esquire, Wreck Commissioner, assisted by Captains PARISH and WILSON, as Assessors, into the circumstances attending the stranding of the steamship "GLENOCUM", of London, near Porth Cadlan, in Cardigan Bay, on the 23rd May last, whilst on a voyage from Newport, Monmouth, to Liverpool.
Report of Court.
The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances of the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds, for the reasons annexed, that the stranding of the said vessel was due to the negligent navigation thereof by John Sims, the master, in having put her from off the South Bishops on a course too much to the eastward; in not having taken a cast of the lead; and in having kept her going at full speed, although the weather had become very foggy, until just before she stranded.
For these wrongful acts and defaults the Court suspends the certificate of the said John Sims for twelve months from this date, but recommends that during the period of such suspension he be allowed a first mate's certificate.
The Court was not asked to make any order as to costs.
Dated this 12th day of June 1883.
(Signed) H. C. ROTHERY,
Wreck Commissioner.
We concur in the above report.
(Signed) ALFRED PARISH, R. WILSON, Assessors.

Annex to the Report.
The "Glenocum" was an iron screw steamship belonging to the Port of London, of 343 tons gross and 233 tons net register, and was fitted with engines of 75 horse power. She was built at Drogheda in the year 1875, and at the time of the casualty which forms the subject of the present inquiry she was the property of Mr. William Edward Murray Tomlinson, of 3, Richmond Terrace, Whitehall, Barrister-at-Law, and member for Preston. She left Newport in Monmouthshire at about 8.30 a.m. of the 22nd of May last, bound to Liverpool, with a crew of 11 hands all told, and a cargo of 353 tons of steel crop ends, and at about 9.30 p.m. the same day had arrived off the South Bishops. The night, we are told, was fine, the wind light from the S.W., the sea perfectly smooth, and the tide, which was at the very top of the springs, was flood. She passed at a distance of about a mile and three quarters outside the Bishops, and was then, we were told, put upon a N.N.E. course for an hour, after which the course was altered to N.E. half N. It was the mate's watch that night from 7 to 11 o'clock, and on his going below at 11.20, Winter, an able seaman, but who was acting as second mate, took charge. The captain, it seems, was at this time on deck; but in about 10 to 15 minutes afterwards he went below, leaving Winter in charge, and with another able seaman at the

wheel, and with directions to keep the vessel on her course, and to look out for the Cardigan Bay Light. According to Winter, the course which he was ordered to steer was N.E., not N.E, 1/2 N., and that by the wheel house compass. Not seeing the Light, Winter, at about 2 a m., went down to the cabin and told the captain, who desired him to go back and keep a good look-out. At about 3.20 a.m. the chief officer came on deck, and, seeing that the weather had become hazy, he directed Winter to go and tell the captain. On being told that it was hazy the master came on deck, and he then altered the course of the vessel a quarter to half a point more to the eastward, with the view, as he told us, of making Bardsey Island Light. At about 6 a.m. the weather had become very hazy, so that objects could only be. seen at a very short distance off; and accordingly the master ordered the chief officer to go and get the deep sea lead, which we are told was kept in one of the after-boats; and just as he had got it, and was returning along the deck with it, the master observed something dark ahead, upon which he ordered the engines to be stopped, and then to be put full speed astern. Whether there was a delay in executing these orders is a point on which there has been some discussion; but however this may be, before the vessel's way had been stopped she took the ground, and although the engines were kept going astern for some minutes, she remained fast; and within a quarter of an hour she had filled, the water inside being as high as it was outside. Signals having been made, assistance came to them from the shore, when it was found that she had grounded on the west side of Porth Cadlan Bay, and about 4 or 5 miles to the east of Bardsey Light. Having obtained a gang of 12 men from the shore, they proceeded to lighten her, and although about one hundred tons of the steel ends were thrown overboard, it was found impossible to move her. In the meantime the captain had telegraphed to the brokers at Liverpool, and a steam tug, divers, and pumps were sent round in charge of Captain Archer. They arrived there on the 25th, when the holes in the bottom having been partially stopped, and the vessel pumped out, she was hauled off the beach, with the object of taking her to Pwllheli; but on finding that she was making a great deal of water, it was deemed advisable to lay her aground again in Aberdaron Bay. The holes having been again stopped, another attempt was made to take her to Pwllheli, but she made water so rapidly that she sank in 5 fathoms water, and we are told that it is intended at the next springs to make an attempt to raise her.

These being the facts of the case, the first question upon which our opinion has been asked is, "Whether the vessel was properly and sufficiently manned?" It seems that she had a crew of 11 hands, of whom six were deck hands, consisting of a master, a mate, and four able seamen. This, as Captain Beddoe, the officer who brought her round, after she had been purchased by Mr. Tomlinson, from Rochester to Liverpool, told us was quite sufficient to form two watches for a vessel of her description, giving an officer and two able seamen to each watch, the master in these small coasting vessels keeping his own watch. The master, however, appointed one of the able seamen, named Winter, to be the acting second mate. He told us that he did so because he did not like to leave the deck in charge of only an able seaman; but we do not exactly see how the status or position of Winter was in any respect altered, save that he had the name of acting second mate, and that he was not required to take the wheel, but in all other respects he remained the same. He received 2s. a week extra for trimming the lamps, but apart from this his wages were only 28s. a week, the same as the other three seamen had. The watches then were thus arranged; the master and Winter had one, and the mate had the other, each watch being four hours long; whilst the other three hands had no

Aberdaron Bay, Maen Gwenonwy and Porth Cadlan.

particular watch, but each had his turn at the wheel for two hours, and then four hours below. The result of this arrangement was that, except when the master was there, there were never more than two hands on deck, either the mate or Winter in charge, and one man at the wheel, but there was no look-out forward. Such a disposition of the crew the assessors think was not a good one; in their opinion there ought always to have been two men on deck besides the officer of the watch, one at the wheel and one forward on the look-out, and there were hands on board sufficient for that purpose had the master kept his watch in person, as Captain Beddoe did, instead of calling one of the able seamen an acting second mate, and then putting him to do officer's duties. The assessors think that it would perhaps have been better if they had had a fifth hand, even a boy to act as cook and steward, so as to have left the seamen to give all their time to the duty of navigating the ship; but it appears to us that the captain at all events has no just ground of complaint, for he had accepted the arrangement, and had offered to navigate the vessel with this crew. In his letter to Mr. Amoroso, the manager to Messrs. Japp and Kirby, the brokers to the ship, dated the 15th May 1883, the master says, "At last I have got a crew that will stop on board. The steward did not care for going on deck, so I have got four seamen on deck, and no steward; everybody must cook for themselves now."' Whilst then we think that it would perhaps have been better if they had had a boy to act as cook and steward, we are not prepared to say that the vessel was either improperly or insufficiently manned, for it must be remembered that she was only a small coasting vessel, and that it is the practice on board such vessels for the master to keep a watch, as Captain Beddoe did; and had he done so, there were sufficient hands on board for the purpose.

The second question which we are asked is, "Whether the compasses were sufficient in number and in good order, and whether they were so placed to be as little affected by the

cargo as possible?" We are told that there were two compasses on board, both of them being amidships, one in the wheel house on the lower bridge, the other on the upper bridge. In March last, when the vessel was purchased by Mr. Tomlinson, they had been sent on shore, cleaned, and put in order by Messrs. Heath and Co.; and, after they had been sent on board again, the vessel had been taken down to Greenhithe, and swung at the usual place, and her compasses adjusted by Mr. Stebbing, of Southampton, a gentleman who is well known as a compass adjuster, and who has, I am told, for many years adjusted the compasses of the Peninsular and Oriental Company's vessels. Captain Beddoe told us that Mr. Stebbing and his assistant were engaged for some hours adjusting the compasses; and Mr. Stebbing's name is a sufficient guarantee that the work was well and properly done. Captain Beddoe told us that he had proper deviation cards given to him for both compasses, and that in coming round from Rochester to Liverpool on her first voyage he found them to be perfectly correct. The captain however has told us that they were not placed in a proper position, but we are at a loss to see where else they could have been placed; one, the steering compass, was in the wheel house on the lower bridge, just before the helmsman, and at a distance of about 12 feet from the main hatch; the other, the standard compass, was on the upper bridge, and was, we are told, some 22 feet from the main hatch. But then it is said that the cargo which she had on board, consisting of 353 tons of steel ends, might have affected them; but the assessors are of opinion that it could not have done so. Moreover, we have the fact that in the run between Newport and the South Bishops from 8.30 a.m. to 9.30 p.m., they were able to keep her on her course; but we were told by the captain that he supposed that the compasses must have gone wrong after the fog set in; so that the disarrangement of the compasses would in that case have been caused, not by the cargo which she had on board, but by the fog. This theory, however, appears to the assessors to be utterly untenable; they think that the compasses were sufficient in number and in good order, and that they were so placed as not to be affected, and that they were not affected, by the cargo.

The third question which we are asked is, "Whether the vessel was supplied with a proper log or other " means of testing her speed on her last voyage?" It appears that when the vessel was handed over to Mr. Tomlinson there was a Massey's patent log on board, but of which two blades were gone, and accordingly Mr. Lang, consulting engineer, and who examined the vessel and her machinery before Mr. Tomlinson bought her, thought it would be better to have a new one, and accordingly a new patent log was purchased from Messrs. Heath at a cost of £2. 12s. 0d., besides 12s. 6d. for a line, making £3 4s. 6d. altogether; and that log, we were told by Captain Beddoe, registered the distance quite correctly; but he said that he always took care to fend it off with an oar so as to avoid the wash from the screw. We have, therefore, no reason to think that the log was not a perfectly good one when properly used.

The fourth question which we are asked is, "Whether proper means were taken to ascertain the vessel's position when passing the South Bishop's Rock; and whether proper courses were set and steered after that time, and proper allowance made for tides and currents?" There is no reason to think that the vessel's position was not properly ascertained when she passed the South Bishops; but the question is, Whether proper courses were set and steered afterwards? According to the captain, after passing the Bishops, they first steered N.N.E. for an hour, and after that N.E. 1/2 N., and in this he was confirmed by the chief mate; whilst Winter told us that when he came on deck at a little after 11 the course which they were steering was N.E., and that that course was steered during the whole of his watch. But now the question arises,

Were these courses the magnetic courses, or were they the courses shewn by the compasses, and by which, by the steering compass or the standard compass? The master, indeed, wished us to believe that these were the magnetic courses, and that there was 3/4 of a point easterly deviation on the steering compass when she was on a N.N.E. course magnetic, and 1/2 a point easterly deviation on that compass when she was on a N.E. 1/2 N. course; so that for the first hour after passing the Bishops the course shown on the steering compass would be N. by E. 1/2 E., and after that N.E. by N. That this, however, was not so is clear from the evidence of the mate and of Winter, who told us that the courses which they gave us were the courses by the steering compass; that that was the only compass they consulted; that they didn't know what deviation there was on it; that they kept their watch on the lower bridge, and that they didn't consult the standard compass at all, and don't know what course it shewed. Now, if the evidence of these two men is to be believed, and we prefer it to that of the master, it is clear, seeing that he has himself admitted that the steering compass had a considerable easterly deviation, that the vessel must have been steering a good deal to the eastward of the courses which have been given to us. Captain Beddoe, who has commanded one of the Guion Line of steamers, and appeared to be an officer of considerable experience, and who told us that he assisted to swing the vessel, and on the voyage from Rochester carefully compared the compasses with the deviation cards, told us that the compasses had the largest deviation on a N.E. course, that of the steering compass being 13 degrees easterly deviation, that of the standard compass being 8 degrees on that course. Captain Beddoe also told us that there was an easterly deviation of 2° on a north course, but what it was on the other intermediate points he was not prepared to say. Taking, however, that there was an easterly deviation of 13° on the steering compass on a N.E. course, it is fair perhaps to assume that on a N.E. 1/2 N. course there would have been an easterly deviation of at least 11°, or, say, one point, so that when the steering compass showed N.E. 1/2 N., the vessel was in fact making a N.E. 1/2 E. course, which would be quite sufficient to take her inside Bardsey Island from where she was. We must reject altogether the evidence of the three seamen, who came forward and swore positively that the course which they steered from the Bishops was N.E. by N. 1/2 N., which it clearly was not, if we are to believe the evidence of the master or of either of the mates. It appears to us then that the courses steered from off the Bishops were neither safe nor proper courses, being about one point more to the eastward than they ought to have been, the courses having been laid by the steering compass, and no allowance having been made either for deviation or for the strong flood tide which was setting her to the eastward.

The fifth question which we are asked is. "Whether a good and proper look-out was kept, and if so, how was it that the Cardigan Bay Light was not seen?" It is extremely difficult for us to say how this occurred, seeing that they must have passed very close to it; and the only suggestion that we can offer is that, when they were in the vicinity of the Light, the fog had already settled down over the water, or that Winter, the man in charge of the deck, could not have been keeping a good look out. Cardigan Bay Light is about 35 miles from the South Bishops, whilst it is only about 27 miles from the place where the vessel took the ground, so that they probably were off the Cardigan Bay Light at about half past 2 or thereabouts; and we have the evidence of both the engineers that from about that time the fog whistle was going, shewing that the fog must at that time have commenced. Be this however as it may, the Light is said not to have been seen.

The sixth question which we are asked is, "Whether, after the weather became thick, the

vessel was kept going at a moderate speed" It seems clear that the engines were kept going at full speed quite up to the last. The master indeed stated that for two hours before she went ashore he had observed that the vessel was going slow, and that consequently he had not, after they entered the fog, altered the telegraph, which pointed to full speed. But both the engineers say that the engines were going at full speed, making 62 revolutions, and with a pressure of 58 lbs.; and the chief engineer added that when he went off duty at 4 a.m. he lay down with his clothes on, feeling very anxious on account of the vessel going at full speed through the fog.

The seventh question which we are asked is, " Whether the lead ought to have been used?" It seems that there is a lightship placed in the middle of Cardigan Bay to warn ships against getting too far to the eastward, and thus becoming embayed in Cardigan Bay. It is moored just outside the line of the 30 fathom soundings, and a vessel bound, as this vessel was, from the Bishops to Liverpool, had no business whatever to have gone inside of it. The "Glenocum", however, must, on the course she was steering, have been for some hours before she grounded inside the lightship, and a cast of the lead would have shown her at once that she was getting into shallow water. When Winter came and told the master at about 2 o'clock that he had not seen the light of the Cardigan Bay Lightship, he ought to have ordered a cast of the lead to be taken, instead of which he tells Winter to return on deck and to keep a good look-out. When again he was called up on deck at twenty minutes past 3, owing to the weather having become foggy, he should then have taken a cast of the lead, instead of which he orders the course to be altered half to a quarter of a point more to the eastward to make Bardsey Light, thinking that he was outside of it. The vessel ought not to have been allowed to get into less than 40 fathoms of water, and a cast of the lead would have shown him hours before he grounded that he was in less than 30 fathoms, and that he was gradually shoaling his water.

The eighth question which we are asked is, "Whether the fog signal on Bardsey Island was sounded regularly on the morning of the 23rd of May after the weather became thick?" The chief light keeper from Bardsey Island has told us that the fog set in that morning at 2.30, and that the syren was kept going from that time until noon, sounding about every 5 minutes; and we have no reason to doubt that statement, verified as it is by the entries in the log-book. The fact that it was not heard on board the "Glenocum" is no proof that the syren was not being sounded, for we do not know how far the "Glenocum" may have got to the eastward; and Professor Tyndall's experiments at the North Foreland show that the distance to which these signals can be heard is very uncertain. There is therefore nothing to show that the fog signal was not sounded regularly that morning from the time the weather became foggy.

The ninth question which we are asked is, "What was the cause of the vessel stranding" The cause of the vessel stranding is quite clear. The master laid his courses by the steering compass as though it had no deviation, whereas we were told by Captain Beddoe that on a N.E. course there was an easterly deviation of 13° on that compass, and we shall perhaps not be far wrong when we say that on a N.E. 1/2 N. course, there was an easterly deviation on the steering compass of about 11° or one point, so that when the compass was pointing N.E. 1/2 N., the vessel was in fact making a N.E. 1/2 E. course magnetic, and that would be quite sufficient to take her inside Bardsey Island. The cause of the casualty was that the master chose to lay his courses by the steering compass without making any allowance for deviation, or for the strong flood tide which would be setting him to the eastward for some time after passing the South Bishops.

The eleventh question may be more conveniently taken next, it is as follows: "Does blame attach to the owner or to the light keepers at Bardsey in regard to any of the above matters?" In our opinion no blame attaches either to the owner or to the light keepers at Bardsey in respect of any of the matters which have arisen in this case.

The tenth question which we are asked is, "Were the master, the second engineer, or either of them in default in regard to any of the above matters?" and it is added that, in the opinion of the Board of Trade, the certificates of the master and of the second engineer should be dealt with. And first, as regards the second engineer. He is no doubt an old man, and not very intelligent, but there is no reason to think that the casualty was due to him. He told us that the first order which he got was to slow, that shortly afterwards he got the order to stop, that he executed both those orders, and that then he got the order "full speed astern." By that time, however, the chief engineer had come into the engine-room, and he was told to go and open the auxiliary cock, whilst the chief engineer reversed the engines. It does not appear to us that there was any delay in carrying out the master's orders, but even if there had been, it would not be a case in which we should deal with the second engineer's certificate. The casualty was undoubtedly owing to the vessel having got too far to the eastward of the proper course, and for this the master is alone responsible.

This master charged almost every person, who has had anything to do with this ship, with misconduct. According to him, the vessel was a bad vessel, the bulkheads not being tight; the engines were difficult to reverse; the compasses were out; the deviation cards inaccurate; the log line of no use; the ship was improperly and insufficiently manned; the second engineer was incompetent; the damage to the vessel was trifling, although she filled within a quarter of an hour after striking; and it was owing to Captain Archer's neglect and incompetence that she was not got off and taken into Pwllheli; and last of all, he has charged Mr. Stebbing, a gentleman of the highest character, with being the worse for liquor, when he adjusted the compasses. More gross and unfounded charges could hardly have been made, and then this man, when all his charges have broken down, asks for the indulgence of the Court; in our opinion he does not deserve it. He has grossly misconducted himself, and has added to his misconduct by bringing these false charges against persons of the highest respectability. He has by his gross negligence lost a ship worth something like £6,000, and a valuable cargo, for which he can make no compensation whatever; had he been able to do so, he ought to make good every penny of that loss, and in suspending his certificate for twelve months, I am of opinion that the sentence is a very lenient one for the offence of which he has been guilty.

The Court, on the application of the master's solicitor, agreed to recommend that during the suspension of his master's certificate, he should be allowed a first mate's certificate.

The Court was not asked to make any order as to costs.

(Signed) H. C. ROTHERY,
Wreck Commissioner.

We concur. (Signed)
ALFRED PARISH, R. WILSON, Assessors.

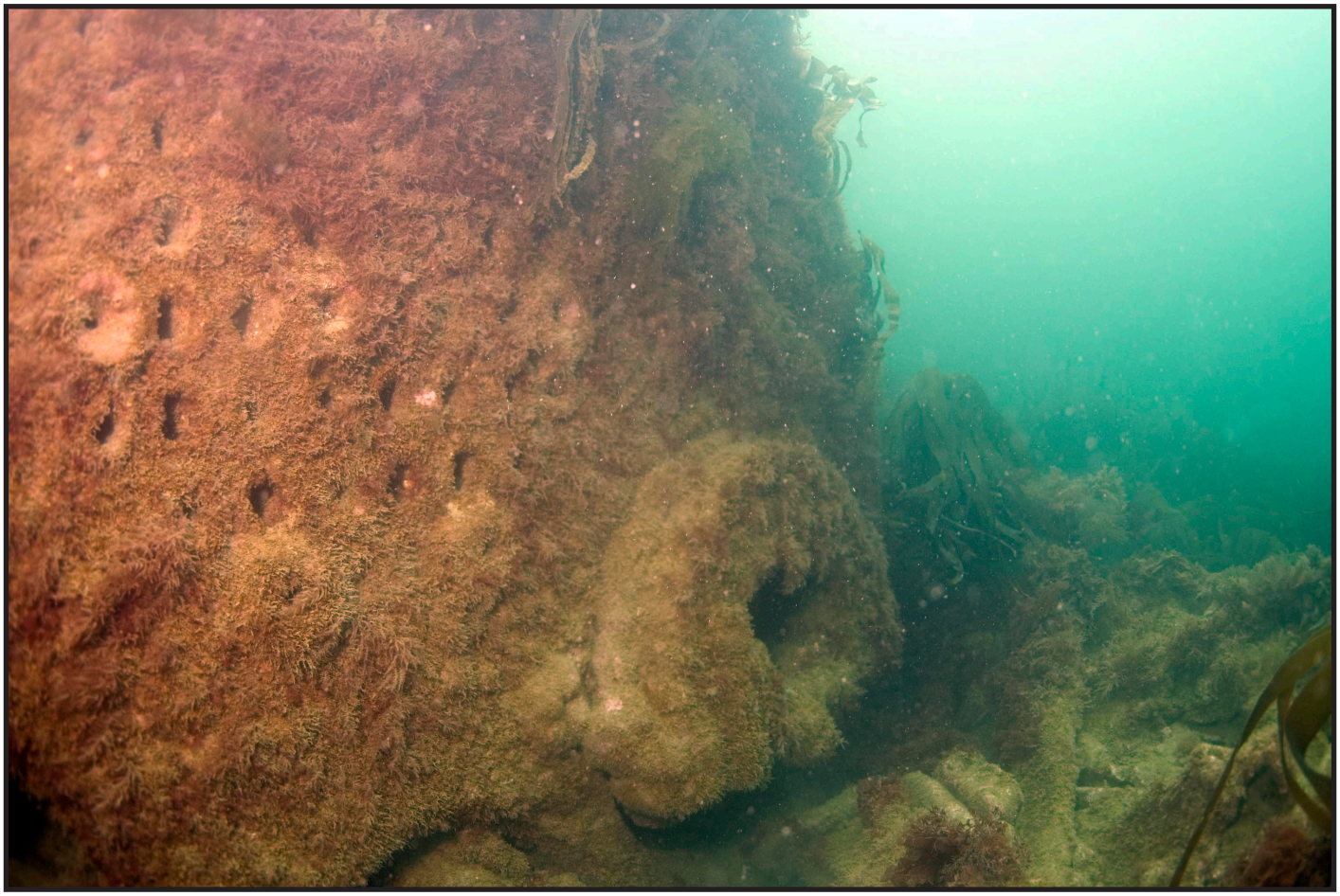
Aberdaron Bay, showing the location of the wreck of the 'Glenocum'.

The Wreck Today.

This report describes the remains of the 3-masted, iron steamer 'Glenocum' which initially ran ashore near Maen Gwenonwy in 1883 during thick fog. She was subsequently re-floated but had to be beached in Aberdaron Bay. Built in 1875 at the shipyard of T. Grendon & Co., Drogheda, Ireland, and originally named 'Torca', the 'Glenocum' was owned by The Belfast Steamship Company and propelled by a 75-horsepower, 2-cylinder steam-engine. According to the 1881 edition of Lloyd's Register, the Glenocum was 146 feet 5 inches long, with a beam of 22 feet 4 inches. Having measured this wreck from the prominent bow to the stern-post, I came to a total of 147 feet 8 inches which, allowing for minor errors, is virtually the same as the 'Glenocum'.

Lloyd's List of 25th May, 1883, reported that the 'Glenocum' was ashore and full of water. By the 28th, the Liverpool Salvage Association had re-floated the ship, but then had to beach her again at Aberdaron in the hope of removing the cargo and repairing the ship. Operations continued all summer to recover most of the cargo of iron bars, along with the ship's anchors, chains and fittings. By September 20th, 246 tons of cargo had been removed, but all hope of saving the ship had been lost and work was abandoned, so the wreck and remaining fittings were sold for £70.

The 'Glenocum' provides an excellent introduction to wreck diving, being shallow, out of the main current, and close to the shore. The prominent bows are intact and point seawards (south), indicating that the ship probably dropped anchor before grounding. Take a torch to peer into the forward locker at deck level, immediately aft of the stem. This is the deepest part of the



The boiler of the 'Glenocum'.

wreck, where even at high-water the maximum depth will be less than 10 metres. The deck is completely missing, so there are no passageways or holds to explore other than the fore-peak, but the single 4-metre high 'Scotch' (tubular) boiler remains upright and intact, with dense kelp growing on its upper surface, and tompot blennies and leopard-spotted gobies peering out of the pipes emerging from the vertical faces of the boiler. The twin furnaces face towards the stern, a design feature of a small vessel in which the jobs of engineer and stoker could be combined.

There is no sign of the engine, propeller or anchors. The hull has collapsed outwards so that the iron hull-plates now lie almost horizontal, creating large gaps that provide a safe haven for large shoals of pout and the occasional codling. A powerful torch will also prove useful for illuminating the pout, the prawns in the fireboxes and one or more of the conger-eels that either peer out of the hole in the top of the boiler, hide in one of the boiler pipes, or tuck themselves away between the hull-plates. Unfortunately, the large conger that we nicknamed 'Dinky' hasn't been seen for some years, but three smaller ones were seen on one dive during 2012, and one of them had certainly grown considerably by May 2014. In addition to the shoals of pout already mentioned, pipefish and two-spotted gobies hide among the wreckage and thick kelp, while large ballan wrasse will follow a diver around the wreck in the hope that he or she will dislodge an easy meal.

Lobsterpots are usually set around the wreck, so there are few lobsters and edible-crabs, but large spiny spider-crabs and small squat-lobsters are common. There are patches of clean sand around the wreck, as well as clumps of kelp and bootlace weed where cuttlefish and shoals of various gobies hide away. Even your safety-stop can be enjoyable, as a variety of jellyfish drift by and a shoal of sandeels hunts for food over the boiler.

7.0 Analysis.
The stranding and subsequent loss of the 'Glenocum' follows a story familiar to many of those who conduct research into Welsh shipwrecks. Bad weather, unreliable compasses, poor visibility, a lack of those navigation aids that we now take for granted, and sheer bad luck, all combined to add to the tally of vessels lost on and around our coast, and a combination of these factors allowed the 'Glenocum' to run ashore approximately five miles to the east of Bardsey Island, when she should have passed at a safe distance to the west of the Bardsey Lighthouse.
Thankfully, GPS, depth-sounders and other electronic devices have made navigation much easier, and almost eliminated the risk of ships colliding or running ashore.
However, ships do continue to sink, and lives are still being lost.....

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations.
The steamship lying in Aberdaron Bay is almost certainly that of the 'Glenocum', where it provides a haven for marine-life, and an excellent introduction to wreck-diving for sub-aqua divers.
There is no sign of the anchors, the steam-engine or other machinery, so the shallow depth of water meant that that salvors could have easily recover these items.
Being a utility ship engaged in coastal-trading, there is little of interest regarding ship-design to justify a full survey of the site.

9.0. References.
Sources include:

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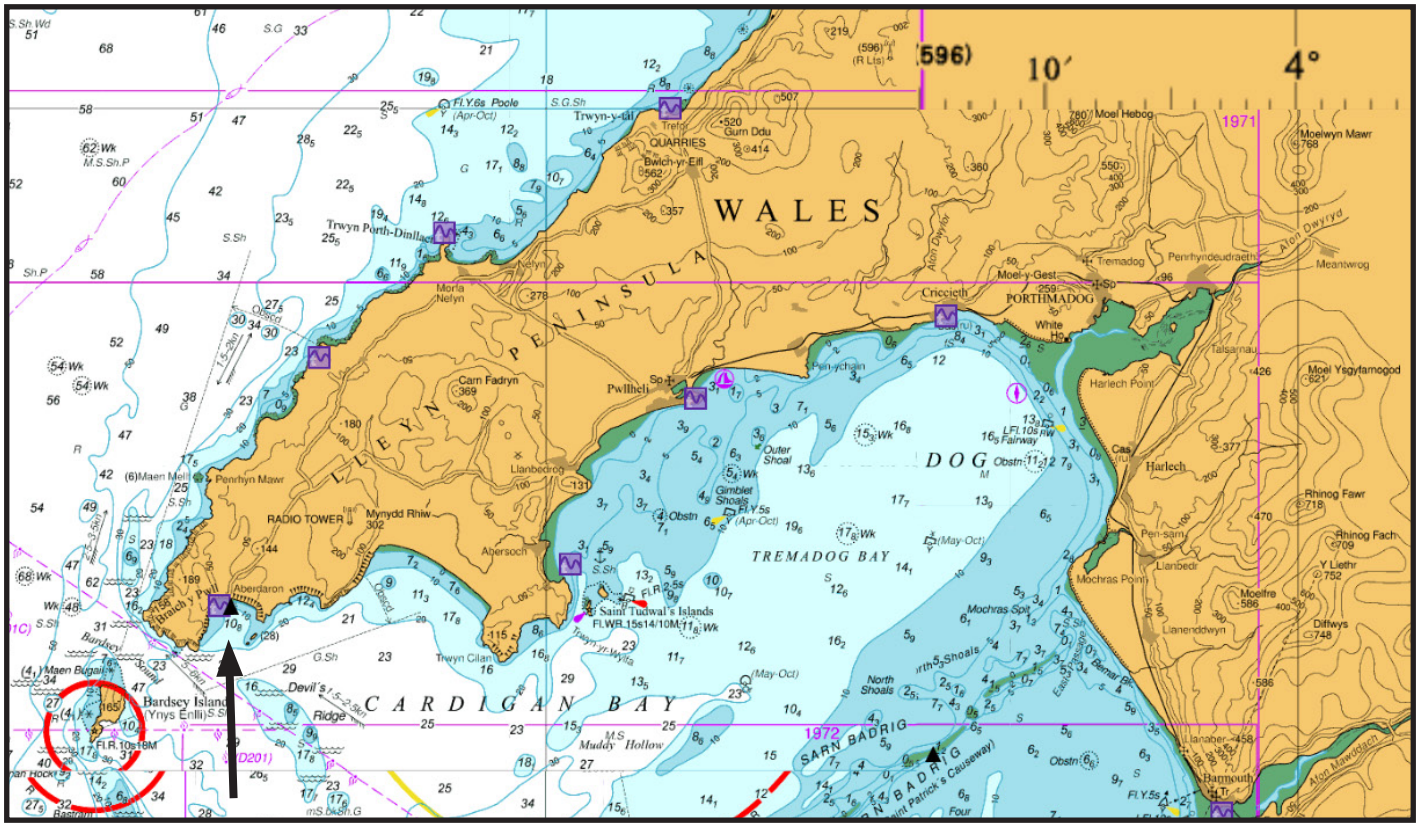
Location.


WALES
LLEYN PENINSULA
TREMADOG BAY
CARDIGAN BAY
PORTHMADOG
Criccieth
Pwllheli
Aberdaron
Bardsey Island
Harlech
Barmouth
Mynydd Rhiw
Abersoch
Llanbedrog
Trwyn Porth-Dinllaen
Trwyn-y-tal
Moel Hebog
Moelwyn Mawr
Moel Ysgyfarnogod
Rhinog Fawr
Rhinog Fach
Y Llethr
Diffwys
Moelfre
Llanenddwyn
Mochras Point
Harlech Point
Tremadog
Penrhyndeudraeth
Meanwrog
Talsarnau
Llanbedr
Llanaber
Aber Mawddach
Aber Dwyryd
Carn Fadryn
Penrhyn Mawr
RADIO TOWER
Saint Tudwal's Islands
Devil's Ridge
Muddy Hollow
Outer Shoal
Gimblet Shoals
Fairway
North Shoals
Mochras Spit
SARN BADRIG
Saint Patrick's Causeway
Gurn Ddu
QUARRIES
Bwlch-yr-Ell
Morfa Nefyn
Trwyn Cilan
Trwyn yr Wylfa
Pen-ychain
Pen-sarn
Mynydd Anelog
Mynydd Mawr
Porth Simdde
Porth Meudwy
Porth Felen
Aberdaron
Porth Cadlan
Maen Gwenonwy
Carreg Gybi
Trwyn y Penrhyn
Trwyn Gwningaer
Aberdaron Bay
Ynys Gwylan-fawr (28)
Ynys Gwylan-bâch
Carreg Ddu
Pen y Cil
PA
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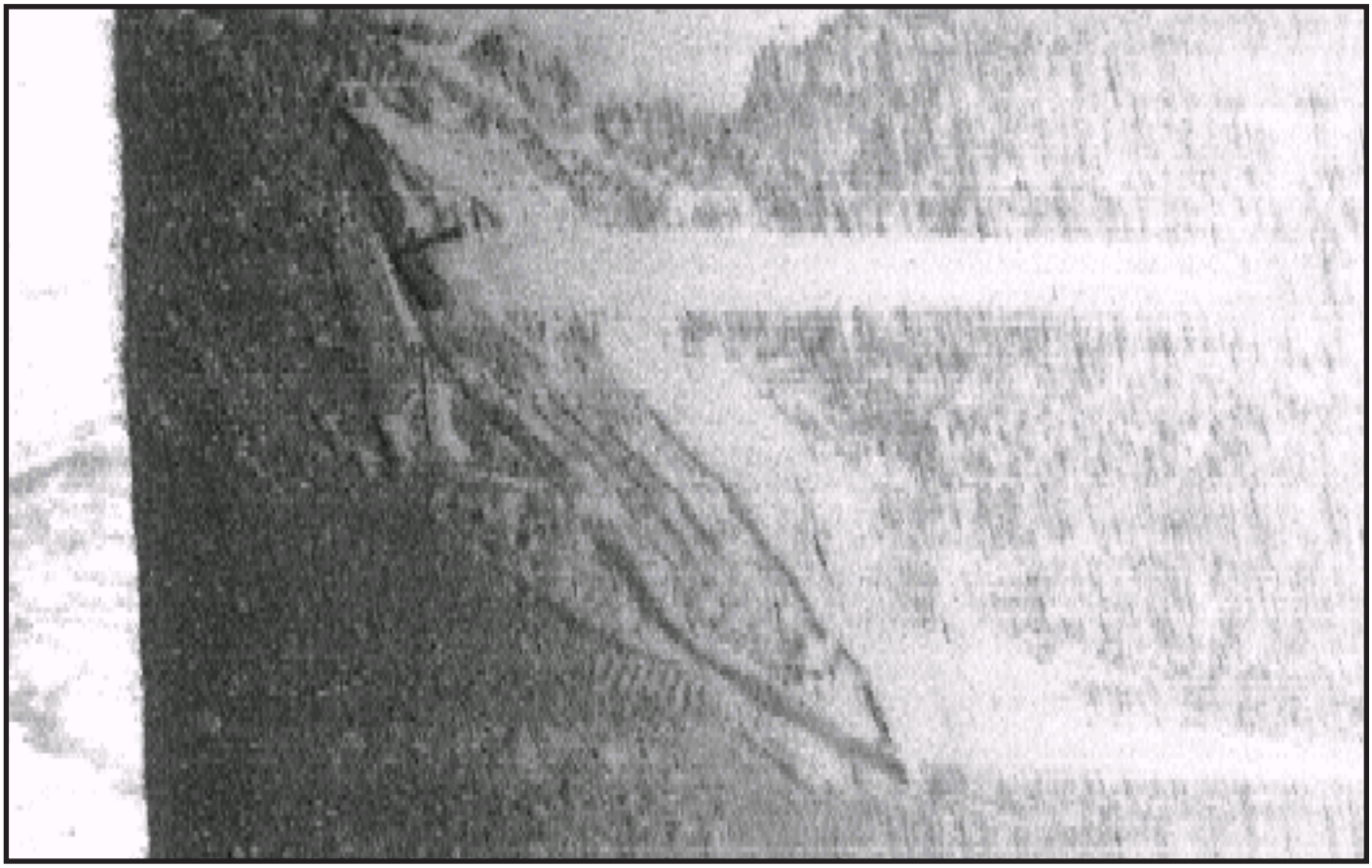
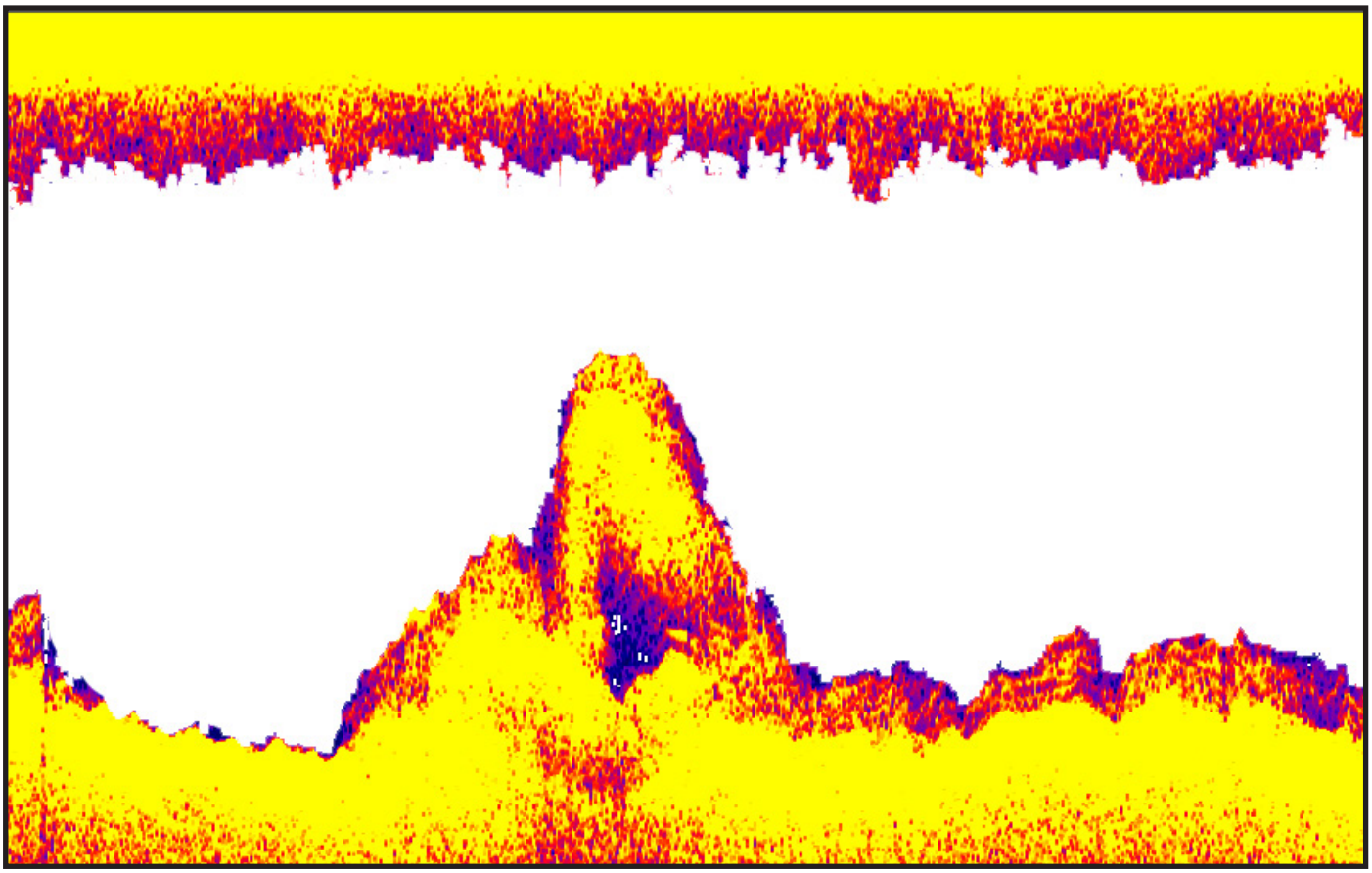


An side-scan trace of the wreck



An echo-sounder trace of the wreck

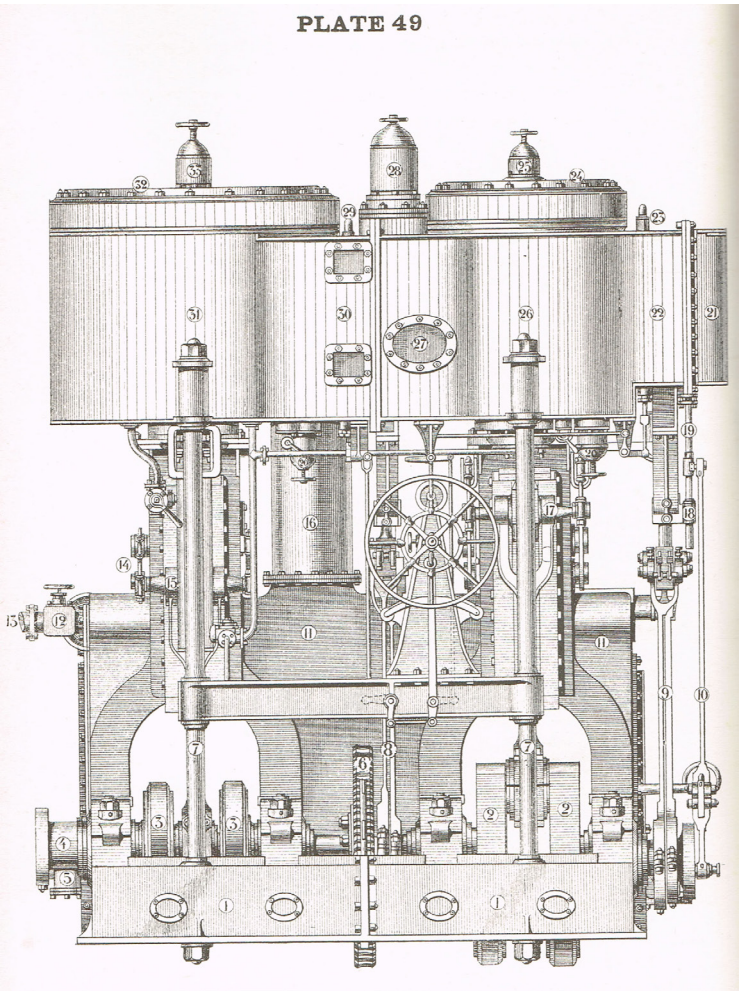


PLATE 49.

Compound-Engine.

1 Bed-plate.
2 Crank-webs; Webs of Crankshaft.
3 Balance-weights on Crankshaft.
4 Crankshaft.
5 Pass-by-valve, for Circulating-pump.
6 Turning-wheel.
7 Cylinder-columns.
8 Low-pressure-eccentric-rods.
9 High-pressure-eccentric-rods.
10 Expansion-valve-rod.
11 Condenser.
12 Jet-injection-valve.
13 Jet-injection-pipe.
14 Pump-link; Lever-link.
15 Low-pressure-piston-rod-crosshead.
16 Eduction-pipe.
17 High-pressure-piston-rod-crosshead.
18 Expansion-valve-spindle-guide.
19 Expansion-valve-spindle.
20 Escape-valves.
21 High-pressure-valve-casing-door.
22 High-pressure-valve-casing.
23 High-pressure-valve-spindle-guide-dome.
24 High-pressure-cylinder-cover.
25 High-pressure-cylinder-escape-valve.
26 High-pressure-cylinder.
27 Manhole-door.
28 Low-pressure-balance-piston-dome.
29 Low-pressure-valve-spindle-guide-dome.
30 Low-pressure-valve-casing.
31 Low-pressure-cylinder.
32 Low-pressure-cylinder-cover.
33 Low-pressure-cylinder-escape-valve.

A drawing of a Compound Steam Engine.
Reproduced from the 'Illustrated Marine Encyclopedia', published in 1890.
It is assumed that the engine of the 'Glenocum' was recovered by the salvors during the 1880s.