



Welsh Wreck Web Research Project

(North Cardigan Bay)

On-line research into the wreck of the:

PLYNL YMON (133)

Report compiled by:

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1.0 Abstract

Between 2001 and 2009 The Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU) held various licences under the Protection of Wrecks Act (1973) to dive and work on the Welsh designated wreck site known as the *Diamond*. The *Diamond* was a fully rigged American ship, built in 1823, that made 4 return transatlantic crossings before wrecking on the Sarn Badrig Reef, north Cardigan Bay in January 1825.

Over the research into the *Diamond*, MADU compiled a list of all the vessels that we could identify as having wrecked on or around the Sarn Badrig Reef, and to date there are 453 vessels on MADUs data base. Of these, very few have been investigated in any depth.

With corona virus currently requiring all to rethink the way we live, MADU instigated an on-line research project to identify details of these wreck on the data base.

This is a report on the results internet-based research of the PLYNLYMON which has thought to have been wrecked on the St Patrick`s Causeway on the 9th March 1858. The results of the project indicate that the PLYNLYMON was not wrecked on this date. In fact, the vessel operated well after this date, changing its name to the TROUBADOUR.

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3.0 Introduction

Database entry No 133 PLYNLYMON was selected to be the subject of an on-line research-based project. The PLYNLYMON was chosen as there were no data entries in the database.

This project aimed to answer the following research questions:

- 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 any salvage, etc. been carried out?
- Have there been any previous reports produced relating to the vessel?

4.0 Background

Prior to starting this research project the only known information about the PLYNLYMON in regards to the Cardigan Bay wreck information is summarised by entry 133 of the data base provided by MADU, Figure 1.

										Metric			Impe	
MADU Ref. No.	Date Wrecked	Name	Location 1	Location 2	Details	Vessel Type	Matts	Ref.	L	B	D	L	B	
132	11/02/1858	Leander	Caernarvonshire	Caernarfon bay, Bardsey Island	30M NE & E	Full rigged ship	wood	ri						
133	09/03/1858	Plynlymon	Cardiganshire	Causeway	Aground	Steamship		rc.iwj						
134	10/09/1858	Glaston Miller	Caernarvonshire	Caernarfon bay, Bardsey Sound, 1M off		Schooner	wood	ri						
135	18/09/1858	Isabel	Cardiganshire	Barmouth	Wrecked on the Bar	Schooner		rc						

Figure 1 MADU Database Entry for PLYNLYMON

The MADU database has the PLYNLYMON recorded as being wrecked on the 9th March 1858 on the `Causeway`, and that she was a steamship. No entries in any of the additional information supplied by MADU related to this vessel i.e. North Cardigan Bay Wreck Notes (compiled by Sue Barker)

The vessel does appear on the map of wrecks in the Merioneth and Caernarvonshire sections of Cardigan Bay, Figure 2, on the south east tip of St Patrick`s Causeway, circled **RED**.

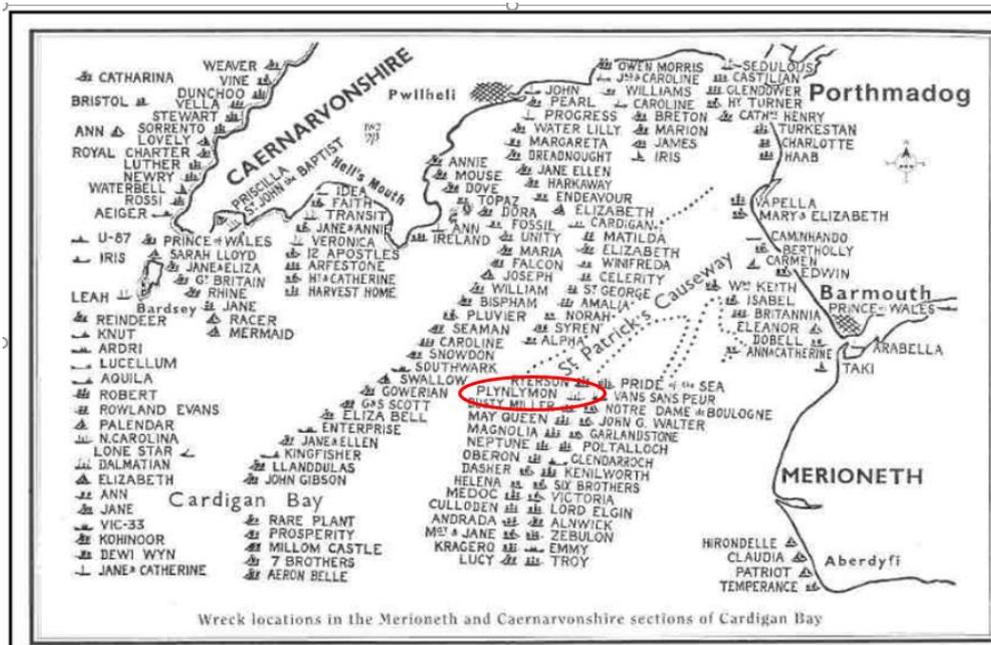


Figure 2 Wreck locations in the Merioneth and Caernarvonshire sections of Cardigan Bay

St Patrick`s Causeway or Sarn Badrig (Welsh for *St. Patrick's Causeway*), Figure 3, is one of several more or less parallel shingle reefs extending under the sea in Cardigan Bay on the west coast of Wales. Sarn Badrig is the longest and most northerly of these, and extends south-westwards under the sea from Mochras Point, on Shell Island, near Harlech, parallel to the Llŷn Peninsula for a length of about 20km, and can be seen at low tide. It is a hazard to shipping (Wikimedia – St.Patricks Causeway, nd).



Figure 3 St Patrick`s Causeway or Sarn Badrig

5.0 Research Methodology

The research methodology was mainly a literature review of internationally recognised shipping registers (Lloyd's Register of Shipping), local and national news paper archive searches, and ancestry databases.

Wholly internet based the search was conducted through established search engines i.e. Google, Lloyds Register of Shipping Foundation archives, British Newspaper archives etc. A wide range of portals were used:

- Personal Computers – DELL, Toshiba & ASUS;
- Tablets – IPAD
- Smart Phones – IPHONE 8 & 6S

All using Microsoft Operating Systems.

As a lot of newspaper articles are compiled from 3rd party accounts, and in some case anecdotal information, the first part of the research focussed on identifying an entry of the PLYNLYMON in a reputable source, Lloyds ship registers, as these are 1st hand entries made by what is accepted reliable sources.

Identifying the PLYNLYMON in the register books, enabled subsequent information from not so academic sources to be verified.

6.0 Results

The PLYNLYMON was built in 1856 by Thomas Vernon & Sons (Shipping and shipbuilding UK, nd) for the Cambrian Steam Packet Company. The vessel is listed as a “Iron Screw Steamer” and given the Official Number **17782**. Figure 3 is the boiler plate entry for the PLYNLYMON at Shipping & Shipbuilding UK.

Total 1 : Vessels matching your search						
Year Built ▲▼	O.N	Vessel Name ▲▼	Builder ▲▼	Yard No ▲▼	Vessel Type ▲▼	Propulsion ▲▼
1856	17782	PLYNLYMON	Thomas Vernon & Sons			Screw Steamer

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Figure 3 details of the PLYNLYMON at Shipping & Shipbuilding UK.

Although listed as a `General Cargo Ship` she was built for the Cambrian Steam Packet Co. to provide a small passenger/sea excursion service between Aberystwyth, Liverpool and other ports along the Welsh coast. Figure 4, A share certificate of the Cambrian Steam Packet Company.

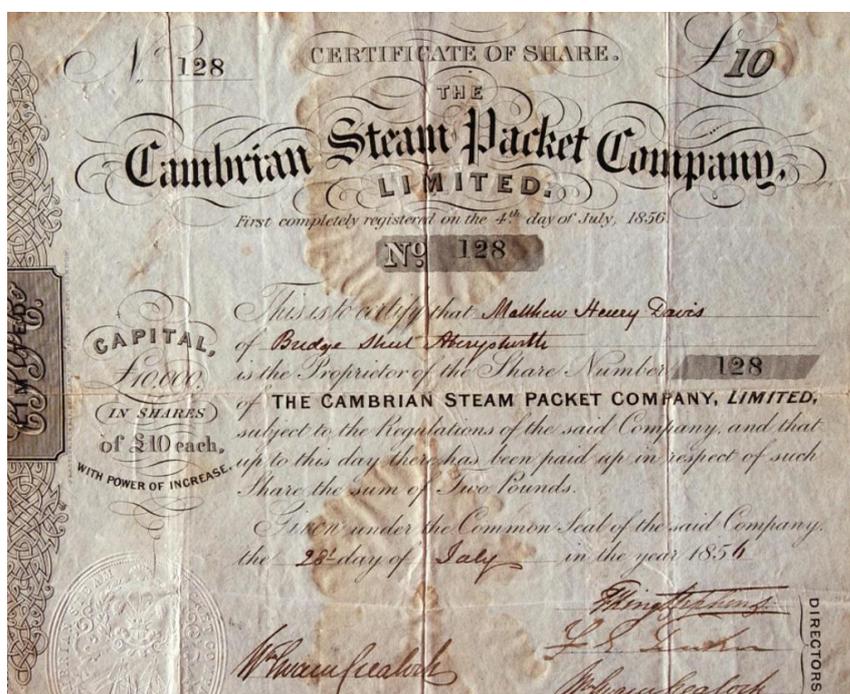


Figure 4 – A share certificate of the Cambrian Steam Packet Company

The company operated out of Aberystwyth, with ships going to Bristol, Liverpool and London and extended the service to Swansea. It carried both cargo and passengers to these destinations, stopping off at intervening smaller ports (Aberdovey Londoner, nd). The PLYNLYMON was advertised as:

“Excellent accommodation for Passengers. Stewardess on board.” Fares from Liverpool and Bristol to Aberystwyth, Portmadoc, Aberayron, Aberdovey, Cardigan and New Quay cabins were 12 shillings and steerage 7 shillings between either Aberystwyth, Aberaeron, Aberdovey, Cardigan, new Quay, Portmadoc or Holyhead, cabins were 9 shillings and steerage was 6 shillings. (Aberdovey Londoner, nd)

Although it ran cargo and offered passenger less expensive prices than the railway, it found competition from the combination of rail and the establishment in 1863 of a rival steamship company difficult, and folded in 1876 (Aberdovey Londoner, nd)

The internet search using the PLYNLYMON as the search phrase resulted in numerous newspaper article extracts of incidents that the vessel was involved in between 1858 - 1863, see Appendix I. A summary of these is listed in Table 1.

Date of Incidence	Description of Incidence	Action Taken	Source of Incidence Report
13th December 1858	Ran aground on the Patches Rocks	Refloated on the 14th December and towed into Aberystwyth in a "leaky condition".	Shipping Intelligence". <i>Liverpool Mercury etc</i> (3380). Liverpool. 16 December 1858. and "Mercantile Ship News". <i>The Standard</i> (10714). London. 16 December 1858. p. 7. still 1860 16 June
13th June 1860	The propeller shaft was broken in the act of reversing to square the vessel with the wharf at Portmadoc	Propeller Shaft repaired by Mr. John Henry Williams, Britannia Foundry,	North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 16th June 1860
26 th April 1861	Whilst on passage from Liverpool the vessel rescued the schooner "Elizabeth Davies," who dragged her anchor and drifted onto rocks sustaining damage.	Reports would indicate that the " <i>in a sinking state (The Elizabeth Davies)</i> ", <i>having struck on the Middle Mouse, and drifting towards shore. The steamer (Plynlymon) took her in tow to the entrance of Amlwch harbour, into which port she was afterwards hauled, much damaged.</i>	The Welshman. 3rd May 1861. North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 4th May 1861
2 nd November 1863	Grounded on the South Bank, near the chequered buoy whilst entering Portmadoc		Lloyd's List PORT MADOC
3rd November 1863	A tug succeeded in towing off the South Bank, but she grounded again on the North side, and now lies in a more dangerous place		Lloyd's List PORT MADOC

Date of Incidence	Description of Incidence	Action Taken	Source of Incidence Report
10th November 1863	Was floated safely on Saturday last, and steamed up at once to the harbour	The cargo was unloaded – no reported damage sustained	North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 14th November 1863

Table 1 Newspaper article extracts of incidents between 1858 – 1863

The next chronological entry that the internet search uncovered was an entry in 'The London Gazette' dated October 8th 1872. The article was announcing a change of name of a ship. The subject vessel was named as the PLYNLYMON official number 17,782. The article states that the owner's of the ship are Edgar Sydney and Edward Joynes Wiggins of 6 Fowkes-buildings, Great tower Street, London (The Gazette, nd). The new name of the vessel is to be TROUBADOUR, see Figure 5.

Official Notice.—Proposal to Change a Ship's Name.

WE, Sydney and Wiggins, of 6, Fowke's-buildings, Great Tower-street, London, E.C., hereby give notice, that in consequence of the unsuitability of the name for the trade for which she is intended, viz. :—between London and the Continent—the names of our other steamers being spelt the same in French and English,—ending with the letter R,—and names easily written and understood by foreigners, it is our intention to apply to the Board of Trade, under Section 6 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1871, in respect of our steamship "Plynlymon," of London, official number 17,782, of gross tonnage 260·82 tons, of register tonnage 206 $\frac{1}{10}$ tons, heretofore owned by Edgar Sydney and Edward Joynes Wiggins, of 6, Fowke's-buildings, Great Tower-street, London, E.C., for permission to change her name to "Troubadour," to be registered under the said new name at the Port of London, as owned by Edgar Sydney and Edward Joynes Wiggins.

Any objections to the proposed change of name must be sent to the Assistant-Secretary, Marine Department, Board of Trade, within fifteen days from the appearance of this advertisement.

Dated at 6, Fowke's-buildings, Great Tower-street, London, E.C., this 4th day of October, 1872.

SYDNEY and WIGGINS.

Figure 5 London Gazette announcement of the name change of the PLYNLYMON

The Lloyd's Register Ships had NO entries for the PLYNLYMON and the Cambrian Steam Packet Company were not listed as subscribers for the period between the vessel delivery and prior to the change of name date. In 1874 we see the first entry of the vessel with the official number 17,782.

The entry lists the TROUBADOUR (O.N. 17,782) having been surveyed in London in 1874. The owners are listed as Sydney & Wiggins and the ship's Master is E.French (Lloyds Register of Ships, nd). See Figure 6 for the Lloyd's Register of Ships entry for the TROUBADOUR 1874.

60868	Tropic	DKILL. VICKERY	494	141	0	29	5	17	.....	Baldwin	7mo.			A.&CP.	1,74		
8	Troubadour	SewSr E.French	170	152	4	20	1	11	1	2 I.D.A.....	50HP.	Livrp]	1856	Sydney & Wiggins	London	.....	—
17782	Iron		272	238						27-22		Veraon					
9	Troubadour	Sr A Campbl	96	83	7	21	1	9	5	.....		P.E.Isl	1867	W.M'Gill	P.E.Isl.	PEI.	4
57092		I.R.	—									M'Gill	12mo.				4,68

Figure 6 for the Lloyd's Register of Ships entry for the TROUBADOUR 1874.

The next chronological newspaper archive entry is in the London Gazette this time announcing the bankruptcy of Messers Sydney & Wiggins dated 26th August 1874 (The London Gazzette, nd). Figure 7 is an extract from the London Gazette bankruptcy notice.

THE LONDON GAZETTE, SEPTEMBER 1, 1874. 4263

and Booth Hollin's Mill, Littleborough, of Lancaster, and of No. 8, Goldsmith-London, Planuel Manufacturers, trading together under the firm of Abraham Scho- and will be paid by me, at my offices, west, in the city of Manchester, on and f September, 1874.—Dated this 28th day

DAVID SMITH, Trustee.

e Bankruptcy Act, 1869. Court of Essex, holden at Chelmsford, idend of 2jd. in the pound has been the matter of proceedings for liquidation composition with creditors, instituted by Romford, in the county of Essex, Auc- hant, Baker, and Confectioner, and will my office, Romford, Essex, on and after day of August instant, between the hours

ALFRED HARVEY, Trustee.

e Bankruptcy Act, 1869. Court of Sussex, holden at Brighton, Final Dividend of 4s. 4d. in the pound elated in the matter of proceedings for

Gresham-street, in the city of London, on the 10th day of September, 1874, at twelve o'clock at noon precisely.— Dated this 26th day of August, 1874.

WILLIAM A. CRUMP, 10, Philpot-lane, London, E.C., Attorney for the said Debtors.

The Bankruptcy Act, 1869.

In the London Bankruptcy Court.

In the Matter of Proceedings for Liquidation by Arrange- ment or Composition with Creditors, instituted by Edgar Sydney, of No. 6, Fowke's-buildings, Great Tower-street, in the city of London, and of No. 9, the Grove, Greenwich, in the county of Kent, and Edward Joynes Wiggins, of No. 6, Fowke's-buildings aforesaid, and of No. 20, the Circus, Greenwich aforesaid, trading as Ship and Insurance Brokers, under the style or firm of Sydney and Wiggins.

NOTICE is hereby given, that a First General Meeting of the separate creditors of the above-named Edgar Sydney has been summoned to be held at the Guildhall Coffee-house, Gresham-street, in the city of London, on the 10th day of September, 1874, at two o'clock in the afternoon precisely.—Dated this 26th day of August, 1874.

WILLIAM A. CRUMP, 10, Philpot-lane, London, E.C., Attorney for the said Debtor.

Figure 7 is an extract from the London Gazette bankruptcy notice.

A detailed specification of the PLYNLYMON can be found at the shipping and shipbuilding UK database produced in Figure 8 (Shipping and shipbuilding UK, nd).

Name	Official number	Flag	IMO
PLYNLYMON	17782	GBR	
Year built	Date launched	Date completed	
1856		11/1856	
Vessel type	Vessel description		
Cargo General	Iron Screw Steamer		
Builder	Yard	Yard no	
Thomas Vernon & Sons, Liverpool	Brunswick Dock		

Tonnage	Length	Breadth	Depth	Draft
209 grt / 142 nrt /	125.5 ft	20.5 ft	11.1 ft	
Engine builder				
Engine detail				
50hp, 1 screw				

First owner	First port of register	Registration date
T. & J. Vernon, Liverpool	Liverpool	08/11/1856
Other names	1873 TROUBADOUR	
Subsequent owner and registration history	1872 Sydney & Wiggins, London (reg. London) MNL.1880 Stephen B. Walsh, Kilmallock, Co. Limerick (reg. London)	
Vessel history		
Remarks		
End year	Fate / Status	
1882	Stranded	
Disposal Detail	11/1882 stranded, no details.	

Figure 8 A detailed specification of the PLYNLYMON

7.0 Analysis

Built by Vernon`s of Liverpool originally for the Cambrian Steam Packet Co in 1856. This has been corroborated by several different noted data sources, Lloyd`s Register of Shipping and the shipping and shipbuilding databases. The PLYNLYMON has been given the official number 17782, which will stay with the vessel throughout her life regardless of change of ownership, name or registration.

The MADU database has the PLYNLYMON recorded as being wrecked on the 9th March 1858 on the Causeway`.

There are numerous internet hits having the PLYNLYMON operating post this date. This report lists internet hits from 1858 - 1863

In 1874 we have an announcement made the London Gazette announcing the change of name of the PLYNLYMON to the TROUBADOUR. The ship is no longer owned by the Cambrian Steam Packet Co, but now by Sydney & Wiggins of Great Tower Street, London.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

It is evident from the internet search that the PLYMPLYMON was not wrecked on the Causeway on the 9th March 1858 as indicated on the map "*Wreck locations in the Merioneth and Caernarvonshire sections of Cardigan Bay*", Figure 2.

The PLYNLYMON did have an eventful period whilst operating under the ownership of the Cambrian Steam Packet Company, as evidenced by several contemporary newspaper articles, however none indicate, or could be construed to indicate, the wrecking of the ship on the Causeway on the 9th March 1858.

Within the context of this project – the research questions have been answered for the PLYNLYMON, however it would be interesting to see how it was thought that the PLYNLYMON was wrecked on the Causeway.

9.0 References

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Appendix A – Newspaper articles related to the PLYNLYMON 1858 - 1863

13 December 1858

The steamship ran aground on the Patches Rocks. She was refloated the next day and towed in to Aberystwyth, Cardiganshire in a leaky condition.

PLYNLYMON IN SHIPPING ARRIVALS 1858, 59, 60**North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 16th June 1860.**

THE "PLYNLYMON" STEAMER. To the Editor of the North Wales Chronicle. I Sir, In the last impression of your excellent paper, it was reported that the shaft of the propeller of the Plynlimon was broken in the act of reversing to square the vessel with the wharf. I am now glad to say that the same was successfully welded, &c., by Mr. John Henry Williams, Britannia Foundry, of this town, and was taken on board on the 11th inst., but owing to the strong westerly gales and low-tides, it could not be fixed till this morning. Taking into consideration Mr. Williams' small smithy, it is a wonder that he has been able to do the work, and it speaks highly of his enterprising spirit and ingenuity, and he undoubtedly deserves the thanks of the Cambrian Steam Packet Company, in saving them a great expense by his ingenuity and skill, and thus shewing that the little port may be proud that such an undertaking has been so satisfactorily completed, and the affair speaks highly of the enterprising spirit of the inhabitants. W. BARROW. Portmadoc, 13th June, 1860.

The Welshman. 3rd May 1861

ABERYSTWYTH. DISASTER AT SEA.

As the Plynlimon steamer was on her passage from Liverpool to this port on the 26th ult., she fell in with the schooner "Elizabeth Davies," of this port in a sinking state, having struck on the Middle Mouse, and drifting towards shore. The steamer took her in tow to the entrance of Amlwch harbour, into which port she was afterwards hauled, much damaged. The Elizabeth Davies" is a new schooner, and was laden with railway iron from Newport to Runcorn.

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 4th May 1861

The schooner "Elizabeth Davies," of Aberystwyth, James Davies, master, on her passage from Newport to Runcorn, with a cargo of railway iron, at 7 p. m., on the 26th of April, struck on the Middle Mouse, having dragged her anchor, damaged her keel, and in a leaky state, was towed off to the Harbour, by the Plynlimon steamer, assisted into port by the Harbour boat. She is now discharging her cargo, and being repaired by Mr. W. C. Payuter, of Amlwch. The conduct of the Capt. of the steamer, on this occasion, cannot be too much commended. After the "Elizabeth Davies," struck, she slipped into deep water and was fast filling. The indefatigable chief officer of the Coast Guard and his men were in prompt attendance to render every assistance.

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 14th November 1863.

PORT MADOC. THE PLYNLYMON.

We are happy to learn that the steam vessel Plynlimon, which was stranded on Monday week on the Bar at the entrance of the river, was floated safely on Saturday last, and steamed up at once to the harbour, and apparently not much the worse for her long detention. On Monday the cargo was unloaded so that, fortunately, the loss sustained was chiefly the loss of time.

Lloyd's List PORT MADOC 2nd Nov.(1863)

The PLYNLYMON,(s), from Liverpool, in attempting to get in, grounded on the South Bank, near the chequered buoy, where she remains, and, as the tides are falling off, she must be lightened; if the weather moderate, assistance will be rendered next tide.

Lloyd's List PORT MADOC 3rd Nov.(1863)

A tug succeeded this morning in towing off the PLYNLYMON (ss) from Liverpool, which grounded on the South Bank, but she grounded again on the North side, and now lies in a more dangerous place. A vessel's headboard, marked 'Presta' in cut and gilt letters, was picked up in this neighbourhood 31st Oct. Lloyd's List Nov 10 (1863) says Plynlimon safe in port.