

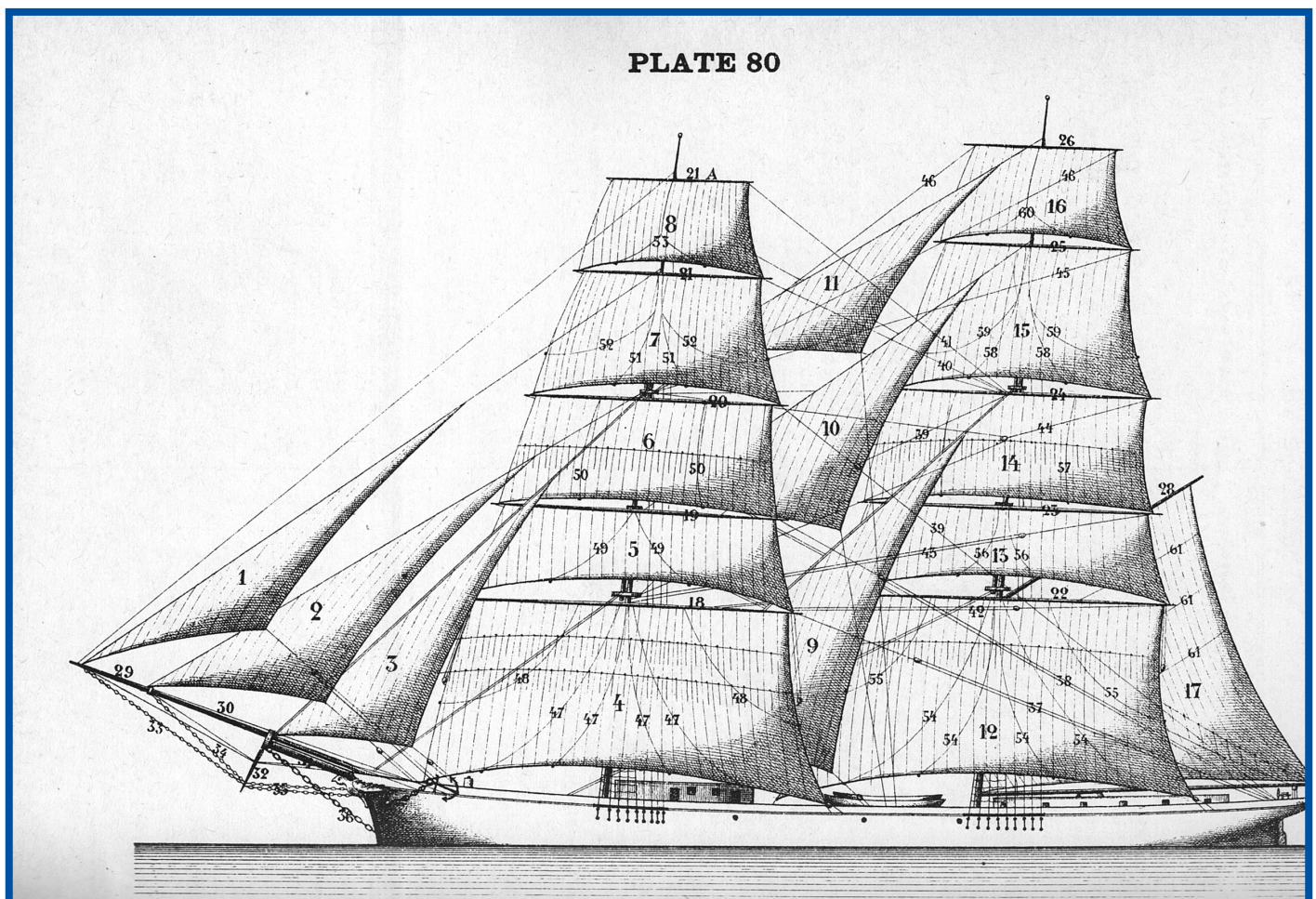


Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay)

On-line research into the wreck of the brig

Concordia,

which came ashore at Abersoch in 1887, but was
re-floated soon afterwards.



A Brig; taken from 'The Illustrated Marine Encyclopedia' by Captain H. Paasch.

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

On-line and practical research into the grounding and subsequent re-floating of the brig 'Concordia' at Castell March, Abersoch, North Wales.

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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

	Page		
1.0 Abstract	2		
2.0 Index	3		
2.1 Table of Contents	3		
2.2 Contributors	3		
2.3 Abbreviations	3		
3.0 Introduction	4		
4.0 Background	4		
5.0 Research Methodology	4		
Details.	4		
Location	4		
Overview	4		
Charts	5		
Newspaper Reports.	6		
Photos			
Abersoch Lifeboat, off Castell March beach.	4		Chris Holden
Castell March beach & Llanbedrog Headland.	5		Chris Holden
Castell March beach.	9		Chris Holden
7.0 Analysis	9		
8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations	9		
References	9		

2.2 Contributors

Chris Holden.

2.3 Abbreviations used in this report:

MADU Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

NAS Nautical Archaeology Society

CPH Chris Holden



Abersoch Lifeboat, with the beach at Castell March in the background.

3.0 Introduction

For many years, the author spent the summer months diving the area around Aberdaron, Abersoch, Bardsey Island and Hell's Mouth. Bad weather would intervene, so he then spent much time walking the beaches and exploring the cliff-tops in search of items of interest.

4.0 Background.

Having come across references to the 'Concordia', the author was keen to investigate if this was a shipwreck that could be visited underwater.

Note that the spelling of the town of Porthmadog varies in the early newspapers, so it may appear as 'Port Madoc' or 'Portmadoc'. 'Tudwal' also appears as 'Tudwall' or 'Tudwel'. Aberystwyth appears as 'Aberystwith'.

Caernarfon appears as 'Carnarvon' or 'Caernarvon'.

Wherever possible, the spellings in the published newspapers have been used.

5.0 Research Methodology.

Equipment and sources used:

Richard Larne's Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. West Coast 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.



Castell March beach (Arrowed) and Llanbedrog Headland. The beach provided a safe place to bring the ‘Concordia’ ashore, whereas the headland would have meant the destruction of the brig.

6.0 Details.

Vessel Name: Concordia. Type: Brig.

Registered Weight: 236 tons.

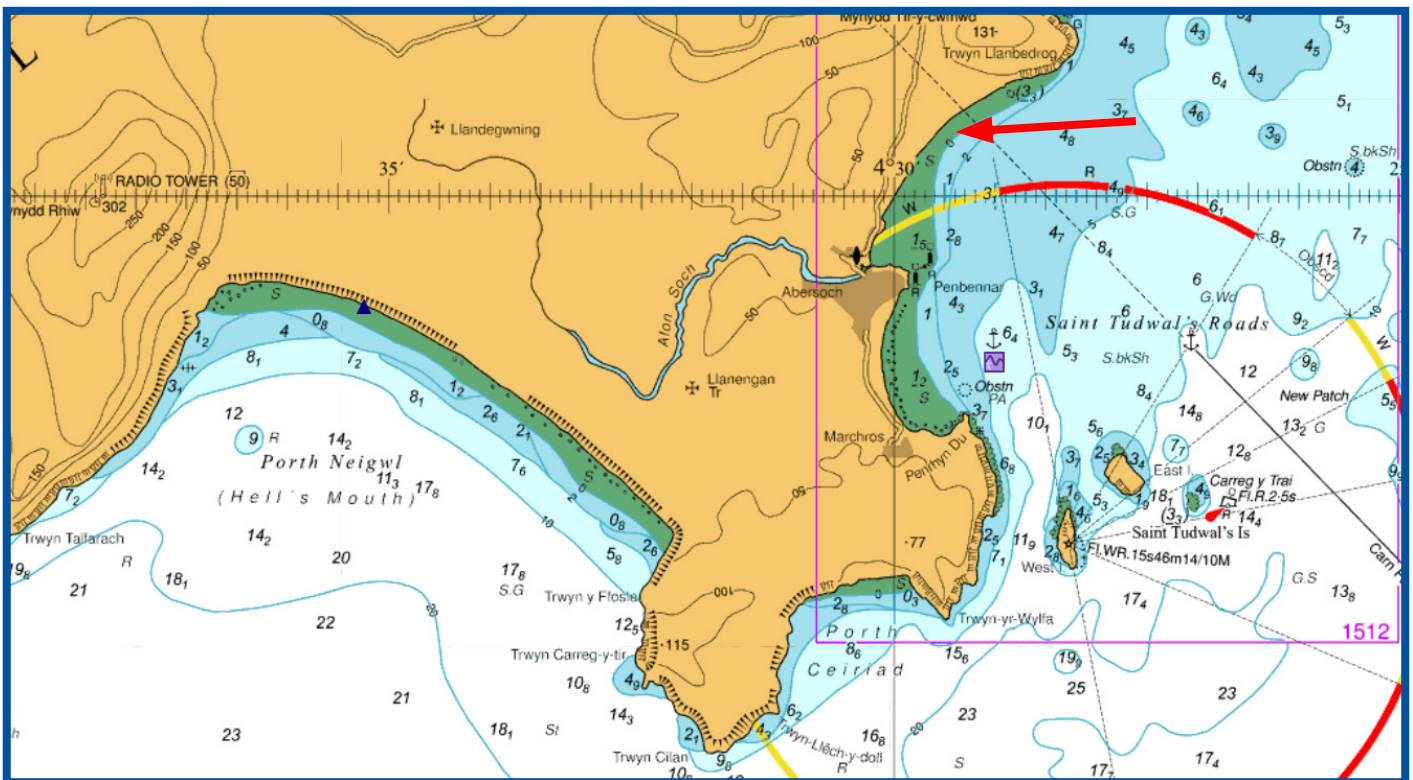
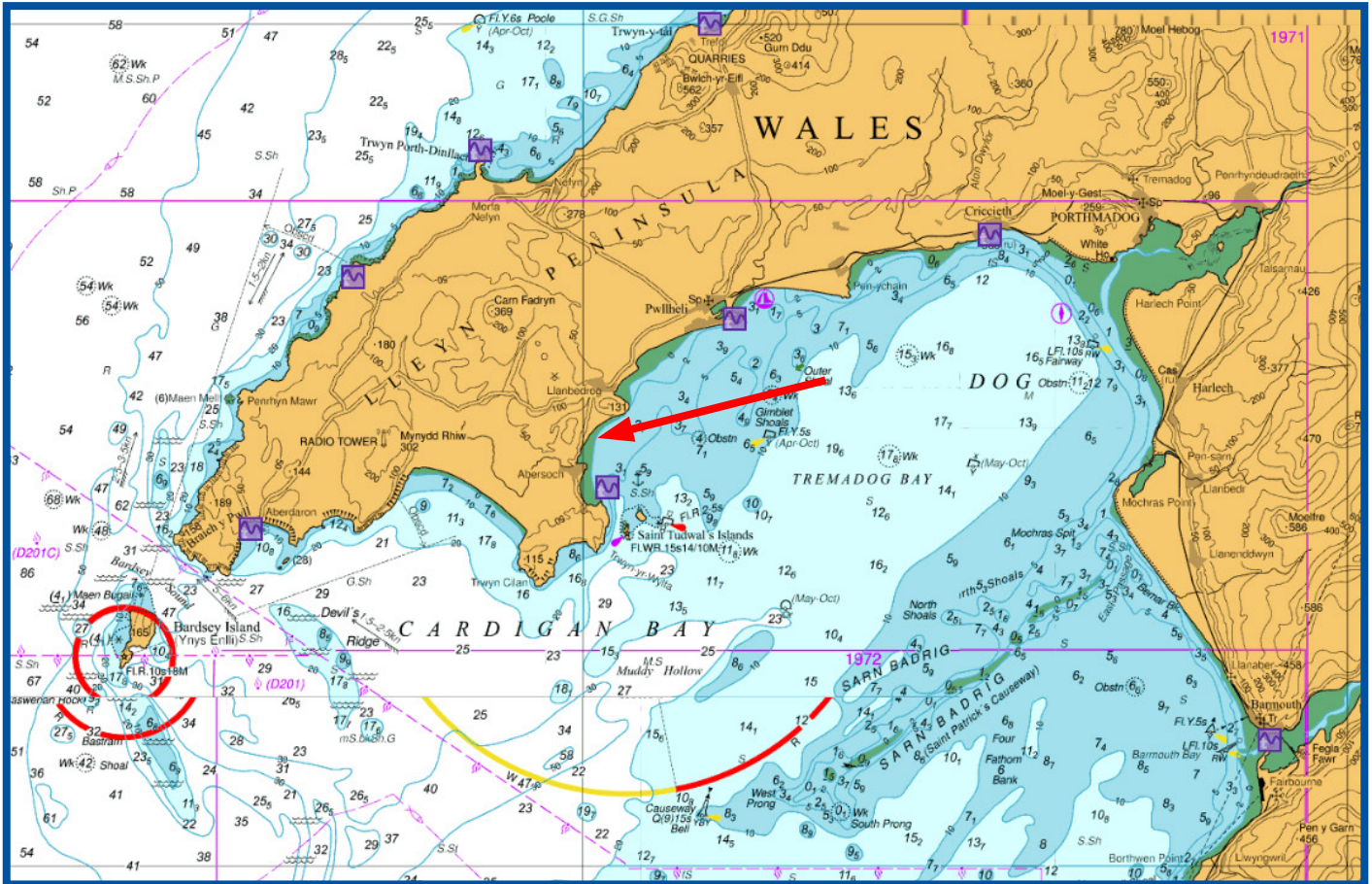
Propulsion: Sail. Construction Materials: Wooden hull.

Location.

Castell March is a gently-sloping sandy beach, located immediately north of the village of Abersoch on the southern coast of the Llyn Peninsula in North Wales. A headland and two nearby islands provide some shelter from inclement weather, so St. Tudwal’s Roadstead was a popular anchorage during a storm, but many vessels were blown ashore at nearby Castell March, including the ‘Concordia’.

Overview.

As the newspaper reports show, the ‘Concordia’ was re-floated to resume her career. Several vessels share the same name, so it is not conclusive that the ‘Concordia’ ashore at Abersoch was the same one that, as noted on page 8, was later abandoned in the North Sea.



Morning Post. Wednesday, 2 November, 1887.

At Abersoch, the schooner Red Rover, of Whitehaven, and the foreign brig Concordia came ashore. The crews were saved.

Lloyd's List. Wednesday, 2 November, 1887.

CONCORDIA. Abersoch. Nov. 1. The brig Concordia, of Christiana, Christiansen, from Zeddore for Portmadoc with timber, is ashore on Abersoch beach.

CONCORDIA. Pwllheli. Nov 1. 6.25 p.m. The brig Concordia, from 'Cedor', Norfolk, for Portmadoc, ashore at Abersoch; cargo timber; captain gone to Pwllheli.

The North Wales Express. 4th November 1887.**LIFE-BOAT SERVICES CALLED FOR AND REFUSED.**

During the severe storm which prevailed on Tuesday, a brig was observed ashore on the beach under Castell March, about a mile from Abersoch, with a signal of distress flying on the main rigging. The coxswain assembled the crew as soon as possible, launched the lifeboat, and proceeded to the vessel, bringing the boat to an anchor, and getting a line on board of the brig. After waiting alongside for about two hours, the crew declined to come into the lifeboat, saying that they were better off where they were. During a part of the time it was blowing a hurricane. The coxswain weighed the anchor and beached the boat. The vessel's name is the Concordia, of Christiana, a brig of about three hundred tons, bound from Norfolk, Virginia, U.S.A., laden with timber for Portmadoc. It is feared that the lower timbers of the vessel have been much damaged. The schooner Red Rover, of France, with French clay and arsenic for Birkenhead, is ashore on the same beach. Fortunately no lives were lost.

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald. 4th November 1887.**SOUTH CARNARVONSHIRE. VESSELS IN DISTRESS.**

At daybreak, on Tuesday last, a brig was observed ashore at Abersoch beach, under Castell March. She had a signal of distress on the main rigging. The coxswain of the local lifeboat, assembled his crew as soon as possible, and launched the lifeboat, and at once proceeded towards the vessel. The sea in the immediate open was tremendously high, and therefore seriously dangerous. The boat and its brave crew braved it all, and succeeded in bringing it to anchor opposite the vessel. By means of a line, they communicated with the crew of the vessel, and found that they were unwilling to leave the vessel. The boat, after waiting for about two hours, hove up anchor and left, and safely arrived at Abersoch. The vessel, which is high and dry at ebb tide, is the "Concordia," belonging to Christiana, about 300 tons, bound from Norfolk, Virginia, loaded with timber for Portmadoc. The names of the lifeboat crew are the following Evan Davies. John Thomas, Robert Thomas, John Evans, Hugh Jones, Wm. Williams, Richard Williams, Owen Griffith, Thomas Parry, Robert Williams, David Richards (cox) and R. Thomas. The Rev. O. LI. William, the active local honorary secretary of the Lifeboat Institution, arrived on the spot as soon as he could after the receipt of the news of the wreck. The "Red Diver," a schooner of Whitehaven, about 200 tons, was blown on the rocks near Abersoch, and is in a dangerous position. A small craft, in running up towards Abersoch bridge, got on to an anchor, and sank.

DAMAGE TO SHIPPING. Another report says: On the South of Carnarvonshire coast, by Portmadoc, the gale was terrific on land and sea. Passenger trains plying between Portmadoc

and Ffestiniog had great difficulty in crossing the embankment, the engines going at less than half-speed. The situation was a most alarming one, for, when the tide was in, the sea swept clean over the embankment, the gale blowing directly inland. Three vessels, the "Idea," "Industry," and "Glad Tidings," were at anchor in Portmadoc harbour, and, as the gale rose, they broke from their moorings, sustaining serious damage and inflicting heavy damage on the other boats. Many fishing boats went down in the gale, and the full loss of life on the south coast from Portmadoc to Aberystwyth will never be known.

Lloyd's List. Monday, 7 November, 1887.

Concordia. Report of Lauritz Christiansen, master of the brig Christiania, 236 tons, from Yeddore, Halifax, Sept. 26, for Portmadoc, with 119 tons deals: Proceeded, and bad weather was experienced, but no casualty occurred on the voyage previous to arriving in St. Tudwal's Road. On the 1st November, at 6 30 a.m., tide being three-quarter flood, weather stormy, wind S.S.E., blowing a hurricane with a heavy sea from the S.S.E., the vessel broke both her cables, the pilot being on board at the time. He ordered the foresail and the lower topsail to be set, also the two jib sails, and intended running to Pwllheli, but the vessel would not answer her helm because the cables were dragging round bottom of the vessel. She was therefore headed on to Abersoch beach in order to save the lives of the crew. The vessel took the ground between 7 and 8 a.m. The lifeboat came out about 9 30 a.m., and stayed a short distance from the vessel about two hours, but could render no assistance. Portmadoc, Nov, 2.

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald. 18th November 1887.

PORTMADOC. THE CONCORDIA. Messrs. Ebenezer Roberts and David Jones have taken the contract to unload the "Concordia", the timber-laden brig that went ashore during the storm on the 1st inst., under Castell March, near Abersoch. The pieces of timber are formed into rafts and towed here by the Wave of Life tugboat.

Carnarvon and Denbigh Herald. 25th November 1887.

PORTMADOC. THE "CONCORDIA." The brig "Concordia", that was ashore near Abersoch, *was towed into Borth-y-gest last Saturday.*

York Herald - Saturday 10 March 1888.

WEST HARTLEPOOL. SAILED March 8. Concordia, Cristiana.

Lloyd's List. Wednesday, 24 April, 1889.

CONCORDIA. Copenhagen. April 23, 7.5 p.m. The Concordia, Danish brig (ballast), Christiansand, abandoned in North Sea. Crew taken off by the German barque Antares, Captain Rahden, Wilmington for Baltic (resin), and landed here.



The south-western end of Castell March beach.

7.0 Analysis.

From the contemporary newspaper reports, it is recorded that the Abersoch Lifeboat attended the ‘Concordia’ when she came ashore at Abersoch during severe weather, but her crew stayed on board the vessel until the tide ebbed.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations.

It is concluded that the ‘Concordia’ came ashore at Castell March, but was re-floated. It is recommended that any databases are updated to include this information.

9.0. References.

Sources include: Lloyd’s Register.

Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. Vol 5 (Richard Larnie, Lloyd’s Register).

The Essential Underwater Guide to North Wales. Vol. One, Part One. (Chris Holden)

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Wrecksite website <https://www.wrecksite.eu/Wrecksite.aspx>

National Library of Wales Welsh newspapers on line <https://newspapers.library.wales/>

The British Newspaper Archive www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/