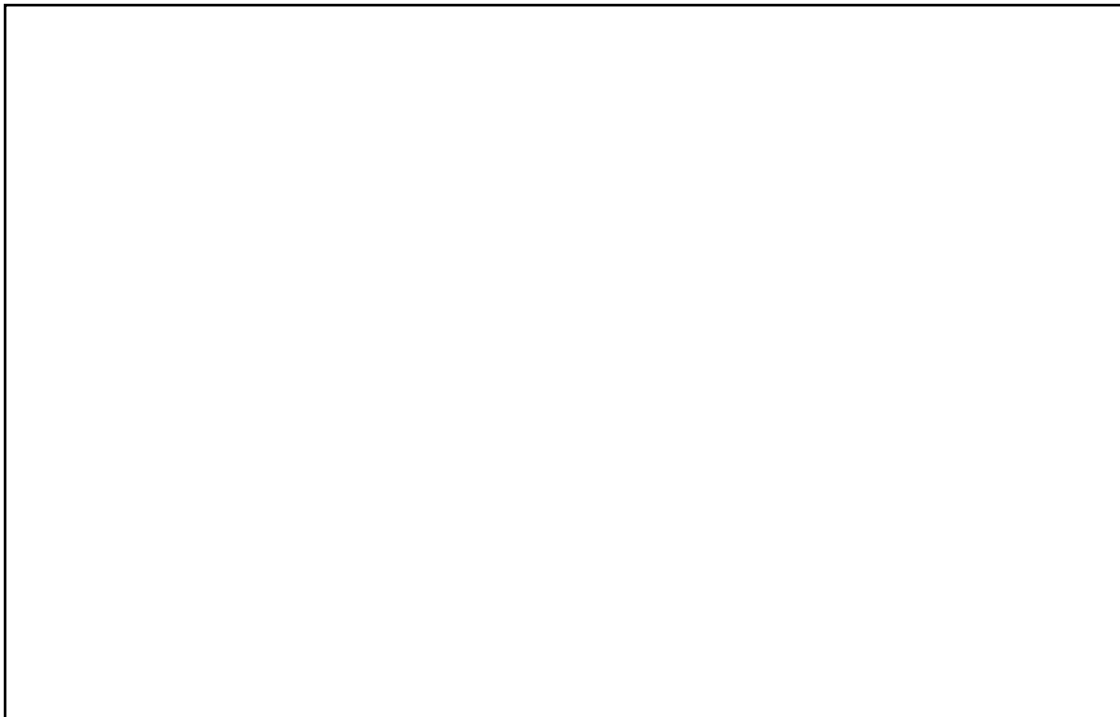


**Welsh Wreck Web Research Project**  
**(North Cardigan Bay)**  
**On-line research into the wreck of the:**  
***Elizabeth***

***MADU Ref No. 370***



*Elizabeth*

Report compiled by:

**Duncan Ross**

Report Title:

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

Compiled by:

**Duncan Ross**  
duncanross@hotmail.co.uk  
Tel:07792597131

On behalf of:

**Nautical Archaeology Society**  
Fort Cumberland  
Fort Cumberland Road  
Portsmouth  
PO4 9LD  
Tel: +44 (0)23 9281 8419  
E-mail: [nas@nauticalarchaeologysociety.org](mailto:nas@nauticalarchaeologysociety.org)  
Web Site: [www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org](http://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org)

Managed by:

**Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit**  
17 Hornyold Road  
Malvern  
Worcestershire  
WR14 1QQ  
Tel: +44 (0)1684 574774  
E-mail: [MADUdiving@gmail.com](mailto:MADUdiving@gmail.com)  
Web Site: [www.madu.org.uk](http://www.madu.org.uk)

Date:

**March 2021**

Report Ref:

***Leave blank***

## **1.0 Abstract**

**The Welsh Wreck Web Research Project is an attempt to investigate and produce research about the hundreds of ship wrecks in the Cardigan Bay area of North West Wales in the United Kingdom.**

**The dates of Cardigan Bay shipwrecks range from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> century and research is being carried out by an international team of volunteers.**

**My personal contribution has been to investigate and reveal the history of a small vessel named *Elizabeth* which was launched in 1847 and sank in 1908.**

## 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 Pictures		5
2.3 Contributors		5
2.4 Abbreviations		5
<b>3.0 Introduction</b> -----		6
<b>4.0 Background</b> -----		7
<b>5.0 Research Methodology</b> -----		8
<b>6.0 Results</b> -----		9, 10 &11
<b>7.0 Analysis</b> -----		12
<b>8.0 Conclusions &amp; Recommendations</b> -----		13
<b>9.0 References</b> -----		14
 <b>Appendices:</b>		
<b>Appendix A</b> – Appropriation Books -----		15
<b>Appendix B</b> - Maritime Deposition of Elizabeth -----		16

## 2.2 List of Pictures

## Page No.

Front Cover: No image of Elizabeth found

Fig. 1	Screen shot of only existing compiled information at outset of research	7
Fig. 2	Map of British Isles	7
Fig. 3	Map of Wales	7
Fig. 4	Newspaper report of <i>Elizabeth's</i> sinking	9
Fig. 5	Lloyd's List report of <i>Elizabeth's</i> sinking	9
Fig. 6	List of available evidence concerning <i>Elizabeth</i>	11

## 2.4 Contributors

Duncan Ross, Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU), Nautical Archaeology Society (NAS), Chris Holden.

## 2.5 Abbreviations

LCL	Liverpool Central Library
MADU	Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
NAS	Nautical Archaeology Society
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales

### 3.0 Introduction

I chose the vessel *Elizabeth* based purely on the circumstance that it was my mother's name too. In all there are 8 vessels named *Elizabeth* in the WWW Research Project database, and my choice of these 8 was randomly made in order to adapt to whatever research challenge it presented – whether it be over-availability of information or the opposite.

From previous research for the WWW Research Project where I conducted research into a vessel called the *Fossil*, I was interested to discover whether the available quantity of information for the *Elizabeth* would be similar. Both vessels were of a comparative size and would have travelled the same waters for much of the same period.

I also was keen to find out.

- The names of the owners
- The names of the crew
- How the wrecking occurred
- Where and when the wrecking occurred
- Whether the existing information was correct
- If there were any fatalities
- If there were any existing photographs
- Whether the wreck site still exists and can be visited by scuba divers.
- If there were any interesting stories surrounding the lifespan of the *Elizabeth*
- What were the vessel's specifications?
- If the *Elizabeth* was listed in Lloyd's Shipping Registers
- If the wrecking was reported in contemporary newspapers
- If the *Elizabeth* reported in July 1903, whose captain died aboard her, was the same vessel

### 4.0 Background

The only available information regarding *Elizabeth* was provided by Mr Ian Cundy of MADU. It was obtained from Larn, R. & Larn, B., 2000, *Shipwreck Index of the British Isles: Volume 5 – West Coast and Wales*.

6	<b>Location:</b>	Cardiganshire, Cardigan Island, 5M ENE
7	<b>Co-ordinates:</b>	52.09.15N 04.33.30W
8	<b>Voyage:</b>	Cardigan - New Quay
9	<b>Ship type:</b>	Ketch
10	<b>Construction:</b>	Wood
11	<b>Port of Registry:</b>	Caernarfon
12	<b>Flag:</b>	United Kingdom
13	<b>Nett Tonnage:</b>	38.00
14	<b>Cargo:</b>	Bricks
15	<b>Built:</b>	1847, Trefrew, Carnarvonshire
16	<b>Propulsion:</b>	Sail
17	<b>No. of Crew:</b>	2
18	<b>Additional Construcion Details:</b>	Registered no. 12386
19		
20	<b>Notes:</b>	Foundered and lost offshore in heavy weather.
21		
22	<b>References:</b>	BOT Wk Rtn ( <i>Board of Trade Wreck Returns</i> ) 1908 Appx C Table 1 p99(737)
23		MNL ( <i>Mercantile Navy List</i> ) 1894 p427
24		
25		

Fig. 1 – Initial data about Elizabeth

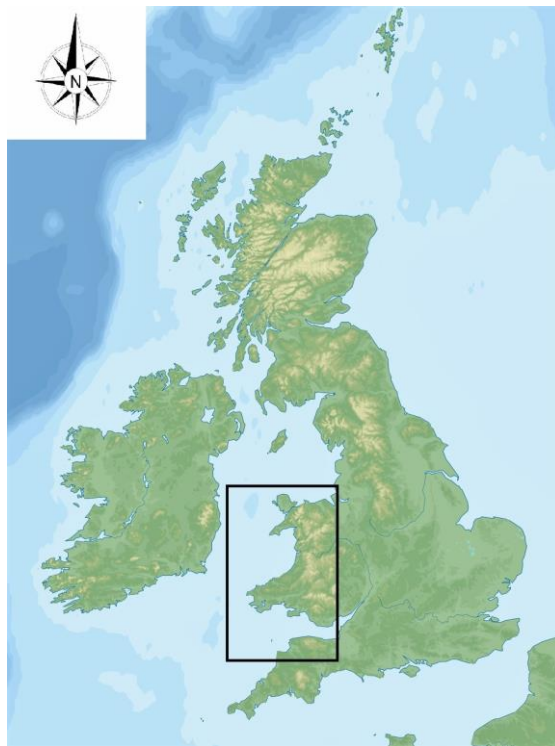


Fig. 2 - British Isles (Duncan Ross)



Fig. 3 - Cardigan Bay MADU©

## 5.0 Research Methodology

The bulk of my research into the *Elizabeth* was conducted on my Lenovo™ ideapad 320 PC. The operating system is listed as Intel CORE 13 inside™.

Microsoft Edge is the internet platform and the default search engine is [www.bing.com](http://www.bing.com).

Microsoft Word, Microsoft Paint and Microsoft Excel were used to compile and research this report.

When lockdown restrictions were briefly lifted in summer/autumn of 2020, I was able to conduct some research in Liverpool Central Library (LCL).

From previous research projects, most notably that of the SS *Leysian* project which formed part of the larger *U-Boat Project Wales 1914 – 1918: Commemorating the War at Sea*, I was aware of online websites that had previously proved extremely fruitful in terms of information.

For researching vessels of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century I find myself time and again heading for [www.maritimearchives.co.uk](http://www.maritimearchives.co.uk) (Books Boxes and Boats, Maritime and Historical Research Service) as the first port of call. Links on the site include the Mercantile Navy List, Lloyd's Shipping Registers, Lloyd's Lists and the Crew List Index Project (CLIP). It is a very good starting point and can often yield a lot of information. The information is, however, not comprehensive and only covers certain years, so investigations elsewhere are required to build a more complete picture of events.

[www.lifeboatmagazinearchivernli.org](http://www.lifeboatmagazinearchivernli.org) is a useful website for finding reports of rescues. Nothing turned up for the *Elizabeth*, but other vessel names I recognised from the WWW Research Project database were listed.

Newspaper archives, such as [www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk), [www.newspapers.library.wales](http://www.newspapers.library.wales) and the American [www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com) can, and did produce fantastic results.

It was suggested by project leader Mr. Ian Cundy of MADU that a systematic method of approaching searches would be best in order not to miss anything and avoid going over old ground. I completely agree with this, although my 'scattergun' tendencies took over for the most part.

In an effort to try to solve the mystery of the reported death of the captain of a vessel called the *Elizabeth*, in 1903 off New Brighton, I took out a free two-week subscription with [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). Accessing the census records for Nevin/Nefyn, Gwynedd, Wales only added more confusion to my investigations.

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk> provided some links to Lloyd's Shipping Registers

## 6.0 Results

**Loss of a Ketch at Cardigan.**


On Friday evening, while the ketch "Elizabeth," of Cardigan, was outward bound from Cardigan with a load of bricks to New Quay, she sprang a leak, and when opposite Aberport Capt James Williams, of Bardsey View, who was in charge with the mate, found that they were in a perilous position, and, finding that the water was filling, had to abandon her in the middle of the night. The master and mate landed safely in a boat at Mount, near Cardigan.

Fig. 4 – News report of *Elizabeth's* sinking

**ELIZABETH.** — **Cardigan,** Oct. 3. — The ketch Elizabeth, of Carnarvon, from **Cardigan** for Newquay (**Cardigan**), with bricks, foundered yesterday (as before reported) near **Cardigan** Island, in about 15 fathoms water.

Fig. 5 – Report of *Elizabeth's* sinking from Lloyds List

Vessel	Name/s	Elizabeth	
	Type	Sloop in Mercantile Navy List (classification begins in 1872), Ketch in L&L and newspapers	
		Cargo - bricks	
Commercial Code Signal		L.B.P.R.	
Built	Date	1847	
	Builder	Not known at present	
Construction	Materials	Wood	
	Decks		
	Bulkheads		
Propulsion	Type	Sail	
	Details		
Engine	Details		
	Boilers		
Drive	Type		
	Number		
Dimensions	Length	ft	ins
	Beam	ft	ins
	Draught	ft	ins
Tonnage	Gross	Between 38 and 44 tons	
	Net		
Owner	First	John Jones, Nevin, Carnarvon	
	Last	Captain James Williams, Moylegrove, Pembrokeshire	
	Others	1869 – 1891 Richard Owen, Church Street, Nevin, Carnarvon	
Registry	Port	Beaumaris	
	Date	22 <sup>nd</sup> November 1847	
	Flag	Nationality	
	Number	12386	
Appropriation	Date	Appropriation - 21 <sup>st</sup> January 1848	
History	Routes And ports visited	Liverpool, Runcorn, Newquay, Portinllaen, Caernarvon, Chester River, Point of Air, (possibly Belfast), Newport, Cardiff,	
	Cargo	Bricks and possibly coal	
Final Voyage	From	Location & departure date	
	To	Location & due date	
	Captain	James Williams	
	Crew	2	
	Passengers	0	
	Cargo	Bricks	
Wrecking	Date	Midnight 3 <sup>rd</sup> / 4 <sup>th</sup> ? October 1908	
	Location	Opposite Aberporth, Near Cardigan Island in 15 fathoms	
	Cause	Sprang a leak and sank	
	Loss of life	0	
	Outcome	Total Loss	

 Ship whose official number is 12386

Notes Search again









Name	Port of registry and details	Source
ELIZABETH	Built: Not stated, Register closed: 1908	<i>TNA catalogue, BT 110/130/44</i> 
	Beaumaris, 1847, Sail, 44 tons	<i>Appropriation Books, RSS</i> 
	Caernarfon, Crew lists 1864-1908	<i>Crew lists, Gwynedd AS (Caernarfon)</i> 
	Caernarfon	<i>MNL, 1857</i>
	Caernarfon, Sail, 40 tons	<i>MNL, 1860</i> 
	Caernarfon, Sail	<i>MNL, 1870</i> 
	Caernarfon, Sail, Sloop	<i>MNL, 1880</i> 
	Caernarfon, Sail, Sloop	<i>MNL, 1890</i> 
	Caernarfon, Sail, Sloop	<i>MNL, 1900</i> 

Fig. 6 – list of material available concerning *Elizabeth* [www.maritimearchives.co.uk](http://www.maritimearchives.co.uk)

## 7.0 Analysis

The aforementioned *SS Leysian* was a steamship used as a horse and troop transport, and although scant research had been conducted about her, the vessel's involvement in WW1 and her varied and international history left a wealth of information behind. This is often not the case with smaller vessels, as research in firstly the *Fossil* and then the *Elizabeth*, would highlight.

Also, at the time of researching, the world was in lockdown due to the Covid 19 pandemic which began in Spring 2020. This made any visits to physical archives an impossibility and made internet searches the only feasible method of research.

What makes research difficult and confusing is that the *Elizabeth* is listed in the Mercantile Navy List as a 'sloop', whereas in newspaper reports the most effective results were found when using the search term 'ketch'. I encountered the same problems during my research into the aforementioned *Fossil*, although in the case of the *Fossil* she was listed as a sloop, smack and a barque. I also found three alternative spellings for *Fossil* in various sources.

Another element that struck me as odd was that, although the *Elizabeth* was of a comparable tonnage and build to the *Fossil*, and her function was nearly the same, the *Elizabeth* was not listed once in the Lloyd's Shipping Registers, whereas the *Fossil* was listed many times.

## 8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

*Elizabeth* had an extremely long career for such a small vessel; around 60 years all-in-all. In some ways, one can't be surprised that she eventually 'sprang a leak' and went to the bottom.

It strikes me as odd that *Elizabeth* did not appear in the Lloyd's Shipping Registers but in every Mercantile Navy List throughout her life.

A lot of my research effort was geared towards the death of the captain aboard *Elizabeth* in 1903, but this remained an unsolved mystery. My thought was that censuses from the time in the town of Nevin would mention some of the owners and captains of the vessel. Relatively only a small town, there was not too much information to look through. After much research, it became apparent that names and addresses stated in news reports and the Mercantile Shipping Registers, did not tally with the official census. From this, it is possible to suggest that either censuses, news reports or the information in the mercantile Navy Lists was incorrect. Whether this is the result of false information being given or lazy reporting or census information retrieval, it is hard to tell.

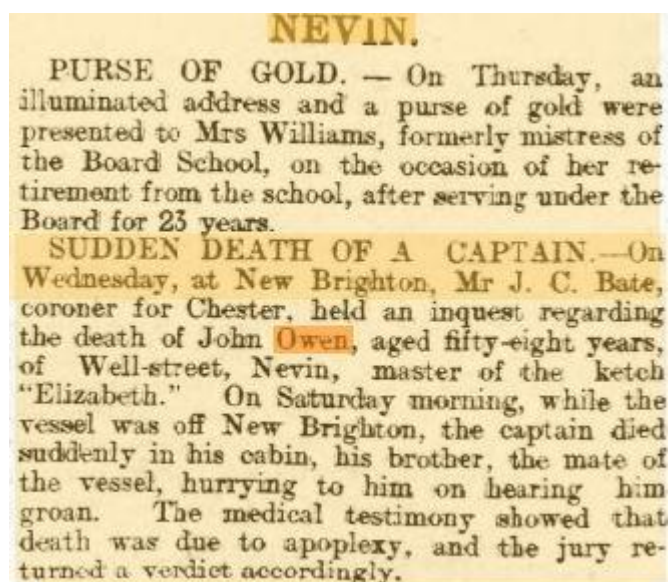


Fig. 7 - Report of *Elizabeth's* captain dying. I was unable to confirm if this was the same vessel.

*Elizabeth* was registered to a Miss M. Owen in Nevin in 1903 (the year of captain John Owen's death). I imagined the deceased captain John Owen was probably a relative as they both lived in Nevin. I found no trace of Miss. M Owen. What is telling is that the ownership of *Elizabeth* transferred to her final captain Mr James Williams in 1905. Perhaps this is due to the death of John Owen and the families wish to part with the vessel after such a tragedy; but this is only heresy.

## 9.0 References

[www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)

[www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk](http://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk)

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk>

Larn, R. & Larn, B., 2000, *Shipwreck Index of the British Isles: Volume 5 – West Coast and Wales*.

[www.lifeboatmagazinearchivernli.org](http://www.lifeboatmagazinearchivernli.org)

[www.maritimearchives.co.uk](http://www.maritimearchives.co.uk)

[www.newspapers.library.wales](http://www.newspapers.library.wales)

[www.newspapers.com](http://www.newspapers.com)

## Appendices:

### Appendix A – Appropriation Books

12380	Richard Roberts	85	Stallhole	22. 1850			1243
12381	Marshall Wellington	25	Caernarvon	5. 1856	New Trevel		1243
12382	Asphid	54		18. 1846	Cat's pawnd?		1243
12383	Ardent	104		17. 1851			1243
12384	Wigwag	107		58. 1856	New Pistol		1243
12385	Rome	45		8. 1856		March	1243
12386	Elizabeth	44	Santing	22 Nov 1847	Cat's pawnd?		1243
12387	Mersey	25	Chester	30 Apr 1858			1243
12388	Chung-tran	41		11 June			1243
12389	Mary G. Martha	28		14			1243

## Appendix B – Deposition of Elizabeth

