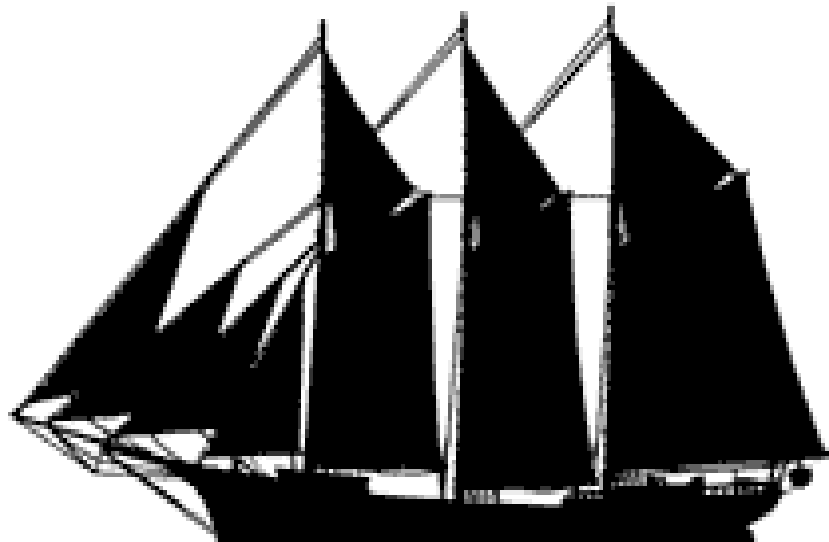


**Welsh Wreck Web Research Project
(North Cardigan Bay)
On-line research into the:
Gezusters (Schooner)**



**Report compiled by:
Gareth J.S. Davies**

Report Title:

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1.0 Abstract

Since 2001 the Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU) has developed a database of vessels known to have wrecked around the coast of Wales.

This project is to discover information relating to the history of the schooner Gezusters (MADU Ref #342) built in Groningen, Netherlands in 1902.

On Nov 24 1902, the Gezusters sailed from Delfzyl, Netherlands for Cardiff on her maiden voyage with a cargo of oats. On December 18 1902 reports of a ship in trouble off Bardsey Island were made but no ship was found. Items indicating that they were from the Gezusters were found on the coastline a few days later and a number of bodies thought to be crew members of the Gezusters were washed ashore on the Caernarfonshire and Merioneth shorelines.

The research has been conducted from information gathered from MADU and on-line sites as I do not reside in the U.K.

| 2.1 | Tables of Contents | Page No. |
|------------|--|-----------------|
| 1.0 | Abstract ----- | 3 |
| 2.0 | Index ----- | 4 |
| 2.1 | Table of Contents ----- | 4 |
| 2.2 | List of Tables ----- | 4 |
| 2.3 | List of Figures ----- | 4 |
| 2.4 | Contributors ----- | 4 |
| 2.5 | Abbreviations ----- | 5 |
| 2.6 | Appendices ----- | 5 |
| 3.0 | Introduction ----- | 6 |
| 4.0 | Background ----- | 7 |
| 5.0 | Research Methodology ----- | 8 |
| 6.0 | Results ----- | 9 |
| 7.0 | Analysis ----- | 10 |
| 8.0 | Conclusions & Recommendations ----- | 11 |
| 9.0 | References ----- | 12 |
| 9.1 | Online WebPages ----- | 12 |
| 9.2 | Personal Correspondences ----- | 12 |
| 9.3 | Publications ----- | 12 |

2.2 List of Tables

| | | |
|----------|---|---|
| Table 1. | Extract from MADU Master Wrecksite Database ----- | 7 |
| Table 2. | Gezusters Specification and History ----- | 9 |

2.3 List of Figures

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| Fig. 1 | North Cardigan Bay and Lleyn Peninsula showing Bardsey Island ----- | 7 |
|--------|---|---|

2.4 Contributors

Ian Cundy MADU Archaeological Diving Unit,
 Nautical Archaeology Society (Regional co-ordinator for Wales)

2.5 Abbreviations

MADU Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
MNL Mercantile Navy List
LR Lloyds' Registry

2.6 Appendices

| | | |
|--------------------|--|----|
| Appendix A: | Report of a Lost Ship off Bardsey Island ----- | 13 |
| Appendix B: | Newspaper Announcement on Gezusters, Feb 18 1903 ----- | 14 |
| Appendix C: | Lloyd's Casualty Listing 1903, Gezusters ----- | 15 |

3.0 Introduction

The schooner Gezusters was chosen as:

- it covered a period of sea history of the late 19th century.
- it was a similar ship and time to other ships I had researched from the MADU Wreck list.
- I live overseas online information would be my priority research tool and similar to my previous research a ship from this period should be reasonably well documented online.

The following topics form the basis of the research:

- What were the vessel's specifications?
- What historical information is available relating to the vessel?
- Has any salvage, etc. been carried out?
- Have there been any previous reports produced relating to the vessel?

4.0 Background

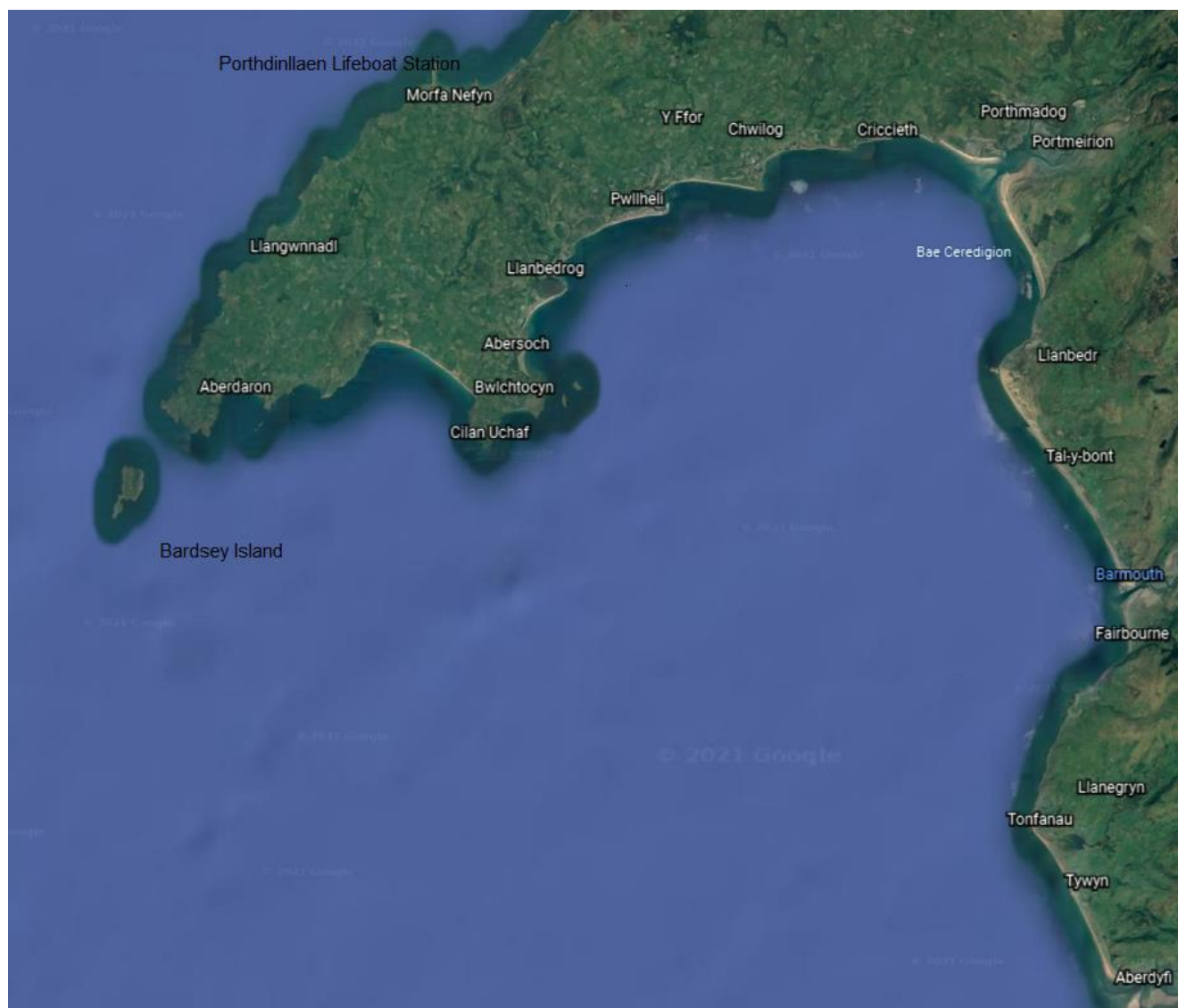
Prior to starting this research the only known data available to me was from the MADU Master Wrecksite Database Listing (Table 1) supplied by Mr Ian Cundy.

Table 1: Extract from MADU Master Wrecksite Database

| MADU Ref. No. | Date Wrecked | Name | Location 1 | Location 2 | Details | Vessel Type | Matls | Ref. |
|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------|--------------|---------|-------------|-------|--------|
| 342 | 00/12/1902 | Gezusters | Caernarfonshire | On the coast | | Schooner | wood | rl, ch |

Around December 18 1902, the Gezusters on her maiden voyage went missing in a storm off Bardsey Island. Other than some items and a number of bodies that washed ashore no other trace of the Gezusters was found.

Fig 1: North Cardigan Bay and Lleyn Peninsula showing Bardsey Island



5.0 Research Methodology

Computer System

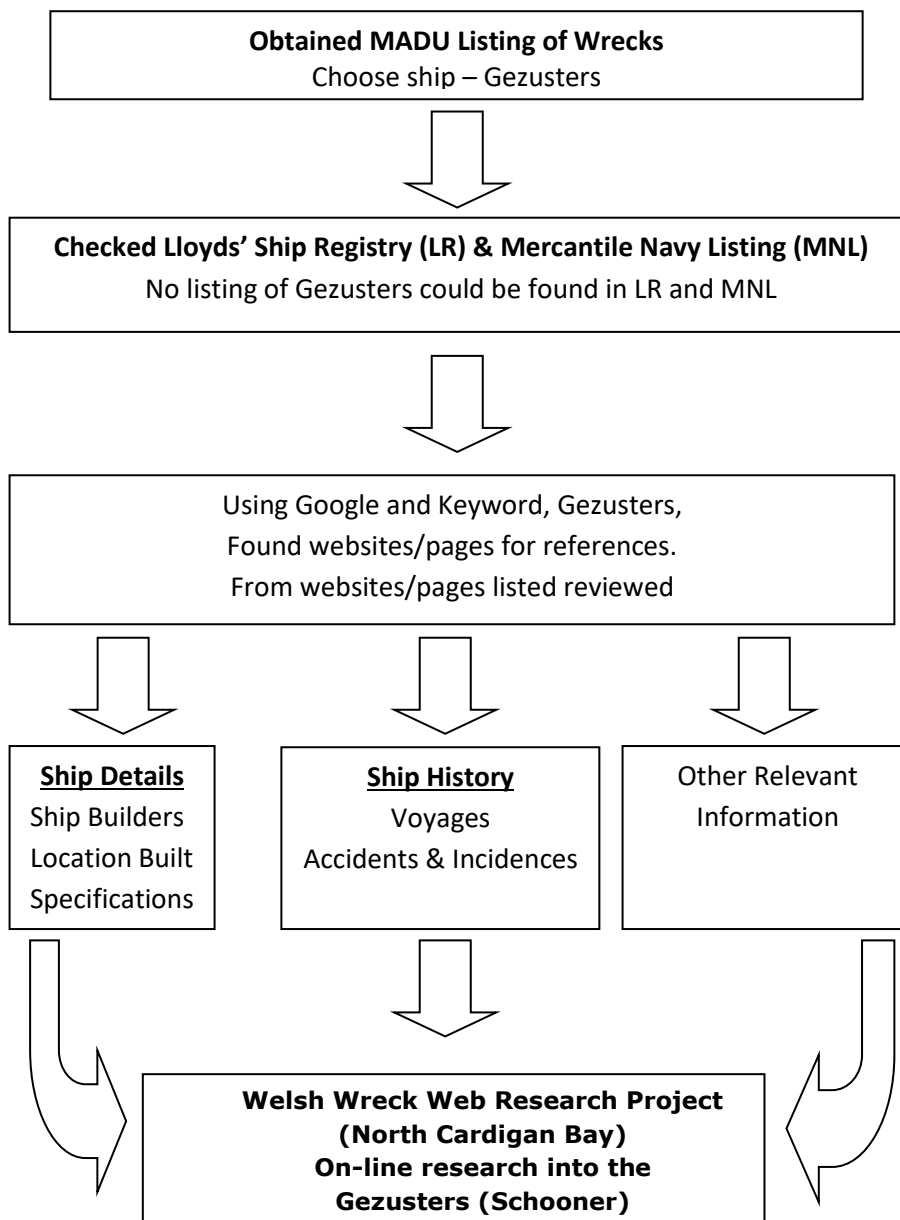
Acer Desktop 64 bit OS; 8 GB Memory, wireless connection.

Windows 10Pro

Microsoft Office 2007

Search engines used: Google Chrome

Methodology



See Section 9 for list of websites viewed

6.0 Results

Table 2: Gezusters (Schooner) Specification and History

| | | | | |
|--------------|---|---------------------------|-----|---------|
| Vessel | Name/s | Gezusters (Sisters) | | |
| | Type | Schooner General Cargo | | |
| Built | Date | Laid Down: N/A | | |
| | | Launched: 15/08/1902 | | |
| | | Delivered: 1902 | | |
| | | Cost: N/A | | |
| Builder | J. Drewes & Co. | | | |
| | Gideon, Groningen, Netherlands: Ship ID: 2489 | | | |
| Construction | Materials | Steel | | |
| | Decks | 1 | | |
| | Bulkheads | N/A | | |
| | Other | N/A | | |
| Propulsion | Type | Sail | | |
| | Details | 3 masts | | |
| Dimensions | Length | ft | ins | 38.56 m |
| | Beam | ft | ins | 7.66 m |
| | Draught | ft | ins | 3.02 m |
| Tonnage | Gross | 252grt | | |
| | Net | 216nrt | | |
| | Deadweight | 385dwt | | |
| Owners | First | E. Gorter, Amsterdam | | |
| Registry | Port | Amsterdam | | |
| | Flag | Netherlands | | |
| | Number | N/A | | |
| | Code | N.T.P.B | | |
| History | Routes | Europe, U.K | | |
| | Cargo | Grain | | |
| Final Voyage | From | Delfzyl, Netherlands | | |
| | To | Cardiff | | |
| | Captain | J. Gorter | | |
| | Crew | 7 | | |
| | Passengers | 0 | | |
| | Cargo | Oats | | |
| | Date | 24/11/1902 | | |
| | Location | Off Bardsey Island, Wales | | |
| | Cause | Weather | | |
| | Loss of life | 7 | | |
| Outcome | Missing, presumed wrecked | | | |

7.0 Analysis

- The schooner *Gezusters* (Sisters in English) was built at Gideon, Groningen, Netherlands by J. Drewes & Co for E. Gorter of Amsterdam and launched on Aug 13 1902.
- Nov 22 1902, the *Gezusters* departed Delfzyl Netherlands on her maiden voyage for Cardiff with a cargo of oats.
- Dec 18 1902, a ship was observed to be on her beam off Bardsey Island, Caernarfonshire. The Porthdinllaen lifeboat was launched and headed towards Bardsey Island. The ship could not be found before dark and the lifeboat returned ashore at 8pm.

A second telegram was received shortly after the lifeboat returned stating a ship had been sighted drifting off Bardsey Island. The lifeboat was relaunched and headed towards Bardsey Island. The lifeboat returned the next morning having survived the severe storm but with no sighting of the ship.

- Dec 22 1902: the Lloyds agent in Aberdaron reported washed up life buoy as well as teak and mahogany cabin furniture on the shoreline. It was also reported that lifeboats bearing the name *Gezusters* had drifted on the beach.
- Dec 30 1902: three bodies have been driven on the Merioneth coast within the last days and two others are reported to have been found on the south Caernarfon coast. They are believed to have come from a ship, presumably the *Gezusters* which went missing off Bardsey Island.
- Feb 18 1903: the *Gezusters* was officially listed as missing by Lloyd's.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

The project took approximately 1 working day.

Having read the report, sufficient information has been collated to compile a history of the schooner Gezusters.

Many different WebPages were viewed ranging from large organisations e.g. Lloyd's Registry Listings to smaller WebPages such as local history or people with a given interest in a subject. The quantity and quality of the WebPages appeared depended on the targeted audiences and the amount of work undertaken. Some of the historical and interest in a subject WebPages were extremely useful. Newspaper archives were also very helpful in giving an overall picture of the operation of the ship and filling in information gaps.

Much of the data collated between websites checked out with some discrepancies observed.

From the research conducted, setting a goal and how to reach that goal should be mapped out first. Careful use of specific words in search engines is very important. Using a specific phrase of schooner Gezusters reduced the number of newspaper to view significantly.

The Gezusters sank on her maiden voyage from Delfzyl Netherlands to Cardiff in a severe storm off Bardsey Island Wales. Items and equipment from the ship were found along the coastline of Caernarfonshire and a number of bodies washed ashore on the coast of Merionethshire and Caernarfonshire.

9.0 References

9.1 Online WebPages

The following websites and pages have been used in the compilation of this report:

<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

Keyword: schooner Gezusters

<https://www.coflein.gov.uk/>

<https://www.google.co.uk/>

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archive-library/casualty-returns>

<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archive-library/lloyds-register-of-ships-online>

<https://www.marhisdata.nl/schip&id=2489>

<https://newspapers.library.wales/>

<https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?292019>

9.2 Personal Correspondences

I would like to thank Mr Ian Cundy for supplying the initial information and other information with regards to the research project.

9.3 Publications

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

Appendices:

Appendix A: Report of a Lost Ship off Bardsey Island

SHIPWRECK OFF BARDSEY ISLAND.

Reports have been received by Lloyd's agent at Carnarvon to the effect that a vessel was seen on her beam ends off Bardsey Island. He at once telegraphed to the sub-agents at Forthdinllaen, Aberdaron, and Abersoch, to be on the look out. In response to his telegram to Portdinllaen, a lifeboat immediately set out in the height of the west-north-west gale, and beat towards Bardsey Island till it became too dark. Failing to see anything the lifeboat returned at 8 p.m., when a further message was sent to Portdinllaen stating that a vessel had been observed drifting off Bardsey. The lifeboat went out again, and after beating right down to Bardsey, no sign was seen of any wreck or vessel. They returned to Portdinllaen at ten o'clock in the morning, after some terrible experiences in the storm throughout the night. Since then reports have come to hand that some wreckage, consisting of mahogany cabin furniture and a lifebuoy, have been cast ashore; and on Saturday two boats bearing the name of the "Gezusters," of Amsterdam drifted on the beach. No signs were seen of the crew. The ill-fated vessel, which was apparently a new one, had been in the vicinity of the roads for some time prior to being caught in the storm, and to all appearance the vessel's boats had not been in use. There has been no communication with Bardsey Island for nearly three weeks.

Appendix B: Newspaper Announcement on Gezusters, Feb 18 1903**LLOYD'S CASUALTIES.**

Para, February 18.—The British steamer *Kelvinside* capsized and sunk at the mouth of the Para River. She is a total loss. Forty of the crew were landed here. Eight men and the captain were drowned.

Sunderland telegraphs that the steamer *Bull* has been in collision with the steamer *Borregaard*, of Sarpsborg. The *Bull* is now at Sunderland with a hole in her starboard bow above the line. The *Borregaard* entered the Tyne.

The following vessel, not having been heard of since the date specified, is considered very much overdue:—*St Enoch*, of Glasgow, official number 99809, Russell (master), which is reported to have sailed from Hamburg for Santa Rosalia on the 4th of May, 1902, and was spoken on the 2d of June, 1902, in lat. 2.45. N., long. 28.43 W.

The following vessel, which has previously been referred to in our summary as overdue, was to-day (Feb. 18) posted at Lloyd's as missing:—*Gezusters*, of Amsterdam, Gorter (master), which sailed from Delfzyl for Bristol Channel with a cargo of oats on the 24th of November, 1902, and has not since been heard of.

Appendix C: Lloyd's Casualty Listing 1903, Gezusters

LLOYD'S REGISTER OF BRITISH AND FOREIGN SHIPPING.

RETURNS OF VESSELS TOTALLY LOST, CONDEMNED, &C.

1ST JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH, 1903.

List of total losses of Merchant Vessels of 100 tons and upwards between the above dates, of which information was received up to the 1st October, 1903.

12

(f.) Missing—continued.

| No. in Reg. Book. 1902-03. | Vessel's Name. | Tons. (Net.) | Nationality. | Description. | Voyage. | Cargo. | Circumstances and place. | Date. |
|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---|-------|
| 161 | George Washington | 1151 | Dut. | W. Bk. | Mithil—Bremerhaven | Coal | Sailed from Mithil on 23rd Nov., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| — | Gezusters | 252 | Dut. | I. & Stl. Sr. | Delfzijl—Bristol Channel. | Oats | Sailed from Delfzijl on 24th Nov., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 14 | Zeemeuw | 333 | Dut. | W. 3m. Sr. | Arendal—Harlingen | Timber | Left Arendal on 4th Nov., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 151 | Kiandra | 978 | Ger. | I. Bk. | Philadelphia—Portishead. | Naphtha & Gasoline. | Sailed from Philadelphia on 23rd Oct., 1902; passed Delaware Breakwater on 24th Oct., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 123 | Paul Rickmers ... | 2817 | Ger. | Stl. 4m. Bk. | Bangkok—Bremen ... | Rice in bags | Sailed from Bangkok on 4th June, 1902; passed Anjer on 20th July, 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 294 | Fotini | 665 | Grk. | W. Bk. | Marseilles—Fiume ... | | Sailed from Marseilles on 16th Oct., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 485 | Gubernator Sinowjew | 382 | Rus. | W. 3m. Sr. | Hamburg—Bahia | General | Sailed from Hamburg on 16th Feb.; wreckage belonging to vessel subsequently washed ashore at Ny Hellesund; no later news. | — |
| 37 | Balthasar | 245 | Swd. | W. 3m. Sr. | Grimsby—Carlsrona | Coal | Sailed from Grimsby on 20th Dec., 1902; not since heard of. | — |
| 429 | Freja | 235 | Swd. | W. Bkn. | Antwerp—Cadiz | Ballast | Sailed from Antwerp on 1st Oct., 1902; not since heard of. | — |