



Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay)

**On-line research into the stranding and subsequent
re-floating of the barque**

Harvest Home

at Hell's Mouth / Porth Neigwl in 1841,

and the wreck of the three-masted schooner

Harvest Home,

lost in Bardsey Sound in January, 1914.

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

On-line and practical research into the two vessels named 'Harvest Home' that feature in the wreck reports for North Wales. It is important not to confuse the two, so this report describes both the barque 'Harvest Home' that ran ashore at Hell's Mouth / Porth Neigwl in 1841 before being towed off the beach by the steam-tug 'Albert', and also the three-masted schooner 'Harvest Home' that was lost in Bardsey Sound in 1914.

The Illustrated Marine Encyclopaedia has the following definitions:

- Barque - Bark. A three-masted vessel; fore-mast, main-mast and mizen-mast; the two foremasts are square-rigged as in a ship; the after- or mizen-mast has no yards, being fitted with a topmast only, and carries a gaff-sail (called a spanker), and a gaff-topsail.
- Three-masted topsail schooner. The foremast is rigged like a topsail schooner; and the two after masts are fitted with boom-sails and gaff-topsails like those in a barquentine.
- Three-mast fore and aft schooner. A three-masted vessel, usually with long lower masts and short topmasts, on which boom-sails and gaff-topsails are carried.

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Date & time created: 18 January 2021 11:34 AM

Report Ref: **Leave blank**

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.

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2.2 Contributors

Chris Holden.

2.3 Abbreviations used in this report:

MADU Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
 NAS Nautical Archaeology Society
 CPH Chris Holden



Hell's Mouth / Porth Neigwl.

3.0 Introduction

For many years, the author spent the summer months diving the coast around Hell's Mouth, Aberdaron and Bardsey Island. Walking along Hell's Mouth beach, he has located items of wreckage, so is interested in identifying which vessels have been lost there. He has dived Maen Bugail, but found no wreckage. Other divers have reported at least one anchor nearby, possibly from the 'Harvest Home', but note that the 'Maid of Meirion' also sank here in 1900.

4.0 Background.

Having come across references to two different references to vessels named 'Harvest Home', the author was keen to investigate if there 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:

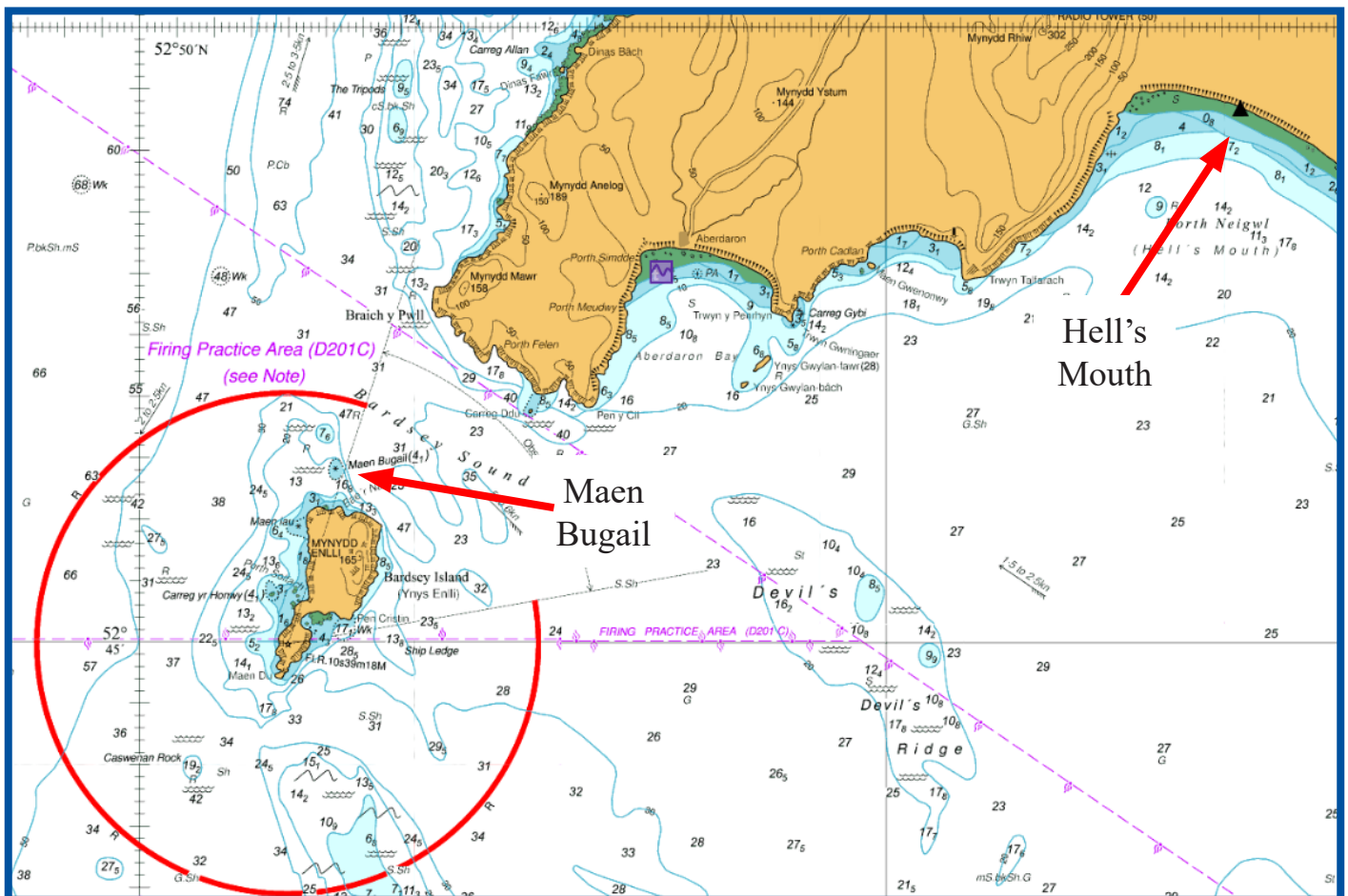
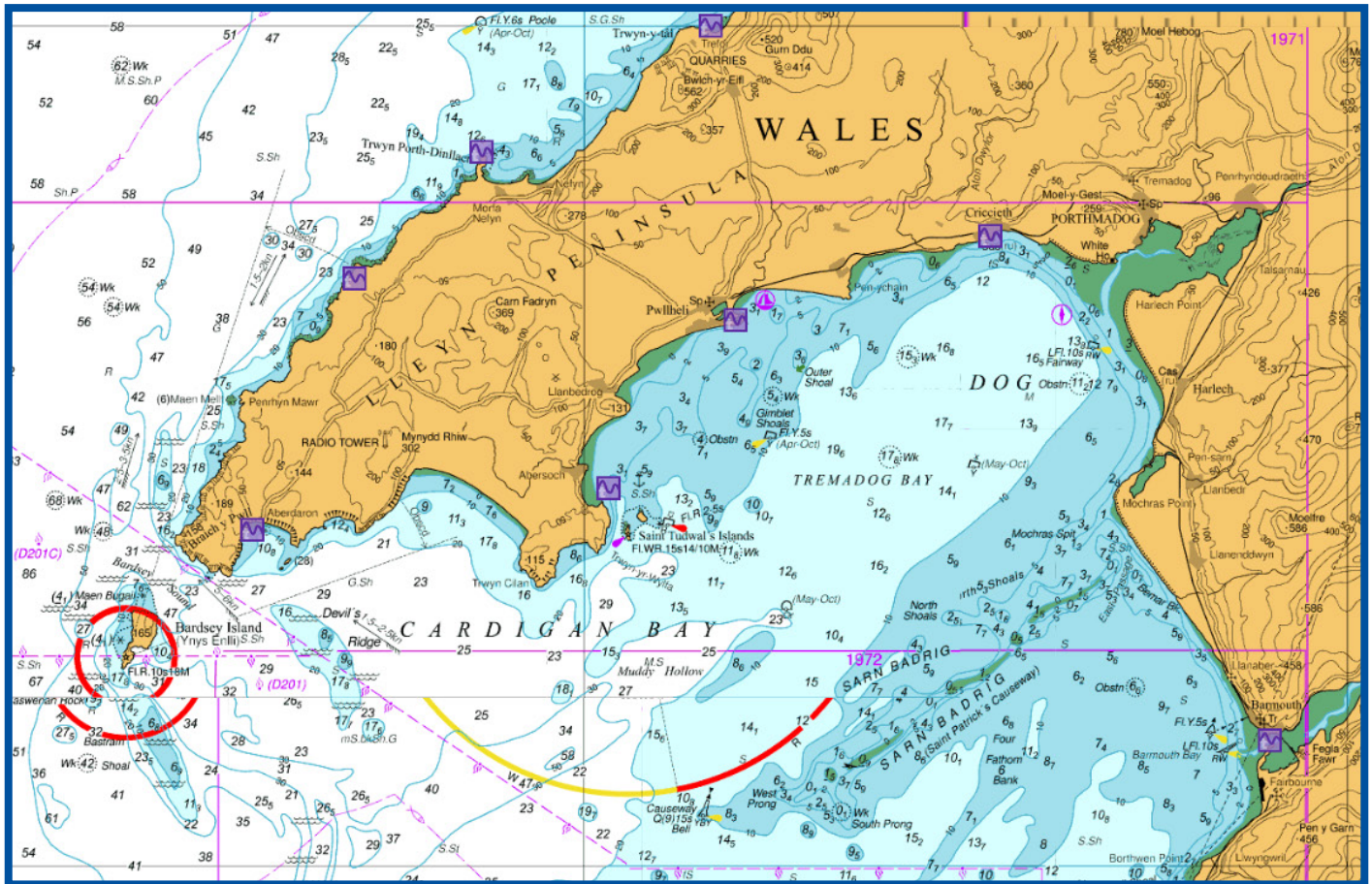
Richard Larne's Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. West Coast and Wales.

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.





The western extremity of Hell's Mouth / Porth Neigwl.
The barque 'Harvest Home'.

6.0 Details.

Vessel Name: Harvest Home. Type: Barque. Registered Weight: 458 tons register.
Propulsion: Sail. Construction Materials: Wooden hull. Cargo: Timber.

Location.

Hell's Mouth or Porth Neigwl was well-known as a graveyard for sailing ships due to the gradually-sloping beach that faces the prevailing-wind direction of south-west, and is bounded on both sides by steep rocky-cliffs.

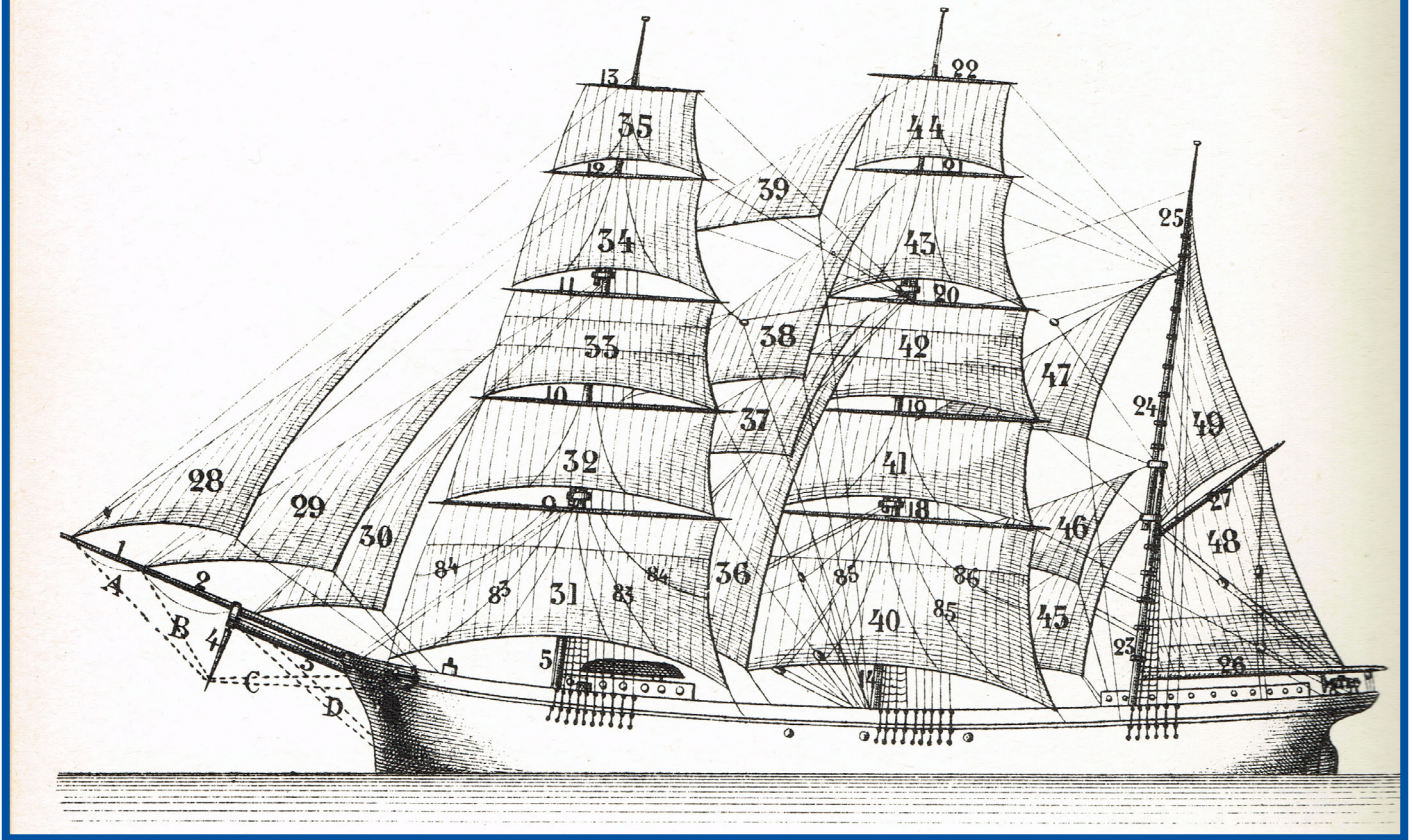
Few places present so favourable an appearance, and at the same time are so much dreaded by mariners, as this. It is at the very end of the promontory, and from point to point is supposed to measure about eight miles: it is nearly semi-circular. None but strange vessels, even in the most boisterous weather, ever seek shelter here, for they are soon stranded, and never again return. From whatever point of the compass the wind blows out at sea, it always (on account of the surrounding high rocks) comes into the mouth of the bay: and from whatever quarter the tide flows, the upper current always sets inwards here. From these circumstances, the place seems to have obtained the appellation of Hell's Mouth.

Excursions in North Wales. William Bingley, 1839.

Overview.

The barque 'Harvest Home' was one such vessel to run ashore here, but contrary to expectations, she survived the ordeal to continue her voyage.

PLATE 77



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

North Wales Chronicle. 6th April 1841.

Pwllheli.—During a thick fog about 8 p.m. on Sunday se'nnight, the barque Harvest Home, Muirhead, master, 458 tons register, having 18 persons on board, with a cargo of deal and other timber, from St. John's, N. B. for Liverpool, was stranded at the west end of Porth Neigal [SIC], near this place. All on board landed in safety but it is feared that the vessel will become a total wreck.

On Wednesday morning last, about 10 o'clock, during a heavy gale from the westward, a large brig was seen off Porthdynllaen, distance about three miles, steering E.N.E. The weather being hazy, it is supposed that the captain was not aware of his perilous situation, otherwise he might have come to anchor in perfect safety in Porthdynllaen Bay. About five o'clock on the same evening, she came ashore, near Llanaelhairn, in this county. She proved to be the brig Strathmore, of Leitli, Peter Givern, muster, from Bahia to Liverpool, laden with sugar, cotton, and rosewood. She is 198 tons register. It is expected that she will become a total wreck.

North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser for the Principality. 13th April 1841.

Pwllheli, April 7. The Harvest Home, from St. John's, N.B., for Liverpool, that was stranded at Hell's Mouth, has been got off with the assistance of a steam tug, and brought into Studwall Roads. She will be ready to proceed to Liverpool tomorrow, in tow of the steamer.

Holyhead, April 11 — The ship Harvest Home, that lately went ashore at Hell's Mouth, was towed to Holyhead on Saturday the 10th inst. by the steam-tug Albert, and stopped for about 5



The distinctly-coloured Bardsey Island Lighthouse.

hours waiting for a tide, proceeded on her way to Liverpool.

The Strathmore.—A survey has been held on the vessel, which was stated to have been driven ashore near Llanhaiarn. She is greatly hogged, and in all probability, will become a total wreck. About 50 or 60 casks of sugar have been saved. The water is up to her hold beams.

The article below shows that the erection of a lighthouse on Bardsey Island did much to warn away many vessels, but the barque 'Harvest Home' was not so fortunate in April, 1841, although the arrival of a steam-tug meant that she was soon re-floated and her cargo saved.

The Cambrian. 1st May 1841.

HELL'S MOUTH.—Since the erection of the light at Bardsey Island, the loss of property in this dangerous bay has been considerably less than it used to be, but vessels not well acquainted with the coast, still occasionally get on shore there, and when they do total destruction almost invariably follows. An instance, however, has occurred lately, of a fine barque, the Harvest Home, which was stranded there on the 28th ult., with its valuable cargo being saved and got safely off. This was owing, chiefly to the instrumentality of Mr. Robert Griffith, merchant, Lloyd's agent at Pwllheli, whose active and skilful exertions, with the assistance of Captain Eccles, of the steam tug Albert, were the means of saving this new ship from being totally wrecked. This is the only vessel ever got safely from this shore within the memory of the oldest inhabitants on the coast, except a small brig belonging to Mr. Richard Williams, of Penybont. Too much praise cannot be awarded to Mr. Griffith for his successful efforts upon this occasion, and as he was the means of saving at least £2,000 to the underwriters, his conduct will, no doubt, be duly appreciated by them.— Carnarvon Herald.



Maen Bugail is surrounded by overfalls and deep, fast-flowing water.

The schooner ‘Harvest Home’.

6.0 Details.

Vessel Name: Harvest Home. Type: Three-masted Schooner.

Registered Weight: 100 tons gross, 79 tons net. Registered Port: St. Ives, Cornwall.

Dimensions: 80ft 2in length x 20ft 8in depth x 10ft 7in depth; fastened with iron bolts

Propulsion: Sail. Construction Materials: Wooden hull.

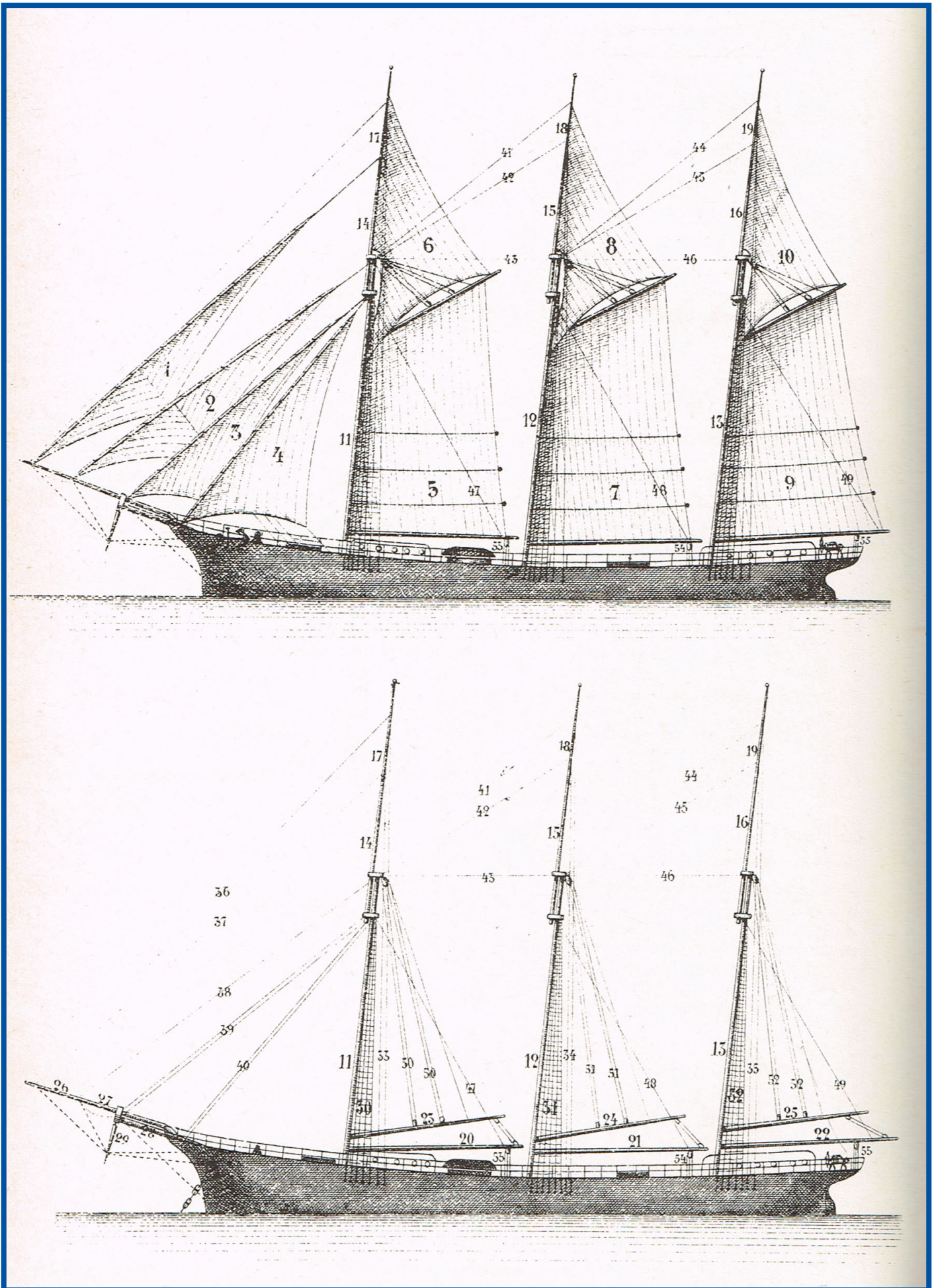
Owner. William Thomas, Amlwch Port, Anglesey. Captain: Hansen. Cargo. China Clay.

Location.

On the 27th of January, 1914, the schooner ‘Harvest Home’ hit Maen Bugail a steep-sided, isolated rock located off the north coast of Bardsey Island. Maen Bugail is surrounded by deep, fast-flowing water, so the remains of the ‘Harvest Home’ may lie close by or might have drifted away before sinking. However, with a dense cargo of china clay, she probably sank soon after running onto the rock, which is always visible above water.

Overview.

Some confusion has arisen as to the fate of the ‘Harvest Home’, but this can be explained by the fact that two vessels of that name ran into trouble in Cardigan Bay; one in 1841; the other in 1914. The earlier incident was resolved when the barque was towed off the beach at Hell’s Mouth, contrary the report in to Henry Parry’s book ‘Wreck and Rescue on the Coast of Wales’. It is assumed that the remains of the schooner still remain in Bardsey Sound close to Maen Bugail (photo above), but has not, as yet, been proved.



A 3-masted fore-&-aft schooner; 'The Illustrated Marine Encyclopedia' by Captain H. Paasch.



Bardsey Island viewed from Mynydd Mawr, Uwchmynydd, with Maen Bugail arrowed.

Lloyd's Register. 1871-72

✠	Harvest Home	Sr	C. Boden	100	80-2 20-8 10-7	Livrp'l	1866	Boden & Co.	Runcorn	Cly. Coaster	8
	(Int. Isabella Croll)		I.H.			Duncan	Smo.		H.Y. Cly. 70	(A. & C. P.)	

Mercantile Navy List, 1900.

Harvest Home, St. Ives	Sr.	Liverpool	1866	Q.L.P.B	79	× William Thomas, Amlwch Port, Anglesey.
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Mercantile Navy List, 1914.

56576	Harvest Home, St. Ives	Sr.	Liverpool	1866	Q.L.P.B	79	× William Thomas, Amlwch Port, Anglesey.
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The Cornish Telegraph. Wednesday, 20 December, 1899.

LELANT (St. Ives, Cornwall) The Harvest Home, the three-masted St. Ives schooner, is laying up here for the winter.

Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser - Tuesday 14 October 1913
MAIL AND STEAMSHIP NEWS. MANCHESTER SHIP CANAL. ENTERED EASTHAM LOCKS. Harvest Home, 79, felspar, Ellesmere Port, Christiansund.



Maen Bugail (arrowed.) Note the disturbed water caused by extremely-strong currents.

Liverpool Echo - Saturday 31 January 1914

SCHOONER WRECKED. An underwriter's message states that the schooner Harvest Home, bound for Ardrossan, with a cargo of china clay, went ashore on Maen Bugail in Bardsey Sound. The crew got off in a boat and stood by. As the schooner's lights disappeared, it was concluded that she had sunk.

Newcastle Journal - Saturday 31 January 1914.

HARVEST HOME Schooner Harvest Home, Par to Ardrossan, with china clay, struck Maen Bugail, Bardsey Sound, and was swept clean by sea; in sinking condition; crew saved in own boat; Harvest Home believed to have sunk.

Belfast Telegraph - Saturday 31 January 1914.

A Brynsiencyn telegram says the schooner Harvest Home. on voyage to Ardrossan with china clay, struck Maen Bugail in Bardsey Sound and was swept clear by the sea. She is in a sinking condition. The crew were saved in their own boat.



The Coastguard lookout at Mynydd Mawr overlooks Bardsey Sound and Maen Bugail.

7.0 Analysis.

From the contemporary newspaper reports, it is clear that two vessels named ‘Harvest Home’ were involved in maritime incidents in North Wales.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations.

It is concluded that the barque ‘Harvest Home’ was successfully re-floated when she ran ashore at Hell’s Mouth in 1841.

All the newspaper reports suggest that the schooner ‘Harvest Home’ sank shortly after hitting Maen Bugail in 1914. Debris and a magnetometer anomaly was found approximately a mile south-east of Maen Bugail during a side-scan survey around Bardsey Island, but this location is in deep water and suffers from strong currents. This has not been confirmed as a wreck-site, and is unlikely to be visited by divers.

9.0. References.

Sources include: Lloyd’s Register.

Shipwreck Index of the British Isles. Vol 5 (Richard Larne, 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/