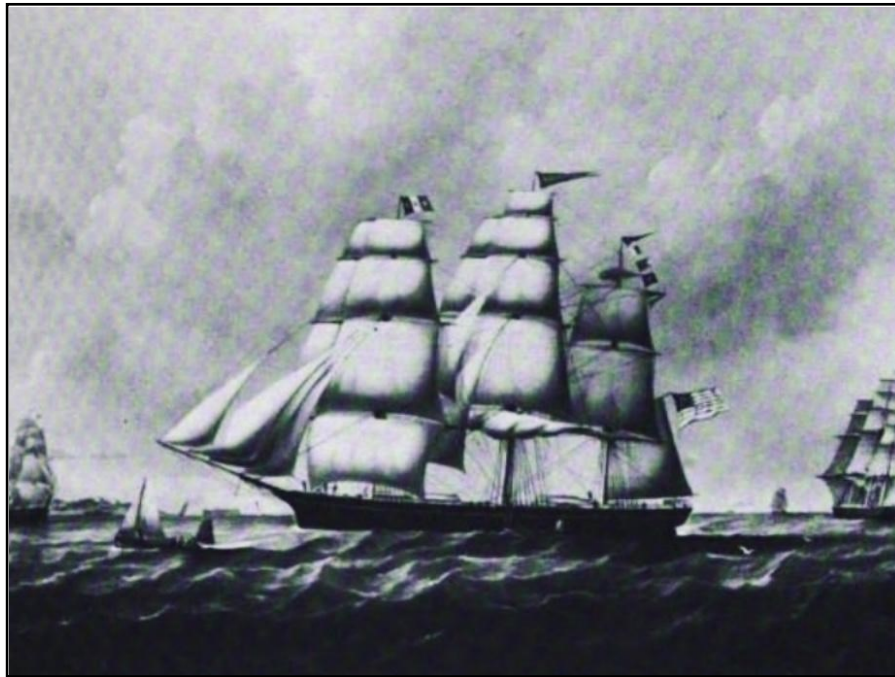


**Welsh Wreck Web Research Project  
(North Cardigan Bay)  
On-line research into the wreck of the:  
Leander of Bath**



*A similar ship built at Bath by Clark & Sewall, 1854.*

Report compiled by:  
**Graeme Perks**

Report Title:

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

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**November 2021**

Report Ref:

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## **1.0 Abstract**

The “www Research Project” is about, discovering by on line research details of ships, on the MADU data base of wrecks of North Wales, the circumstances of their loss, details of the owners and crew, the cargo carried and their history.

The Leander was a fully rigged ship built in Bath, Maine, USA in 1857 by E & A Sewall and used by them for transatlantic voyages. The Leander was on the return leg of her second voyage for New Orleans when she was in collision with the steamer North American in the Irish sea and sank. The owners of the Leander took an action for damages to the Admiralty Court and were successful, including on appeal. The wife of master of the Leander was drowned with nine members of crew when the Leander sank.

## 2.0 Index

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Front Cover: A similar ship built at Bath by Clark & Sewall, 1854. -----	1
Fig. 1 Clarence Graving Dock, Liverpool (2001) -----	?
Fig. 2 Tuskar Rock lighthouse -----	?
Fig. 3 Bardsey Lighthouse -----	?

## 2.4 Contributors

Madu

## 2.5 Abbreviations

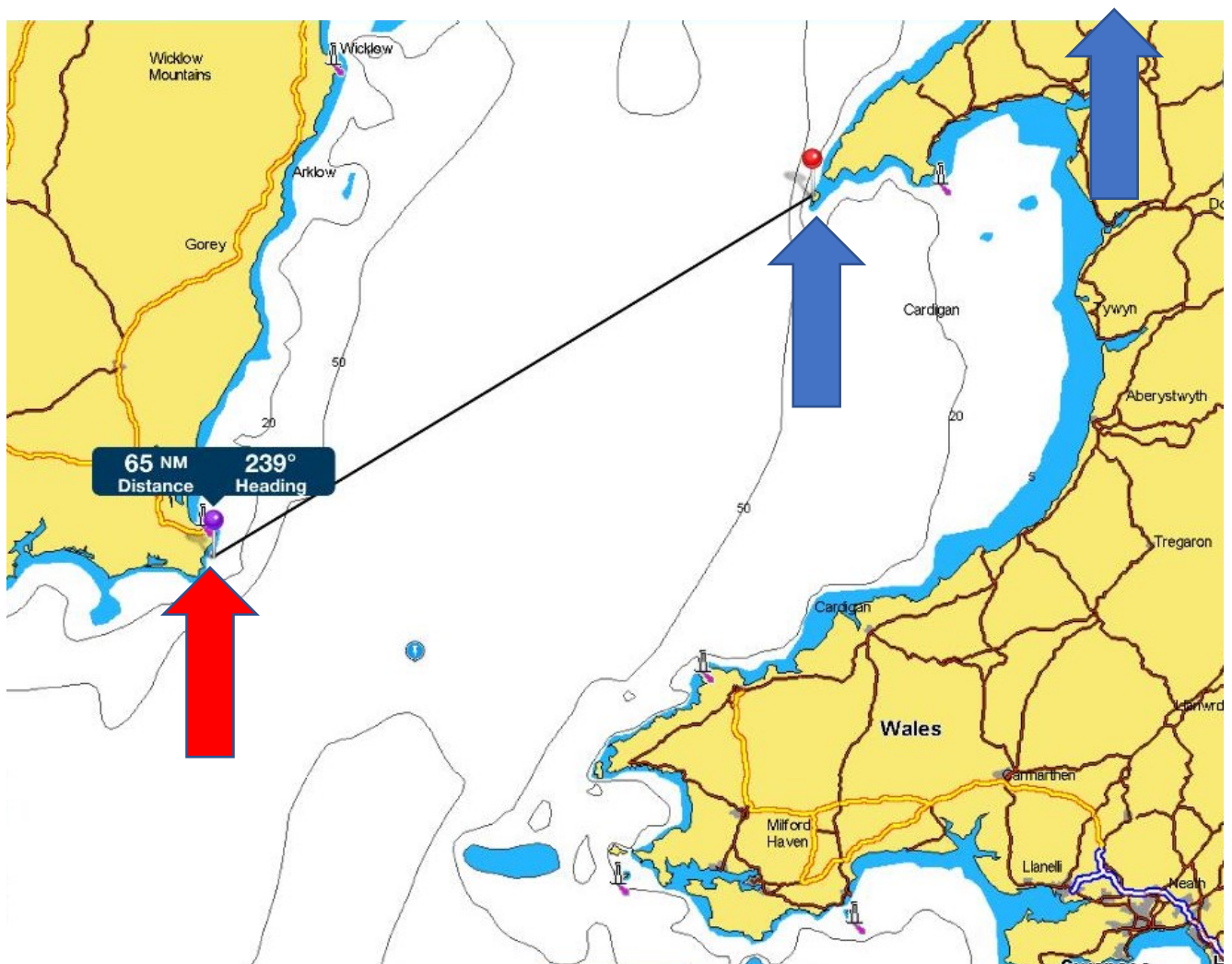
BNA	British Newspaper Archives
LR	Lloyds Register of shipping
MADU	Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
N B	New Brunswick, British North America
NAS	Nautical Archaeology Society
NAW	National Archives of Wales
NPRN	National Primary Resource Number
OS	Ordnance Survey
SMG	Shipping and Mercantile Gazette
WNL	Welsh Newspapers on Line
w/e	Week ending

### **3.0 Introduction**

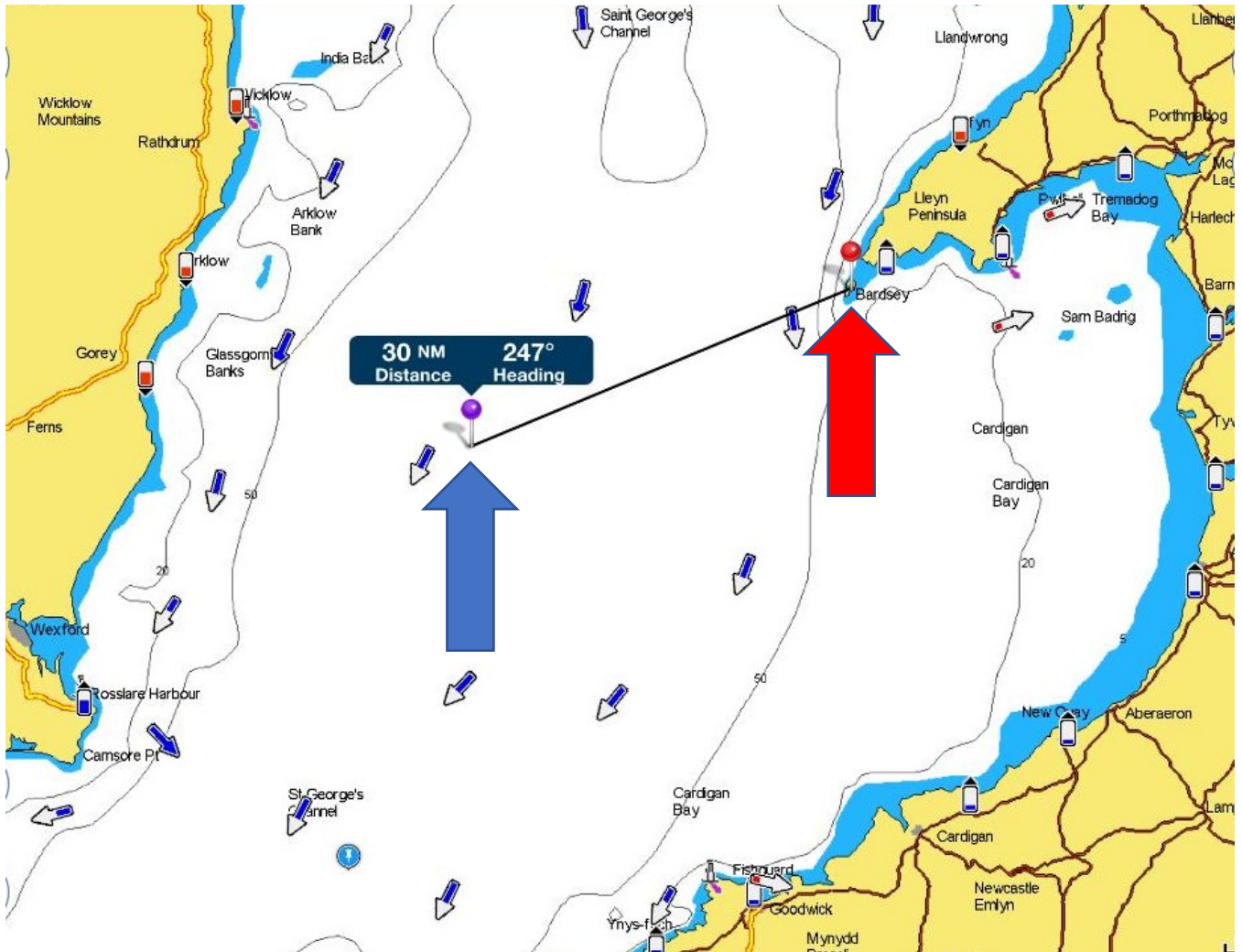
1. I selected Leander to research because she was involved in an incident offshore and I wished to identify her and see how much information I could find about her. I also wanted to find out what happened and to discover:
2. The dimensions of the vessel, Who the builder was and when she was built and any other information available about her.
3. Information concerning the voyages, cargo's, any events affecting the vessel, details of its masters, crew and owners.
4. To find out the sequency of events leading up to the loss of the vessel, whenever that was and the event in 1858.
5. To discover the cause of the event in 1858 and if the vessel survived, the cause of its eventual loss.
6. The events that happened after the incident in 1858 and up to and after its loss if it survived.
7. If there were any previous research of the vessel for the 1858 incident and its story.
8. If there was a wreck site for Leander and if it had been identified, dived and recorded.
9. If any salvage of the vessel and its cargo had been carried out
10. If any previous reports had been produced for the Leander.

## 4.0 Background

When I started this project it was reported Leander 896 tons was a wooden fully rigged ship built in 1857 and involved in an incident on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1858 30M NE & E of Caernarfon bay, Bardsey Island.



Approximate course of North American from Off Tuskar Lighthouse towards Bardsey Lighthouse



Approximate position of collision with North American

 Bardsey Lighthouse

## 5.0 Research Methodology

I used a Microsoft Pixel laptop with access to my home internet running windows 10 operating system. I also used my Apple I pad for research when I was away from the laptop. The new internet provider has now connected my home by a fibre connection so it is very much faster. The Lap top uses bling search engine but I also use Goggle which produces less advertisements and less Americanised content.

I searched Lloyds Register of Shipping ( LR ) for "Leander " looking for details of her dimensions, master, builders and owners from 1857 with no match. I then searched 1858 with no match.

I searched LR ships, plans and survey reports for "Leander" with no match.

I searched The British Newspaper Archives (BNA) for "Leander Curtis" and "Leander" looking for sailings, arrivals, a launch, owners, builders, mishaps and any details of her loss and found a number of matches.

I searched Welsh newspapers on line for "Leander" looking for sailings, arrivals, a launch, owners, builders and any details of her loss and found no matches.

I searched via google for "Leander" with no match. I also searched " E & A Sewall" and "Peleg Curtis" with matches

I searched Coflein site for "Leander" looking for any details of the wreck and a chart with a match.

I searched wreckeu site for "Leander" looking for any details of the wreck with no matches.

## 6.0 Results

Vessel	Name/s	Leander		
	Type	Fully rigged ship		
		Cargo		
Built	Date	1857		
	Builder	E & A Sewall		
		Bath, Maine, America		
Construction	Materials	Wood		
	Decks	One		
	Bulkheads	None		
Propulsion	Type	Sail		
	Details	Square rigged		
Engine	Details	N/A		
	Boilers			
Drive	Type			
	Number			
Dimensions	Length	Unknown ft	ins	
	Beam	ft	ins	
	Draught	ft	ins	
Tonnage	Gross	895 93/95 tons		
	Net			
Owner	First	E & A Sewall		
		Bath, Maine, America		
	Last	E & A Sewall		
		Bath, Maine, America		
	Others			
Registry	Port	Bath, Maine USA		
	Flag	American		
	Number			
History	Routes	British North America to London & America to Liverpool		
	Cargo	Cotton, Salt		
Final Voyage	From	Liverpool 9th February 1858		
	To	New Orleans		
	Captain	Peleg Curtis		
	Crew	16		
	Passengers	One plus captain's wife and son		
	Cargo	Salt		
Wrecking	Date	11 <sup>th</sup> February 1858		
	Location	30 miles N E by E from Bardsey Island		
	Cause	Collision with s. s. North American		
	Loss of life	Captain's wife, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Mate and 8 seamen		
	Outcome	Sank		

**Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser - Thursday 04 February 1858**

Loading in Bramley Moore Dock, and will be despatched in a few days.

For NEW ORLEANS,

The A 1 American Ship LEANDER. – P Curtis, Commander; Burthen per register 896 tons, now her second voyage, sails fast, and presents favourable opportunity for shippers.—For freight, cabin passengers -. having first-rate accommodation, apply to Captain Curtis, board, or

JONES, SONGEY and CO. Fenwick-street.

**Saint James's Chronicle - Saturday 13 February 1858**

CANADA.

(By Electric Telegraph.)

LIVERPOOL, THURSDAY EVENING. The North American, with the Canadian mails, arrived in the Mersey this evening, with advices from Portland to the 30th, and New York to the 29th ult. She has brought 104 passengers and \$26,280. On the 5th instant she passed a paddle-steamer supposed to be the North Star. At half-past one this morning, between Tuskar and Holyhead, she came into collision with the American barque Leander, Captain Curtis, from Liverpool to New Orleans. The steamer struck her on the starboard side, and the barque went down about five minutes after, carrying with her ten persons—nine of the crew and the wife of the captain. The North American's boats saved seven persons, and five jumped on board the steamer. The North American lost bowsprit and cutwater.

**Cork Examiner - Wednesday 17 February 1858**

COLLISION AND LOSS of LIFE in the CHANNEL.

Liverpool, Friday.—At a late hour last night the screw steam-ship North American, Capt. Grange, arrived here from Portland, United States, bringing New York advices to the 29th ult. The North American had the usual Canadian mails, 101 passengers, and specie on freight amounting to 26,280 dollars. The general intelligence by this arrival is not of much moment. We regret say that the North American, in coming up channel, got into collision with the Leander, of Bath, United States, striking her on the starboard side. The vessel went down less than five minutes, one passenger, Mrs. Curtis, and nine seamen were drowned. I

subjoin the following narrative of this unfortunate affair by one of the passengers, named James Kerr. He says:— The Leander was fine ship, of 900 tons, and sailed from Liverpool for New Orleans, with a fine S.E. breeze, at nine o'clock on Tuesday morning, having on board the captain, his wife and son, one passenger, two mates, steward, cook, and fourteen seamen. She was in light order, having about 300 tons salt and 150 tons ballast on board. We made Point Lynas at three o'clock, Skerries at five, Holyhead six ; having run all this time eight and nine knots an hour, with a fresh breeze and all plain sail set. All went well until one or two a.m. on Thursday, when was awoken by a terrible crash of timber, and the first impression was that the ship had been struck by lightning. I arose and tied on my life belt, and tried to open the state-room door, but it was jammed fast. Heard the mate's voice cry, " Run to the passengers' room," and immediately he and the captain's son burst open the door, and the mate broke the window, and I got out, I following him that way. Going forward to the cabin, which is on deck, with a slightly raised walk round three sides of it, I found the captain's wife, son, and second mate. I then knew we were run into, and cut two-thirds through the deck just abaft the main rigging, starboard, on the lee side. The captain's wife exclaimed, " The ship is sinking ; oh ! save me, somebody." It was true; and while she spoke the ship settled fast in the water. I went aft again to the binnacle. A man rushed past me, put the wheel down, and jumped overboard. I took one look forward, and saw the waves rise on every side and then pour in like a cataract. Then I was carried far down with the ship, and came up to struggle with the waves with the others in like circumstances. The time of these occurrences must counted in seconds, not more than five minutes elapsed from the first shock until the ship went down. The steamer that ran down was a short way off, and in about twenty minutes I was picked up. She turned out to be the North American, from Portland to Liverpool. When all saved were mustered we numbered twelve, viz., the captain and his son, mate, steward, cook, six men and myself. The captain's wife, second mate, and eight men were lost. The case the second mate is peculiarly distressing. He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. We had every kindness shown us on board the steamer, and passengers raided money enough to give the mate £5, and the eight crew £1 each. How the accident occurred I know not, nor who was to blame; this will no doubt be investigated. All I know is that some are saved, and that it is of God's mercy that any of us are alive to tell it.

The following is the official report of the Captain of the North American in reference to the melancholy affair : -

February 11.—At 1.35 a.m., came in collision with American barque Leander, of Bath, striking her on larboard side. The vessel went down in five minutes after. Part of the crew saved by our boats. Names of survivors Peleg Curtis, captain ; Elijah Batcheldor, first mate; James Noyes, steward; James Daviss, steward;

Woods, Charles Childs, Edward Phillips, Oliver Nelson, William H. Deous, Peter M'Arej. seamen; Oliver Quimby, boy; James Kerr, passenger. Mrs. Curtis and nine seamen drowned.

### **Cork Constitution - Thursday 18 February 1858**

Captain Grange of the North American made the following statement:— was seen about two miles ahead of 1.30 a.m. Thursday, which was afterwards made out to that of ship coming down channel. We ported helm pass her the port side. The chief officer ordered the men the wheel not fall off, but soon found that the ship was crossing the steamer's bows. Our helm was then put hard a-port, and the engines were stopped and reversed, but unfortunately we struck the ship between the main and mizen she went down in three or four minutes. We lowered our boats, and seven of the crew were picked amongst the floating wreck. The captain and four of the crew the ship jumped on board the steamer. It was clear and starry overhead, but it was not clear on the horizon. I attribute the accident to the ship not keeping her own side of the channel; she did not obey the rules of the road; she ought have passed the steamer on the port side. Captain Curtis, of the Leander, states:— Our ship in going down the channel made light three points on the starboard bow; the ship was going south-west, and the light bearing west-by-south. soon made the light to be that of steamer coming up channel. Soon after we saw the red light on the starboard bow. The Leander was going by the wind, and we braced up, with port tacks aboard. About two or three minutes before the collision we saw the red light, the port bow. In consequence of the steamer being so broad we found the Leander could not port her helm to clear her, and we kept the ship on her coarse. The steamer, keeping under the lee of the Leander, struck her between the main and mizen rigging at right angles. The steamer was heading about southeast when she hit us, and the ship was going south-west. The ship was cut half in two, and she sank in five or seven minutes after the collision. I attribute accident to the steamer altering her coarse, and thus running into the Leander. The night was hazy, but clear." Every kindness was shown to the rescued crew by the captain of the steamer, and the passengers immediately raised subscription, and presented the mate with £5, and the crew with £1 each. Captain Curtis and his crew lost everything they had board their vessel - Upon getting into port the American consul supplied them with funds to procure clothing and other necessaries.

**Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser - Saturday 20 February 1858**

The Steamer "North American."—The statement that the North American, screw steamer, would not be despatched from Liverpool with the Canadian mails until the route was opened to Quebec and Montreal, is, it appears, incorrect; as, though the departure the North American will be delayed to the 3rd of March, she will sail for Portland on that day, and will be succeeded on the March by the Indian, also for Portland.

**Sussex Advertiser - Tuesday 23 February 1858**

The late Fatal Collision off Holyhead.-It is said that the captain of the Leander, sunk on Wednesday week off Holyhead, coming into collision with the screw steamer North American, has entered action in the Admiralty Court against the owners the latter vessel, laying his damages £15,000. the American law on the subject of collisions is very stringent, the European agents of the Montreal ocean steamers have decided not to run the North American until the route is open to Montreal and Quebec, as if sent to Portland, she might be impounded by authorities of the American Admiralty Court. The masters and mates the North American are confident that they can prove that there was no fault the part of the officers charge their vessel; while, as all the crew of the Leander on duty at the time were drowned, the captain of that vessel will placed in very awkward position as to proving his case. The captain himself was only saved by jumping on board steamer the moment the collision look place. It is a singular fact, that almost all the persons who were on deck at the time the accident were drowned, and that the majority of those saved were sleeping their berths.

**Morning Chronicle - Wednesday 24 February 1858****THE FRIGHTFUL COLLISION IN ST GORGES CHANNEL, AND SINKING OF THE SHIP LEANDER**

Yesterday the following depositions were forwarded by the Board of Trade to Lloyd's, relative to the late lamentable accident in the St. George's Channel, by the running down of the American barque Leander, Captain Curtis, from Liverpool to New Orleans, with most of the crew on board by the North American screw steamer North America of Glasgow. The depositions, which were taken on oath by the Admiralty receiver of droits at Liverpool, are those of Captain Grange, the commander of the North American, and Mr. Thomas Alton, his chief officer.

Captain Grange states that the North American steamer is 1,154 tons register, and is the property of the Montreal Ocean Steam Navigation Company and left Portland, United States, on the 30<sup>th</sup> ult., and made the Fastnet light at midnight on the 9<sup>th</sup> inst., and the Tuskar on the night of the 10<sup>th</sup>, the latter bearing N.N.W., hearing about 18 miles. The wind at the time was moderate, blowing S.E., with a clear sky, but hazy on the water- course N.E. by E., for Bardsey. About half-past twelve o'clock I retired to the cabin, and lay down with part of my clothes on. I had fallen asleep, but was suddenly aroused by hearing the man at the wheel (which is only divided by a partition from the state room) shout out, 'Its hard over'. I jumped up, fearing something was wrong, and ran upon deck, when I saw the mast and sails of a ship right ahead, close under our bows, I had only run, about forty feet along the deck to the bridge when a collision took place. I got on to the bridge and saw that the telegraph of the engine-room was at "full astern" In a minute, or thereabouts, having cleared the ship and stopped the engines. Heard shouting from the forecastle, " The ship is going down." I immediately ordered the boats out, which were in the course of three or four minutes lowered, and about the same time I saw the ship go down, then about two points on the steamer's starboard bow. Hearing some cries to windward, one boat pulled in the direction, and the other immediately followed. I then went down into the forepeak to ascertain what damage our steamer had sustained, and found the bows stove in about the water edge. I came on deck and directed the engineer to blow off the two foremost boilers, with the view of lightening the vessel forward. When I returned I was shown the master of the lost ship. I took in the steamer's sails, put the helm hard a-starboard, and set on at half speed. In a few minutes saw one of the boats, hailed it, and found they had picked up some of the crew. Shortly after another of the boats came along- side, having picked up another of the crew. Ascertaining there was no chance of any more being saved, hoisted up the boats, and proceeded on the vessel's course to Liverpool, where the steamer arrived at about eight a. m. the same morning. At the breakfast table, Captain Curtis, the master of the Leander (the ship run down), said he was on deck at the time, and got bothered with the steamer's lights when he first saw them, but afterwards made them out and he thought it her (the steamer's) business to get out of the ship's way. Captain Curtis said he got on board of the steamer during the collision, but how many of the crew he was unable to say. The captain's wife and nine of the crew went down in the ship and perished. -Mr. Thomas Alton, first officer of the North American steamer, said I took charge of the ship when time captain went below ; it was about half-past twelve o'clock. On taking charge I ascertained that the look-outs were on the alert. There was one on each bow, and the third mate was stationed on the poop deck, his usual post, for the purpose of communicating with the man at the wheel, and to see that the course was properly steered. I also saw that the lights were duly exhibited. I had a night glass in my hand and was walking the bridge,

when, about half-past one o'clock, a light was reported right ahead by both look-outs. I had previously passed several vessels bound down, one of which had been reported in the same way "right ahead," and on that occasion both ported their helms and passed each other on the port side. I gave orders to port the helm, which was instantly obeyed, and brought the stranger's light two points on our bow, shutting in the starboard light, and fully exposing the red light. I then saw a strange sail coming down Channel. Our helm was steadied, but almost at the same moment I found that the ship was close with the steamer. I then ordered the helm to be put hard a-port, which was instantly done ; but I saw that a collision was inevitable, from the want of the steamer's helm being put to port. I stopped the engines, and had them reversed full speed, but shortly after the collision took place. The boats were immediately got out to save life, and soon afterwards I heard that the ship had gone down. The master and eleven of the crew of the lost ship were taken on board the steamer- five got on board while the vessels were in contact, and seven were picked up in the boats. In the course of the morning Captain Curtis (the late master of the lost ship) said that when he first saw the steamer's lights he took it to be, the Tuskar - light, and hauled up half a point, but, on making it out was a steamer he kept his course, as he was under this impression that a steamer at all times was considered going free, and consequently should give way. The loss of this Leander is estimated at about £25,000

### **Morning Post - Friday 26 February 1858**

ADMIRALTY COURT.— Feb. 25.

(Before Dr. Lushington.)

#### **COLLISION — THE NORTH AMERICAN.**

This was a suit instituted by the owners of the late ship Leander, an American vessel of 696 tons, bound from London to New Orleans, with a cargo of salt, against the British screw-steamer North American, 1,145 tons, on her voyage from Portland to Liverpool, with a general cargo and passengers, for a total loss by collision in mid-channel, between Tuskar and Bardsey Lights, about two o'clock in the morning of the 11th of the present month. It was alleged that the accident arose from the crew of the steamer not keeping a sufficient look out, and from her improperly porting her helm when the Leander was well upon their starboard bow, and thus suddenly heading up towards the other vessel, instead of keeping their course. They were also censured for not stopping their engines. The American vessel sunk shortly after the collision, and unfortunately the wife of the captain and nine of the crew were lost, the captain and the remaining eleven

men being saved by climbing on board the steamer. On behalf of the North American it was denied the collision arose from her improper conduct, and they attributed the accident solely to the Leander in crossing the bows of the steamer, instead putting her helm to port. Several witnesses were examined in support of the respective cases. The Queen's Advocate and Dr. Spinks were heard for the Leander ; Dr's. Deane and Twiss appeared for the owners of the North American. The Trinity Brethren were of opinion that the collision was occasioned by the steamer, after porting her helm, not having kept it hard a port. The blame, therefore, attached to her, and not to the Leander. The Court pronounced for the damage.

### **Greenock Advertiser - Tuesday 06 July 1858**

#### JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL.

Wednesday, June 30.

#### THE NORTH AMERICAN - DAMAGE.

This was an appeal from a decree the Admiralty Court. On the 11th of February last, about two in the morning, collision took place the Irish Channel, between Bardsey and Tuskar, between the Leander, a United States merchant vessel, 896 tons, bound from Liverpool for New Orleans, with salt, and the North American, a British screw steamer, 1145 tons, bound from Portland for Liverpool, with general cargo and passengers. The wind was from S.E. to S.S.E. ; the Leander was on the port tack beading S. W. half west the North American was steering N.E, by E. half E. The case the Leander was, that seeing the North American on her starboard bow, she kept her course, and on perceiving from the change in the position of the lights that the steamer had shifted her place a light was shown on the starboard side, and the steamer was hailed; but she came on full speed and struck the Leander with such violence that she very soon foundered. The master and 11 of the crew saved themselves by getting on board the steamer, but the master's wife and nine seamen were lost. The North American was blamed for having improperly ported, and for not having stopped her engines. The North American, on the other hand, alleged that she was carrying the proper lights, and making eight or nine knots hour when the Leander's light was seen at a distance of two miles, and the helm was ported; that was afterwards steadied, and that when a collision became imminent it was put hard a port, and the engines were stopped and reversed. The Leander was blamed for not having ported, and for having crossed the bows of the steamer. The Court below, assisted Trinity Masters, after bearing *viva voce* evidence in support of the respective cases, came to the conclusion that the North American alone was to blame.

## **Coflein**

The LEANDER was a 896nt full-rigged ship. The vessel was lost 30 miles east-northeast of Bardsey Island (which suggests the entrance to the Menai Strait).

Sources include:

Board of Trade Wreck Return 1858 Table 19 pg18 (576)

Larn and Larn Shipwreck Database 2002

Maritime Officer, RCAHMW, March 2010.

## **Usk Observer - Saturday 21 January 1865**

FOUNDERING OF THE STEAMER NORTH AMERICAN.

Loss of nearly 200 Lives. The steamer Peruvian, which has just arrived at Liverpool from Portland, brings intelligence of a fearful calamity which occurred on the 23rd December last, in the Mexican Gulf, by the foundering of the steamer North American, and the loss of 197 lives. The commander of the ill-fated steamer, Captain Marshall, states that the North American left New Orleans on the 16th December, and the South West Pass on the 18th, with 203 sick soldiers, 12 cabin passengers, and a crew numbering 44. She had fine weather until noon of the 20th. At four o'clock p.m. of that day it commenced blowing heavily from the S.S.W., with a heavy sea running, and the vessel laboured and strained greatly. On the 22nd the weather moderated in the early part of the day, but at noon the gale began to increase, and the engineer reported that the ship was leaking badly. At one p.m. he reported the water to be gaining in the hold. The course of the ship was then changed to the westward. Took off the fore and main hatch, and discovered water running in forward. They cutaway the ceiling, to try to stop the leak by caulking it, but could not. They next put blankets and sails over the bow, but all to no purpose, as the water continued to gain very fast. At 2.15 p.m. they spoke the barque Mary E. Libby, Captain Libby, bound from Cardenas, Cuba, for Portland. Captain Libby, upon learning the situation of the steamer, said he would remain and take all on board his vessel if necessary. At 2.30 p.m. the water put the fires out. The boats were then got ready, and at 3.30 the first boat started for the barque, with the chief engineer and all the lady passengers. Six boat loads were got aboard the barque; the seventh boat at dark, with the purser, pilot, and eight men, is supposed to have been lost, as it never reached the Mary E. Libby. The eighth and last boat, with the captain, first

and second officers, and eight men, left the steamer at 7.30 p.m. The boats were hoisted aboard the barque at 9 p.m. It being impossible to return to the steamer that night, the barque made sail and proceeded towards the steamer, her lights all in sight-distant about six miles. About 1 a.m. the lights disappeared suddenly, and the steamer must have foundered then, as at daylight nothing could be seen but a water cask belonging to the steamer. The barque cruised about until noon, when all hope was relinquished, and she proceeded on her course. Out of 259 souls which were on board when the North American sailed from New Orleans, only 62 were saved. Among those who went down with the vessel were, Colonel Saunders and Lieutenant-Colonel Home.

### **E & A Sewall, Maine USA**

Edward and Arthur Sewall gained practical experience at home and at sea and in 1855 the firm of Clark Sewall was succeeded by that of E. & A. Sewall. From that date until 1879 this firm built two schooners, a brig, three barks, and 32 ships. In 1872 E. & A. Sewall expanded the original yard on Front Street by purchasing first the adjoining yard to the south where G. F. & J. Patten had built their fleet and then the yard of W. V. & O. Moses which was the next south of that at the foot of Pearl Street. In 1879 Edward Sewall was fatally injured in New York. There was at the time one ship on the ways of the E. & A. Sewall yard at Bath which he insisted on building to provide employment for as many of his employees as possible during a business depression. She was completed by his administrators and became the 1,532-ton Solitaire. The firm was again reorganized, this time as Arthur Sewall & Company, and included Samuel S. Sewall, son of Edward, and the third William D. Sewall, son of Arthur. Between 1879 and 1892 the firm turned out 14 wooden schooners and 11 full-rigged ships. The construction record of Clark & Sewall and their successors shows that the firm averaged about one new vessel a year until 1860 when two a year became common. During the 1870s and 1880s there were several years in which three vessels slid into the Kennebec from the Sewall yard. In 1841 Clark & Sewall completed the largest merchant ship then sailing under the American flag, the first Rappahannock which measured 1,133 tons. They did not equal or surpass her until their 1,220-ton Samaritan of 1854. The Sewalls built no clipper ships but followed the tradition of good capacity with a fair turn of speed.

The last wooden Sewall vessel was the Roanoke which measured 3,539 tons and was the largest square-rigged vessel to fly the American flag in commercial service. She, two slightly smaller predecessors, and eight steel vessels built by the firm were, technically speaking, four-masted barks. In the company's records, however, they were always listed as ships; they had three square-

rigged masts and the fore -and -aft rigged jigger did not count.

In 1893 , realizing that the day of the wooden sailing freighter was over, Arthur Sewall & Company turned to steel construction. Beginning with the Dirigo of 1894 the firm built eight ships ( four -masted barks ), one schooner, one barge , and one bark , the Kaiulani. In their wooden vessels the Sewalls had followed local practices but the eight steel ships were essentially British as the company, lacking experience, turned to England for design and pre-cut materials for the Dirigo. The other seven, built of American steel , were lengthened versions of her.

The Sewall steel shipyard closed in 1903 after the completion of the five -masted schooner Kineo. Arthur Sewall had died in 1900 and the firm , continuing the same name, then consisted of Samuel S. and the third William D. Sewall. They considered proposals to reopen the yard but the day of sailing vessels was over and they had no interest in steam. By sales , losses at sea, and German submarines, the fleet was whittled down and on 25 October 1916 the firm of Arthur Sewall & Company closed its books.

Arthur Sewall (November 25, 1835 – September 5, 1900) was an American shipbuilder from Maine, best known as the Democratic nominee for Vice President of the United States in 1896, running mate to William Jennings Bryan.

On September 5, 1900, Sewall died in Small Point, Maine, from apoplexy. He is interred in Oak Grove Cemetery in Bath, Maine. At the time of his death he was worth \$5,000,000 (\$152,282,302 with inflation)

### **Ance Story Archives Friday, December 5, 2014**

Arthur Sewall of Bath Maine

ARTHUR SEWALL: BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

Arthur Sewall, ship builder, business man, and National Democratic candidate for Vice-President of the United States, was born in Bath, Maine., Nov. 25, 1835, third son of William Dunning and Rachel Trufant Sewall. His great-grandfather, Col. Dummer Sewall, came to Bath, Maine., from York, also a district of Maine, in 1762, purchased the site of the present Sewall estate, was an officer in the French and Indian war, and subsequently in the war of the American Revolution. He was fifth in descent from Henry Sewall, who was mayor of Coventry, England. Henry's grandson married Jane Dummer and emigrated to America in 1634, settling at Newbury, Mass. Judge Samuel Sewall of Salem, the first Chief-Justice immortalized by Whittier as the "good and true," who was made famous in the celebrated witchcraft trials of that town, and one of the board of overseers of

Harvard, was a son of this Sewall, and his brother, John Sewall, was the direct ancestor of all the Sewalls of Maine. Arthur was educated in the best schools of Bath, and at an early age apprenticed to his father in the ship-building business. Here he passed the several grades of progression, and became a thorough master of the business. His first visit to the outside world was a voyage to Prince Edward's Island, where he exchanged a cargo of merchandise for ship timber, to supply his father's yards on the Kennebec. Upon his return, although scarcely twenty years old, he, with his brother, Edward, purchased the business of William D. Sewall and Clark & Sewall, and, under the name of E. & A. Sewall, launched their first ship, the Holyhead, of over 1,000 tons burden. This was in 1855.

The Bath Sewalls have been closely identified with Bath's chief industry, ship building, since 1823, when William D. Sewall opened the small shipyard on the banks of the Kennebec next to the family homestead. He was succeeded in business by Clark & Sewall. These two earlier firms built twenty-nine wooden vessels between 1823 and 1854.

In 1859 Mr. Sewall was married to Emma Duncan, daughter of Charles Crooker, an old-time ship-builder and merchant. She was educated at Ipswich, Mass. She has travelled extensively, is a thorough French linguist, an artist with pen and camera, and a historical student. She is a woman of quiet and refined tastes. They have two sons living, Harold Marsh and William Dunning, and four grandchildren, Loyall Farragut, Arthur, Margaret and Dorothy Sumner.

The firm of E. & A. Sewall was dissolved in 1879 by the death of Edward Sewall. This firm, in its twenty-four years of existence, had built forty-six wooden vessels. In 1879 Arthur Sewall, his son, William D. Sewall, and his nephew, Samuel S. Sewall, a son of the late Edward Sewall, formed the firm of Arthur Sewall & Co.

Arthur Sewall is about the only man in the country who has persisted in building ships in the face of what other builders have considered disaster. Before the first administration of Mr. Cleveland grass grew in every wooden shipbuilding yard on both coasts. But Mr. Sewall, believing that a turn for the better soon would come, resumed building, and with greater earnestness than ever before. There followed in quick succession four monsters, each representing a sum beyond \$125,000. These were the Rappahannock, Shenandoah, Susquehanna, and Roanoke, all wooden vessels, averaging about 3,000 tons net each, capable of carrying easily a tonnage in cargo of half as much more. The Roanoke was the largest. This ship, built in 1892, measures 3,400 tons, and is now the largest wooden ship afloat. The Shenandoah measures 3,258, and the Susquehanna 2,629. All are magnificent vessels, and as a fleet are classed superior to any other similar fleet, in one control, in the world.

In the spring of 1893 Arthur Sewall, having made a tour of all the noted shipyards of the world, to keep abreast of the march of progress in marine construction, returned to Bath and began the equipment of the firm's shipyard for the complete construction of steel sailing vessels, and the first result of this equipment was the launching of the noble steel ship appropriately call the Dirigo. This mammoth vessel, added to those mentioned, composed the largest fleet of sailing vessels in the United States. The Dirigo was launched in 1894, and measures 2,856 tons. She was the first steel sailing ship built in America. To show in what proportion the business of the Sewall's has grown in comparison with the growth of other large businesses of the country, it may be stated that the tonnage of the Indiana, launched in 1876, is 1,488, while that of the Roanoke, launched seventeen years later, is 3,400, nearly two and-a-half times as great. In addition to his large fleet of square rigged "deep water" ships, Mr. Sewall has constructed and manages a large fleet of three and four-masted schooners, which are engaged in the coal, ice and lumber trade on the Atlantic coast. One of these vessels, the Carrie A. Lane, a three-masted schooner of less than 800 tons, was sent some years ago around Cape Horn from New York to San Francisco. She was the first vessel of anything like her kind or size to make this voyage.

Besides his extensive interests in shipping, Mr. Sewall is interested in railroads, the Bath Iron Works, which built the United States gunboats Castine and Machias and the ram Katahdin, and other enterprises. If Mr. Sewall could have had his way, and had the conditions been favorable, he would have devoted all his time to the building of ships. His capabilities as a man of affairs have been the means of drafting him into other work. His father had been a director on the Portland and Kennebec railroad, and Arthur took his father's place. He has had extensive connection with other roads, not only in Maine, but in Mexico and the Western States, and he has been president of the Maine Central system. He is a man of executive capacity, excellent business judgment and a good counsellor in business enterprises, and it is perhaps due more to his possession of these qualities than to the ownership of any very large amounts of stock that he has been called to the corporate positions which he has filled. Mr. Sewall is a Mason, and a member of the Swedenborgian church. He belongs to no other society, secret or otherwise. He is president of the Merchant's Marine Association, which has been organized to restore American shipping by discriminating duties.

He supported the navigation laws with these arguments: "If for no other reason than keeping our flag afloat, the present navigation laws merit the support of every American citizen. Why, it seems to me that it ought to be worth millions to us to have our flag carried around the world. From the patriotic standpoint, aside from that of commercial expediency, I cannot see how the thought of an

American flag flying over anything that is not American can fail to be offensive. No matter what kind of a bill is passed by the friends of the so-called 'Free Ship laws,' owners will put their ships under whichever flag best suit their purposes, and so, in case of war, the advantages will be wholly on the side of the foreign owner."



Fig. Arthur Sewall (1890's)

**From a Complete Schedule of Vessels Built and Registered or Enrolled in the District of Bath, Maine commencing 1781 –Google Books**

Vessels built in Bath Maine by E & A Sewall

1855 Ship Kineo	829 53 tons	
1856 Ship Hellspont	767 62 tons	
<b>1857 Ship Leander</b>	<b>895 93 tons</b>	<b>Captain Peleg Curtis</b>
1858 ship Valentia	799 51 tons	
1859 Ship Vigilant	652 13 tons	
Ship Villafranca	918 99 tons	Captain Peleg Curtis
1860 Ship Ocean Scud	1008 35 tons	
1862 Ship Vancouver	969 04 tons	Captain Peleg Curtis
1863 Brig Glendale	454 00 tons	
Ship Vicksburg	1130 13 tons	
1864 Bark Volant	496 56 tons	
Ship America	1185 10 tons	

In 1865 a new system of measurement was introduced using fractions representing hundredths instead of 95ths

1865 Ship Freeman Clark	1336 03 tons	
1866 Bark Wetterhorn	698 98 tons	
Ship Matterhorn	1327 91 tons	Captain Peleg Curtis
1868 Ship Hermon	1316 37 tons	
1869 Ship Tabor	1339 71 tons	
Ship Undaunted	1764 26 tons	
1871 Ship Eric the Red	1580 27 tons	

Ship Humboldt	1018 19 tons
1872 Ship Carrollton	1450 06 tons
1873 Ship Sterling	1731 62 tons
Ship Granger	1526 59 tons
1874 Ship Occidental	1533 88 tons
Ship Oriental	1688 45 tons
1875 Ship Continental	1712 00 tons
Ship Harvester	1494 30 tons
1876 Ship Reaper	1468 56 tons
Ship Thrasher	1512 44 tons
Ship Indiana	1487 60 tons
1877 Ship Challenger	1456 04 tons
Ship Thomas M Reed	1516 63 tons
1878 Ship Chesebrough	1507 09 tons

### **Daily Alta California, Volume 82, Number 44, 13 February 1890**

#### **SALVAGE FOR TUGBOATS.**

What Three Companies Get for Aiding the Ship Kenilworth.

After the Port Costa fire, on August 26, 1889, the Sacramento Transportation Company, J. D. Spreckels and the Merchants and Shipowners Tugboat Company libeled the British ship Kenilworth for salvage. In the destructive fire, which burnt a goodly portion of Port Costa, the ship Armenia and the British ship Honauwar were totally destroyed. This also would have been the fate of the four masted ship Kenilworth but for the aid rendered by the river steamer San Joaquin, No. 4, and the tugs Belief and Monarch and Sea King. The San Joaquin towed the big

ship into the stream and kept streams of water on her until the arrival of the Relief, and, later, the Monarch and Sea King.

United States District Judge Hoffman rendered a decision in the case— For the original three libels were consolidated— awarding salvage money to each claimant. For her part in the affair the San Joaquin was allowed \$4500. The Belief, on account .of her superior facilities, was awarded \$7000,' and the Monarch and Sea King together \$3000. This is an aggregate salvage of \$14,500, and half of it is to be paid by the owners of the ship, for whom Robert Balfour and R. B. Forman are sureties, and the other half by the owners of the cargo of wheat, who are George McNear and Elijah Ransom. After the fire the Kenilworth was purchased by Alfred Sewall, the Maine shipbuilder, for \$55,000, and repaired. She is to be given an American register, and will make the third iron ship flying the American flag. The other two are the Annie Johnson, also at first a Britisher, and the Clement S Bement, a native-built ship.

**Sketch of the Life of the Man Nominated for Vice-President by the Chicago Convention.**

Arthur Sewall, the Vice-Presidential nominee of the Democratic party, is well known in San Francisco among ship-owners and agents. He has been here several times in the capacity of managing owner in several ships in which he is largely interested, and all, or nearly all, of which were built at his shipyards in Bath, Maine. The large ships Shenandoah, Susquehanna and Kenilworth, Henry Villard, Reaper, Willie Rosenfeld, Iroquois, W. F. Babcock, Solitaire and the Dirigo have been controlled by Mr. Sewall. The names of these vessels are familiar about the city front. The last time Mr. Sewall was in San Francisco was about one year ago. The firm of Williams, Dimond & Co. are his agents in San Francisco. The concern of which Mr. Sewall is the head is Arthur Sewall & Son.

The father of the Vice-Presidential candidate was a builder of ships in Bath when that industry was at its height and there was money to be made in that way. They were wooden ships of the old time sort, as stout and as trim as they could be made by the burly and skilled shipwrights of New England. The father laid the basis of an enduring business, and provided a handsome competence for his family. His son Arthur became identified with the business in due time, and another brother also was a shipbuilder, but he died some years ago. Arthur Sewall has continued in the business, and has added to the original wooden-ship plant a steel shipyard. From the latter it is not known that more than one steel ship has been produced—the Dirigo. The product of the Sewall plants has included schooners in considerable numbers. In fact, the Sewall name has been connected with shipbuilding for many years.

Arthur Sewall has been largely interested in railroads, and has been president of the Eastern Maine Railroad and also president of the Boston and Maine Railroad. He has been largely concerned in other business enterprises. He is estimated to be a wealthy man—a millionaire. He lives in an elegant mansion on the finest street in Bath, the Sewall home having cost somewhere about \$60,000 and perhaps more. About it are fine grounds, conservatories and generally pleasing and sightly accessories. It may be recollected that, although he is a Democrat, he handsomely entertained President Harrison when the latter visited Bath a few years ago. Harold M. Sewall, who was United States Consul-General at Apia, Samoa, during the troublous times in which Malietoa was a prominent figure, is a son of Arthur Sewall. The son is an ardent Republican, and was a delegate to the Republican National Convention of 1896 at St. Louis which nominated William McKinley for President.

A book by W.H. Bunting of Whitefield, "Live Yankees: The Sewall's and Their Ships," published 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009

Captain Peleg Curtis (1818- 11<sup>th</sup> June 1879) and two of his wives, are buried at Riverside Cemetery, Brunswick, Maine with an inscription on the Gravestone for his wife Elizabeth lost at sea 1858.

## 7.0 Analysis

I found the book *The Complete Schedule of Vessels Built and Registered or Enrolled in the District of Bath, Maine commencing 1781* on line, which listed *Leander* as built in 1857, owned by E & A Sewell, master Captain Peleg Curtis. Since E & A Sewell were also a large ship building company which seems to have built for their own use initially, it is certain they built the *Leander*. The list of vessels they owned was large and Peleg Curtis was listed as master of a number of the new vessels. The American Bureau of Shipping commenced in 1862 and *Leander* was not listed with LR.

The cargo of the *Leander* from St Johns to London in 1857 is not recorded but most likely was timber and from New Orleans in 1858 cotton. The reason for the *Leander* being in the Graving dock (Dry dock) at Liverpool in 1858 is not recorded.

Sewell owned vessels were sold in Europe at the beginning of the American civil war in 1861 and some reflagged as Prussian or registered in Montevideo. This was because they could not obtain cargoes because of Confederate cruisers which were operating around the world including around Great Britain. A vessel when captured was burnt because they could not send them into neutral ports and the Southern confederate ports were blockaded. Sewell lost the *Vigilant* 652 tons on route from New York in ballast to the guano island of Sombrero in the West Indies, captured and burnt by the *Sumter*, Commander Semmes. The crews were not harmed and when too crowded they were placed on a captured vessel to return to the United States. Captain Peleg Curtis had been the first master of this vessel, which was only two years old when destroyed, it having escaped from New Orleans when the war started loaded with cotton for France because the cargo was owned by southern businessmen. A "Yankee" vessel captured with a cargo owned by a neutral power would be released.

The location of the collision was reported to be between Tuskar and Holyhead in the Irish Sea. The master of the *North American* states that he passed Tuskar 18 miles off and steered N.E. by E for Bardsey, it was on this course that the collision occurred. The quoted 30M NE & E for the collision, which the Coflein entry queries as being in the entrance to the Menai Strait is probably the bearing to Bardsey Light from the point of the collision. The deposition of the master of the *North American* set out how the vessel is navigated in relation to sightings of the Light houses at Fastnet, Tusker and Bardsey. A sextant measures angular distance between two visible objects and can be used to measure the distance off a known object if the height of the object is known with an allowance made for the height above sea level of the sighting. The sextant was at this time

the principle instrument used in navigation. The range of the Bardsey Lighthouse in the modern day is 18 nautical miles (20 Miles) and was on his course to Liverpool. The range of the Tusker lighthouse in the modern day is 24 nautical miles and is unlikely to have been less in 1858 although the light displayed was altered in 1885 to showing red and white alternately at sixty second intervals.

The Leander was described as a barque in numerous newspaper reports of the collision but the records of her registration quote a ship, in the legal proceedings after the collision she is only described as a vessel. It maybe that the Leander was a barque as Sewall's described 7 steel vessels built by them as ships but they were barques.

The finding of the Admiralty Court and the appeal against that verdict show that although it does not seem to be a hard rule at this time, the courts find steamers at fault for collisions where they have failed to give way to sailing vessels. The International regulations for the avoidance of collisions at sea now require vessels under power to give way to sailing vessels. This recognised the restricted ability of sailing vessels to manoeuvre when sailing.

All the reports concerning the Leander came from the BNA. The background information came via google searches.

## **8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations**

I have spent about 12 hours on this project, since the Leander was lost on its second return voyage.

The location wreck site for the Leander is unknown with only a vague position given which is open to conjecture. The position I believe it to be is beyond the limits of recreational diving.

The project has answered more of my questions than I was expecting for an American vessel. There are few details of the crew, only the survivors, but insufficient to discover any details about them. The master Peleg Curtis continued to sail vessels owned by E & A Sewall and married again twice, with his first wife Elizabeth recorded on his grave stone lost at sea. The dimensions of the Leander are not available on line and no other information to clarify if she was a ship or a barque.

The only previous research into the Leander I could find was the Coflein entry.

The Leander was active for a short time which does not provided sufficient material for any further publication.

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## **Appendices:**

### **Appendix A – The Timeline for the *Leander***

#### **1857**

June 10 1857 Gravesend arrived Leander from St John, N B

June 10 1857 London customs house entered inwards Leander Curtis from  
St John, N B brokers Gumm

June 26 1857 Deal passed Leander, Curtis from London for Cardiff

July 28 1857 Cardiff sailed Leander, Curtis for New York

November 30 1857 New Orleans loading for Liverpool Leander, Curtis

#### **1858**

January 20 1858 Liverpool arrived Leander 896, Curtis from New Orleans

January 28 1858 Liverpool dock directory Victoria Dock Leander 896, Curtis

February 1 1858 Liverpool dock directory Clarence Graving dock Leander 896,  
Curtis, Jackson & Co

February 5 1858 Liverpool entered for loading Leander, Curtis for New Orleans  
Jones, Songey & Co

February 9 1858 Liverpool sailed Leander 896, Curtis for New Orleans

February 11 1858 Leander, Curtis in collision with s. s. North American and sank



Fig. 1 Clarence Graving Dock, Liverpool (2001)

## Appendix B Locations Mentioned

**Bardsey Lighthouse** 99 ft (30.2 m) was established by Trinity House in 1821; it marks Bardsey Island and is a waypoint for vessels north and southbound in St George's Channel. It is the tallest square tower lighthouse in the UK and has red and white horizontal stripes.

The City of **Bath** is situated on the Kennebec River about twelve miles from the Atlantic. In 1607, the first ship built in the New World was constructed at Popham on the Phippsburg peninsula at the mouth of the river. The city was incorporated in 1847, but had previously been chartered under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in 1781. Bath extends for five miles along the river but is only two-thirds of a mile wide.

**Fastnet Lighthouse** is a 54m high lighthouse situated on the remote Fastnet Rock in the Atlantic Ocean. It is the most southerly point of Ireland and lies 6.5 kilometres southwest of Cape Clear Island and 13 kilometres from County Cork on the Irish mainland. The original lighthouse was replaced in 1904 with a granite tower and as powerful a light as circumstances would permit.

**Tuskar Rock** is a group of rocks topped by a lighthouse 11 kilometres off the southeast coast of County Wexford, Ireland. The Lighthouse is a handsome granite tower ninety feet (27.4m) from its bell shaped base to the lantern balcony with a further twenty feet (6.0m) of blocking. The light was first exhibited on 4th June 1815 and in foggy weather a bell was tolled every half minute. The tower was and still is painted white.



Fig. 2

Tuskar Rock lighthouse



Fig. 3 Bardsey Lighthouse