

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



## *The Ultimate Fate of the Schooner Snaefell*

Report compiled by:

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Report Title:

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

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## **1.0 Abstract**

The Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit (MADU) currently has a database of 453 shipwrecks in the northern end of Cardigan Bay in northwest Wales. These wrecks date from 1590 to 1993 and very few have been investigated in any detail. The project aims to investigate all 453 wrecks and to produce a detailed report on each wreck.

With the restrictions brought about by the Corvid 19 pandemic all the research is carried out exclusively on-line using extensive internet based resources. Over the last five to ten years the variety and depth of internet based resources has become much more extensive making on-line research a viable proposition.

The author is based in the Isle of Man and has over 30 years experience is researching and diving wrecks. He is currently preparing to produce the Maritime Historic Environment Record for the Isle of Man with Manx National Heritage. This brand new online resource will contain details of over 1,750 wrecks in the North Irish Sea around the Isle of Man.

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## 2.3 Contributors

All research for this report was conducted using online resources.

## 2.5 Abbreviations

Abbreviations used in this report:

MADU	Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit
NAS	Nautical Archaeology Society
WGS84	World Geodetic System 1984
RCAHMW	Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales
URL	Uniform Resource Locator

### 3.0 Introduction

When commencing this research I knew nothing about the wreck of the Snaefell apart from the few details contained in the MADU database. My reason for selecting the Snaefell is her connection to the Isle of Man. 'Snaefell' is the name of a mountain in the Isle of Man. The word has Norse origins and means 'Snow Mountain'.

The questions I set out to answer in my research were as follows:

- What were the vessel's specifications?
- What historical information is available relating to the vessel?
- What was the story leading up to wrecking or incident?
- What caused the wrecking or incident?
- If an incident what was the ultimate fate of the vessel?
- What has happened since the wrecking?
- Has anyone previously investigated or researched the vessel back story?
- Has anyone dived, recorded, surveyed or worked on the site?
- Has any salvage, etc. been carried out?
- Have there been any previous reports produced relating to the vessel?

## 4.0 Background

When starting the research the only facts that I knew about the Snaefell were from the MADU database:

- She was a schooner
- She was abandoned on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1902 at Pwllheli, Caernarfonshire
- There is a note on the database that she was wrecked off Denmark according to the book "Portmadoc Ships"

From her name I deduced that she was originally from the Isle of Man as she is named after the Isle of Man's highest peak Snaefell.

## 5.0 Research Methodology

My research was conducted on an iMac 27-inch 2020 with macOS Catalina and using Safari version 13.1.2 as a browser.

Research was restricted to resources available online only. The research methodology steps were as follows:

1. Establish the correct vessel involved in the research to avoid researching the incorrect vessel and avoiding any confusion. Many vessels had the same name even in the same port of registry. Sites useful for this are Lloyd's Register of Shipping (<https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archive-library/lloyds-register-of-ships-online>) and the Mercantile Navy List (<http://www.maritimearchives.co.uk/mercantile-navy-list.html>) and CLIP List Index Project (<http://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/viewimages>) which can search the Mercantile Navy List by the vessel's name or Official Number.
2. After 1855 all vessels over 20 tons had an Official Number unique to that vessel so for vessels wrecked after 1855 it is essential to establish the correct official number at the start of the research. The core tool for this is the CLIP List Index Project (<http://crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsalpha>). Searching by the vessel's name gives candidates and a process of elimination (vessel type, size, date range and port of registry) usually establishes the correct vessel fairly quickly.
3. Before 1855 the primary source of information for identifying ships are the Shipping Registers kept at the Ports of Registry. Started in 1786 with major changes in 1824 and 1855 not all Shipping Registers have survived. Few are available online but the following are online:
  - a. Isle of Man from 1824 (<http://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/sourcesarchive?Organisationid=433>)
  - b. Dumfries, Stranraer, Kirkcudbright and Wigtown from 1824 (<https://info.dumgal.gov.uk/HistoricalIndexes/Home/DisplayQuickSearchResults/8?page=1>)
  - c. Whitehaven, Workington and Maryport from 1786 (summary spreadsheet) ([https://cumbria.gov.uk/archives/online\\_catalogues/genindexes/indexes.asp](https://cumbria.gov.uk/archives/online_catalogues/genindexes/indexes.asp))
  - d. Various ports in Canada from 1824 (many ships were built in Canada) (index: <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/ship-registration-index-1787-1966/Pages/search.aspx>) and Register Images (<https://heritage.canadiana.ca/search/?q0.0=Registrar&q2.0=shipping>)
  - e. Various ports in the northeast USA from 1856 (many ships were built in this region) (<https://research.mysticseaport.org/indexes/ship-registers/>)
4. Other sources of technical data for ships are:
  - a. Clyde built ships. Details of over 35,000 ships built in Scotland (<https://www.clydeships.co.uk/search.php>)
  - b. Norwegian ships. Details of over 27,000 vessels. Norway had the second largest merchant fleet after the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (<https://www.sjohistorie.no/en/>)
5. The sources in steps 1 to 4 above will also provide technical aspects the vessel and changes and repairs through its working life. Lloyd's Survey Report in 1876 (see pdf) and Lloyd's Survey of Repairs 1894 (see pdf).
6. Check 'Coflein' to see if the wreck is already recorded. (<https://www.coflein.gov.uk>)
7. Check the website 'Wreck Site' to see if there is an entry. Good for wrecks which have been surveyed or are dived but patchy especially for sailing ships and earlier wrecks. Data is entered by volunteers and members so isn't always accurate so caution is required. (<https://www.wrecksite.eu>)
8. Investigate the wrecking or incident for the date provided in the MADU database. Primary online resources for this are historic newspaper sites:

- a. British Newspapers Online between 1700 & 2009 – normally a paid subscription (<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>). Specialist maritime publications covering maritime incidents and wrecks include Lloyd's List from 1800 to 1914 and the Shipping & Mercantile Gazette from 1838 to 1888 when it merged with Lloyd's List.
  - b. Welsh Newspapers Online between 1804 & 1919 – free (<https://newspapers.library.wales>)
  - c. Manx Newspapers Online between 1792 & 1960 – free (<https://www.imuseum.im/newspapers/>)
  - d. Irish Newspapers Online between 1750 & 1900 – paid subscription (<https://www.irishnewsarchive.com>)
  - e. British & Irish Newspapers via American Newspapers Online between 1607 & present. In particular, Newspaperarchive has an extensive range of eighteenth century British and Irish newspapers not available on the British Library site. (<https://newspaperarchive.com>)
  - f. Dutch Newspapers Online. In Dutch but good source of information (use Google Translate), not just for Dutch ships but often covered wrecks in the British Isles particularly in the eighteenth century. Free. (<https://www.delpher.nl>)
9. Board of Trade Wreck Reports. Some wrecks were subject to a Board of Trade Inquiry. Not all of these have survived but some are found at the Southampton Library website (<https://www.southampton.gov.uk/arts-heritage/southampton-archives/plimsoll.aspx>). Others are sometimes reproduced or summarised in newspapers. In this case it is important to search for the wreck up to 6 months after the date it occurred as most inquiries were generally held between one month and four months after the incident.
10. RNLI 'Lifeboat' journal archive. Useful if the wreck or incident involved the RNLI. Published from 1852 to the present. Free. (<https://lifeboatmagazinearchive.rnli.org>)

Results for researching the schooner 'Snaefell'. Key search words were 'Snaefell' and 'schooner' within the incident date range (1<sup>st</sup> October 1902 to 1<sup>st</sup> February 1903). A general search using "Schooner Snaefell" from 1876 to 1906 was conducted in the Manx newspapers to see if there were any significant or interesting events during her life. The date for the final wreck of the Snaefell (1<sup>st</sup> November 1906) was obtained from the book 'Closing Down Sail', Martin Benn and an appropriate date range in 1906 was also searched (1<sup>st</sup> October 1906 to 1<sup>st</sup> February 1907). Searches were conducted for several months after the incident/wreck to capture any follow up stories or reports of a Board of Trade Inquiry etc.

Resource Searched	Result
1. Lloyd's Register, Mercantile Navy List, CLIP	1877 to 1887 & 1889. Note. No online access to Registers from 1890 to 1906. Found in CLIP as Official Number 44,724. Found in Mercantile Navy Lists of 1900 & 1904 as Official Number 44,724.
2. Establishing the Official Number using CLIP	See 1.
3. Isle of Man Shipping Registers	Found in the Ramsey Shipping Register 1876 folio 2 ( <a href="http://www.crewlist.org.uk/registers/registersfolio/6689/188">http://www.crewlist.org.uk/registers/registersfolio/6689/188</a> ) However, few details as the actual register has been lost and its contents haven been partially reconstructed from other sources by CLIP. Registry transferred to Caernarfon in 1902.
4. Other sources for ship details	No result.
5. Searching Lloyd's Surveys etc.	No result.
6. RCAHMW Coflein	No result.
7. Wreck Site	Record found with some detail. Acknowledges the fact that the

	Snaefell was not wrecked in 1902 but sometime later but the contributor hasn't researched her final wrecking. ( <a href="https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?294622">https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?294622</a> )
8. British Newspapers	Incident in 1902: Too many references to list – literally the same one line in each newspaper to record the rescue of 8 people by the Pwllheli lifeboat.
Welsh Newspapers	Incident in 1902: a. Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard p8 17.10.1902 – account of incident and rescue of crew by Pwllheli lifeboat.
Manx Newspapers	Final Wrecking in 1906: a. North Wales Express 30.11.1906. – account of loss
(searched using words 'schooner' and 'Snaefell')	Final Wrecking in 1906: a. Ramsey Courier Friday 04.01.1907. - Board of Trade Inquiry Report
9. Board of Trade Wreck Report	Wreck Report for 'Snaefell, 1906' found ( <a href="https://southampton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/FULL/WPAC/BIBENQ/4279561/26935216,1">https://southampton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/FULL/WPAC/BIBENQ/4279561/26935216,1</a> ) .
10. RNLI Lifeboat Journal	No result.

## 6.0 Results

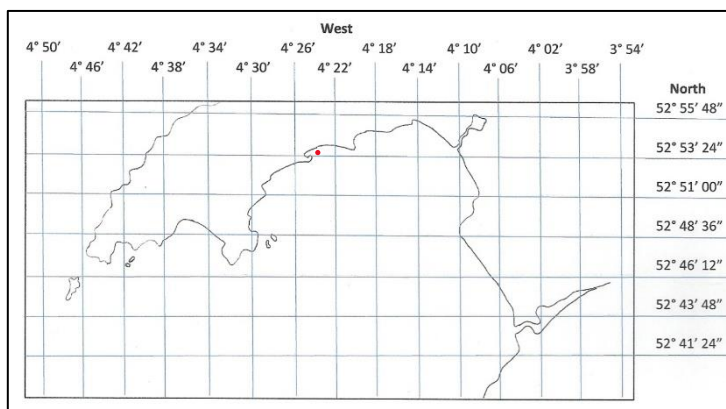
Vessel	Name/s	Snaefell	
	Type	Sailing Vessel	
Built	Date	Launched on Saturday 27 <sup>th</sup> May 1876	
	Builder	William Westacott & Sons	
		Barnstaple, Devon	
Construction	Materials	Wood	
	Decks	One	
	Bulkheads	Unknown	
Propulsion	Type	Sail	
	Details	Schooner Rigged	
Engine	Details	N/A	
	Boilers	N/A	
Drive	Type	Sail only	
Dimensions	Length	83.4 ft	25.4 m
	Beam	21.5 ft	6.6 m
	Draught	9.2 ft	2.8 m
Tonnage	Gross	90.0	
	Net	77.7	
Owner	First	Messrs Goldsmith & Cowley	
		Ramsey, Isle of Man	
	Last	Mrs Lizzie Evans	
		Llanbedrog, Gwynedd	
	Others	Robert Marks, Glangors, Llanbedrog	
Registry	Port	Caernarfon	
	Flag	Wales	
	Number	44724	
History	22 July 1876	The Snaefell arrives at Ramsey from Barnstaple. She was 'minutely inspected by the nautical fraternity, and her qualities freely discussed.' On Tuesday 24 July 1876 a number of friends of the owners were taken to sea on a pleasure excursion, after which she sailed to Runcorn, whence she was chartered to Peterhead and to Hamburg. (Isle of Man Times Saturday 22.07.1876)	
	November 1877	The Snaefell, which left Castletown, Isle of Man for Dublin with a cargo of barley, shipped by Messrs Goldsmith & Cowley, encountered heavy weather on the passage, and some of the cargo having shifted, the vessel put back to Derbyhaven to trim and refit for sea again. (Isle of Man Times Saturday 24.11.1877)	
	24 February 1883	The Snaefell, Captain Thomas Callow, master, bound for Lossiemouth, was in collision with the schooner Emily Millington, of Runcorn, bound for Douglas, in the Mersey. The Snaefell had her bowsprit and bulwarks carried away. The Emily Millington had two stanchions and her mainsail carried away, covering board split, and boat smashed. The owners of the Snaefell successfully sued the owners of the Emily Millington for damages in the Liverpool County Court after contending that if the Emily Millington had not 'ported' no collision would have occurred. (Isle of Man Times Saturday 10.03.1883. & Mona's Herald Wednesday 14.03.1883.)	

	25 November 1888	The Snaefell, Daniel Corlett, master, bound from the Baltic for Ramsey, with a cargo of timber, was driven ashore at Brassey Island in the Orkneys during a terrific gale. One chain burst and the other anchor dragged before she was driven ashore. She didn't sustain much damage and a portion of her cargo of flooring boards is being taken out and Captain Corlett expected to float her on the next spring tides. (Mona's Herald Wednesday 05.12.1888.)
	20 December 1888	Captain Daniel Corlett junior was drowned in going across to his vessel at night in a dinghy, with a boatman. In the morning the boat was found bottom up on Brassey shore. Much sympathy was felt for his parents and his friends in Ramsey. (Mona's Herald Wednesday 26.12.1888.)
	31 January 1889	Body of Captain Daniel Corlett recovered and the Snaefell floated off. Temporary repairs were made and Captain Thomas Callow resumed command to bring her back to Ramsey (Isle of Man Times Saturday 02.02.1889. & Ramsey Courier Friday 07.03.1924.)
	7 May 1889	Messrs Goldsmith and Cowley put the Snaefell up for sale in a public auction with a reserve of £500. Advertised as 'of best materials, under special survey, and classed A1 12 years; splendid model, and sails very fast.' The highest bid was only £450 despite a large attendance. After the auction an offer of £500 was made but rejected by the owners who decided to repair the Snaefell. (Isle of Man Times Saturday 27.04.1889. & Mona's Herald Wednesday 15.05.1889.)
	May 1895	The Snaefell is sold to Robert Marks, Glangors, Llanbedrog in Wales for £620. (Ramsey Courier Friday 10 May 1895. & Mercantile Navy List)
	26 June 1899	The Snaefell arrives in Douglas harbour with a cargo of cement. As she enters the harbour the mate is seen to be chasing a lad around the deck and lashing him with a rope. A crowd gathers and the police are called and take the lad to hospital. Meanwhile it transpires the mate, a Russian Finn, has been bullying the lad for the entire trip. The crowd start pelting the Snaefell with stones forcing the mate to retreat below and smashing all the glass in the skylights. The police later decided that there was no evidence for bullying as the lad had no marks and the mate, captain and crew denied the allegations. (Mona's Herald Wednesday 28.06.1899.)
	1902	Port of Registry changes from Ramsey to Caernarfon (CLIP Crew Lists). Owner still Robert Marks, of Llanbedrog.
	15 October 1902	About 6.00 a.m. on Wednesday 15 October 1902 when a southwesterly gale was raging, the schooner Snaefell, of Llanbedrog, Captain Marks, master, bound from Llanbedrog to Portmadoc, in ballast, was seen off Gimblett Rock dragging her anchors and drifting towards Abererch beach. The Pwllheli lifeboat was launched at 8.00 a.m. with Captain Willoughby, coxswain, in command. The lifeboat was alongside in less than half an hour and brought the Captain's wife

		and four children, and three members of the crew ashore. Captain Marks declined to leave the ship and was left on board. A few hours later the wind abated and veered round to the west, thus reducing to a minimum the danger which the vessel ran. (The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard Friday 17.10.1902.) The Snaefell did not sustain any damage in this incident.
	October 1903	The Snaefell, Captain Evans, master, sails from Newfoundland to Queenstown, Ireland, with just two men after the rest of three crewmen abandoned the vessel in Newfoundland and no replacements could be found even offering premium wages as no one wanted to take the risk. Captain Evans and the German mate decided to take the vessel back home by themselves. The two men went through a very difficult experience with little food, rest or sleep in a stormy Atlantic crossing. They later successfully arrived at King's Dock, Liverpool. (Manx Sun Saturday 24.10.1903.)
Final Voyage	From	Departed Portmadoc on 17.10.1906.
	To	Middlefart, Denmark
	Captain	Robert Owen
	Crew	Master, mate, two able seamen and a boy who acted as ordinary seaman and cook
	Passengers	None
	Cargo	176 tons of slates shipped by Oakeley's Slate Co
Wrecking	Date	31.10.1906.
	Location	4 miles east of Hirtshals Lighthouse, Jutland, Denmark
	Cause	Standing in too close to shore during the night (from the Report of the Court)
	Loss of life	Nil
	Outcome	Total Loss

Fig 1. Location of the maritime incident involving schooner Snaefell on 15.10.1902 at Gimblet Rock off Abererch beach, near Pwllheli, Cardigan Bay

Lat. 52 52.920 N  
 Long. 04 23.410 W  
 Datum: WGS84



## 7.0 Analysis

Not surprisingly the Manx newspapers provided much of the information on the Snaefell's life as a trading schooner over a 30-year period.

I think my research methodology detailed in section 5.0 provides other researchers with a robust framework for the online researching wrecks. An important lesson is to only use information from reliable sources, preferably official sources and treat information posted on the internet with caution. Even then newspapers, as now, vary in journalistic accuracy and there can be conflicting accounts and information given, some of which can subsequently turn out to be wrong. Fortunately, when researching the Snaefell I didn't discover any conflicting information.

With regards to the technical figures for the ship I've used those quoted in the Official Inquiry on the assumption these were valid for when she finished her career in 1906. Tonnages, dimensions etc. vary over the years as different surveys are conducted and calculation methods change and vary.

The Snaefell was a good wreck to research. There is plenty of information available over a 30-year career and she has a distinctive name which makes online searches more productive. From my experience in researching many wrecks online this isn't always the case especially the further back in time the wreck occurred so not every online project will be as fruitful.

## **8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations**

The project has successfully answered my questions posed in section 3.0.

The maritime incident involving the Snaefell on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1902 did not result in her total loss. This happened on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1906 4 miles east of Hirtshals Lighthouse, Jutland, Denmark. No evidence of the existence of a wreck site can be found online but that doesn't mean that one doesn't exist.

As the final wreck site of this vessel lies in Danish waters I do not propose any further research to be conducted nor does Snaefell provide a suitable candidate for the NAS Adopt-a-Wreck scheme due to its geographical location outside the UK.

I spent 18 hours in total on the project of which a total of 7 hours was online research. Report writing took 11 hours or 61%. This highlights the time and care required to present the information uncovered in research in a clear and informative format.

## 9.0 References

Crew List Index Project

(<https://crewlist.org.uk/data/vesselsalpha?shipsearch=snaefell&SearchType=Exact&submit=search>)

Isle of Man Times Saturday 22.07.1876.

Isle of Man Times Saturday 24.11.1877.

Isle of Man Times Saturday 10.03.1883.

Isle of Man Times Saturday 02.02.1889.

Isle of Man Times Saturday 27.04.1889.

Manx Sun Saturday 24.10.1903.

Mona's Herald Wednesday 14.03.1883.

Mona's Herald Wednesday 05.12.1888.

Mona's Herald Wednesday 26.12.1888.

Mona's Herald Wednesday 15.05.1889.

Mona's Herald Wednesday 28.06.1899.

Ramsey Courier Friday 07.03.1924.

Ramsey Shipping Register 1876 folio 2

(<http://www.crewlist.org.uk/registers/registersfolio/6689/188>)

The Cambrian News and Merionethshire Standard Friday 17.10.1902.

Wreck Report for 'Snaefell, 1906' (<https://southampton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/FULL/WPAC/BIBENQ/4279561/26935216,1>)

Wreck Site (<https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?294622>)

## Appendices:

### Appendix A – Board of Trade Court of Inquiry Wreck Report for the Snaefell 31.12.1906.

(No. 7026.)

#### "SNAEFELL."

The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.

IN the matter of a formal investigation held at the County Hall, Carnarvon, on the 28th, 29th, and 31st days of December, 1906, before D. P. WILLIAMS and J. ISSARD DAVIES, assisted by Captains KENNETT HORE and THOMAS, into the circumstances attending the stranding of the British ship "SNAEFELL" at or near to the N.E. of the Hirtshal Light on the coast of Jutland, at about midnight of the 31st of October, 1906.

#### *Report of Court.*

The Court, having carefully inquired into the circumstances attending the above-mentioned shipping casualty, finds, for the reasons stated in the Annex hereto, that the vessel "Snaefell" stranded and was lost on the Jutland coast about four miles eastward of Hirtshal's Light through standing in too close to the shore at night. The Court finds the master, Captain Robert Owen, alone in default for the casualty and suspends his certificate, No. 034443, for the period of three months from this date.

On the application of the master the Court (subject to the approval of the Board of Trade) grants him a mate's certificate during the period of suspension.

Dated this 31st day of December, 1906.

D. P. WILLIAMS, } Justices.  
J. ISSARD DAVIES, }

We concur in the above Report.

KENNETT HORE, } Assessors.  
JENKIN THOMAS, }

#### *Annex to the Report.*

This was an inquiry into the circumstances attending the stranding and loss of the British sailing vessel "Snaefell" about four miles eastward of Hirtshal's lighthouse on the coast of Jutland on the 31st of October, 1906, and was held in the County Hall, Carnarvon, before Mr. D. P. Williams and Mr. J. Issard Davies, two of His Majesty's Justices of the Peace, on the 28th, 29th, and 31st days of December, 1906.

The "Snaefell," official number 44724, was a sailing vessel, schooner rigged, and built of wood at Barnstaple, Devon, by William Westacott & Sons in 1876, and of the following dimensions:—Length 83'4 ft., breadth 21'5 ft., and depth of hold 9'2½ ft., gross tonnage 90'01 tons, and registered 77'65 tons, and was last surveyed in Liverpool on January 6th, 1904. She was owned by Mrs. Lizzie Evans, of Llanbedrog, in the County of Carnarvon, as per Register dated July 15th, 1904; number, sale, and port of registry being 5, 1902, and Carnarvon respectively, and she was classed A1 (black) at Lloyd's for six years.

The "Snaefell" left Portmadoc on the 17th of October last, bound for Middlefart with a cargo of 176 tons 12 cwts. of slates shipped by Oakeley's Slate Co. and consigned to the harbour master at Middlefart. Her draft of water when loaded was

8 ft. 10 ins. forward and 11 ft. 4 ins. aft. She had a crew of five hands all told, which consisted of the master, mate, two A.B.'s, and a boy who acted as ordinary seaman and cook. There were no passengers, and the master, Mr. Robert Owen, held a certificate of competency, numbered 034443, dated August the 8th, 1902.

She had one boat, the usual size for vessels of this description, which was carried on the main deck fitted in chocks and standing upright, and was put overboard when required by tackles from the masthead. There were also four lifebuoys, five lifebelts, and two compasses on board, one of which only was in use as described in the answers to the questions, and the vessel was well found, fitted, and equipped for the trade in which she was engaged. The "Snaefell" proceeded on her voyage all well, until about the 27th of October, when heavy weather seems to have set in from the westward, and on the 28th they were hove-to off the Horns Reef in a heavy gale with the wind veering to the N.W. and carried away the fore-sail standing jib and staysail. By some accident with the gear of the main boom the master was thrown overboard, but got hold of the "peak down haul" and was hauled on board again. On Tuesday, the 30th of October, at about 9 a.m., the fresh-water tank was found to be empty; the water had leaked out, and there was no more on board. It is by no means clear how this happened as there was nothing apparently the matter with the tank, and no hole or damage could be found on examining it.

On Wednesday the 31st the wind had veered round to the E.S.E. and at about 1 a.m. they were about 13 miles from the "Skaw" light, and between the "Skaw" and the "Hirtshals." The wind which was fresh made a heavy sea off the "Skaw," and the vessel was kept tacking backwards and forwards under the lee of the land in smooth water, so that if an opportunity offered they might anchor, and send the boat on shore for water, during the day. The wind, however, instead of falling or hauling to the southward, backed to the eastward, and the vessel was kept standing off and on for the rest of the day under small canvas. At 8 p.m. the wind had backed to E.N.E. and she was tacked to the S.E. standing inshore. She was under reefed mainsail, topsail, and jib, making about four knots an hour through the water. The master was below, and had been there since teatime, the able seaman Roberts was in charge of the deck and at the wheel, and the boy "Roberts" was keeping the look-out. The night was fine, but the wind fresh and Hirtshals light was in full view on the starboard bow. At about 10.50 p.m. the A.B. Roberts gave the wheel to the boy and went below to call the master, telling him that the land was plainly in view ahead of them and the light abeam on the starboard side. Shortly afterwards the master came on deck and took charge. In about 10 minutes he went below to get the lead, and coming on deck again took a cast himself and found 12 fathoms. In a short time he took another cast, which, he said, gave 8 or 9 fathoms, he could not remember which. It was, however, quite clear that with the water shoaling so rapidly the vessel should have been put about immediately and headed off shore to a position of safety, but, on the contrary, the master, still continued heading his vessel inshore to the S.E. although, had he consulted his chart, he must have seen that the shoal water of two fathoms extends a mile or more from the coast, and that his vessel was dangerously close to it. At 11.30 he took another cast of the lead, which gave only six fathoms. Even then he did not seem to realize the danger of his position, for it was not until 11.40 or 11.45 p.m. that he took the wheel and put the helm hard down to go about. It was then too late, the vessel missed stays, probably because she was too close to the ground and under small canvas, and in the endeavour to wear she bumped heavily and finally drove on shore, stranded, and remained fast. Flare-up signals were then made

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for assistance which were at once answered by rockets from Hirtshal's lighthouse. No efforts were made by the master to jettison a portion of his cargo, or to carry out an anchor to keep the vessel from driving further up the beach, because, as he stated, the sea began to break over her directly she stranded.

At about 3 a.m. the lifeboat came off to their assistance and all hands were safely landed on the beach, which was about a mile from where the vessel stranded. Later in the day, the master and crew went back to save their clothes and effects. They found the vessel had in the meantime driven farther in-shore and was within three-quarters of a mile of the beach upon which they had landed that morning, and was half full of water. The wind and sea having increased, it was found that nothing could be done to save the ship or cargo, and after consultation with Lloyd's agent and the agent appointed by the insurance club, it was decided to abandon her as a total loss.

From these facts there is no doubt that the stranding and loss of the "Snaefell" was due to careless navigation on the part of the master; had ordinary care and precaution been observed the casualty would not have occurred because the chart clearly indicates that the line of two fathoms soundings extends seaward a mile or more from the shore and for some distance along the coast both east and west of where the vessel stranded. Moreover, the bearing of Hirtshal's light and the soundings taken before 11.30 p.m. gave ample warning of the danger in keeping the vessel any longer on the port tack, and the Court fails to see (in the explanation given by the master that he was endeavouring to keep the ship in smooth water) any justification for the risk he incurred in approaching the land so closely at night. The vessel was valued at £750, and was insured in the Connal's Quay Club for £500, and her freight was said to be £70.

From the evidence of the master, it appears the vessel was in reality owned by his wife, and the reason his sister-in-law's name appears on the register was because she was the sole executrix of his late father-in-law's will.

At the conclusion of the evidence the solicitor for the Board of Trade submitted the following questions, the master then addressed the Court on his own behalf (as he was not represented by counsel), and the solicitor for the Board of Trade having replied on the case, and expressed his opinion as to the navigation of the vessel generally, the Court proceeded to answer the questions and give judgment accordingly:

#### Questions.

- (1) What number of compasses had the vessel, were they in good order and sufficient for the safe navigation of the vessel, and when and by whom were they last adjusted?
- (2) Did the master ascertain the deviation of his compasses by observation from time to time, were the errors correctly ascertained, and the proper corrections to the courses applied?
- (3) Was the vessel supplied with proper and sufficient charts and sailing directions?
- (4) Were proper measures taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel from time to time after 11 p.m. of the 31st October last, were safe and proper courses steered, and was due and proper allowance made for tide and currents?
- (5) Was a good and proper look-out kept?
- (6) Was the lead used with sufficient care, frequency, and accuracy?
- (7) Where and upon what did the vessel strike? Was the obstruction marked on the chart used by the master? Is it marked on the Admiralty charts?
- (8) What was the cause of the stranding and loss of the vessel?
- (9) Was the vessel navigated with proper and seamanlike care?
- (10) Was the loss of the sailing ship "Snaefell" caused by the wrongful act or default of the master?

#### Answers to the Questions.

(1) The "Snaefell" had two compasses, but only one in use—the usual practice on board this class of vessel when employed in the coasting trade. The compass by which the courses were set and steered and the vessel navigated was fitted in the after end of the cabin skylight. The other was kept below and not used, but served as a standby in case of necessity. The compass on deck was adjusted by Messrs. Sewell, of Liverpool, at that place in February, 1906, and was stated by the master to be in good order and condition, and sufficient for the safe navigation of the vessel.

(2) The master stated that he did test the compass by observations from time to time, to ascertain if any errors existed, but always found it to be practically correct, and therefore there were no errors to apply to the courses steered, or to the bearings taken by the compass. The "Snaefell" being a wooden vessel, there is probably no doubt that the compass was correct as stated.

(3) The vessel was supplied with sufficient charts and sailing directions. The charts were James Imray & Sons', 1904 and 1905, blue backed charts of the North Sea, and No. 81 of the Skagerrack and Admiralty charts of the different coasting ports. The compass card corrections, taken in Liverpool, the log book, sailing directions, ship's papers, and all the charts were unfortunately lost with the vessel, and no effort appears to have been made to save them.

(4) Proper measures were taken to ascertain and verify the position of the vessel from time to time after 11 p.m. of the 31st of October last, the lead being used and a bearing of Hirtshal's light taken. But the verification obtained by these means was apparently disregarded. The vessel was at this time on the port tack, standing in direct for the shore and heading S.E. She was going about 4 knots through the water under reefed mainsail, topsail, and jib—the night fine with a fresh E.N.E. breeze, Hirtshal's light abeam on the starboard side, and roughly estimated to be about 4 miles distant, and the land clearly visible in front of them. The sea, which had been rough outside, was now fairly smooth, as the vessel approached the land, and the master, who came on deck about 11 p.m., went below for the lead some 10 or 15 minutes afterwards and took a cast, which he said gave 12 fathoms. Shortly afterwards he took another cast which gave 8 or 9 fathoms, but no alteration was made in the course or order given to tack, although the water was shoaling rapidly. At 11.30 another cast was taken which gave 6 fathoms, and Hirtshal's light was said to bear W. by S.  $\frac{1}{2}$  S. The master then took the wheel, and at about 11.40 the helm was put hard down to tack to the northward. It was, however, too late, the vessel was close to the ground and missed stays, and in the endeavour to wear her, she stranded and drove on shore. The master could give the Court no further explanation as to why he continued the vessel's course towards the land at night in this manner, except that he wanted to keep her in smooth water. No allowance was made for tide or current, because it was not considered necessary.

(5) A good and proper look-out was kept by the able-seaman, Roberts, and the "boy" who had charge of the deck until 11 p.m. After that time sufficient attention was not paid by the master to the bearing of Hirtshal's light, or how fast the vessel was approaching the shore, which could be plainly seen ahead of them.

(6) The lead was not used with sufficient care or judgment. The two soundings taken by the master before 11.30 p.m. should have warned him that he was rapidly shoaling his water, that it was not prudent to stand in closer to the shore at night, and to tack to the northward at once. The cast of 6 fathoms at 11.30 p.m. left no alternative but putting the vessel about to avoid immediate danger, as the soundings alter from 6 fathoms into 2 fathoms a mile from the shore for some distance along the coast.

(7) The vessel sailed into shoal water and stranded about 4 miles east of Hirtshal's lighthouse on the shoal

ground which extends about a mile off the shore at a depth of 2 fathoms, and is marked on the Admiralty charts, and also on Imray & Sons' charts as used by the master.

(8) The stranding and loss of the vessel was caused by her being kept too long on the port tack, and approaching the shore so closely that when she missed stays there was not room to wear, she grounded, drove up the beach in the attempt to do so, and was wrecked in consequence.

(9) The vessel was not navigated with proper and seamanlike care after 11 p.m. of October 31st.

(10) The loss of the "Snaefell" was caused by the default of the master alone.

D. P. WILLIAMS.  
J. ISARD DAVIES.

We concur.

KENNETT HORE.  
JENKIN THOMAS.

(Issued in London by the Board of Trade on the 22nd day of January, 1907.)

**Appendix B – Research Diary**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Spent (hours)</b>	<b>Activity</b>
05.07.2020	1	Initial Investigation
22.07.2020	1	Initial Investigation
25.08.2020	1	Started looking at the report format
09.09.2020	3	Defined research methodology
10.09.2020	3	Online research
11.09.2020	2	Online research
20.10.2020	3	Writing report
09.11.2020	1	Writing report
26.11.2020	1	Writing report
27.11.2020	2	Writing report
Total	18	