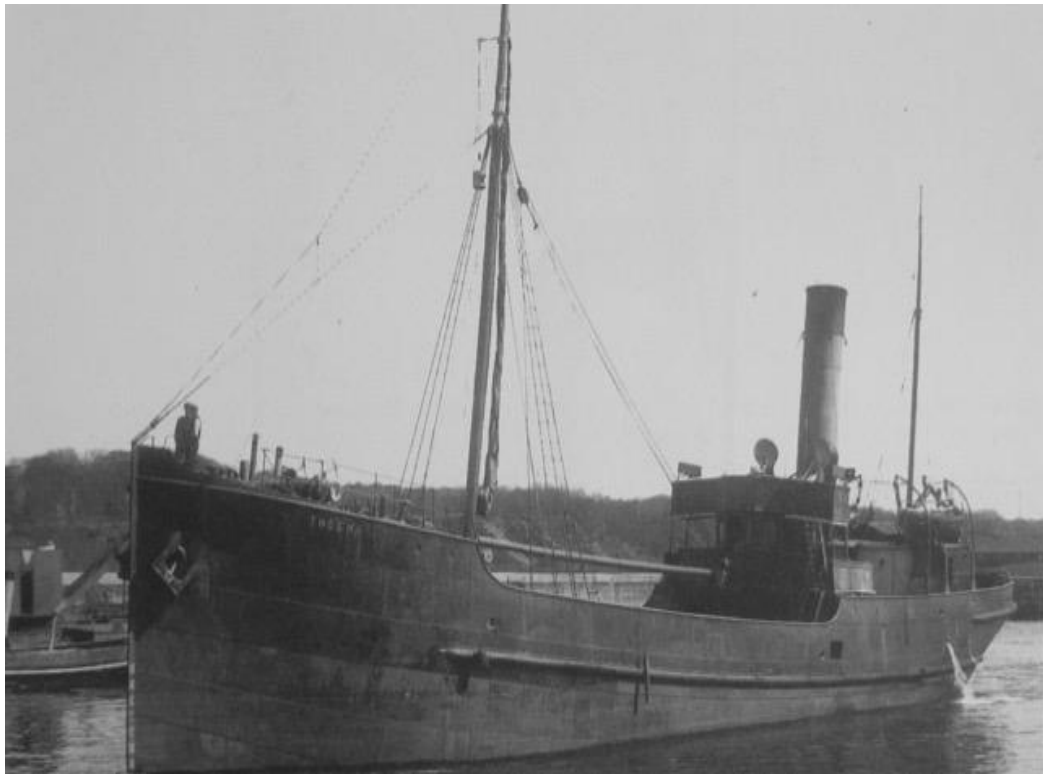


Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay) On-line research into the SS Thelma



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Report Title: **Welsh Wreck Web Research Project
(North Cardigan Bay)
On-line research into the SS Thelma**

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1.0 Abstract

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

This project is to discover information relating to the history of the SS Thelma which collided with the SS Pulteney off Bardsey Island in Aug 1934. The history of the SS Pulteney has been compiled in a separate report Welsh Wreck Web Research Project (North Cardigan Bay) On-line research into the wreck of the: SS Pulteney.

The SS Thelma was a small coastal cargo steamship built in Troon, Scotland and commissioned in 1903. The SS Thelma sailed largely in the Irish Sea carrying coal, cement and stones between NW England, Wales and SW England. In August 1934, in poor visibility the SS Thelma collided with another coastal steamship the SS Pulteney off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire resulting in the SS Pulteney sinking with no loss of life. In Aug 1943, the SS Thelma ran aground at the west end of Doolough Point, Blacksod Bay, Ireland. She was refloated but later sank.

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

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2.4 Contributors

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

2.5 Abbreviations

MADU Malvern Archaeological Diving Unit

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3.0 Introduction

The SS Thelma was picked as:

- it was involved in the sinking of the SS Pulteney, off Bardsey Island in Aug 1934.
- it covered a period of sea history from the early 20th century to WW2.
- the SS Thelma was a small coastal cargo ship that sailed predominately between ports on the Irish Sea.
- I live overseas online information would be my priority research tool and similar to my previous research a ship from this period should be reasonably well documented online.

The following topics form the basis of the research:

- What were the vessel's specifications?
- What historical information is available relating to the vessel?
- What was the story leading up to the wreckage?
- What caused the wreckage?

4.0 Background

Prior to starting research on the SS Thelma, research on the SS Pulteney had shown that her sinking was caused by a collision with the SS Thelma, off Bardsey Island in Aug 1934. The SS Pulteney was part of the MADU Master Wrecksite Database Listing (Table 1) supplied by Mr Ian Cundy.

Table 1: Extract from MADU Master Wrecksite Database

MADU Ref. No.	Date Wrecked	Name	Location 1	Location 2	Details	Vessel Type	Matls
N/A	18/08/1934	Thelma	Caernarfonshire	SW of Bardsey Island	Collision with the SS Pulteney	Steamship	Stl

MADU Ref. No.	Date Wrecked	Name	Location 1	Location 2	Vessel Type	Matls	Ref.
432	18/08/1934	Pulteney	Caernarfonshire	Bardsey Island, offshore	Steamship	Steel	rl

In August 1934, the SS Thelma was sailing to Liverpool when in bad visibility she collided with the SS Pulteney (Fig 1). The SS Pulteney sank within 15mins with no loss of life. The SS Thelma continued to sail until 1943 when she ran aground at the west end of Doolough Point, Blacksod Bay, Ireland. She was refloated but later sank.

Fig 1: Location of collision of SS Thelma and SS Pulteney resulting in the sinking of the SS Pulteney, off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire



5.0 Research Methodology

Computer System

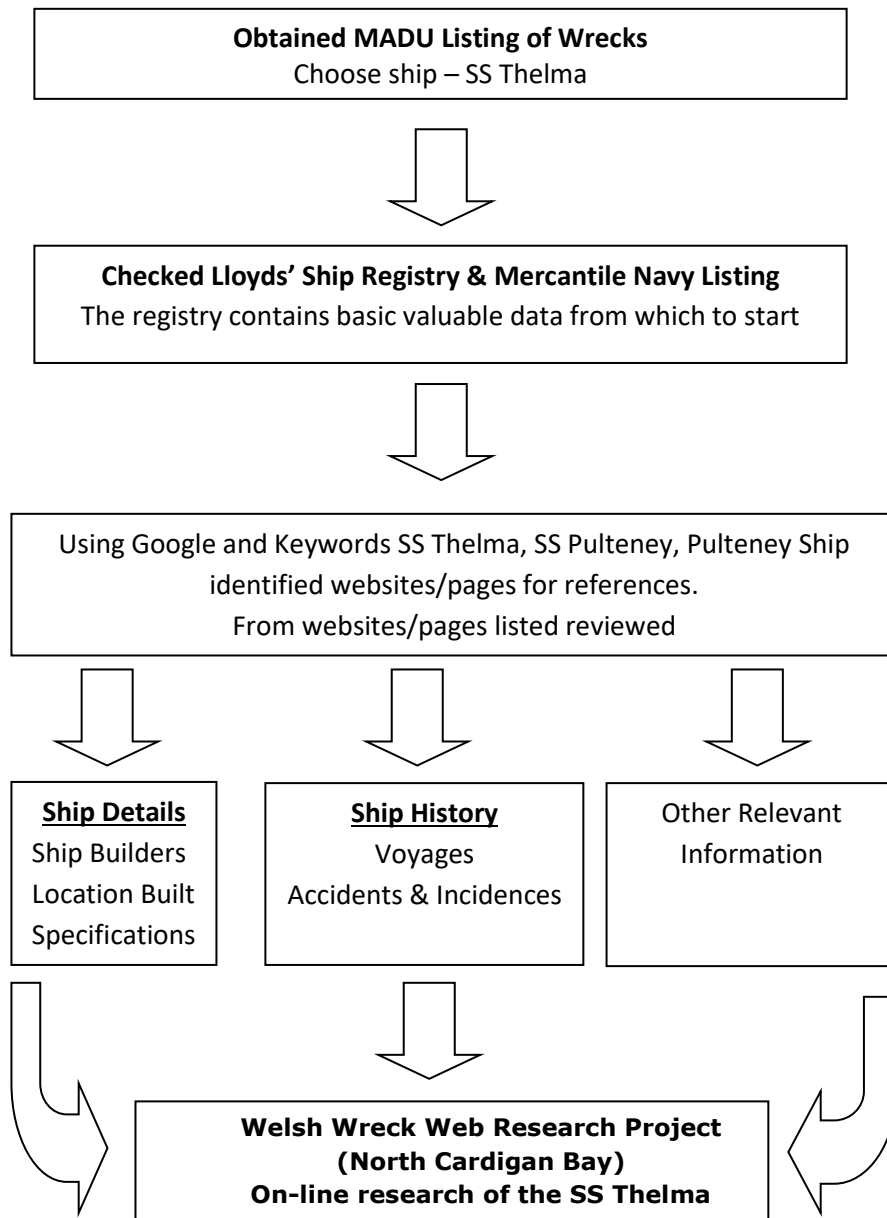
Acer Desktop 64 bit OS; 8 GB Memory, wireless connection.

Windows 10Pro

Microsoft Office 2007

Search engines used: Google Chrome

Methodology



See Section 9 for list of websites viewed

6.0 Results

Table 2: SS Pulteney Specification and History

Vessel	Name/s	Thelma		
	Type	Steamship		
		Coaster General Cargo		
Built	Date	Laid Down: N/A		
		Launched: 9/11/1903		
		Delivered: 14/12/1903		
		Cost: N/A		
	Builder	Ailsa Shipbuilding Company		
		Troon, Scotland Yard# 122		
Construction	Materials	Steel		
	Decks	1xdeck, q'deck 46ft, b'deck 10ft, f'castle 25ft, 2 masts		
	Bulkheads	N/A		
Propulsion	Type	Engine, Steam		
	Details	1 x screw		
Engine	Details	2cyl comp		
		18, 40 x 27in; GS 54, HS 2456		
		HP: 91		
		Manufacturer: Ross & Duncan, Glasgow		
	Boilers	1, 3 plain furnaces		
Drive	Type	Propeller		
	Number	1		
Dimensions	Length	143ft	3 ins	43.7 m
	Beam	25ft	0 ins	7.6 m
	Draught	11ft	6 ins	3.5 m
Tonnage	Gross	370		
	Net	75		
Owner	First	Zillah Shipping & Carrying Co, Ltd., (W.A Savage, Manager)		
		Warrington & Liverpool, England		
	Last	S. William Coe & Co. Ltd., (W.J. Ireland, manager)		
		Liverpool, England		
	Others	N/A		
Registry	Port	Liverpool		
	Flag	GBR		
	Number	118065		
	Code	V.N.L.B		
History	Routes	Ireland, NW England, Wales, SW England		
	Cargo	Coal, stone chipping, cement		
Final Voyage	From	Ayr		
	To	Galway		
	Captain	N/A		
	Crew	N/A		
	Passengers	0		
	Cargo	Ballast		
Wrecking	Date	12/07/1943		
	Location	West end of Doolough Point, Blacksod Bay, Ireland		
	Cause	Ran aground		
	Loss of life	0		
	Outcome	Refloated but sank		

7.0 Analysis

- Built 1903 in Troon, Scotland by Ailsa Shipbuilding Company (Appendix A, C, E).
- Official #: 118065; Call Sign; V.N.L.B.
- On her trial trip she carried 450 tons of pig iron and 25 tons of coal and reached a speed of 11 knots.
- Sailed predominately between NW England, Wales and SW England carrying coal, cement and stone.
- On Mar 1th 1906 the Saltom collided with the SS Thelma while at the quayside in Dublin.
- On Aug 18th 1934, the SS Thelma collided with the SS Pulteney (Appendix D) in dense fog off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire.
- The SS Pulteney encountered thick fog and was proceeding cautiously with every member of the crew on observation duty. About 1 am, the lights of a ship bearing down on them were seen and immediately the order 'hard astern' was given. However, the Liverpool-owned SS Thelma (374 grt) crashed into the SS Pulteney amidships and swept away part of the bridge and destroyed one of the two lifeboats onboard.
- The SS Pulteney heeled over immediately and the captain ordered the crew to the boats. The crew had only rowed a short distance when the SS Pulteney sank. The crew were taken onboard the SS Thelma and arrived in Liverpool where they were provided with clothing, lodgings and food by the Sailors Home, Canning Place (Appendix F, G). The SS Thelma was damaged in the collision but continued to Ellesmere Port to discharge its cargo of china clay.
- After the collision with the SS Pulteney the SS Thelma continued to sail between ports on the Irish Sea.
- On Jul 12th 1943 whilst on a ballast trip from Ayr to Galway, the SS Thelma stranded at the west end of Doolough Point, Blacksod Bay, Ireland.
- In Dec 1943, the SS Thelma was refloated but subsequently sank (Appendix B).

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

The project took approximately 1 working day with half of that time spent on on-line research as much of the information had been acquired while researching the SS Pulteney.

The initial goal of researching the history of the SS Thelma was for cross reference with the SS Pulteney. Reading the report here, I believe I have collated sufficient information on the history of the SS Thelma from when it was built to her wrecking at Blacksod Bay, Ireland.

The SS Thelma was not well documented and newspaper archives were very helpful in giving an overall picture of the operation of the ship and filling in information gaps.

The SS Thelma appears to have been a very active ship sailing between ports on the Irish Sea but also to London.

An information package for the wreck of the SS Thelma is available for purchase at <https://www.wrecksite.eu>

Many different WebPages were viewed ranging from large organisations e.g. Lloyd's Registry Listings to smaller WebPages such as local history or people with a given interest in a subject. The quantity and quality of the WebPages appeared depended on the targeted audiences and the amount of work undertaken.

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

A few WebPages viewed led to pay to view pages. However in most cases the information was obtained from other sources.

From the research conducted, setting a goal and how to reach that goal should be mapped out first. Careful use of specific words in search engines is very important.

9.0 References

9.1 Online WebPages

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

<https://archive.org/details/HECROS1905ST/page/n859/mode/2up>

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

Keyword: Thelma Ship, Thelma Steamship; Years 1903-1943

http://www.clydeships.co.uk/view.php?official_number=&imo=&builder=&builder_eng=&year_built=&launch_after=&launch_before=&role=&propulsion=&category=&owner=&port=&flag=&disposal=&lost=&ref=224&vessel=THELMA

https://coflein.gov.uk/en/site/search/result?FREETEXT=Pulteney&SEARCH_MODE=SIMPLE_SEARCH

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

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

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

<https://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?59743>

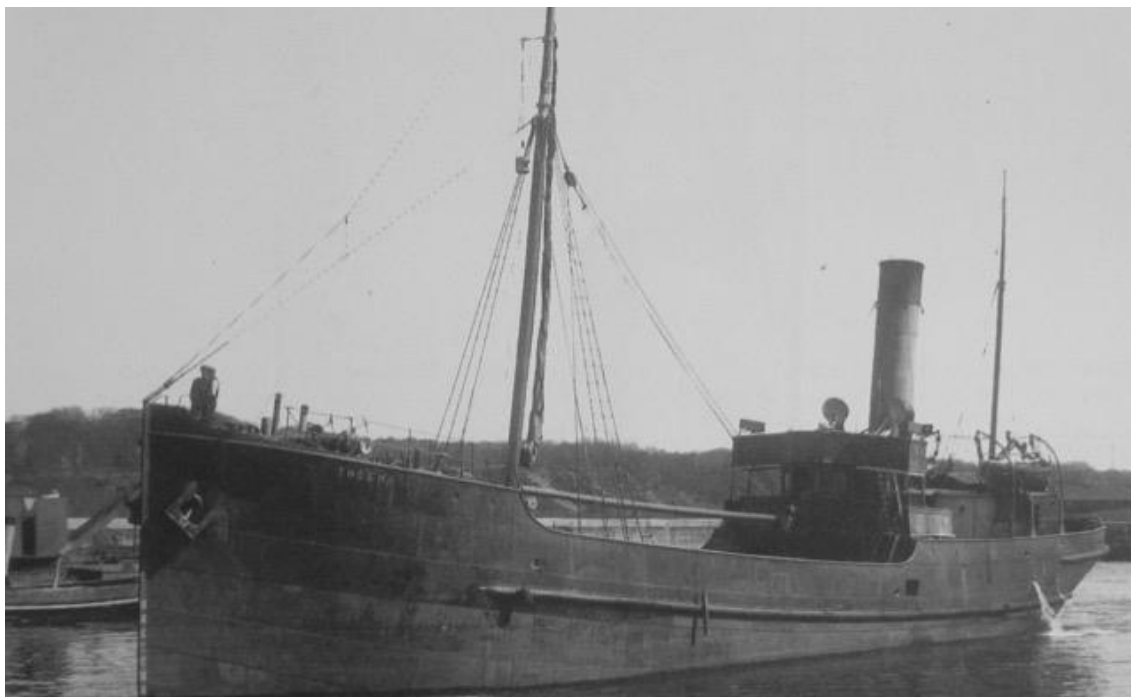
9.2 Personal Correspondences

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

Appendix A: Lloyd's Registry 1905, SS Thelma

THE		LLOYD'S REGISTER.				NAVIRES A VAPEUR.				1904-05						
Numero d'Ordre.	Nom du Navire, Matériau, Grément, etc.	Détails de la Classification.			Construit.		Armateurs.		Dimensions d'après la Douane, Superstructures, &c.		Port d'Armement.	Machines.	Cross sur Quille.	16	17	
Numero Officiel.	Capitaine. Ex-nom, s'il y a lieu.	Total.	Cote.	Poste de Visite.	Quand.	Par qui.			Longueur.	Largeur.	Cross.	Pavil.	No. & Dia. des Cylindres.—Course, Pression des Chaudières.	Force en chevaux d'après les formules de la Douane.	Force en chevaux d'après les formules de la Douane.	Force en chevaux d'après les formules de la Douane.
Signaux.	Visites Périodiques, Nombres des Ports.	Sous le Pavil.	Surveillance spéciale.	Terme assigné au maintien d'un pavil.	Navire.	Où.							Détails des Chaudières & Foyers. Nom du Constructeur des machines.			
377	Theano	SteelScSr	1534	+		1890	P.Smit, Jr.	Algoma Central & Hudson Bay Ry Co. (F.H. Clergue, Mgr.)	241'8"	36'0"	17'1"	Newcastle	T.8Cy.18", 29" & 48"-33" (s)	19	5	
110350	G.W. Pearson	00-02 ss Ama. No.2-98	1246			11mo	Slikkerveer		40'0"			British	1600b 50b 146NH			
RVQH	Well deck	1Dk (1ra) 2tr B	952									British	2SB, 4cf, 0s76, 2s386			
												Pavil.	P.Smit, Jr., Slikkerveer			
378	Theben	W. Riebert	4614	+	100A1	1897	Flensburg	Deutsche Dampfschiffahrt. Ges. Kosmos	368'0"	45'9"	27'0"	Hamburg	Q.4Cy.22", 32", 47", 60"-45"	29	9	
RKNS	2Dks (StU-teak a) & Web frames lower dsk forehold	2063				1mo	Schiffbau Ges.		P&B228'F44"			German	218b 1000b (s) 407NH			
	Elect light						Flensburg					German	3SB, Def, 0s138, 8s625			
379	Thebes	IronScSr	2208	+		1865	C.&W.	Moss S. S. Co. Ltd.	321'5"	34'8"	25'5"	Hamburg	C.2Cy.34", 62"-42"	27	1	
05	6th Survey, Liv. 9.92	2081					Earle					British	NE74NH 202 208NH			
	2nd Survey, Liv. 7.01	1408					Hull	J.Goutte	50'92"			British	2SB, 6cf, 0s55, 8s375			
	2Dks											British	J.Jack, Rollco & Co., Liv.			
380	Thekla Bohlen	SteelScSr	2239			1894	Blohm & Voss	Weermann Linie KommanditGes.	290'7"	38'1"	23'7"	Hamburg	T.8Cy.19", 30" & 50"-39"			
RKIJ	A. Deppen 99-02	2046					Hamburg		B80" F35"			German	157NH			
	2Dks 3tr B	1416										German	Blohm & Voss, Hamburg			
381	Thelma	SteelScSr	1002	+	100A1	1903	A.Vnijs	Glen & Co.	215'7"	32'1"	15'4"	Glasgow	T.8Cy.17", 28", 46"-30" (s)	16	3	
119073	W. Taylor -03	787				1mo	Capella & d Xsel		Q74'6"	12'21"		British	1800b 1000b 138NH	1	5	
VLMT	Well deck	618										British	1SB, 3pf, 0s52, 8s2152			
	1Dk (StU) & deep framing											British	G.T. Grey, South Shields			
382		SteelScSr	400	+	100A1	1903	Ailsa S.B.	Zillah Shipping & Carrying Co. Ltd. (W.A. Savage, Mgr.)	143'3"	25'0"	11'6"	Liverpool	C.2Cy.18" & 40"-27" (s)	12	8	
118905	R. Wakefield 98-03	291				12mo	Co. Ltd.		610'4"	6'4"	25'0"	British	1300b 918H			
VNLB	1Dk (StU-pt teak s)	75										British	1SB, 3pf, 0s54, 8s1641			
												British	Russell, Duncan, Glasgow			

Appendix C: Photo of SS Thelma



Appendix D: SS Pulteney, sank after collision with SS Thelma



Appendix E: Ailsa Shipbuilding Co. Ltd

AILSA

SHIPBUILDING CO., LTD.

SHIPBUILDERS & ENGINEERS

SHIP, ENGINE and BOILER REPAIRERS

TROON, Ayrshire.




Photo by Naval Armament Vessel "BEDENHAM" 18' 1/2" and 20' 1/2" 18' 1/2" and 20' 1/2"

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 and Cargo vessels up to 350 feet in length.

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 No. 2 Dock
 100 ft. x 100 ft.

Telegraphic
 Address: "AILSA"
 TROON.



Both SS Thelma and SS Pulteney were built at Aisla Shipbuilders, Troon

Appendix F: Ballymoney Free Press, Aug 30, 1934**STEAMERS COLLIDE DURING FOG****ONE SINKS IN SEVENTEEN
MINUTES.****CAPTAIN A COLERAINE MAN.**

The s.s. Pulteney, which had plied regularly between Coleraine and Liverpool, being owned by Messrs. S. W. Coe, Ltd., was sunk in collision during a dense fog on Saturday last at Cardigan Bay, Wales.

The Pulteney was on her way to London at the time with a cargo of stones. Another coasting steamer, the s.s. Thelma, was involved in the collision. The Pulteney sank in seventeen minutes, and shortly before then the crew of seven had taken to a lifeboat and were picked up by the Thelma.

The captain of the Pulteney was Mr. Clarence Doherty, Institution Road, Coleraine, who is a nephew of Mr. J. Doherty, a well-known Coleraine pilot.

Appendix G: Ballymena Observer, Sept 21, 1934**LUCKY GLENARIFF SAILOR.**

Mr. James M'Veigh, who had a narrow escape from death recently, has arrived at his home in Glenariff.

Mr. M'Veigh was at the wheel of the Pulteney, a Liverpool-owned ship, when in a dense fog off Bardsey Island she was run into by the Thelma, also of Liverpool, and sank in less than fifteen minutes. One of the two lifeboats was stoved in by the impact, but luckily Mr. M'Veigh and the other members of the crew were able to launch the remaining one and keep afloat till rescued. Another member of the crew was Mr. Charles Magee, of Glenarm, who also escaped.