

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



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

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SS Pulteney**

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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 and sinking of the SS Pulteney off Bardsey Island in Aug 1934 after colliding with another coastal steamship. (MADU Ref. 432).

The SS Pulteney was a small coastal cargo steamship built in Troon, Scotland as the SS Barrow Castle and commissioned in 1899. The SS Pulteney sailed largely in the Irish Sea carrying coal between NW England, Wales and SW England. In August 1934, in poor visibility the SS Pulteney collided with another coastal steamship the SS Thelma off Bardsey Island, Caernarfonshire and sank within 15 mins with no loss of life.

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

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 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 Pulteney was picked as:

- it covered a period of sea history from the early 20th century to pre WW2.
- the SS Pulteney 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?
- What happened after the wrecking? Has anyone previously investigated or researched the vessel back story?
- Has any salvage, etc. been carried out?
- Have there been any previous reports produced relating to the vessel?

4.0 Background

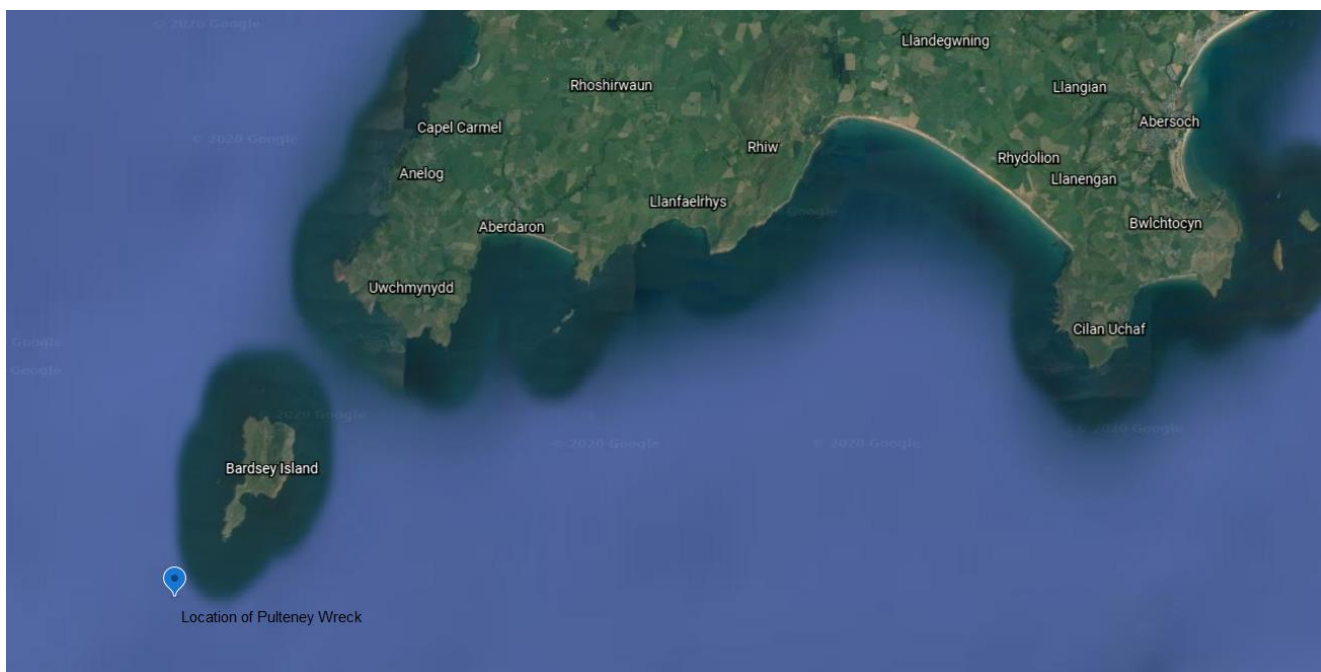
Prior to starting this research the only known data available to me was from the MADU Master Wrecksite Database Listing (Table 1) supplied by Mr Ian Cundy.

Table 1: Extract from MADU Master Wrecksite Database

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

In August 1934, the SS Pulteney was sailing to London from Penmaenmawr with a cargo of stones when in bad visibility she collided with the SS Thelma. The SS Pulteney sank within 15mins with no loss of life (Fig 1).

Fig 1: Location SS Pulteney Wreck, off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire



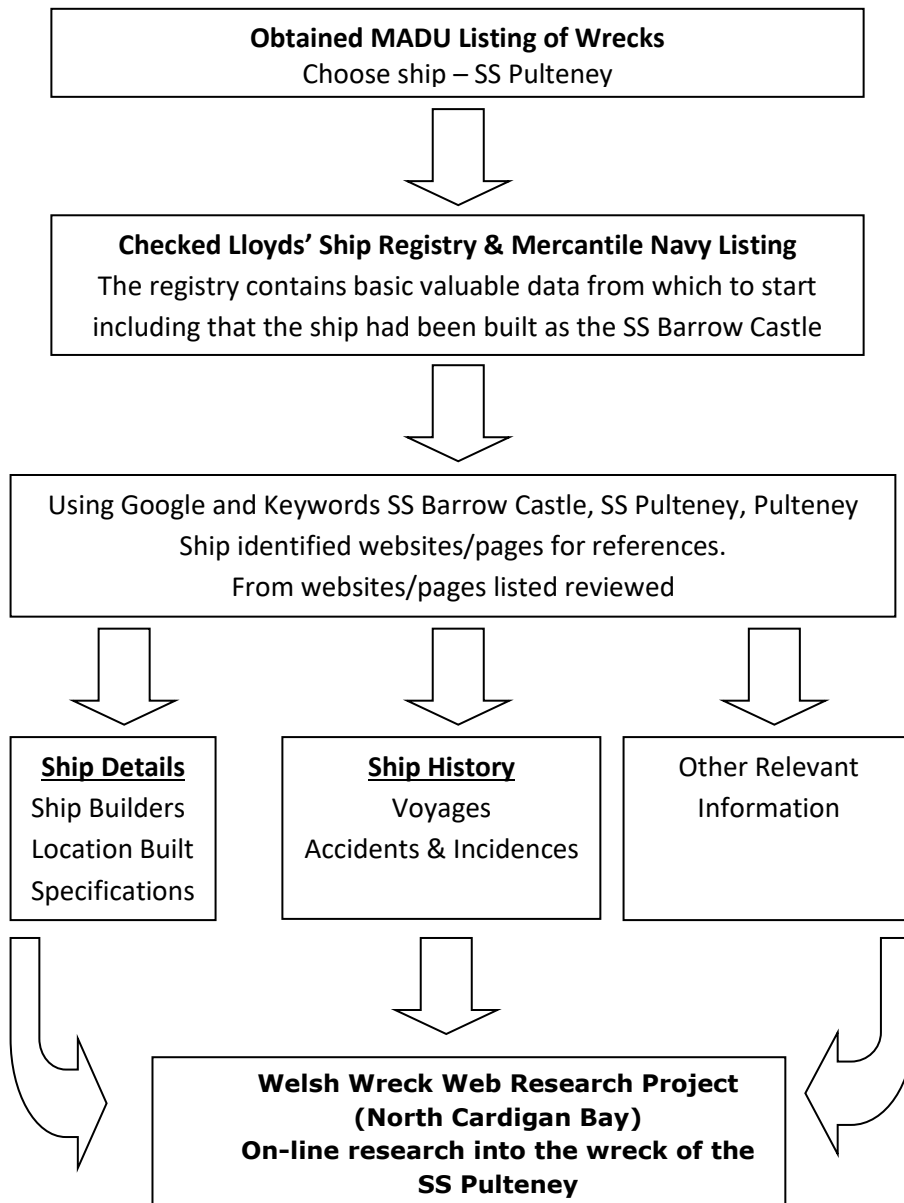
5.0 Research Methodology

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	Barrow Castle. Changed name to Pulteney in 1906		
	Type	Steamship		
		Coaster General Cargo		
Built	Date	Laid Down: N/A		
		Launched: 13/05/1899		
		Delivered: 06/1899		
		Cost: N/A		
	Builder	Ailsa Shipbuilding Company		
		Troon, Scotland Yard# 81		
Construction	Materials	Steel		
	Decks	Machinery by Dunsmuir & Jackson, Glasgow, / 1xdeck, q'deck 83ft, b'deck 9ft, f'castle 22ft, 3 masts, machinery aft		
	Bulkheads	N/A		
Propulsion	Type	Engine, Steam		
	Details	1 x screw		
Engine	Details	2cyl comp		
		18, 38 x 27in; GS 50; HS1400		
		HP: 78		
		Manufacturer: Dunsmuir & Jackson, Glasgow		
	Boilers	1, 3 plain furnaces		
Drive	Type	Propeller		
	Number	1		
Dimensions	Length	145ft	1 ins	m
	Beam	23ft	5 ins	m
	Draught	9ft	9 ins	m
Tonnage	Gross	326		
	Net	129		
Owner	First	McCowen R. & Sons, Tralee, Ireland, 1899-1905		
	Second	James G. Duncan & George Jamieson, Wick 23/10/1905		
	Third	Williams, Williams & Co, Scorrier, Cornwall 1906-1916		
	Fourth	Harvey John & Co., Hayle, 1916-1933		
	Last	Ireland W.J, 1933-1934 (remained registered at Falmouth)		
Registry	Port	Falmouth		
	Flag	GBR		
	Code	M.C.C.T.		
	Number	104693		
History	Routes	Ireland, NW England, Wales, SW England		
	Cargo	Coal, stone chipping		
Final Voyage	From	Penmaenmawr,		
	To	London		
	Captain	Clarence Doherty		
	Crew	7		
	Passengers	1		
	Cargo	Stone		
Wrecking	Date	18/08/1934		
	Location	52.44N; 04.49W, off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire		
	Cause	Collision in bad visibility		
	Loss of life	0		
	Outcome	Wrecked and sank		

7.0 Analysis

- The Barrow Castle was built in 1899 in Troon, Scotland by Ailsa Shipbuilding Company for McCowen R. & Sons, Tralee, Ireland (Appendix A, B, F).
- Official #: 104693; Call Sign; M.C.C.T.
- Was renamed Pulteney in 1906 after a change in owners (Appendix C).
- Sailed predominately between NW England, Wales and SW England carrying coal.
- At time of loss on 18 August 1934, the SS Pulteney was owned by S W Coe of Liverpool but registered at Falmouth and was on passage from Penmaenmawr to London with a cargo of stone.
- 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 374grt SS Thelma (Appendix E) 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 (Appendix D). 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 G, H). The SS Thelma was damaged in the collision but continued to Ellesmere Port to discharge its cargo of china clay.

8.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

The project took approximately 2 working days with half of that time spent on on-line research.

I set out with the goal of researching the history of the SS Pulteney with basic information provided. Reading the report here, I believe I have collated sufficient information on the history of the SS Pulteney from when it was built to her wrecking off Bardsey Island, Caernarvonshire.

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.

The SS Pulteney 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. In two searches the accident was reported in newspapers 2-4 weeks after the event.

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.

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

An information package for the SS Pulteney is available for purchase from the following webpage <https://www.wrecksite.eu/fullReport.aspx?wk=59743>

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/HECROS1900ST/page/n117/mode/2up>

<https://archive.org/details/HECROS1907ST/page/n753/mode/2up>

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

Keyword: Pulteney Ship, SS Pulteney; Years 1899-1934

http://www.clydeships.co.uk/list.php?vessel=Barrow+Castle&official_number=&imo=&builder=5&builder_eng=&year_built=&launch_after=&launch_before=&role=&propulsion=&category=&owner=&port=&flag=&disposal=&lost=

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

<https://www.crewlist.org.uk/data/viewimages?year=1899&name=Barrow+Castle&steamsail=Steam&year=1900+&submit=enter>

<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://nmmc.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/090323_Cornish_Steam-1.pdf

<https://www.shippingtandy.com/features/s-william-coe-co-ltd/>

<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.

9.3 Publications

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

Appendices:

Appendix A: Mercantile Navy List 1900, SS Barrow Castle

Official No.	Name of Ship.	International Code Signal (if any).	Port and Year of Registry.	Where Built.	When Built.	Whether Iron, Steel, Wood, or Composite.	Dimensions.			Registered Tonnage.		Horse Power of Engines and description of Propeller.	Owner, or Part Owner, and Manager (if recorded). X Signifies <i>Managing Owner</i> . Italics signify <i>Manager</i> .
							Length.	Breadth.	Depth of Hold.	Net Tonnage.	Gross Tonnage.		
104693 86356	Barrow Castle *Barry	R.G.W.S H.M.V.L	Tralee, 1899. Cardiff, 1894	Tron Sunderland	1899 1883	Steel Iron	145 2 296 0	23 6 37 9	10 0 27 6	78 1411	358 2221	79 Sc. 290 Sc.	pool. <i>William Johnston, same address.</i> X William Henry McCowen, Tralee, co. Kerry. The Barry Steamship Co., Lim., 2, Stuart St., Cardiff.

Appendix B: Lloyd's Registry 1900, SS Barrow Castle

BAR LLOYD'S REGISTER. NAVIRES A VAPEUR. (1899-1900)																
Numero d'Ordre.	Nom du Navire. Matricule, Gréement, etc.	Tonnage Officiel.	Details de la Classification.				Construit.		Armateurs.	Dimensions d'après la Donnée. Superstructures, &c.			Port d'Armement.	Machines. N° & Dia. des Cylindres.—Course. Pression des Chaudières. NIP—Force en chevaux d'après les fabrications de la Société. RIP—Force en chevaux d'après les papiers du navire. Détails des Chaudières & Foyers. Nom du Constructeur des machines.	Cotes sur Quille.	Poids en milles de navire.
			Total.	Cote.	Port de Visite.	Surveillance Spéciale.	Quand.	Par qui.		Longueur.	Largeur.	Chaux.				
166	Barrow Castle	358	+	100A1	Trn	/	1899	Ailsa S.B. Co.	R. McCowen & Sons	145 2	23 6	10 0	Tralee	C.2 Cy. 18" x 38" - 27"	(s) 11	0
104693	P. Fitzgerald 09-99 1Dk(Irn) 3MstSr Mchy Aft Well deck	333 78	4,00	BS4/06	LMCS04	6mo	Troon A&CP	Williams, Williams & Co.	145 2	23 6	10 0	Falmouth	C.2 Cy. 16 1/2" x 38" - 27"	(s) 11	0	

Appendix C: Lloyd's Registry 1907, SS Pulteney

BAR LLOYD'S REGISTER. NAVIRES A VAPEUR. (1899-1900)																
Numero d'Ordre.	Nom du Navire. Matricule, Gréement, etc.	Tonnage Officiel.	Details de la Classification.				Construit.		Armateurs.	Dimensions d'après la Donnée. Superstructures, &c.			Port d'Armement.	Machines. N° & Dia. des Cylindres.—Course. Pression des Chaudières. NIP—Force en chevaux d'après les fabrications de la Société. RIP—Force en chevaux d'après les papiers du navire. Détails des Chaudières & Foyers. Nom du Constructeur des machines.	Cotes sur Quille.	Poids en milles de navire.
			Total.	Cote.	Port de Visite.	Surveillance Spéciale.	Quand.	Par qui.		Longueur.	Largeur.	Chaux.				
165	Pulteney	358	+	100A1	Trn	/	1899	Ailsa S.B. Co.	Williams, Williams & Co.	145 2	23 6	10 0	Falmouth	C.2 Cy. 16 1/2" x 38" - 27"	(s) 11	0
104693	W.H. Philips 02-06 1Dk(Irn) 3MstSr Mchy Aft Well deck	333 78	4,00	BS4/06	LMCS04	6mo	Troon A&CP	Williams, Williams & Co.	145 2	23 6	10 0	Falmouth	C.2 Cy. 16 1/2" x 38" - 27"	(s) 11	0	

Appendix D: Lloyd's Register Returns of Ship Totally Lost, Condemned, etc (for quarter ended 30th Sept 1934)

LLOYD'S REGISTER OF SHIPPING.

RETURNS OF SHIPS TOTALLY LOST, CONDEMNED, &c.

1ST JULY TO 30TH SEPTEMBER, 1934.

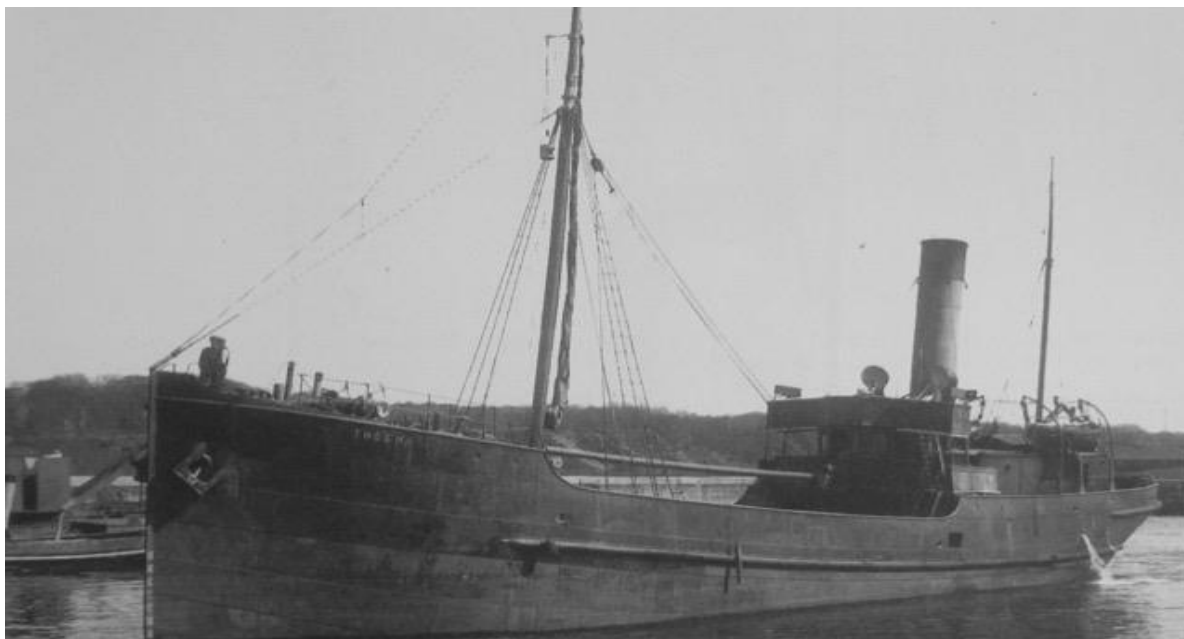
List of total losses of Merchant Ships of 100 tons and upwards between the above dates, of which information was received up to the 31st January, 1935.

(f.) Collision.

No. in Reg. Book. 1934-35.	Ship's Name, and Year of Build.	Tons (Gross)	Country	Description.	Voyage.	Cargo.	Circumstances and place.	Date.
83486	Pulteney '99	326	U.K.	Stl.Sc.	Penmaenmawr— London.	Stone ...	Off Bardsey Island	18th Aug.

TOTALS:—STEEL, 1—326 tons. IRON, Nil. WOOD AND COMPOSITE, Nil. TOTAL, 1—326 tons.

Appendix E: Photo of SS Thelma



Appendix F: Ailsa Shipbuilding Co. Ltd

AILSA

SHIPBUILDING CO., LTD.
SHIPBUILDERS & ENGINEERS
SHIP, ENGINE and BOILER REPAIRERS
TROON, Ayrshire.




Photo 642 Naval Armament Vessel "BEDENHAM." 1874/81 and 2 years thereafter

Builders of—
 All classes of Steam and Motor Passenger
 and Cargo vessels up to 350 feet in length.


Makers of—
 Reciprocating and Combination Machinery
 Triple and Quadruple Expansion Engines of
MODERN ECONOMICAL DESIGN
 Also Paddle Engines (Steam or Diesel)

PROMPT REPAIRS TO HULLS AND MACHINERY A SPECIALITY

Telephone:
 25, 26 and 28
 1920-1921
 1922-1923
 1924-1925
 1926-1927

GRAVING DOCKS
No. 1 Dock No. 2 Dock
 1928-1929 1930-1931

Telegraphic
 Address:
 "Ailsa"
 Troon.



Appendix G: Liverpool Echo, Aug 20 1934

Appendix H: 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 I: 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.