



ULSTER
ARCHÆOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

Survey Report

Reference: Survey Report No. 79

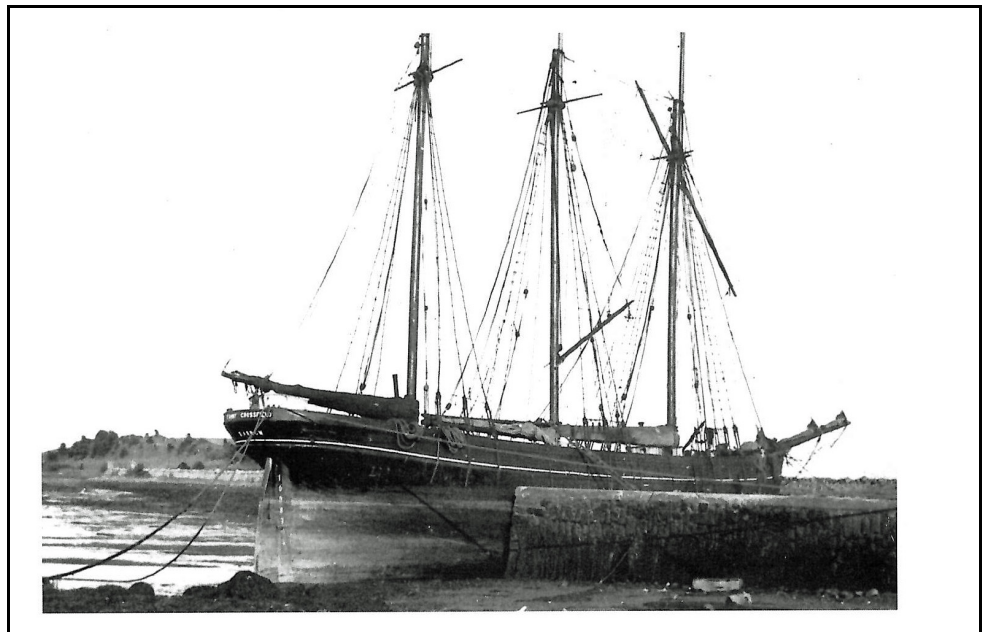
Author: Leo van Es

Location:

Survey of shipwreck
Fanny Crossfield
Ringneill Quay
County Down

In association with:

 **National Trust**



© Ulster Archaeological Society 2019

Ulster Archaeological Society
C/o Archaeology and Palaeoecology
School of Natural and Built Environment
The Queen's University of Belfast
Belfast BT7 1NN

Cover illustration: The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* at Ringneill Quay c. 1938 (MRD 168:101) McErlean et al 2002.

CONTENTS	Page
List of Figures	4
List of Plates	4
1. Summary	7
1.1 Location of site	7
1.2 Aims of the survey	7
2. Introduction	8
2.1 Background	8
2.2 Previous archaeological surveys in the environs of the wreck	8
2.3 Cartographic Evidence	8
3. The history of the schooner <i>Fanny Crossfield</i>	10
4. The 2019 UAS Survey of the wreck of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i>	19
4.1 Aims of the survey	19
4.2 Methodology	19
4.3 Production of plan drawings	19
4.4 Photographic Record	22
5. Conclusions and Further Work	45
6. Archiving	47
7. Credits and Acknowledgements	47
8. References	47
9. Appendix 1: Paul Rodgers of Carrickfergus	48

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Site location map.	7
2. First Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1834.	8
3. Second Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1859.	9
4. Third Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1904.	10
5. From Lloyd's <i>List</i> of Tuesday 20th May 1890.	11
6. Weekly Telegraph date? 1936.	12
7. Dundee Courier and Advertiser, 7th January 1936.	13
8. The Scotsman 14th January 1924.	14
9. Crew Details held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London.	16
10. 'The <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> of Barrow', by Reuben Chappell	18
11. ' <i>Le Fanny Crossfield à Paimpol</i> ' (1928), by Paul Signac.	18
12. Plan of the visible remains of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	20
13. Plan of Ringneill Quay and the wreck of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	22
14. Sketch of wreckage	46

LIST OF PLATES

Plate	Page
1. The <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> under sail.	11
2. A juxtaposition of the products of the Belfast and Carrickfergus Shipyards. The schooner <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> and the cruiser <i>Georgic</i> . From the collection of the late Dr. Rupert Cameron.	17
3. The <i>Mary Miller</i> HOYFML234.6	19
4. The keel of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> . From the west.	22
5. Rib from <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> with treenails. From the south.	23
6. Rib with treenails. From the north.	23
7. Rib with treenails. From the south.	24
8. Timber. From the north.	24
9. UAS members with stempost from the wreck of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	25

Plate	Page
10. The stempost. From the east.	25
11. Detail of the stempost. From the east.	26
12. The stempost. From the west.	26
13. Timbers from the wreck site.	27
14. Iron object (valve?).	27
15. Iron object.	28
16. Debris from the wreck site.	28
17. Debris from the wreck site.	29
18. UAS members with a section of the hull of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> . From the west.	29
19. Section of the hull. From the east.	30
20. UAS members carrying out the survey of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	30
21. Iron bow bracket. From the north-east.	31
22. Iron bow bracket. From the south.	31
23. Detail of iron bow bracket.	32
24. Iron bow bracket.	32
25. Wood and metal from the wreck site beside the Ringneill Quay wall. From the north.	33
26. One side of a wooden rib.	33
27. The other side of the wooden rib.	34
28. Detail of the western end of the keel? From the south.	34
29. Section of the keel.	35
30. Section of the keel, moving south.	35
31. Section of the keel, moving south.	36
32. Section of the keel with metal component.	36
33. Detail of the keel, moving south.	37
34. Detail of the keel, moving south.	37
35. Section of the keel, moving south.	38
36. Submerged wreck debris.	38
37. Timber perpendicular to the keel. From the east.	39

Plate	Page
38. Timber at 45° to the keel. From the north.	39
39. Timber at 45° to the keel. From the east.	40
40. Three iron objects found loose on the wreck site.	40
41. Ringneill Quay. East face of the quay wall. From the north-east.	41
42. Ringneill Quay. North face, eastern end.	41
43. Iron and timber frame beside the hull of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	42
44. Possible section of the hull of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	42
45. Debris from the wreck of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	43
46. Section of the hull of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	43
47. Wreck debris from <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	44
48. Timbers from the wreck of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	44
49. The keel of <i>Fanny Crossfield</i> .	45
50. Carrickfergus Shipyard Workforce.	50
51. Lines Plan for schooner <i>Result</i>	51

1. Summary

1.1 Location of site

A site survey of the visible remains of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*, located immediately to the west of Ringneill Quay, County Down was undertaken on Saturday 27 July 2019 (Fig 1). This report, detailing the results of that survey, is intended to accompany Ulster Archaeological Society (UAS) Survey Report No. 78 of the quay itself (Welsh 2019). Ringneill Quay is located in Ringneill townland, Parish of Tullynakill and Barony of Castlereagh Lower at Irish Grid reference J 5230 6538. There is archaeological evidence for human activity in Ringneill townland from prehistoric times onwards (Welsh and Welsh 2018). This survey was the seventh in a series of planned surveys undertaken by members of the Ulster Archaeological Society during 2019.

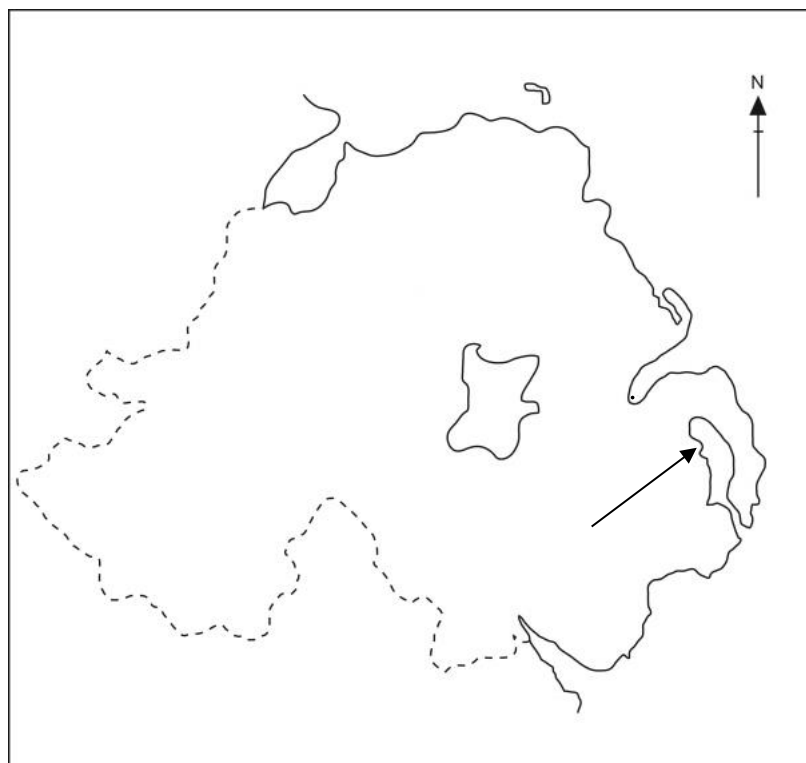


Fig 1: Site location map.

The remains of the ship are recorded in the Northern Ireland Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) as MRD 168:101 at Irish Grid reference J 5229 6540. The stone quay is recorded as MRD 168:114 at Irish Grid reference J 5230 6538.

1.2 Aims of the survey

In order to enhance the archaeological record of this wreck site, the aims of this survey were to produce a record of the extant remains of the monument, including a photographic survey. This information was compiled into a report and copies were submitted to the National Trust and to the archives of the Ulster Archaeology Society.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

The remains of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* are located immediately to the west of Ringneill Quay, known locally as *Dorn Quay*, or *Dornan's Quay*. The survey of the ship was carried out by the Field Survey Group of the Ulster Archaeological Society, in response to a decision by the Committee of the Society to give members the opportunity to participate in practical surveys of archaeological monuments that had not previously been recorded and followed a bequest to the Society from the late Dr Ann Hamlin, from which the items of survey equipment were purchased. The wreck of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* at Ringneill Quay was subsequently chosen to be the seventy-ninth of these projects.

2.2 Previous archaeological surveys in the environs of the wreck

Ringneill Quay is recorded in the SMR as MRD 168:114 and is classified as a stone quay. It is ascribed to the Post-Medieval period. The quay and the wreck of the *Fanny Crossfield* were also noted during the compilation of the Strangford Lough survey (McErlean *et al* 2002, 382-383).

2.3 Cartographic Evidence

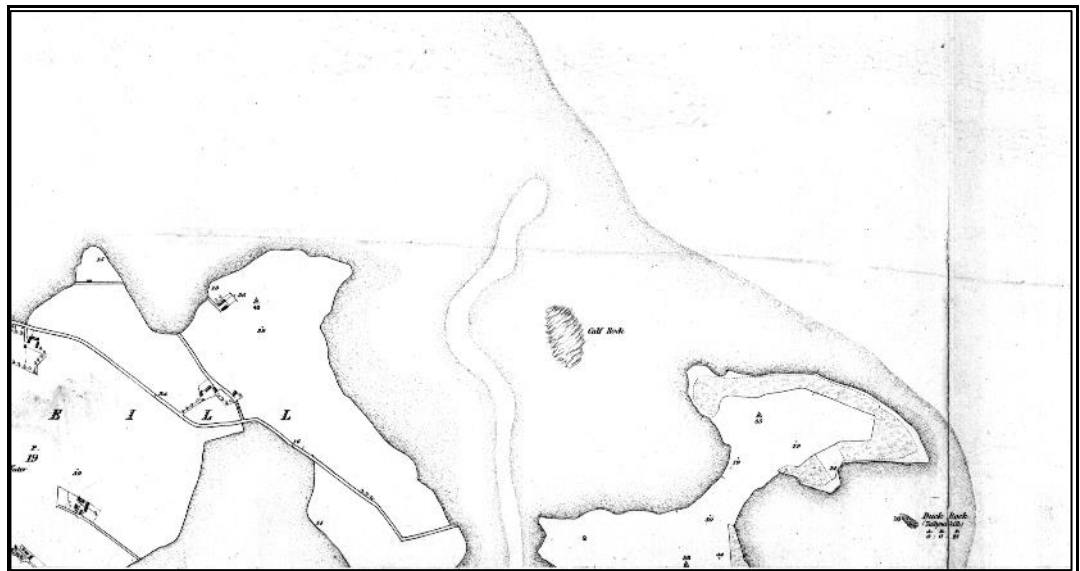


Fig 2: First Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1834.

Ringneill Quay is not recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1834 (Fig 2). On this map, what is today the main road from Lisbane, Co. Down, to Mahee Island stops at the shore, close to where Ringneill Quay now stands. A stone slipway is recorded on the SMR (MRD 168:104) a short distance to the south-west of where the 1834 road terminates (Irish Grid reference J 5229 6535) and this was probably the means whereby people could access Reagh Island by boat, before the quay was built. Another stone

slipway (MRD 168:038) is recorded a short distance away (Irish Grid reference J 5250 6550) on Reagh Island.

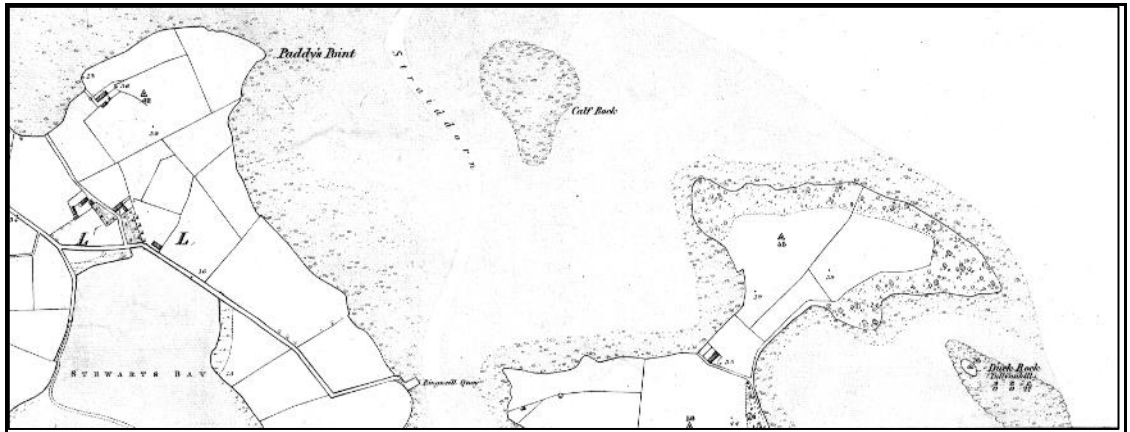


Fig 3: Second Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1859.

Ringneill Quay is recorded on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1859 (Fig 3), so the pier must have been constructed between 1834 and 1859. A navigable channel is recorded on the Second Edition map, annotated *Straiddorn* on subsequent maps and was clearly the route to be taken by vessels approaching Ringneill Quay. By 1904 (Fig 4), a causeway had been constructed to connect the mainland with Reagh Island and this is shown to have blocked this channel at Ringneill Quay. By stopping the flow of water at this point, the presence of the causeway led to the silting up of the surrounding area over time and impaired the use of the quay as a loading or unloading facility for shipping in Strangford Lough. This is most likely the reason why the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* was grounded.

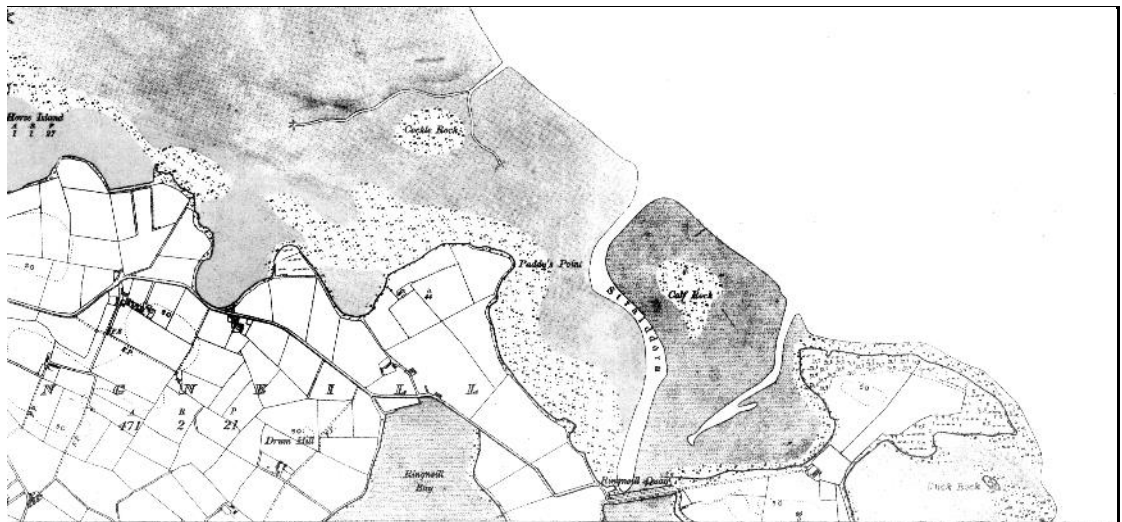


Fig 4: Third Edition OS County Series, Down, Sheet 11 (detail from), 1904.

The remains of the *Fanny Crossfield* wreck are not recorded on any of the Ordnance Survey maps.

3. The history of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*

The *Fanny Crossfield* was a three-masted wooden sailing schooner that served as a cargo vessel. It was built in 1880 and had a gross tonnage of 119 tons. The vessel measured 95.6 feet in length, 22.1 feet in breadth, with a depth of 9.8 feet. It appears that this vessel was never fitted with an auxiliary engine. These sorts of engines were utilised in periods of calm when there was little or no wind to power the sails. However, they could add considerably to running costs impacting the profitability of cargo ships.

The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* was built in the shipyard of Paul Rodgers at Carrickfergus (see Appendix 1). This shipbuilding yard commenced operating in 1874 and a dozen schooners were built there for Messrs. J. Fisher & Sons of Barrow-in-Furness between 1876 and 1892. Initially wooden ships were built "...the most marvellous structures ever built by humankind..." (Steffy 1994). The *Fanny Crossfield* was one of those schooners.

A description of one such ship claimed that it was built of "the best Irish oak" (*Belfast News-Letter*, 13th July 1861)

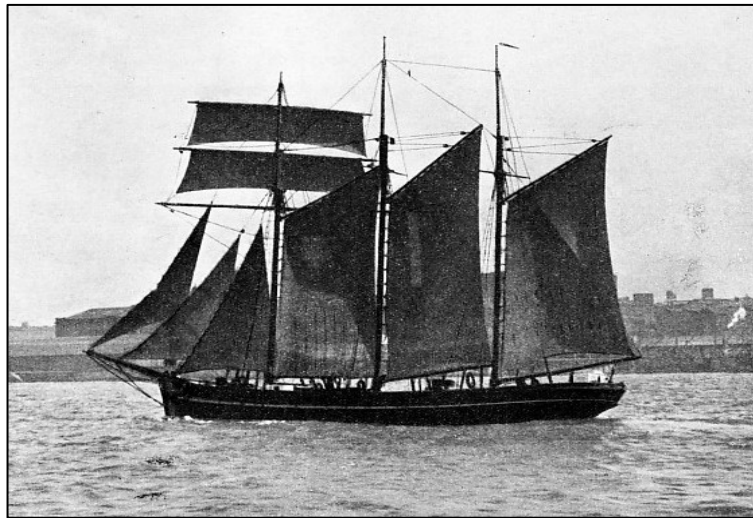


Plate 1: The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* under sail. Courtesy of [Last Days of Sail - Shipping Wonders of the World](#).

The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* plied the Irish Sea trading area under a number of owners for over fifty years. It remained registered in Barrow throughout this period. In the mid-1920s the ship was registered as being owned by G. H. Grounds. By the mid-1930s the owner was registered with Lloyds of London as W. Black. The ship traded as a collier and had a licence to sale coal over the side in the Isle of Man.

A number of newspaper reports found in The British Newspaper Archive serve to illustrate just some of the more colourful history of this vessel and the often hard and hazardous life of her crews (Figs 5-8).

FANNY CROSSFIELD.—*Liverpool*, May 19, 4 17 p.m.
 —Fanny Crossfield, of Barrow, and Knight of St. George
 (tug), were in collision yesterday in river; former had
 some planks broken and made water; was beached at New
 Ferry. Leak was stopped and vessel proceeded to East-
 ham. Latter was at anchor; had stern carried away and
 made water, and was placed in dock.
FERDINAND.—*Boston*, May 8.—Norwegian ship

Fig 5: From Lloyd's *List* of Tuesday 20th May 1890.

**SCOTTISH COAST
THRILLS.**

SCHOONER HIGH AND DRY.

CARRICKFERGUS-BUILT VESSEL.

The Fanny Crossfield, one of the few surviving vessels from the old shipyard of Paul Rodgers at Carrickfergus, was driven ashore on Monday night in the gale at Garlieston, Wigtownshire. She is a three masted schooner of 119 tons gross, built in 1880, registered in Barrow, and commanded by Captain Wm. Black, of Belfast.

Bound from Strangford Lough to Workington to load, the Fanny Crossfield was caught in the gale of Monday north of the Point of Ayre in the Isle of Man. The skipper tried to make Ramsey harbour, but the fury of the gale drove him over to the Wigtownshire coast. When the vessel was seen in distress word was immediately phoned to the Kirkcudbright Lifeboat Station and the lifeboat stood in readiness. At the same time the Isle of Whithorn Life-Saving Crew and apparatus were rushed along the coast to Garlieston. By this time the plight of the vessel was less serious. She had reached the more sheltered waters of the bay and the Kirkcudbright lifeboat was warned not to proceed to the scene as there appeared to be no danger. The Isle of Whithorn life-saving apparatus, which was under the command of the chief coastguard officer from Portpatrick, was then offered to the storm-tossed vessel. Searchlights were played over her deck and two rockets were successfully fired over the vessel. Both of these were, however, refused by the crew, who decided to stick to their vessel, which was eventually driven up past the harbour on to the beach within a stone-throw of the public road, where she now lies high and dry. When the tide had receded the skipper and his crew came ashore. They are being given hospitality by the Garlieston harbour pilot, Mr. John Houston. The vessel has apparently suffered little damage, and the skipper hopes to be able to take her off when the weather moderates. Her skipper is Mr. William Black, aged 29, Belfast, and her crew of two Patrick Doyle, aged 47, seaman, Killyleagh, and Angus Radcliffe, aged 19, seaman.

Fig 6: Weekly Telegraph, 11th Jan, 1936.

ASHORE IN GLARE OF SEARCHLIGHTS

SCOTS ROCKET BRIGADE WAITS FOR HELPLESS SCHOONER

—BUT CREW REFUSES AID

With the beams of searchlights focussed on her decks, and a life-saving crew standing by, a three-masted schooner was driven ashore on the Wigtownshire coast last night.

In the teeth of the gale, the scene was a stirring one as the schooner drew nearer and nearer the shore.

When she was beached, however, the sailors refused the assistance of the rocket brigade. They waited until the tide receded and then clambered ashore to safety.

The schooner, the **Crossfield**, belongs to Belfast.

Battered and buffeted by a storm of wind and rain, and tossed like a cork before a raging sea, the vessel was trying to make the shelter of the harbour at Gardleston when her plight was first observed.

Her skipper is William Black (29), Belfast, and the crew of two are Patrick Devlin (47), Killybegs, Co. Down, and Angus Radcliffe (19), seaman, Ramsey, Isle of Man.

LIFEBOAT READY.

The ship was proceeding light from Strangford Lough, Ireland, to Workington, and when opposite the Heads of Ayr a strong gale sprang up. The skipper tried to make Ramsey Harbour, but the fury of the gale drove his ship back on to the Wigtownshire coast.

Coast-watchers saw the danger, and a message was sent to the Kirkcubright Lifeboat Station. The lifeboat was put in readiness.

The Isle of Whithorn life-saving apparatus from Portpatrick rushed to the scene.

By this time the plight of the **Crossfield** was less serious. She had reached the more sheltered waters of the bay, and the lifeboat was advised not to put to sea.

ROCKETS REACH MARK.

The assistance of the life-saving apparatus was then offered to the stern-towed schooner. Searchlights were played on her decks, and two rockets were successfully fired over her.

Both of these, however, were refused by the crew. They decided to stick to the vessel, which was driven on to the beach to within a stone's throw of the public road. There she now lies high and dry.

When the tide receded the crew clambered ashore and told the story of the rough passage. They had refused the assistance of the rockets, they said, as they were concerned for the safety of the schooner.

They are now being given hospitality at Gardleston.

Fig 7: Dundee Courier and Advertiser, 7th January 1936.

SCHOONER CREW'S ESCAPE FROM DEATH.

CLOTHES BURNT FOR DISTRESS SIGNALS.

A thrilling story of a narrow escape from death is told by the skipper of a little schooner, which, after tossing about disabled for hours off Portland Bill, was finally brought into Portland Harbour on Saturday night by two tugs. The schooner, the *Fanny Crossfield*, manned by Captain King and three men, left a port in Cornwall for London at nine o'clock on Friday night. Its mainmast and foremast blew down. She lost every strip of canvas, and only a little mast remained standing. The vessel was only 15 miles out, and the seas were running very high.

From two o'clock on Saturday morning during the remaining hours of darkness, distress flares were sent up, but no help came. Until daybreak the schooner drifted slowly towards Portland Bill. Signals of distress were hoisted, but it was not until midday that the weather was sufficiently clear for them to be seen from shore.

Tugs immediately went out, and the schooner was towed into safety.

Captain King appeared to regard his narrow escape as a very trifling matter. He was, however, rather concerned over the fact that he had used twelve gallons of paraffin and a considerable portion of the surplus wardrobe of the crew to make flares.

"I tried sacking soaked in paraffin first," he said, "but that did not burn very well. Then I used a jacket, which was a bit better; then a cardigan jacket, two pairs of flannel trousers, and two pairs of flannel drawers. After that we gave it up and waited for daylight. The cardigan coat made the best flare, but I was sorry to lose it, because it was a very good jacket."

The Weymouth lifeboat was launched to go to the schooner, but failed to reach it. The sweeper *Truro*, which was on duty near the buoy locating L 24, also observed the signals, and stood by until the tugs had got the schooner in tow.

Fig 8: The Scotsman, 14th January 1924.

In 1937 the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* ran aground in Strangford Lough. This ended a career of nearly sixty years. The *Fanny Crossfield* was declared a derelict and left to decay at Ringneill Quay, Co. Down. The vessel was broken up after the Second World War. Much of the material was removed and repurposed by locals and others perhaps for building or firewood etc. One rumour has it that the spar was placed in a local bar.

Ships do not sail themselves. They consist of a crew of various character, from various locale. Below is a crew list from 1915 documented in The National Maritime

Museum: The Caird Library and Archive. Greenwich, London (Fig 9). The catalogue description is as follows:

Reference:	RSS/CL 1915/3386/28 RSS/CL 1915/3386/29
Date:	1915
<p>Description: Ship: Fanny Crossfield; Official number: 76898.</p> <p>Description Oliver King; rank/rating, Master; age, 51; place of birth, Canada; previous ship, same ship.</p> <p>Alfred J Hamblin; rank/rating, Mate; age, 39; place of birth, Bridgewater; previous ship, same ship.</p> <p>Fred Mackrandin; rank/rating, Able Seaman; age, 54; place of birth, Archangel; previous ship, same ship.</p> <p>George H Porter; rank/rating, Able Seaman; age, 25; place of birth,</p>	<p>National Maritime Museum: The Caird Library and Archive, not available at The National Archives</p>

Bournemouth; previous ship, same ship.	
Legal status:	Public Record(s)
Language:	English
Closure status:	<p>Open Document, Open Description</p> <p>Finding Reference RSS/CL/1915/3386/28</p> <p>Catalogue section Public records: records of the central administration of the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy</p> <p>Creator Registrar General Of Shipping And Seamen</p> <p>Credit National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London</p>

Fig 9: Details about the crew of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* in the year 1915, held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. (Public Record).



Plate 2: A juxtaposition of two products of the Belfast and Carrickfergus Shipyards. The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* and the cruiser *Georgic*. Taken on 10th June 1932. From the collection of the late Rupert Cameron. Used with permission of his son Robin Cameron.

Tall ships are picturesque and romantic and have caught the imagination of artists and photographers (Plate 2). The wreck of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* was captured by the local artist Tom Carr. The Carr image is still within copyright but can be viewed online: [229-35.JPG \(800×402\) \(rosss.com\)](#)

The newspaper *The Belfast Telegraph* carried a photograph of what then remained of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* in the 6th edition dated 20th October 1960 and was titled “Strangford Lough is graveyard of a Tall Ship. A schooner’s end”. (Note; We are unable to reproduce the photograph in this report, however it can be viewed in the Belfast Telegraph Archive, Belfast)

Another artist who captured the image of the ship was Reuben Chappell (1870-1940). He was known as ‘The Pierhead Painter’ and his painting ‘The *Fanny Crossfield* of Barrow’ (Fig 10) captures the ship as it must have looked in its heyday.



Fig 10: '*Fanny Crossfield of Barrow*', by Reuben Chappell. Actual date of painting unknown.

Fig 11: The French neo-impressionist painter Paul Signac (1863-1935), a lover of sail and sailing, painted *Le Fanny Crossfield à Paimpol* (1928). Paimpol is a port in Brittany.

<https://www.paul-signac.org>



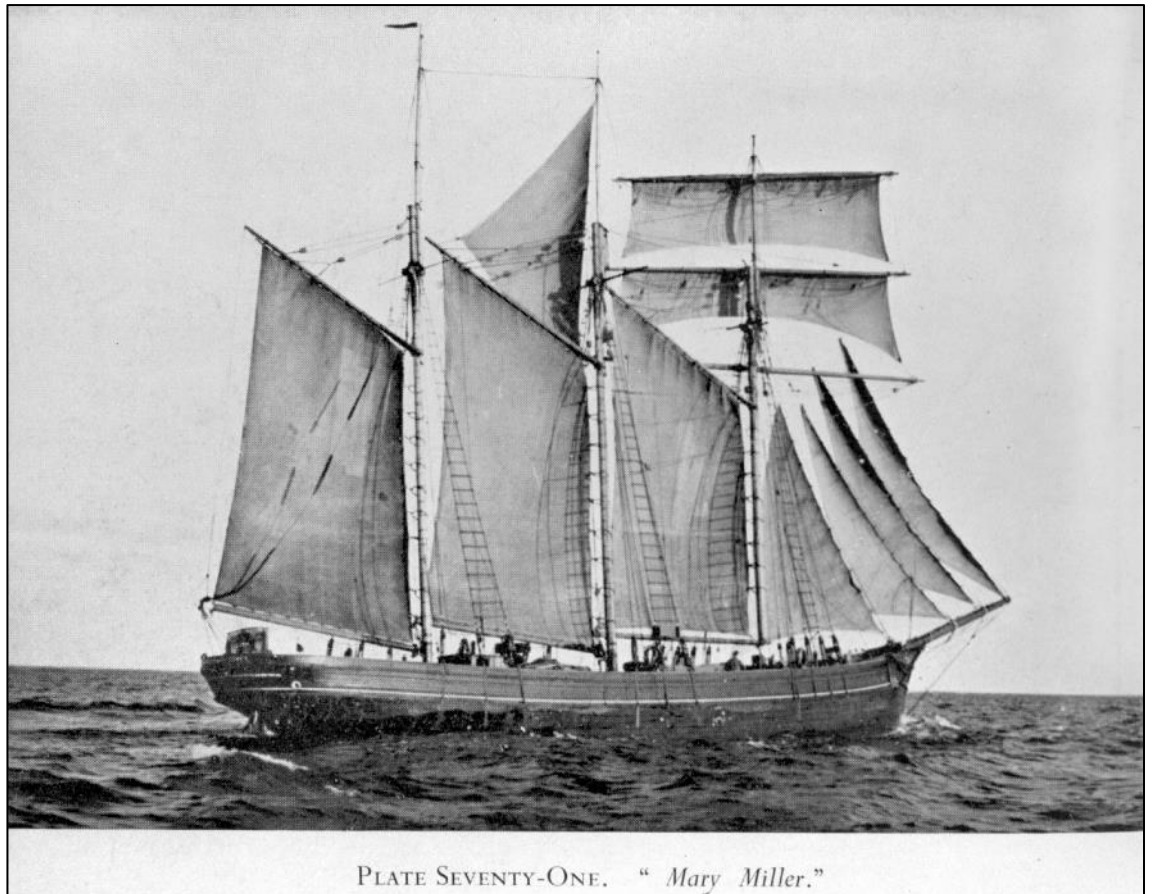


Plate 3: The similar wooden schooner “*Mary Miller*” (see note on page 50).
[HOYFM.L234.6](#)

4. The 2019 UAS Survey of the wreck of the *Fanny Crossfield*

4.1 Aims of the survey

In order to enhance the archaeological record of this wreck site, the aims of this survey were to produce a record of the visible remains of the monument, including a photographic survey.

Care has to be taken when examining the debris and detritus recorded at the wreck site. It can be assumed that most of this material belonged to *Fanny Crossfield* but other material that has been lost or discarded from other vessels may also have been deposited there. The location of the wreck site is also used by aquaculture industry vessels and one of these was reported to have been lying directly on the remaining wreckage of the *Fanny Crossfield* at low tide.

4.2 Methodology

It was decided that the survey would take the form of the production of plan drawings, sketches and elevations, accompanied by a photographic survey. This report was compiled using the information obtained from these sources, in addition to background documentary material.

4.3 Production of plan drawings (Figs 11 and 12)

Measurements of the wreckage were made using base lines and off-set measurements with hand tapes. The ends of the base line for the main section of wreckage were termed A and B and measurements taken of these two points with the society's Leica Sprinter electronic measuring device (Fig 11). These points were included in the plan of Ringneill Quay, which was located immediately to the east of the wreckage in order to accurately record the relationship between the two sites (Fig 12).

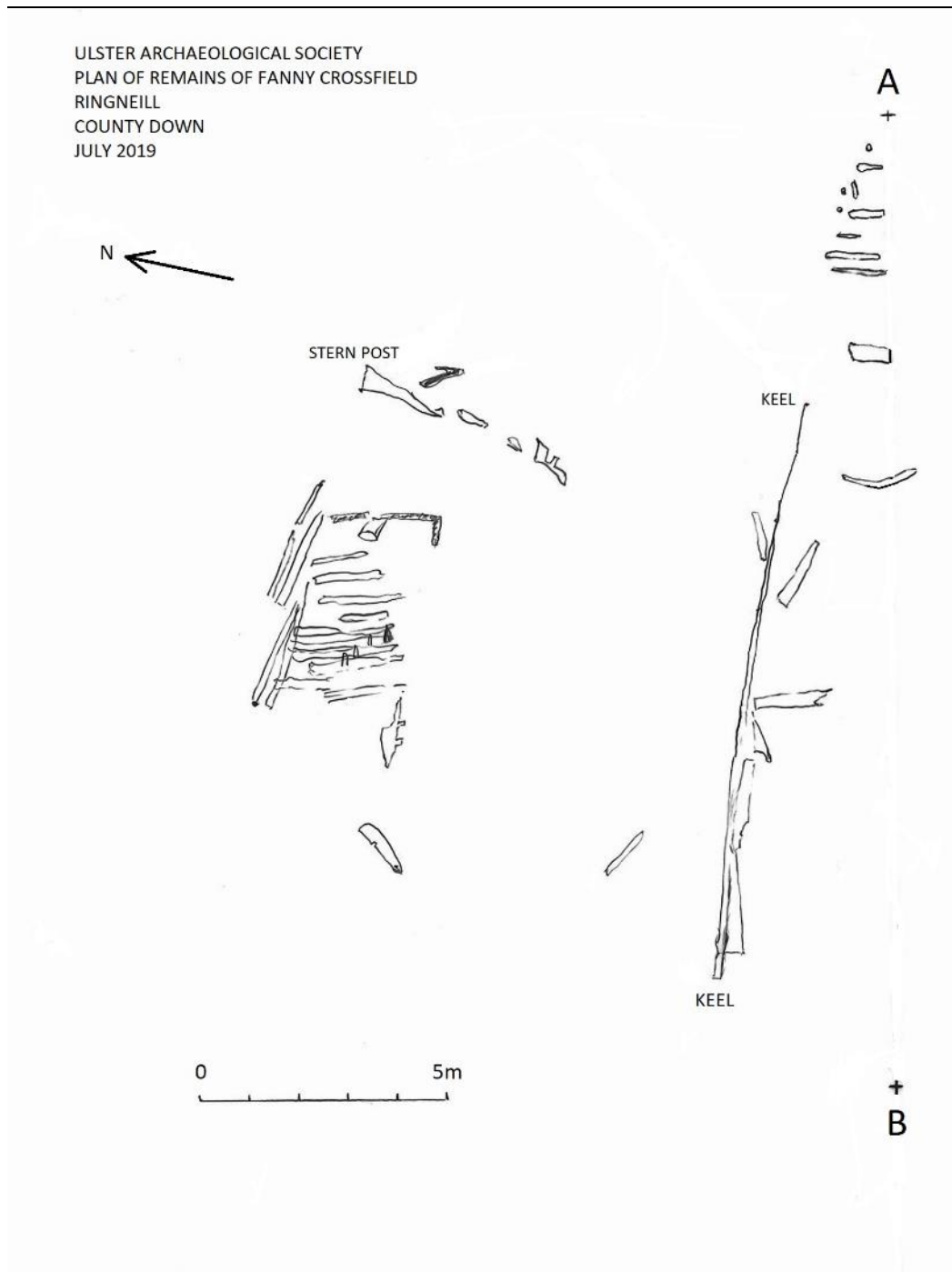


Fig 11: Plan of the visible remains of the *Fanny Crossfield*.

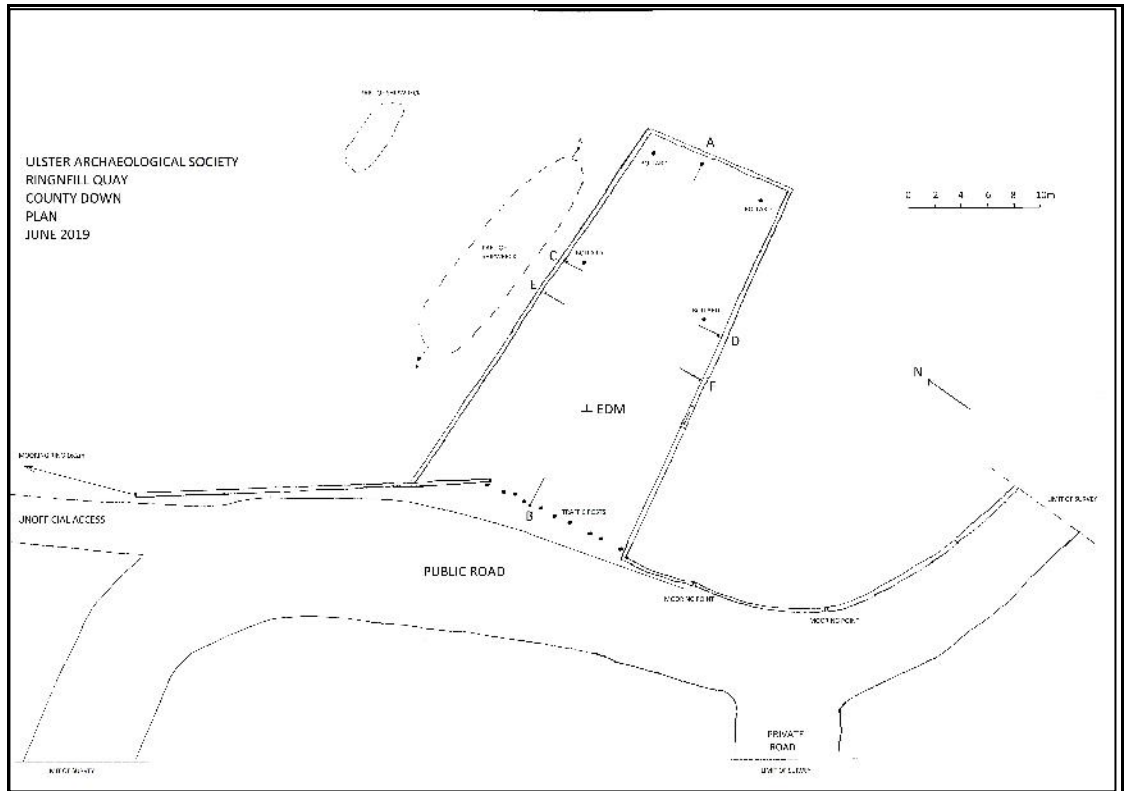


Fig 12: Plan of Ringneill Quay and the wreck of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*.

3.3 Photographic Record (Plates 4-49)



Plate 4: The keel of *Fanny Crossfield*. From the west.

A photographic record of the site was taken by using a *Ricoh G600W8* megapixel digital camera and others. A photographic record sheet was employed, corresponding to

photographs taken during the site survey on 27 July 2019. The archive has been compiled in jpeg format and saved to compact disc.

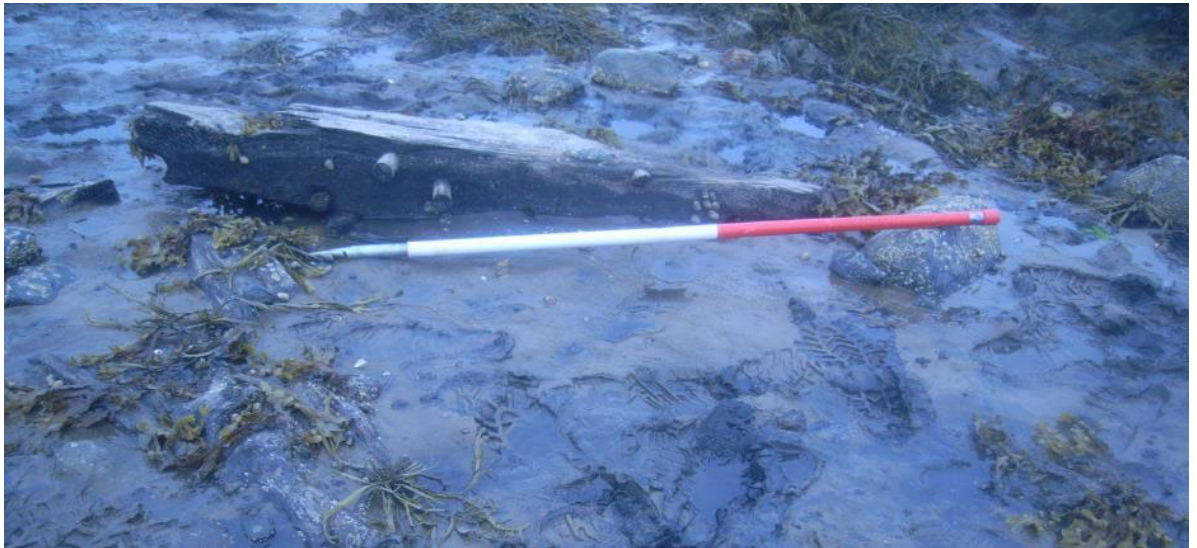


Plate 5: Futtock from the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* with treenails. From the south.



Plate 6: Futtock with treenails. From the north.



Plate 7: Futtock with treenails. From the south.



Plate 8: Timber. From the north.



Plate 9: UAS members with sternpost from the wreck. From the west.



Plate 10: Rudder fittings?. From the east.



Plate 11: Detail of the Rudder Fittings. From the east.



Plate 12: The Rudder Fittings. From the west.



Plate 13: Timbers from the wreck site.



Plate 14: Iron object (valve?).

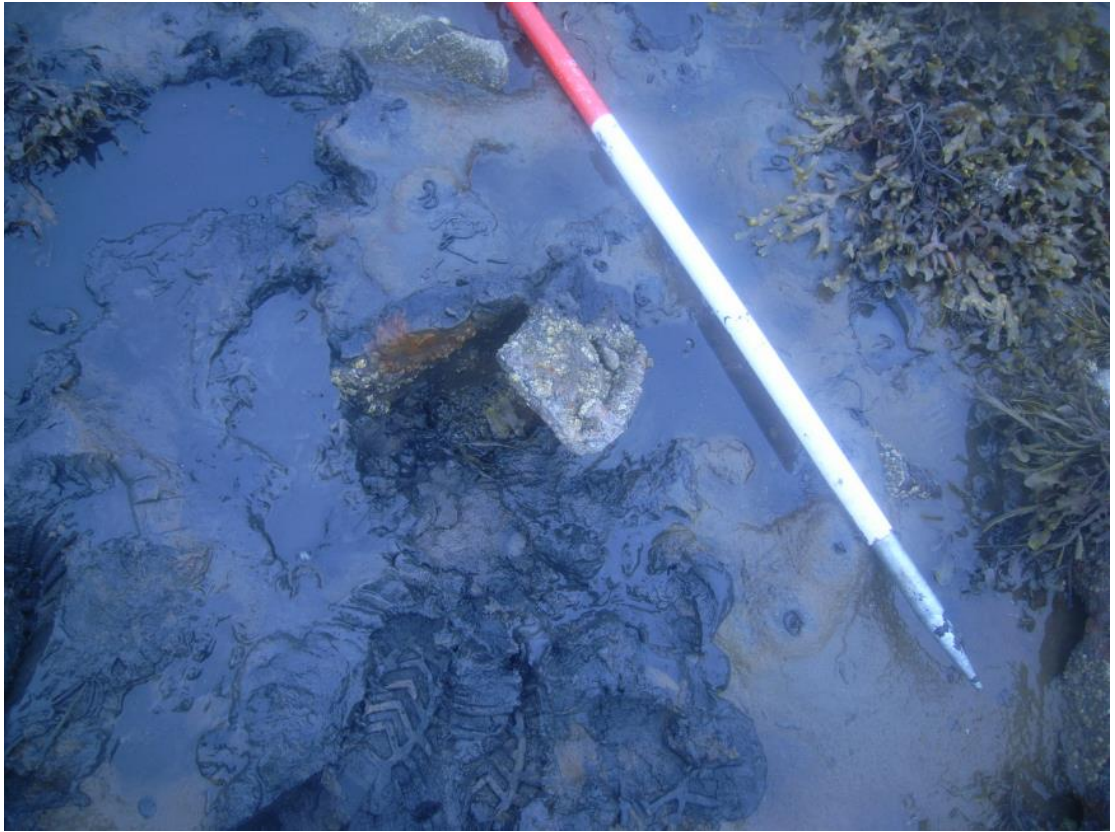


Plate 15: Iron object.

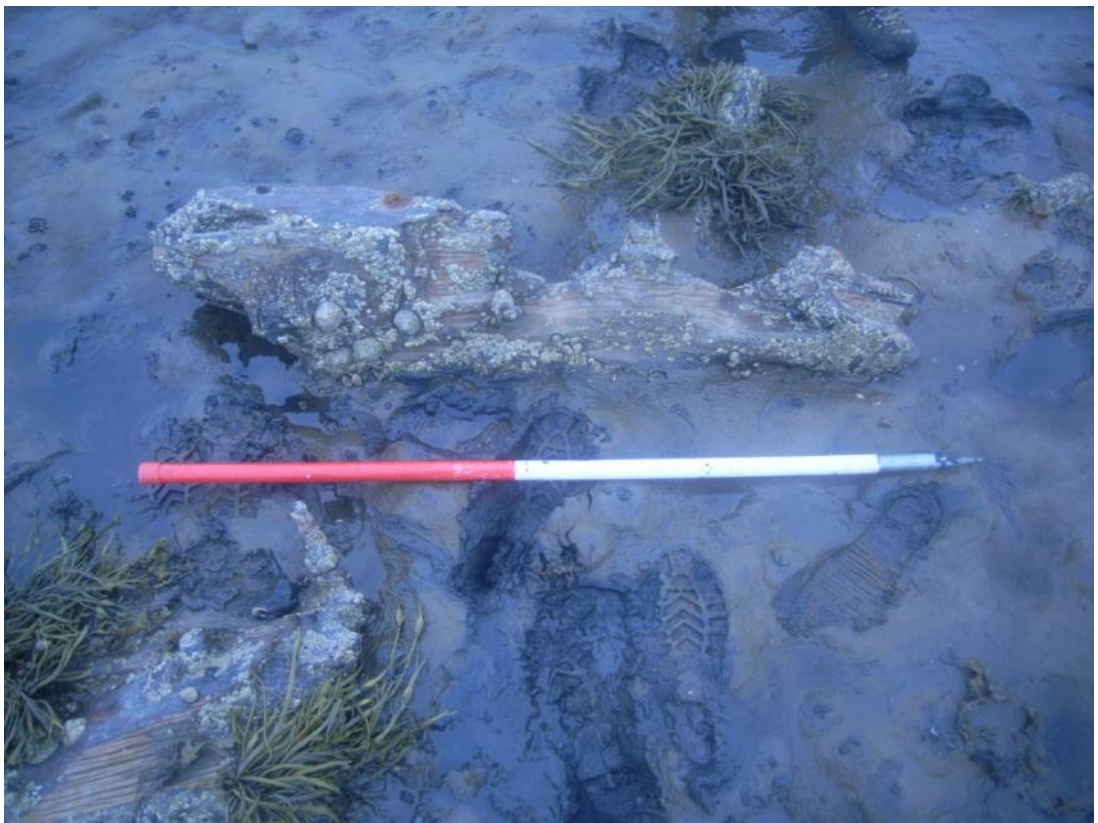


Plate 16: Debris from the wreck site.



Plate 17: Debris from the wreck site.



Plate 18: UAS members with a section of the hull of *Fanny Crossfield*. From the west.



Plate 19: Section of the hull. From the east.



Plate 20: UAS members carrying out the survey of *Fanny Crossfield*.



Plate 21. Iron bracing component. From the north-east.



Plate 22: Iron bracing component. From the south.



Plate 23: Detail of iron bracing component.



Plate 24: Iron bracing component



Plate 25: Wood and metal from the wreck site beside the Ringneill Quay wall. From the north.



Plate 26: One side of a futtock.



Plate 27: The other side of the futtock.



Plate 28: Detail of the western end of the keel? From the south.



Plate 29: Section of the keel.



Plate 30: Section of the keel, moving south.



Plate 31: Section of the keel, moving south.

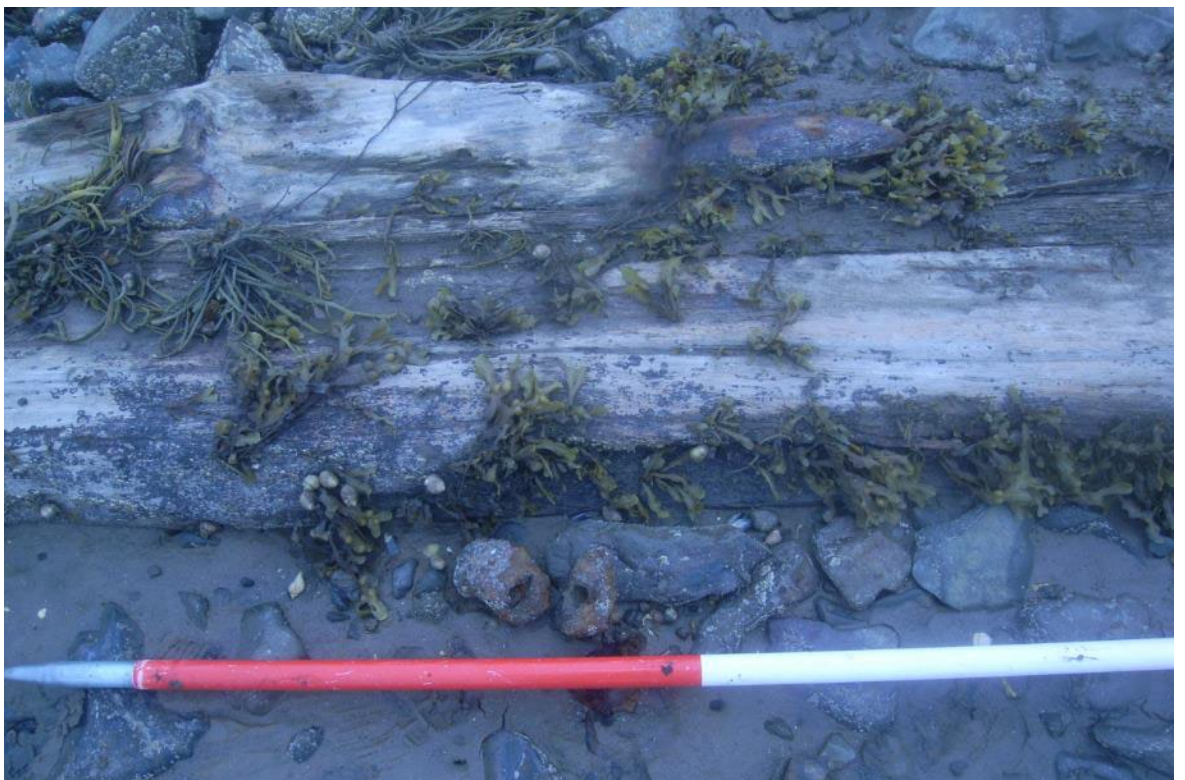


Plate 32: Section of the keel with metal component.

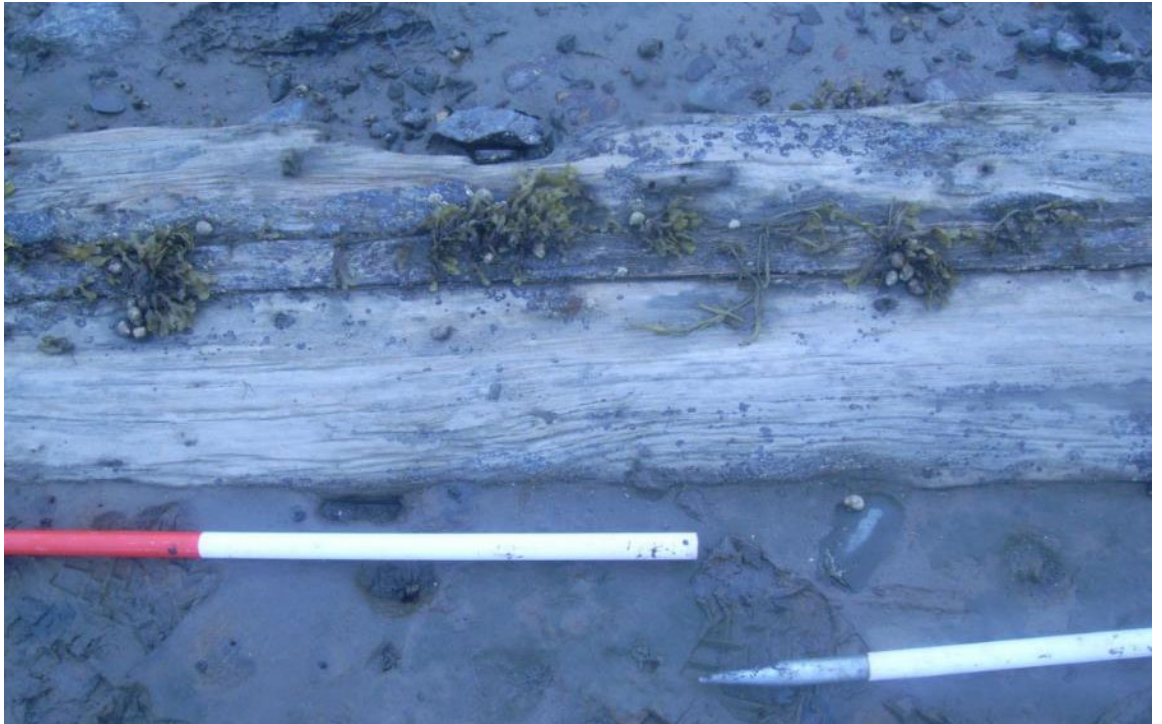


Plate 33: Detail of the keel, moving south.

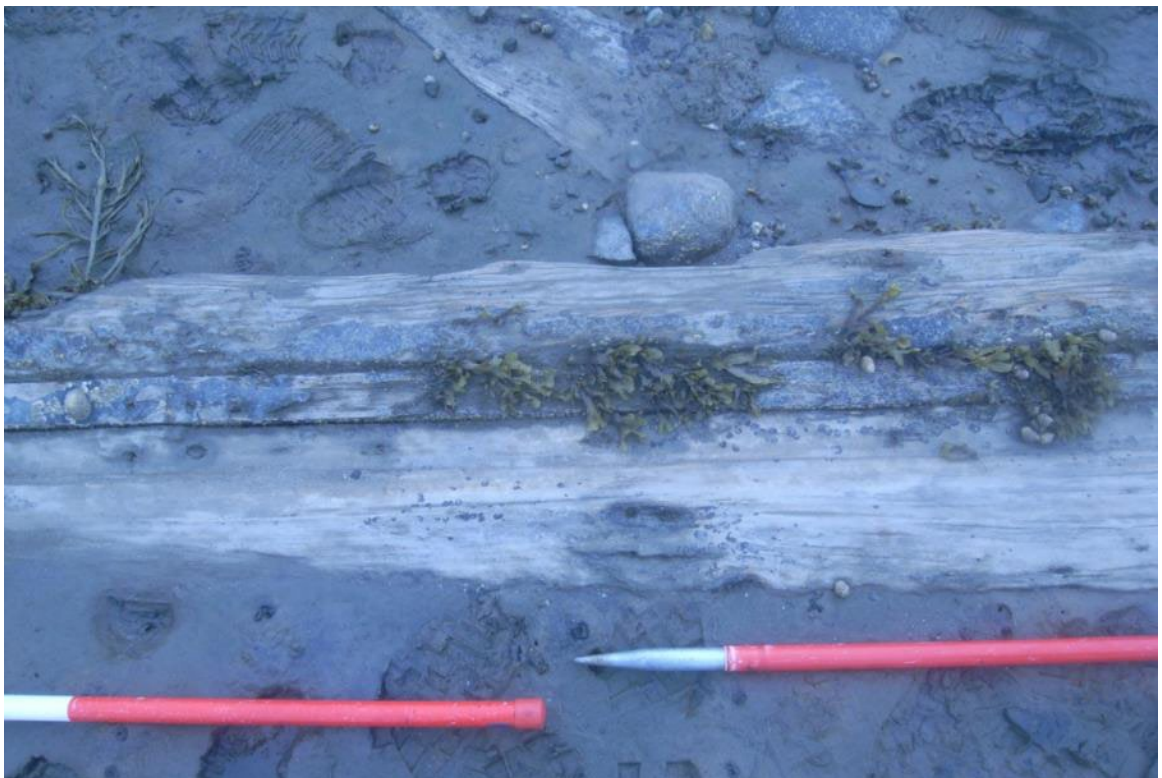


Plate 34: Detail of the keel, moving south.

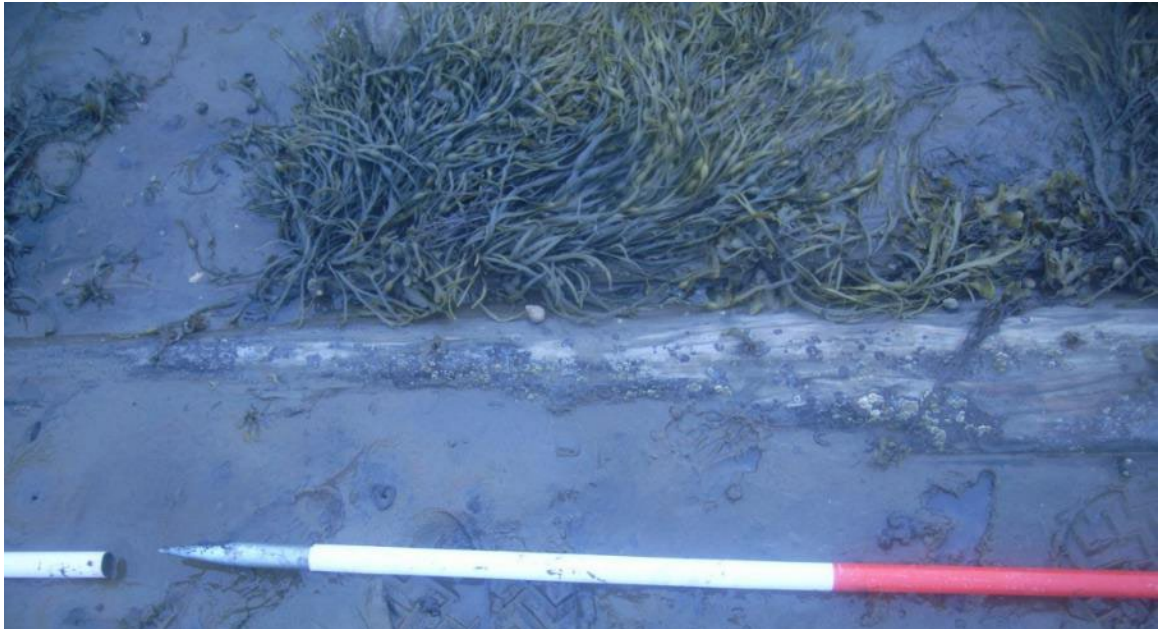


Plate 35: Section of the keel, moving south.

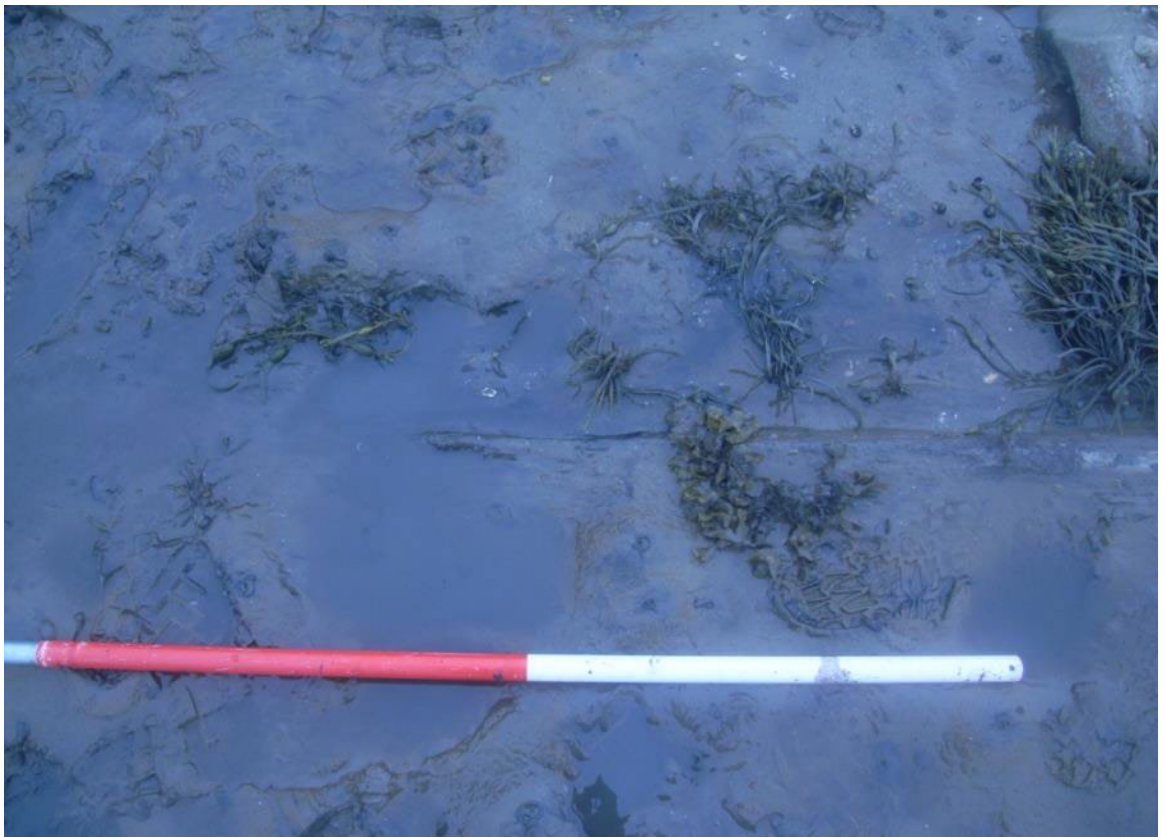


Plate 36: Submerged wreck debris.



Plate 37: Possible flooring timber. From the east.



Plate 38: Flooring timber at 45° to the keel. From the north.



Plate 39: Flooring timber at 45° to the keel. From the east.



Plate 40: Three iron objects found loose on the wreck site.



Plate 41: Ringneill Quay. East face of the quay wall. From the north-east.



Plate 42: Ringneill Quay. North face, eastern end.



Plate 43: Iron and timber frame beside the hull of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*.



Plate 44: Possible section of the hull of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*.



Plate 45: Debris from the wreck of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*.



Plate 46: Section of the hull.



Plate 47: Looks quite well articulated and could be the floor of the vessel.

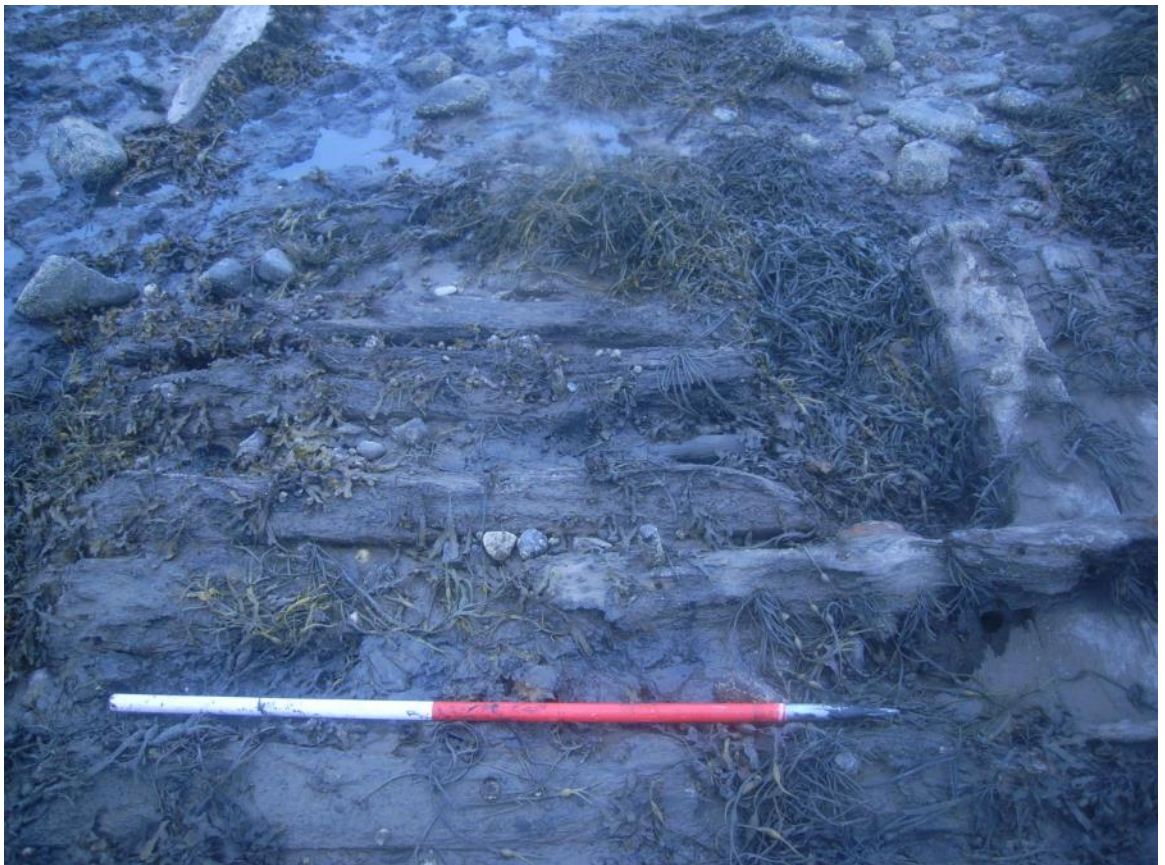


Plate 48: Possible floor from the wreck.



Plate 49: The keel of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*.

4.4 Conclusions and Further Work

Strangford Lough has been designated as a statutory Marine Nature Reserve and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area is rich in archaeology in and around the lough and has an outstanding maritime cultural history from prehistoric times through medieval to modern times (McErlean *et al* 2002, O'Sullivan & Breen 2007, Welsh and Welsh 2018). The lough contains a number of wrecks. The schooner *Fanny Crossfield* is a foreshore wreck lying in the intertidal zone.

The largest extant piece visible of the schooner *Fanny Crossfield* at low tide is the hardwood keel (Quercus?). It appears that more elements of the schooner may be buried in the sand and silt. The exposed and visible elements are of course subject to tidal movement and from that respect and the shallow location they are susceptible to damage, both natural and man-made.

Wet wood artefacts from an archaeological site can deteriorate rapidly once they begin to dry out and the moisture content falls. The deterioration can vary enormously between different species of wood and between zones in the wood. Once the moisture content falls the wood can warp, shrink and crack (Cronyn J.M. 2001). Attempting to store and preserve wet wood artefacts in the long term can be time consuming and an expensive enterprise with long term conservation needs and resources.

The approximate rate of corrosion of iron and steel in seawater is 0.1 mm per year, 1mm every ten years, or 10mm every 100 years (MacLeod 1987). This rate can double if the

wreck is in shallow water, and if the pH, dissolved oxygen and water temperature are high.

A sketch and survey record of the wreck site was first produced in the 1990s as part of the Strangford Lough Archaeological Survey and was submitted to the NI SMR (Ref MRD 168:114) and is held by the Historic Environment Division. The survey notes and sketch drawing are reproduced below.

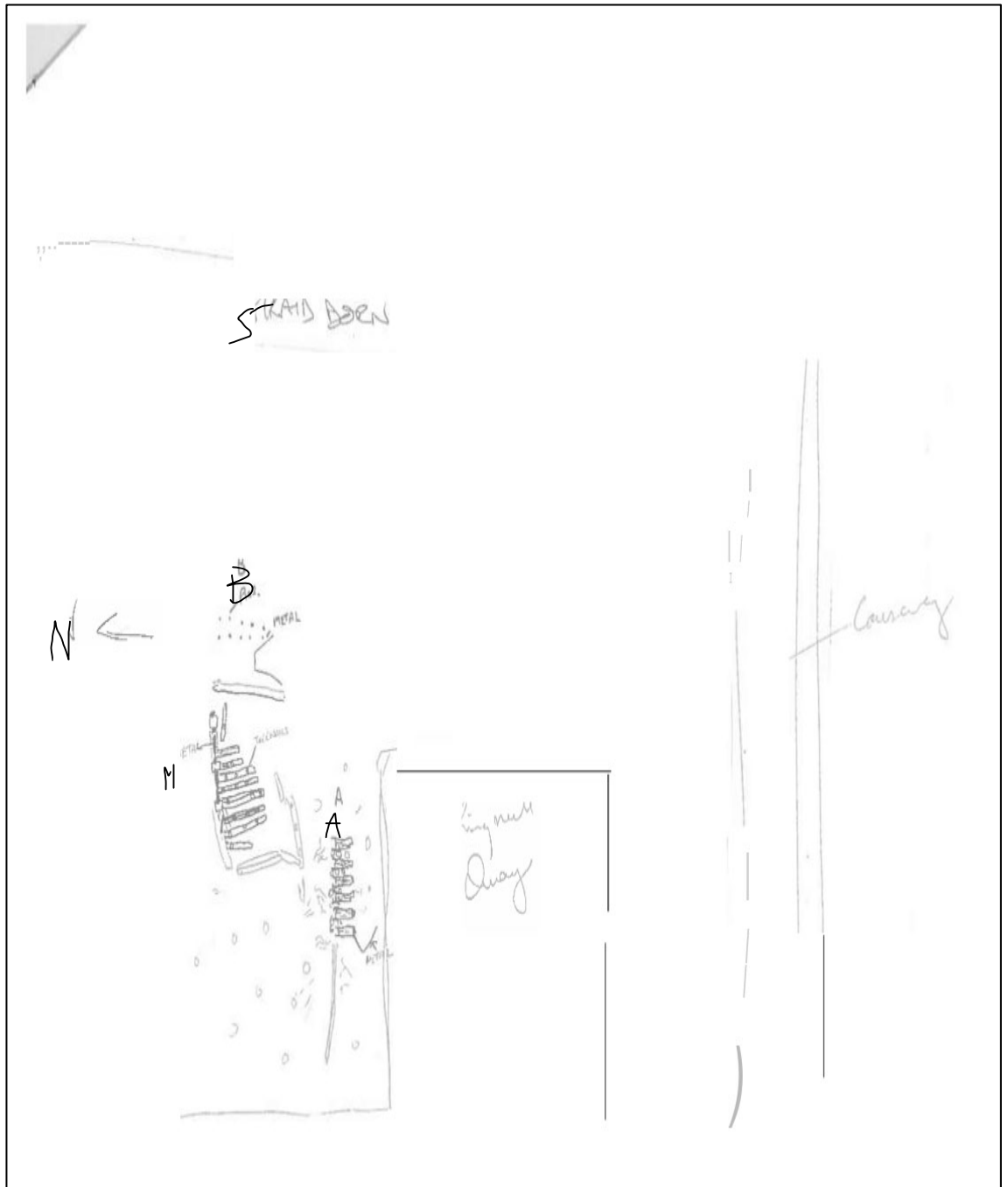


Fig. 13. Plan of remains of the schooner Fanny Crossfield made by CMA as part of Strangford Lough Survey (Ref MRD 168:114) and held in NI SMR, HED (DfC).

Site description; The vessel, which is constructed of wood with iron fittings, is visible in two distinct portions: one lies 4.0m off the northern side of the quay, and the other 12m further north. The latter consists of three large uprights in a row, each measuring about 0.25m long, 0.16m wide and 0.7m high. Metal is riveted to these forming a large U-shape between each, and fourteen ribs project out north-south from them. The ribs each contain three or four treenails, and are on average 1.5m long, 0.1m wide and 0.2m high. At the western end of this portion are eight planks, around 2.0m long, 0.27m wide and 0.07m thick, which may have been part of the vessel's deck. A series of metal pins, 0.05m in diameter, protrude from soft mud at the visible eastern end of the hulk. The southern part of the hulk is less well preserved. It consists of sixteen ribs, firmly embedded in mud, and eight uprights. The ribs have an average length of 1.0m long and thickness of 0.9m, and the uprights are 0.1m in length, 0.1m in thickness and 0.32m in height. A constructional length of wood, 16.5m long by 0.45m thick, curves west from these and may have been part of the gunwhales. A similar piece of wood 1.2m long lies at the end of the quay, and other fragments of wood and metal from the vessel are visible around it.

[Original site record notes made in 1990s for MRD 168:114]

The wreck has deteriorated further since this report was written. Further highlighting the need to record many aspects of our maritime heritage which are disappearing.

5 Archiving

Copies of this report have been deposited with the National Trust and the Ulster Archaeological Society. All site records have been archived by the National Trust at Rowallane, Saintfield, County Down.

6 Credits and Acknowledgements

The survey was led by Harry Welsh and included David Craig, June Welsh, Ian Gillespie, Lee Gordon, Liz McShane, Colin Boyd, Hilary Boyd, Anne MacDermott, Janna McDonald, Moira O'Rourke, Randal Scott, Chris Stevenson, Leo van Es, George Johnston, Kate Crane, Ian Forsythe, Helen Yohanis and Paula Sandford. The Ulster Archaeological Society is particularly grateful to Malachy Conway, Archaeologist of the National Trust, who worked closely with the survey team in choosing the site and facilitating access.

Thanks especially to George Rutherford, Ian Gillespie and Robin Cameron for supplying historical information and content and to Harry and June Welsh, Rory McNeary, Ruairí Ó Baoill for information and advice. Thanks also go to Clare Ablett (Curator) and Stephen Weir (Picture Library), National Museums Northern Ireland.

7. References

Anderson, E. B., 1951 *Sailing Ships of Ireland*. Morris and Company, Dublin.

Breen, C. and O'Sullivan, A. 2007 *Maritime Ireland, An Archaeology of Coastal Communities*. The History Press.

Cameron, R. 1998 'Georgic and Fanny Crossfield in 1932' *Carrickfergus and District Historical Journal* Vol 9. Carrickfergus and District Historical Society.

Cronyn, J.M. 2001 The Deterioration of Organic Materials in Brothwell, D. R. and Pollard, A. M. (eds.) 2001 *Handbook of Archaeological Sciences*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd, Chichester.

Greenhill, B., 1951, *The Merchant Schooners vol 1*, Percival Marshall Co Ltd, London.

McCaughan, M., 1983 *Paul Rodgers, an Ulster Shipbuilder, and his Welsh Connections* in Eames, A., Lloyd, L., Bryn, P. and Stubbs, J. *Cymru A'R Mor/ Maritime Wales* No 7. Gwynedd Archives Service.

MacLeod, I., 1987, Conservation of corroded metals from shipwrecks, in M. McCarthy (ed.) *Iron Ships and Steam Shipwrecks: Papers from the First Australian Seminar on the Management of Iron Vessels and Steam Shipwrecks*,93-104.

McErlean, T., McConkey, R., and Forsythe, W. 2002 *Strangford Lough. An Archaeological Survey of a Maritime Cultural Landscape*. Belfast, Blackstaff Press.

Steffy, J. Richard 1994 *Wooden Ship Building and the Interpretation of Shipwrecks*, College Station, TX.

Welsh, H. 2019 *Ringneill Quay, Co. Down. Ulster Archaeological Society Survey Report* Number 78. Belfast, Ulster Archaeological Society. Web Link: [Ringneill Quay \(qub.ac.uk\)](http://qub.ac.uk)

Welsh, H. and Welsh, J. 2018 *Sites of Prehistoric Life in Northern Ireland*. Archaeopress Archaeology.

Websites & online content consulted:

<https://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum> (some images of the schooner)

www.irishshipwrecks.com/

www.britishnewspapersarchive.co.uk

https://www.shippingwondersoftheworld.com/last_days-sail.html

(includes image and information on the schooner *Fanny Crossfield*)

<https://www.nauticalarchaeologysociety.org/>

historycircle.org.uk/paul-rodgers/

[highlight-tour \(nmni.com\)](http://highlight-tour (nmni.com))

www.cherishproject.eu

paul-signac.org

8. Appendix 1: Paul Rodgers of Carrickfergus.

Paul Rodgers was the owner of the Carrickfergus Shipyard and he acquired a considerable reputation amongst ship-owners as a designer and builder of small merchant sailing vessels. His ships were known for their quality and aesthetically pleasing build. These

vessels were also very practical in terms of their speed and their cargo capacity in specific goods and their manoeuvrability in a small draught of water. Of one particular clipper designed by Rodgers it was claimed by the Belfast News Letter of 18th April 1864, that it was 'a specimen of naval architecture which would be no disgrace to the most eminent builders in the United Kingdom.'

The metal schooner *The Result* has been preserved and can be seen at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, Cultra, Co. Down. [highlight-tour \(nmni.com\)](http://nmni.com)

The business employed from 100 and up to 150 people and produced 4893 gross tons of shipping during Rodgers's proprietorship. The shipyard gained a number of regular customers, the most important of these being James Fisher & Sons of Barrow. Between 1880 and 1892 this firm had placed orders for twelve three-masted schooners. The first of these vessels was the wooden schooner *Fanny Crossfield* built in 1880. This successful design was repeated for the next five years with five similar ships.

After initial success the Rogers shipyard went into decline due to a combination of factors: general trading losses, cancellation of orders and a failure to secure new orders for metal ships. The business had invested a large amount in iron and steel shipbuilding facilities and stock. The firm's main customer, James Fisher & Sons, had ceased to place orders for schooners and instead began to purchase steamships built by Mellwaine & McColl of Belfast.

The firm's balance sheet at 31st October 1890 reveals liabilities of £11,900, assets of £8,678, therefore a deficiency of £3,222. Bank loans and borrowings balanced the books (from Paul Rodgers's business records, McCaughan 1983)

During a period when no orders were on the books Rodgers refused to reduce his workforce, following in the tradition of the paternal Victorian it has been said. Whilst he was a shipbuilder of innovation and enterprise it seems that he was unable to adapt production for the growing small steamship market.

Rodgers was forced to sell the shipyard in 1892 to Robert Kent & Co. of Ayr in Scotland. However, Kent & Co. went bankrupt in 1893.

Rodgers re-purchased the shipyard in May 1895. No new vessels were built, however, and the business focused only on ship repair and conversion, notably converting the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company's former paddle steamer *Cavan* into a four-masted barquentine.

Paul Rodgers continued in business, ship owning and management, developing an extensive coal importing concern. He died of apoplexy on 8th March 1901 (Carrickfergus Advertiser 16th March 1893). The site of the former remarkable shipyard is today occupied by a children's playground. Nearby there still exists the home of Paul Rodgers, '...an outstanding small-scale shipbuilder who turned out superlative sailing vessels in wood and metal. In particular, his later steel schooners represented the highest technical development of the British merchant schooner' (McCaughan 1983). The dwelling is appropriately named *Marine Cottage*. A plaque has been placed by the Ulster History Circle to mark the location.

[Paul Rodgers – Ulster History Circle](#)

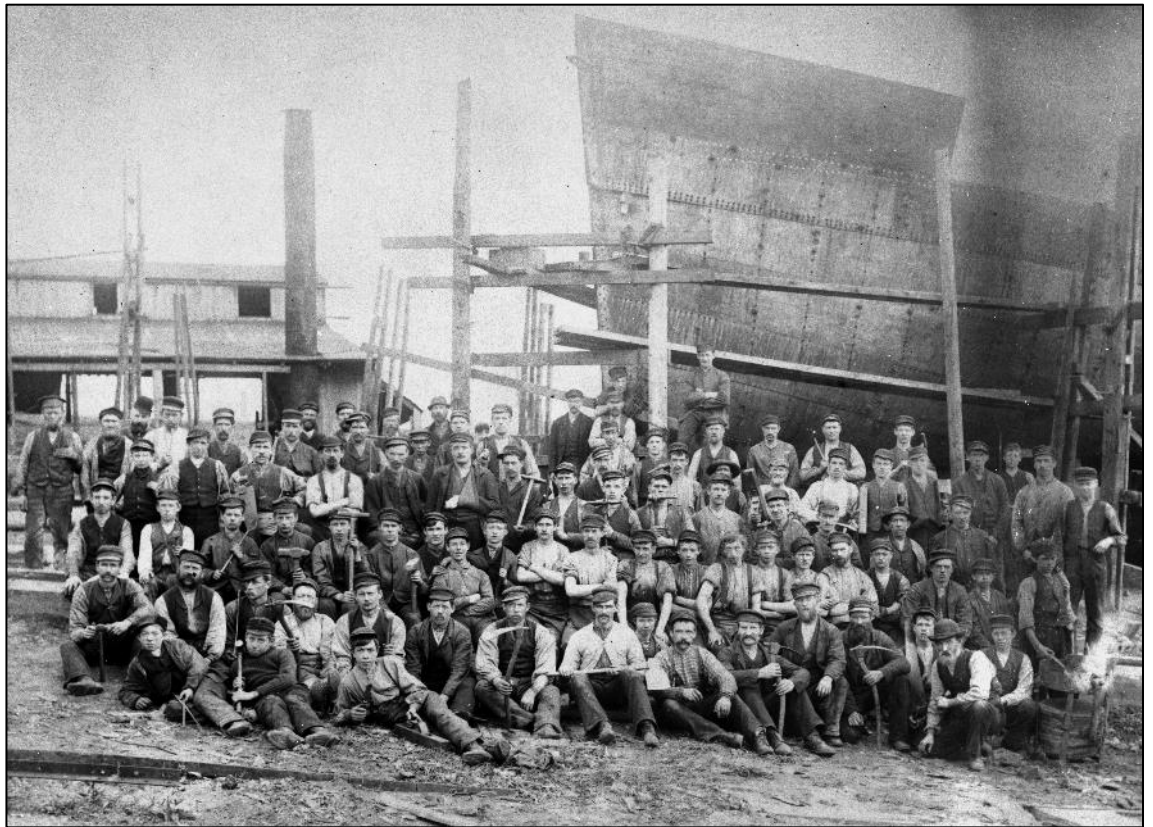


Plate 50. HOYFM.L346.4- Carrickfergus Shipyard workforce. Picture taken to mark the occasion of the yard switching over to producing steel ships. The workforce of around 100 men stand with their tools in front of a steel hull. Paul Rodgers, the yard owner, is standing in the back row on the left, 3 from the end. 1885. Copyright National Museums of Northern Ireland

A note on the Wooden Schooner *Mary Millar*, of same design as the *Fanny Crossfield*.

HOYFM.L234.6- From "The Merchant Schooners" Vol. I Basil Greenhill (publisher Percival Marshall Co Ltd London 1951). Plate 71. 'Mary Miller'. The 'Mary Miller' was the second of six wooden three-masted schooners built at the Carrickfergus shipyard of Paul Rodgers for Barrow shipowners James Fisher & Son. She was launched in April 1881. In 1920 the Mary Miller was sold by Fishers to Grounds of Runcorn, who bought many of the Fisher fleet. She was resold in about 1931 to an Irish owner, and then to Couch of Fowey in about 1938. She operated in the china clay trade for a time and was at this time one of the last two engineless sailing ships in operation in the UK. She was fitted with a motor at the start of WW2, and she was then used as a balloon anchorage at Greenock. She was later used as a houseboat in the River Mersey and survived until the 1960's (NMNI)

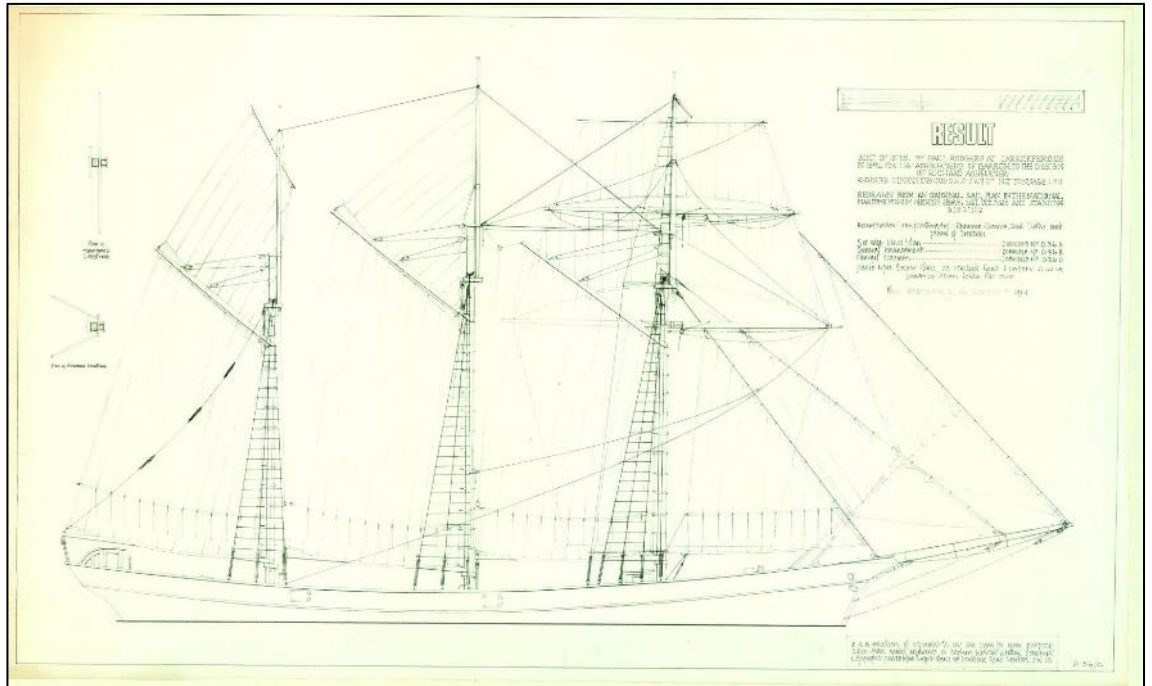


Plate 51. HOYFM.SCH2016.176.20- Lines Plan for Schooner RESULT. Built of steel by Paul Rodgers at Carrickfergus in 1892 for the Ashburners of Barrow to the design of Richard Ashburner, this Plan was redrawn from a photo stat of the builder's plans, which were loaned by Basil Greenhill. Drawn by Allan Hobbs, March 1969. Copyright reserved, David MacGregor Plans, 99 Lonsdale Road, London SW13. Register Dimensions 102.0 x 21.7 x 9.0, 88 tons net. Drawing no. D/36/A. Copyright NMNI