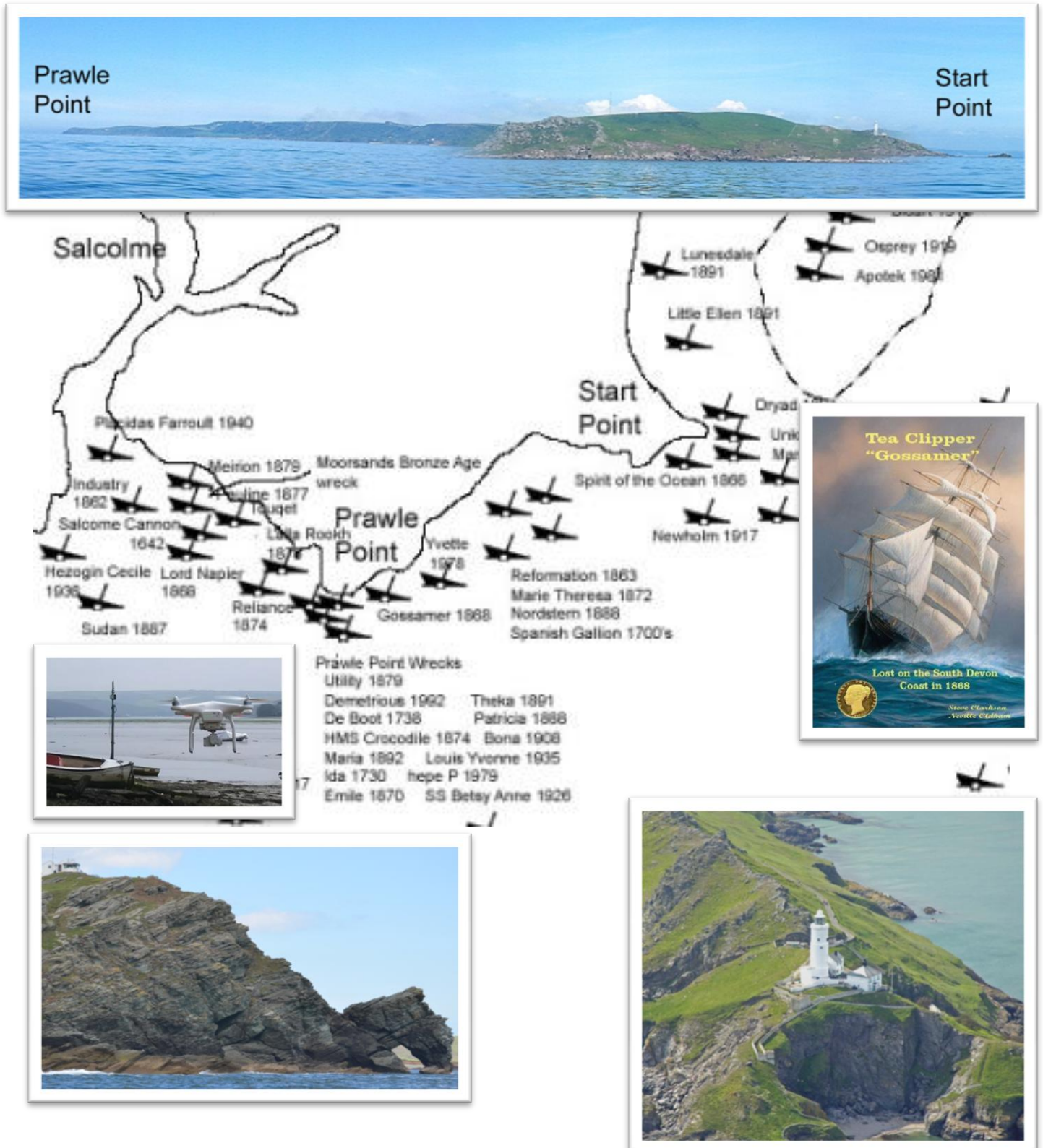


Start Point Project

Steve Clarkson

May 2016

Supported by the BSAC Jubilee Trust



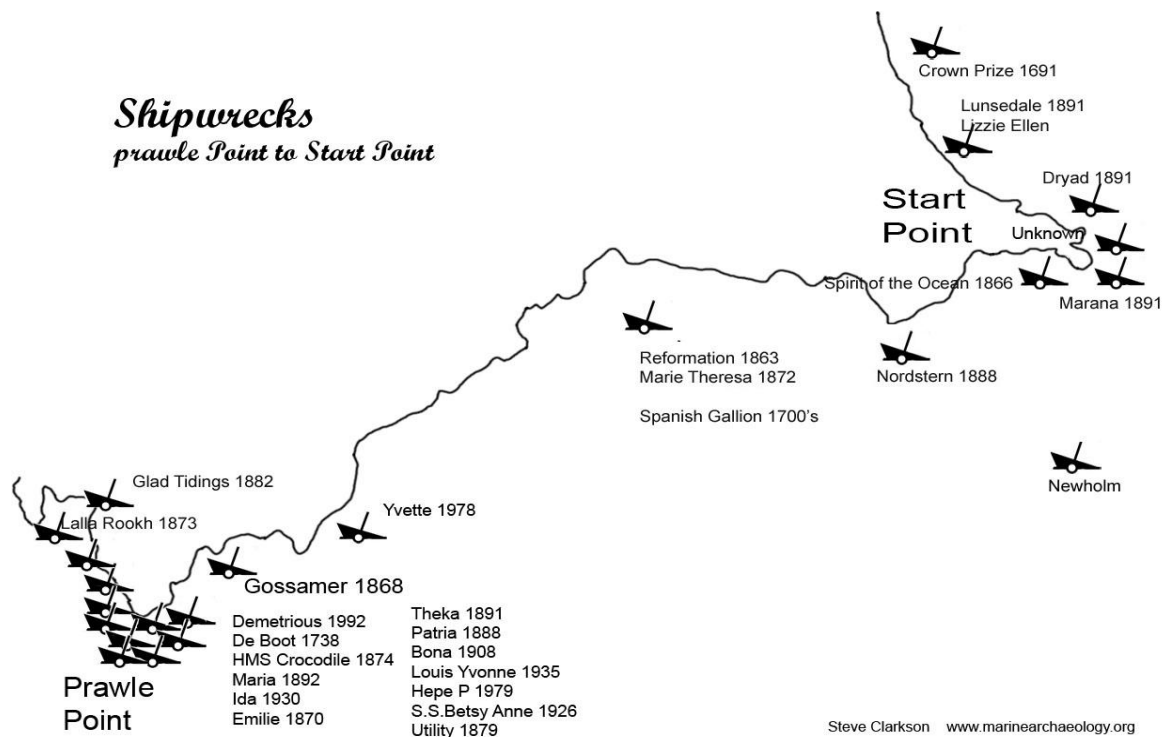
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2. Summary

This Start Point project documents the research carried out by the team on the inshore shipwrecks on the South Devon coast. It covers the area between Start Point and Prawle Point. Some of the inshore shipwrecks in the area are shown on the following chart.



This document includes the research, magnetic surveys and drone surveys in order to clearly identify their exact positions as well as identifying other magnetic anomalies in the area that could indicate any unknown shipwrecks.

3. Project achievements

- The exact position of most of the wrecks were established
- A magnetic survey was carried out up to the 10m line offshore
- All the ships were researched and documented.
- A book has been produced for one of the ships
- A Drone was used at low water to access the rocky coastline to search for evidence of shipwrecks
- Diver were trained in Marine Archaeology

4. Background to Project

The Start Point Project was started by the late Neville Oldham and taken over by myself, Steve Clarkson following his death.

Over the years both Neville and I have researched a considerable amount of information on the shipwrecks of South Devon as well as diving a lot of the sites. The inshore sites have been little dived and a lot of the positions are not accurately known and have never been documented.

Shipwrecks have been found in South Devon covering over 3000 years from the Bronze Age to the current period. These ships were Merchantmen, Passenger ships, Tea Clippers and naval vessels and include some from the age of sail as well as modern steamships. Many of the offshore shipwrecks are well known and have been dived over the years but few of the inshore ones are dived and many have never been found.



Clues to this maritime heritage are found in the local churchyards where the crew and passengers from the wrecks are buried. The gravestone on the left is some of the crew on the “Marana” lost at Start Point in a blizzard in 1891. The gravestone was only recently discovered laying face down under the earth. Many of the bodies from shipwrecks were buried in unmarked graves so will never be identified.

Other clues can be found in local museums where some of the artifacts washed ashore are displayed. Often these objects are donated to the museums when individuals are clearing out their garages. One such artefact is a wood plane found on the site of the Tea Clipper “Gossamer” that was driven onto the rocks at Prawle point.



5. Acknowledgements

Plymouth Records Office
Salcombe Museum
Kew Records Office
Exeter Records Office
Stephen George (Maritime historian and local diver)
Kendal McDonald's books
Richard Larn
Nautical Archaeological Society
British Sub Aqua Club Jubilee Trust

6. Legal Status

None of the shipwrecks in the area covered are protected wrecksites

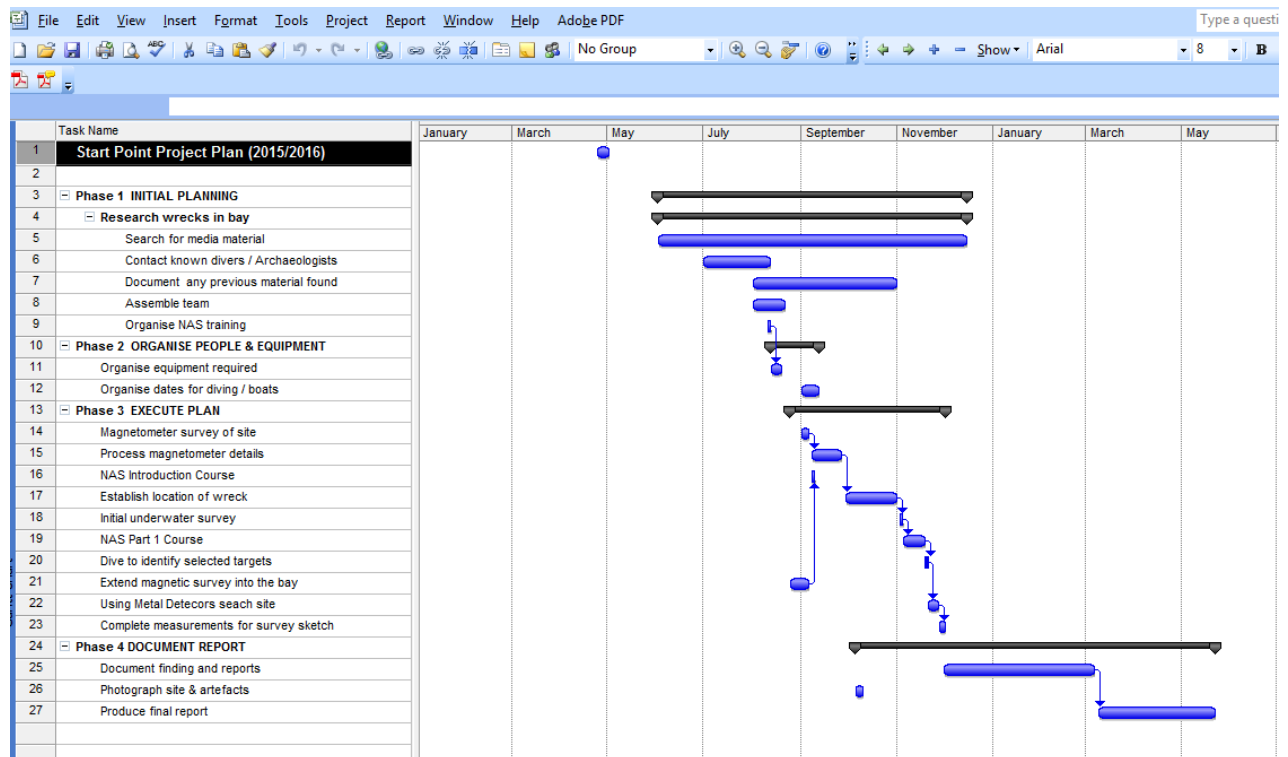
7. Objectives

The objectives of this project were to:

- Survey the Bay and beaches using Magnetometers and Metal Detectors
- Identify the position and condition of the inshore wrecks between Prawle and Start Point
- Carry out a Aerial camera survey of the shore using a drone,
- Get Divers to investigate any Targets found
- Train experienced divers to NAS part 1 qualification.
- Document the ships and produce at least one book.

8. Plans and approach

The following was the initial project plan. A lot of the tasks were delayed during the project but all were achieved.



The plan was to first research books about the known shipwrecks in the area followed by searching the National archives as well as local libraries. This was followed up by visiting local churchyards in order to identify crew and passengers.

A magnetic survey was then carried out between Prawle Point and Start Point in order to establish the position of known shipwrecks as well as identify any other magnetic anomalies that could well be shipwrecks. A chart was produced showing the areas of magnetic anomalies.

Charts were then produced for the known wrecks with the established positions and the unknown wrecks with approximate positions.

Divers were then deployed on selected targets in order to establish what wreckage remained.

The tea clipper Gossamer was selected as the next ship to document in a 48 page A5 booklet. This booklet included an insight into the tea clipper era, design and construction as well as details of the Gossamers history, crew and passengers on her fated voyage. Also included are details of the artifacts recovered.

9. Diving Boating Operations

All diving will be undertaken in accordance with the BS-AC *Safe Diving Practices* guidance.

Hazard	Risk	Level	Control Action
Magnetometer Surveys	Snagging magnetometer Hitting shallow rocks	Moderate	Areas will be surveyed using an echosounder prior to the survey work
Diving practice	Poor diving practice	Moderate	All diving will be undertaken in accordance with the BS-AC <i>Safe Diving Practices</i> guidance
Equipment	Equipment failure	Moderate	Divers will use their own equipment which will be configured in accordance with BS-AC <i>Safe Diving Practices</i> guidance.
Shipping	The sites are subject to a medium level of small boat and fishing traffic. There is a slight risk that the divers may be placed at risk by other water users.	Moderate	Whilst divers are in the water the DSV will fly the code Flag 'A' to warn other water users that diving operations are underway. A constant watch will be maintained by the surface crew for potentially hazardous shipping movements and in the event that these occur the diver will be shielded from the offending craft by the small cover boat
Entrapment	There is no risk of entrapment within the site itself. There is a possibility of encountering nets or lines on the site. This risk is no greater than that found in recreational wreck diving.	Low	All diving will be carried out as a 'buddy pair' and all divers will carry a cutting device
Restricted Surface visibility	The onset of restricted surface visibility may place the diving support vessel and the divers at risk from collision with other shipping in the area.	Moderate	Diving operations will not be started if forecast or actual conditions indicate that surface visibility is below that which is thought to be safe (1km). A constant check will be made on the weather and the divers recalled should conditions begin to deteriorate.
Temperature	The sea temperature is expected to be around 10°C.	Moderate	All divers will be required to use either dry suits or suitable wet suits.

Access to hardboat	Access is not considered to be a risk	Low	Entry to the water will be by jumping from the boat (less than 1m) Exit will be by dive ladder or lift
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Breathing Gas	The depths at which the diving operations are to be conducted are less than 25m	Low	Air will be used as the breathing gas. BS-AC 88 tables to be followed. All divers will surface upon reaching a limit of 50bar
Emergency facilities	The nearest decompression facilities are at Plymouth. In the event of any incident, first aid will be given by the diving team. The vessels master will contact the emergency services and arrange evacuation	Low	The DSV will be equipped with oxygen and standard first aid equipment. The diving team will have as a minimum two members trained in Diving first aid. The DSV will be equipped with an operational marine radio and be capable of summoning help from the emergency services should this be required
Depth	Increasing depth of water can expose divers to addition risk of nitrogen narcosis and decompression sickness	Moderate	The operations are to be conducted in between 0 and 10 meters of water. At these depths the risk presented by nitrogen narcosis is low to experienced divers and there is no special risk of decompression sickness.
Weather	The site is relatively exposed to adverse weather conditions.	Moderate	A weather forecast will be obtained each day. Diving operations will not be undertaken should the forecast indicate that weather conditions would make them unsafe. A constant check will be kept on weather conditions by both the master of the diving support vessel and the diving supervisor. Diving Operations will be abandoned when weather conditions appear likely to become hazardous.
Visibility Underwater	In certain conditions visibility can be poor on site.	Moderate	Only experienced divers will be used. They will be in constant visual or physical contact with each other. Should they become separated they will surface immediately
Underwater currents	The site is exposed to some underwater currents	Low	All divers will be either connected to a buoy line or buddy line. If this is lost for any reason they will be required to surface. All diving work will be conducted at slack water.
Diving support vessels	The master of the vessel should be suitably experienced in working with SCUBA divers.	Low	All diving operations will be conducted from a MCA Code of Practice category 2 or the teams own boats. The master of all vessel's will be experienced at working with divers

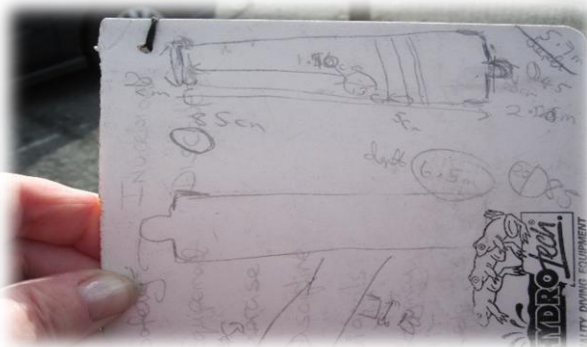
Illumination	Where a diving operation is to be carried out during the hours of darkness, the diver must be equipped with a lamp or other device suitable for indicating their position on the surface. The place on the surface from which the diving is being carried out will be illuminated adequately.	Low All diving will be done in daylight hours	
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10. Training

Three divers were trained on the dive sites and another eight to Nautical Archaeological Society Part 1 standard on a NAS course run in Reading



Practicing measuring then producing first sketch of cannon 7 found on wreck site



Additional training was done using a drone to record hulks in the river.





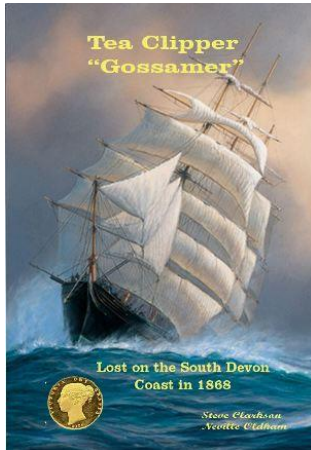
11. Promotion

The project was promoted at a variety of events including:



- Woman Institute Salcombe (Devon)
- Brixham probus Club (Devon)
- Ashburton probus Club (Devon)
- Kings Langley Probus Club (Hertfordshire)
- Thames Valley Sub Aqua Club (Berkshire)
- International Shipwreck Conference Plymouth (Devon)

12. Publications

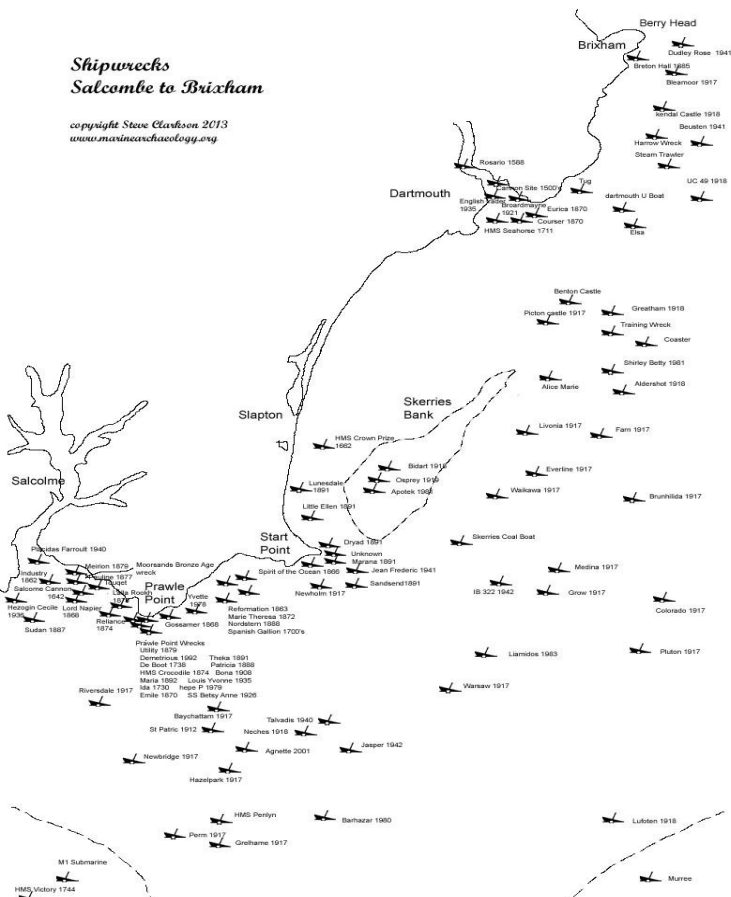


Publication of one of a 48 page booklet on one of the shipwrecks located Tea Clipper “Gossamer” lost between Start Point & Prawle Point.

Sold on Amazon and at Start Point Lighthouse.

Publication of documents for Lady Mary Newman who manages the Start Point Lighthouse.

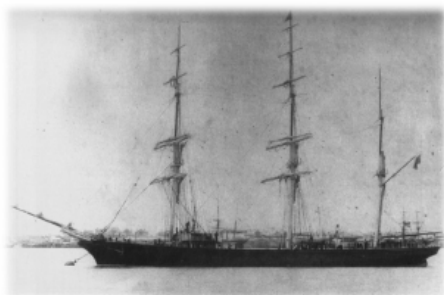
Shipwreck chart produced for project and the Lighthouse visitors



Shipwreck details produced for the project and visitors at Start Point lighthouse

Barque "Dryad" wrecked on Start Point 1891

Steve Clarkson - marinearchaeology.org



The Dryad was a 1035 ton fully rigged iron barque of Liverpool. On the 3rd March 1891 she left Shields on the Tyne with a cargo of coal and mining equipment en route to Valparaiso in Chile. On her way down the English Channel Captain William Thomas and the crew were off Beachy Head at about 9:30 in the morning being helped by a moderate easterly gale but later were battling hurricane winds and a blizzard and just before midnight she was driven into the cliffs at Start Point. Head lighthouse keeper Jones thought he had seen a glimmer of navigation light but the conditions were such that he and his colleagues could not see the ship, which by this time, had hit the rocks. The disaster became evident the next morning.

The Dryad was built in 1874 at Rodens of Liverpool and was 203.4 ft long with a breadth of 34.7 ft and draught of 21.25 ft. Her main mast was over 83 ft in length. She carried a general cargo to and from many ports including: Liverpool, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Melbourne, Dublin, Newcastle, Calcutta, Dunkirk, Cardiff, Pisasqua, Falmouth, Bordeaux, Hamburg, Falkland Islands and her planned final destination of Valparaiso in Chile. Although she was carrying a cargo of coal on her last journey, generally, she carries a variety of goods including furniture, toys, piano's, slates, flour, paint, cigars, chinaware and rum.

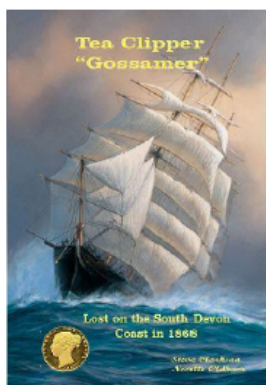
On board at the time of wrecking were Captain William Thomas and his first mate Glenville, Sailmaker- William Irvine, a carpenter, steward, cook and nine able seamen as well as five apprentices. Only one of the twenty one survived but he died later having spent the night, clinging the frozen rocks in the blizzard. The crew came from many countries including, England, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Jersey.

On March 15th an inquest was held in the "London Inn" Hallsands but only two of the eight bodies recovered could be identified. Fifty five year old, sailmaker, William Irvine was identified by his cork foot. William Irvine was buried at Stockenham church where his gravestone can be seen today. Diver Henry Alexander has written a book "The life and death of Liverpool Barque DRYAD"



Tea Clipper "Gossamer" wrecked on Prawle point 1868

Steve Clarkson - marinearchaeology.org



The painting shown, by Tim Thomas of Plymouth, depicts Tea Clipper "Gossamer" off the Eddystone lighthouse. She was wrecked off Prawle Point near Salcombe on the South Devon coast in December 1868. She comes from the "Tea Clipper" era between 1843 to 1869 and was born out of the opening up of the tea trade with China. These were very fast ships for the time and averaged 17 to 21 knots. The Gossamer was from a unique group of clippers in that it was a composite built ship with an iron frame and wooden planking, which enabled the hull to still be covered in copper below the waterline in order to reduce the growth of sea life. This iron frame meant the ship could carry more weight for its size. Boats of this construction were only made between 1862 and 1869 (a period of 7years). The most famous in the UK is the "Cutty Sark", on display in London. These fast and manoeuvrable tea clippers were mainly used for the tea trade. However they also had other uses, trading silks and opium and were known to have been used by pirates and smugglers due to their manoeuvrability and speed.

The Gossamer was 735 Tons with a length of 181 ft and breadth of 30 ft and built by Alexander Stephens and Sons at a cost of around £14,500. She was built in the Kelvinhaugh Yard, Glasgow, in 1864. The carpenter's plane on the left, also recovered from the wreck, was used by ships carpenter Charles Truscott, who survived the wrecking. The Gossamer spent most of her life shipping dry goods such as haberdashery and shoes to Shanghai, returning with fresh tea ten months later.



On the 2nd December 1868, the Gossamer left London Docks on route to Adelaide with a cargo of general goods and was due to pick up some more passengers at Plymouth. In a South Westerly gale and strong tides, and a decision not to tack further out to sea, she was driven into the shore near Prawle Point. Thirteen crew and passengers drowned with at least eight of them being buried in Chivelstone Churchyard. The inquest was held in the Seven Stars Inn close to the church. Captain Thomson and his wife of four weeks, Barbara, share the same grave. *Sketch by Stephen George.*



SS "Marana" wrecked on Start Point 1891

Steve Clarkson - marinearchaeology.org



On March 9th 1891, the "Great Blizzard" hit the West Country unexpectedly, catching out a few ships that had gone to sea. The "Marana" was one of the fifteen casualties lost off the Devon and Cornish coast that night in the Blizzard. The other ship lost off Start Point that night was the "Dryad", which was a fully rigged iron barque on her way to Valparaiso from the Tyne with a cargo of coal.

The Marana was a sail and steamship, built by Aitken & Mansel in Whiteinch (Glasgow) in 1880. She was 2177 gross tons with a length of 87.1m and width of 6.8m. The photograph on the right shows

her stranded at Start Point.

The Marana was on route from London to Colombo, Ceylon, with a general cargo including railway sleepers and telegraph poles. Captain Higginson and his 27 crew were scheduled to call in at Swansea to take on coal for the journey. She was at St. Catherine's Point, off the Isle of Wight, when the blizzard struck, but she continued on her journey west. She was next seen in mountainous seas by the coastguard at Hallsands, who thought she was perilously close to the shore. A couple of hours later the lookout on the ship saw land but it was too late and she struck the Blackstone Rock off Start Point. The Hallsands coastguard alerted Prawle coastguards so they could bring their rocket rescue apparatus, but the blizzard conditions were such they had no chance of getting to the scene quickly. Twenty two of the passengers and crew took to a lifeboat, whilst Captain Higginson, three Mates, Chief Engineer and a mess room steward, took to a jolly boat. The conditions sent all the boats to the west and the jolly boat was never seen again, but the other lifeboat eventually reached the shore at Horseley cove. Unfortunately, it had turned over a couple of times in the rough sea and, hanging to the upturned keel, only four survivors made it to the shore. Their ordeal was not over as crew member Rathnison froze to death, whilst the fittest crew member, Fireman Andrew Johnsen, left to get help from the Prawle Coastguard. When he arrived at the Prawle coastguard station he could not make himself understood as he only spoke Swedish and this led to a delay in the others being rescued. Nine days later, another of the crew from the lifeboat was washed ashore. Eight bodies were buried in the Chivelstone Church graveyard as well as one at Littlestone Exeter. Approximately Fifteen hundred railway sleepers, from the ship's cargo, were later sold by messrs Bourne & Son at Prawle.



SS Newholm wrecked on Start Point

Steve Clarkson - marinearchaeology.org



SS Newholm was a 3399 ton British cargo steamship built in 1899 by Swan Hunter of Newcastle. She was 330 ft long and 48 ft wide and had a 293 hp triple expansion engine. The picture on the left is of an almost identical ship built by the same company, Swan Hunter. She is the steamer "Elingamite" which was also built in the late 1800's.

On the 8th September 1917, SS Newholm was on her way from Bilbao in Spain to Middleborough with a cargo of iron ore when she hit a mine laid by the German submarine UC-31 of the I Flotilla.

The ship sank so fast that twenty of her crew did not have time to get off and drowned during the sinking. Nine of her crew including Captain Mangus Smith managed to get to cling to floating wreckage. Two local crabbing boats, one skippered by 13 year old Ella Trout of Hallsands picked up the survivors who were then transferred to naval patrol drifter "Direct Me" and taken to Dartmouth. Ella was seen as the second "Grace Darling" and awarded the OBE in 1918.

UC 31 had laid eight mines in the area the night before planning to sink the shipping around the Dartmouth entrance. She sank 38 ships with a total of 51,017 tons between 2 September 1916 until she surrendered on 26 Nov 1918. One of these ships sunk was the Newholm. UC31 was skippered by Kapitänleutnant Kurt Siewert who was honored with the "Royal House Order of Hohenzollern".

The Newholm sits on the seabed on a sloping sand bank (28 to 42m) and is a popular site for scuba divers. The photo to the right, taken by local diver Richard Knight, shows some of her twisted remains.



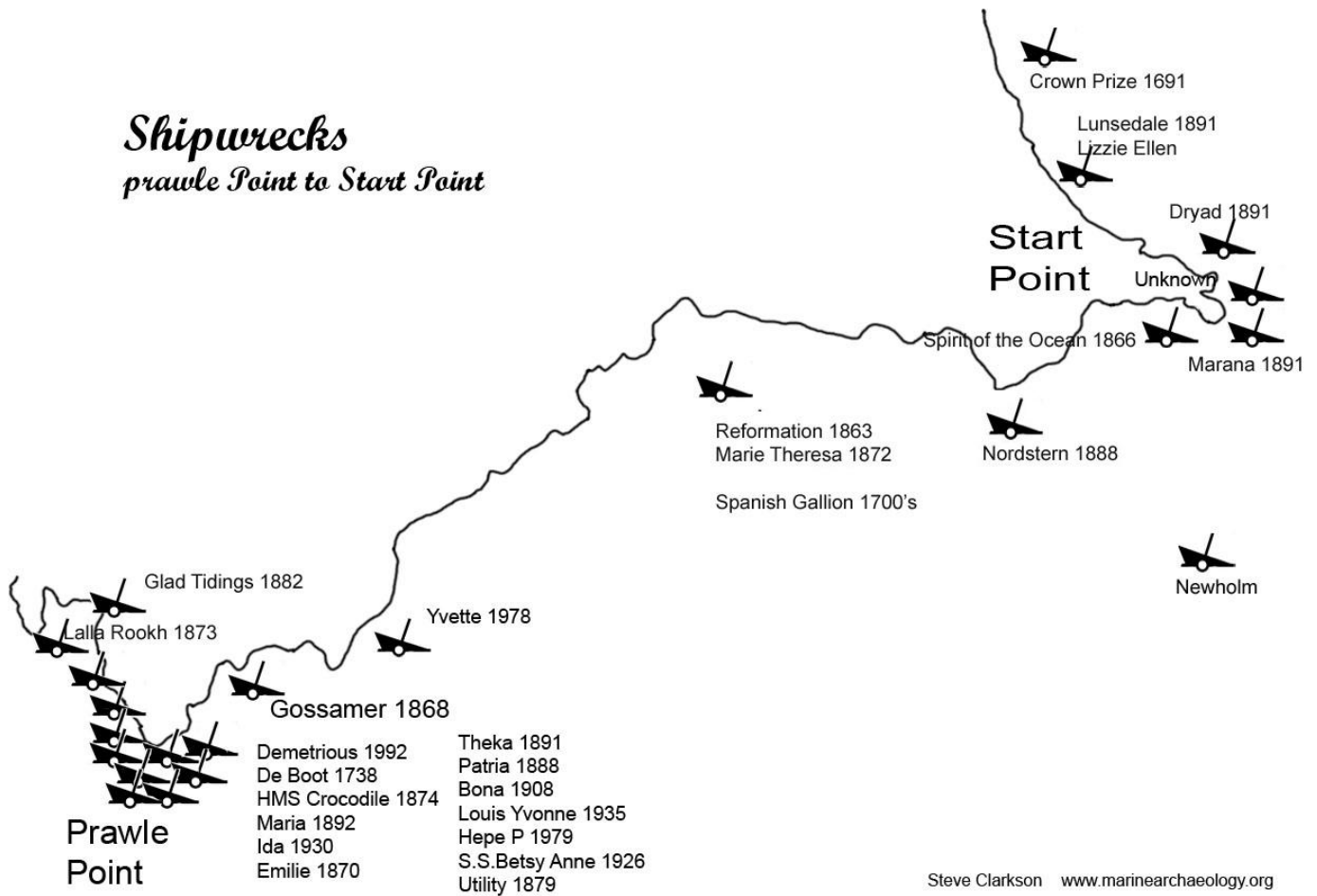
13. People Involved

The project has involved divers from various BSAC clubs Those involved in the project are shown below:-

Steve Clarkson	Reading BSAC (Project leader)
The late Neville Oldham	East Cheshire BSAC
Dave Parham	Bournemouth University BSAC (NAS Trainer / Project advisor)
Mike Turner	Totnes BSAC
Ron Howell	Northampton BSAC
Colin Mathews	Reading BSAC
Emma Harris	Reading BSAC
Sue Mitchell	Reading BSAC
Paul Fiander	Reading BSAC

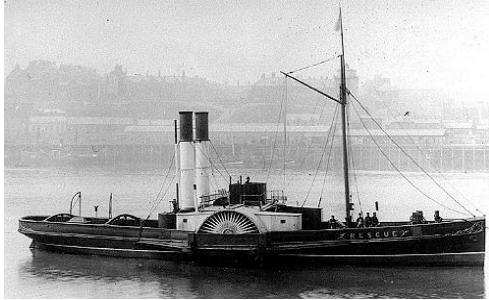
14. Shipwrecks – Prawle to Start Point

The following chart shows the shipwrecks between Prawle Point and Start Point and this is followed by details of the ships and wrecking for both those that have been located and those still be found.



15. Shipwrecks located

a) Steam Tug Reliance 1888



Paddle Steamer Reliance was built 1874 by Beeching, Gt. Yarmouth. She was a wooden paddle tug measuring : L98.5'. B18.7'. D9.4'. (Official Number ON70162

She was 113grt. With a 60nhp 2cyl 25"x48" steam engine built by T A Young. ON70162. She sank off Prawle Point in 1888 whilst being towed by tug "Conqueror" and all four crew were rescued safely.

She had a chequered history:

23-11-1875 Towed S/V Accorda Jovey Augustina into Ramsgate after she had lost anchor and chains.

26-11-1876 Captain Freshwater awarded binoculars and a silver medal for earlier rescue of crew of schooner Jean Baptiste off Courcelles.

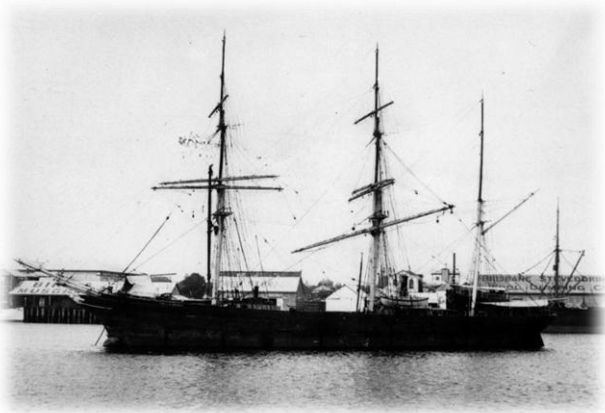
2-5-1878 Passing Gravesend towing bark Louise for Deptford.

1882 [by] Owner Wm Fothergill, Milton, Gravesend.

Today all that is left of her is her boiler which lays in 20m of water in a deep gully.

b) Lalla Rookh 1873

Lalla Rookh 1856 (Prawle Point)



The Lalla Rookh was a square-rigged tea clipper and was homeward bound to London from Shanghai with 1300 tons of tea and 60 tons of tobacco. She met her fate on 3rd March 1873 when she struck Gammon Head in a South Westerly gale and fog. The gale blew her round into 'Elender' cove where she lay under the sand today. She had 19 people, including Captain Fullerton, on

board and most got ashore either by jumping onto the rocks or using the breaches buoy which had been deployed by a rocket from Prawle coastguards. Two other people, Thomas Groves and a stowaway, were unlucky and had drowned, the mate trying to launch a lifeboat and the stowaway presumably hidden in his bunk. There were three Lalla Rookh's operating at this time and many other ships in the 1800's had this name making research difficult. This particular Lalla Rookh was built in 1856.



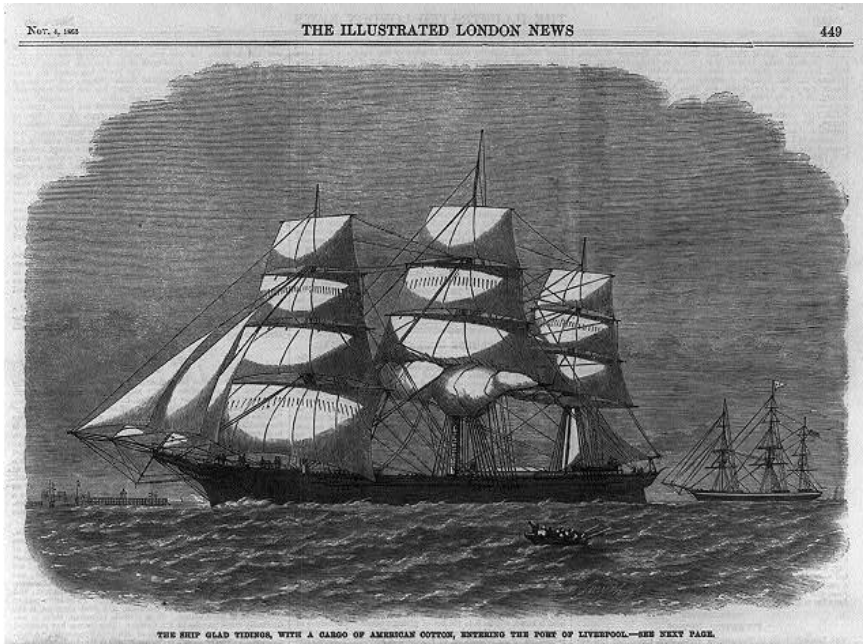
Within a couple of weeks the ship had broken up and some of its cargo recovered however the people of Slapton sands got a present when some of the wreckage and cargo of tea and tobacco was washed up onto the beach. One piece of wreckage, her figurehead, was washed up on a beach in Jersey and can now be viewed on the 'Cutty Sark' in Greenwich. Items on the left were

recovered from the wrecksite.

Today the Lalla Rookh sits under the sand in Elender cove near Prawle Point

c) Glad Tidings

Glad Tidings 1882 (Prawle Point)



Glad Tidings was a 1322 gross tons full rigged Canadian Schooner registered in St John's New Brunswick. She was built in Portland, St John's in 1874. The image to the left is a sketch of the ship illustrated in the London news.

Captain Charles McMullen was below at the time of the wrecking and the ship was under the command of mate William Robertson Baikie who thought he was about six miles offshore. By the time he realised the ship was close to the shore it

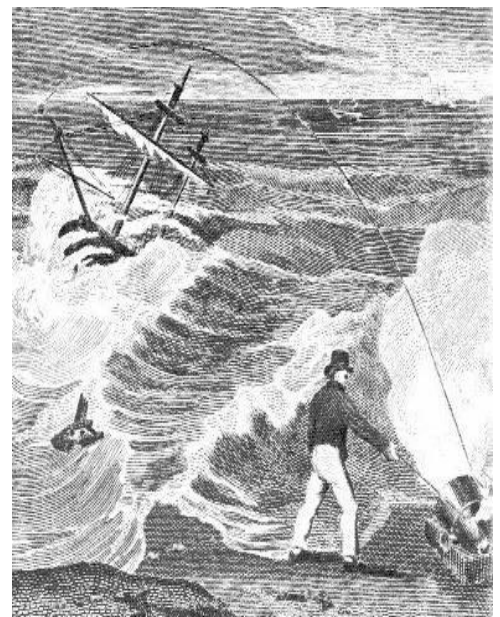
was too late to complete a turn so they cut down her mizzen mast to stabilise the ship which eventually went ashore in Elender cove. One of the crew lit a distress signal which set fire to the ship making it essential for a quick rescue. Fortunately the Rickham coastguard reached them in time and used rocket apparatus to save 19 of the crew. Meanwhile Chales Allen and a sick Portuguese crew member tried to swim a rope ashore and were both drowned.

The ship left Calcutta on 10th August 1882 with a crew of 21 including the captain's wife and two children who disembarked at Falmouth. She was carrying 1800 tons of linseed oil in bags. Glad Tidings was bound for Amsterdam having stopped at Falmouth between 11th and 15th August when this tragic navigation error occurred.



Linseed seeds

At a court hearing both the Captain and the Chief Officer were blamed for the accident, having been accused of not taking into account the correct calculations for tide and wind when plotting the course. Both had their masters certificates suspended for three months each.



HMS Crocodile (Prawle Point)

Steve Clarkson

- marinearchaeology.org



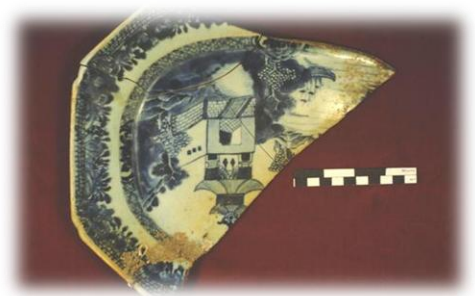
The above painting by Nicholas-Pocock (1740-1821) depicts the wrecking of HMS Crocodile on Prawle Point. Built in Portsmouth dockyard in 1781 the Crocodile was a 114 ft long 24 gun Royal Navy sixth rate Frigate. The middle of the 18th century saw the introduction of a new fifth/Sixth -rate type, the classic frigate, with no ports on the lower deck, and the main battery disposed solely on the upper deck, where it could be fought in all weathers. Until the middle of the 18th century these size ships

did not have a rating and were called "Post Ship" Post ship was a designation used in the Royal Navy, during the early century and the Napoleonic Wars, to describe a ship of the sixth that was smaller than a frigate of the time (in practice, carrying fewer than 28 guns), but by virtue of being a rated ship (with at least 20 guns), had to have as its captain a post captain rather than a lieutenant or commander. Thus ships with 20 to 26 guns were post ships, though this situation changed after 1817. With a crew of 170 and commanded by Captain Williamfon, the Crocodile left Bombay, India on 14th January 1784 with dispatched including one on an account of an engagement between Sir Edward Hughs and the French at Cannonore, "where the French had great losses and the British gained an immense quantity of treasure".



On her homeward journey via St Helena, she was with the "HMS Rodney", Royal Henry, Worcester, and East Indiaman "Dutton". When they entered the English Channel they encountered thick fog and at half past two in the morning of the 9th May 1784, hit the rocks at Prawle Point. All the crew were saved as well as the despatches that were delivered to the "East India House" in London. Images- Terry Crocker

The wreck is very scattered and some of it lays amongst the remains of the wreck of the "Heye-P" and the "De Boot". She was extensively salvaged at the time and most of her cannon removed. Artefacts found are iron cannon, copper pins bearing the admiralty marks, barbed nails and a pan weight with the figure 14 engraved into it. Also amongst the wreckage was a sounding weight. The wreck was found by local Diver Terry Crocker who also owns her.



e) Demetrios

Transport ship “Demetrios” wrecked on Prawle point 1992



One of the newest additions to the 34 or so ships that have hit prawle Point is the 9700 ton Demetrios. She was formally the Chinese owned “Longlin” and was being towed from Dunkirk to Turkey by a Russian tug *Nastoroh*. During a force 10 gale, with none aboard, she drifted for five hours before hitting Prawle Point.

She was a 9700 ton 160m long Panamanian transport ship built in 1974 by Brodospit Shipyard Ltd and capable of 19kts.

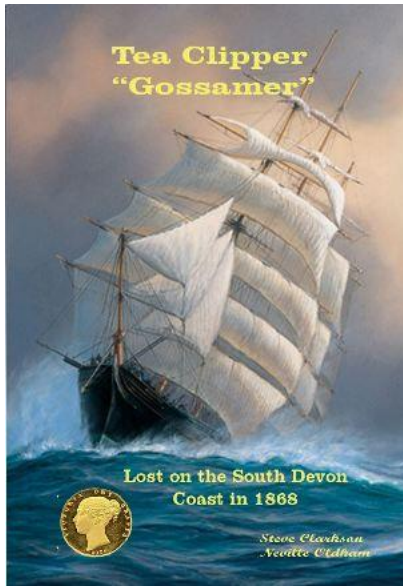
This wrecking in December 1992 now makes it very difficult to divers to dive the many wrecks that are beneath her wreckage. She has been partly salvaged but her boilers, engine and two large section of the ship lay on the seabed.

Some of the bow section of the ship remains on the rocks above the wrecksite.



f) Tea Clipper Gossamer 1868

Tea Clipper “Gossamer” wrecked on Prawle point 1868



The painting shown, by Tim Thomas of Plymouth, depicts Tea Clipper “Gossamer” off the Eddystone lighthouse. She was wrecked off Prawle Point near Salcombe on the South Devon coast in December 1868. She comes from the “Tea Clipper” era between 1843 to 1869 and was born out of the opening up of the tea trade with China. These were very fast ships for the time and averaged 17 to 21 knots. The Gossamer was from a unique group of clippers in that it was a composite built ship with an iron frame and wooden planking, which enabled the hull to still be covered in copper below the waterline in order to reduce the growth of sea life. This iron frame meant the ship could carry more weight for its size. Boats of this construction were only made between 1862 and 1869 (a period of 7 years). The most famous in the UK is the “Cutty Sark”, on display in London. These fast

and manoeuvrable tea clippers were mainly used for the tea trade. However they also had other uses, trading silks and opium and were known to have been used by pirates and smugglers due to their manoeuvrability and speed.

The Gossamer was 735 Tons with a length of 181 ft and breadth of 30 ft and built by Alexander Stephens and Sons at a cost of around £14,500. She was built in the Kelvinhaugh Yard, Glasgow, in 1864. The carpenter’s plane on the left, also recovered from the wreck, was used by ships carpenter Charles Truscott, who survived the wrecking. The Gossamer spent most of her life shipping dry goods such as haberdashery and shoes to Shanghai, returning with fresh tea ten months later.



On the 2nd December 1868, the Gossamer left London Docks on route to Adelaide with a cargo of general goods and was due to pick up some more passengers at Plymouth. In a South Westerly gale and strong tides, and a decision not to tack further out to sea, she was driven into the shore near Prawle Point. Thirteen crew and passengers drowned with at least eight of them being buried in Chivelstone Churchyard. The inquest was held in the Seven Stars Inn close to the church. Captain Thomson and his wife of four weeks, Barbara, share the same grave. *Sketch by Stephen George.*



g) Yvette 1978

Trawler "Yvette" wrecked near Prawle point 1978



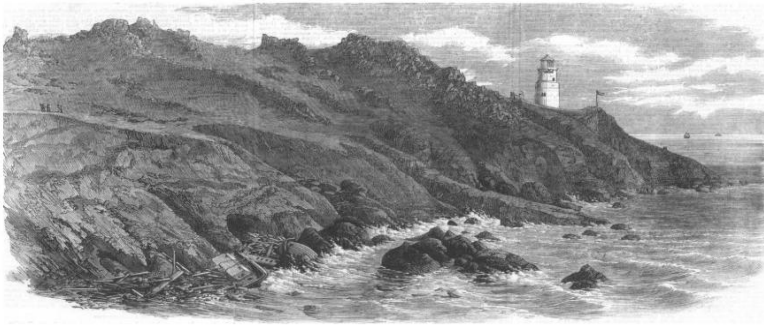
On 12 March 1978 the Brixham trawler Yvette was steaming near Prawle in poor visibility and a big swell. Issues with the radar made the skipper unsure of his position and before he could take any action the ship was driven ashore off Langstone point. Attempts to get her off the rocks failed so the skipper was taken off by helicopter and three remaining crew were taken off using the coastguards "Rocket Apperatus".

Today the majority of her remains can be seen at low water and some of her is under the water at 3m.



h) Spirit of the Ocean 1866

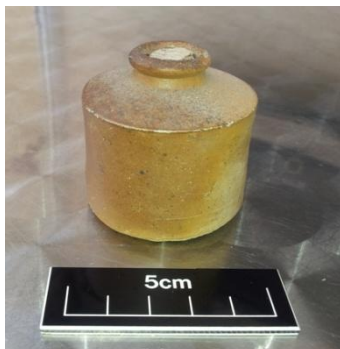
Tea Clipper "Spirit of the Ocean" lost off Prawle Point 1866



The painting above was in the "London Illustrated News" in 1866 and depicts the Spirit of the Ocean breaking up on the cliffs to the east of Start Point. This 578 tons barque and was built in 1863, by Jones & Co and was originally owned by Messrs C. Walton and Croshaw & Co. Her Port of registry and

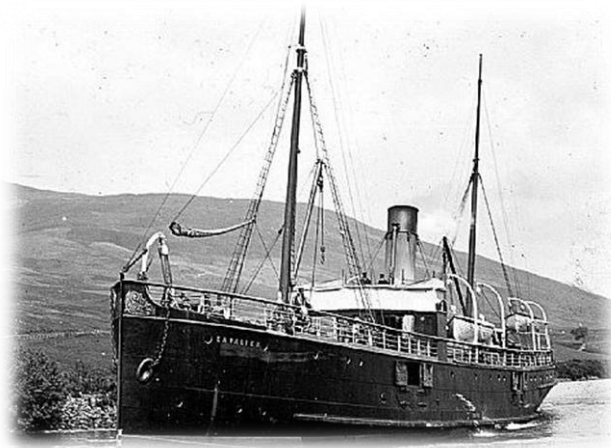
survey was London. In the spring of 1866, under the command of Captain Carey, she was on route from Halifax Nova Scotia to London when she encountered a South West gale off the Devon coast. She was owned by Crawshaw of London and her general cargo valued at £50,000 was mostly salvaged from the wreck in the weeks following the sinking. Captain Carey had decided to try and reach the shelter of Dartmouth but the conditions were such that she lost the wind and drifted into the cliffs to the west of Start point. On board were a crew of eighteen and very few of them were qualified as able seamen and this was confirmed by a letter sent by one of the passengers who had posted it at the previous port of call. Including the passengers, only four of the forty two people on board were saved and that was only due to the gallantry of a local, Samuel Popplestone of Start Farm, who had swum out to the shipwreck. He was awarded the "Gold Medal"

The inkpot below is just one of the many objects recovered from the wreck. Some of the other artifacts can be found on display at the Museum in Salcombe.



i) Marana 1891

SS “Marana” wrecked on Start Point 1891



On March 9th 1891, the “Great Blizzard” hit the West Country unexpectedly, catching out a few ships that had gone to sea. The “Marana” was one of the fifteen casualties lost off the Devon and Cornish coast that night in the Blizzard. The other ship lost off Start Point that night was the “Dryad”, which was a fully rigged iron barque on her way to Valparaíso from the Tyne with a cargo of coal.

The Marana was a sail and steamship, built by Aitken & Mansel in Whiteinch (Glasgow) in 1880. She was 2177 gross tons with a length of 87.1m and

width of 6.8m. The photograph on the right shows her stranded at Start Point.

The Marana was on route from London to Colombo, Ceylon, with a general cargo including railway sleepers and telegraph poles. Captain Higginson and his 27 crew were scheduled to call in at Swansea to take on coal for the journey. She was at St. Catherine’s Point, off the Isle of Wight, when the blizzard struck, but she continued on her journey west. She was next seen in mountainous seas by the coastguard at Hallsands, who thought she was perilously close to the shore. A couple of hours later the lookout



on the ship saw land but it was too late and she struck the Blackstone Rock off Start Point. The Hallsands coastguard alerted Prawle coastguards so they could bring their rocket rescue apparatus, but the blizzard conditions were such they had no chance of getting to the scene quickly. Twenty two of the passengers and crew took to a lifeboat, whilst Captain Higginson, three Mates, Chief Engineer and a mess room steward, took to a jolly boat. The conditions sent all the boats to the west and the jolly boat was never seen again, but the other lifeboat eventually reached the shore at Horseley cove. Unfortunately, it had turned over a couple of times in the rough sea and, hanging to the upturned keel, only four survivors made it to the shore. Their ordeal was not over as crew member Rathnison froze to death, whilst the fittest crew member, Fireman Andrew Johnsen, left to get help from the Prawle Coastguard. When he arrived at the Prawle coastguard station he could not make himself understood as he only spoke Swedish and this led to a delay in the others being rescued. Nine days later, another of the crew from the lifeboat was washed ashore. Eight bodies were buried in the Chivelstone Church graveyard as well as one at Littlestone Exeter. Approximately Fifteen hundred railway sleepers, from the ship’s cargo, were later sold by messrs Bourne & Son at Prawle.



j) Dryad 1891

Barque "Dryad" wrecked on Start Point 1891



The Dryad was a 1035 ton fully rigged iron barque of Liverpool. On the 3rd March 1891 she left Shields on the Tyne with a cargo of coal and mining equipment en route to Valparaíso in Chile. On her way down the English Channel Captain William Thomas and the crew were off Beachy Head at about 9:30 in the morning being helped by a moderate easterly gale but later were battling hurricane winds and a blizzard and just before midnight she was driven into the cliffs at Start Point. Head lighthouse keeper Jones thought he had seen a glimmer of navigation light but the conditions were such that he and his colleagues could not see the ship, which by this time, had hit the rocks. The disaster became evident the next morning.

The Dryad was built in 1874 at Rodens of Liverpool and was 203.4 ft long with a breadth of 34.7 ft and draught of 21.25 ft. Her main mast was over 83 ft in length. She carried a general cargo to and from many ports including: Liverpool, New York, San Francisco, Sydney, Melbourne, Dublin, Newcastle, Calcutta, Dunkirk, Cardiff, Pasaqua, Falmouth, Bordeaux, Hamburg, Falkland Islands and her planned final destination of Valparaíso in Chile. Although she was carrying a cargo of coal on her last journey, generally, she carries a variety of goods including furniture, toys, piano's, slates, flour, paint, cigars, chinaware and rum.



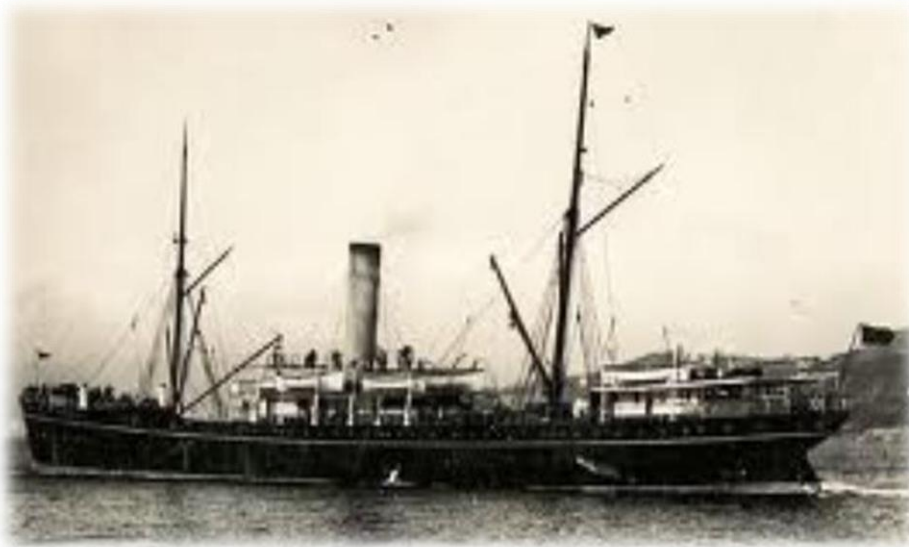
On board at the time of wrecking were Captain William Thomas and his first mate Glenville, Sailmaker- William Irvine, a carpenter, steward, cook and nine able seamen as well as five apprentices. Only one of the twenty one survived but he died later having spent the night, clinging the frozen rocks in the blizzard. The crew came from many countries including, England, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Jersey.

On March 15th an inquest was held in the "London Inn" Hallsands but only two of the eight bodies recovered could be identified. Fifty five year old, sailmaker, William Irvine was identified by his cork foot. William Irvine was buried at Stockenham church where his gravestone can be seen today. Diver Henry Alexander has written a book "The life and death of Liverpool Barque DRYAD". The ring shown above was found on the wreck.



k) Newholm 1917

SS Newholm wrecked on Start Point



SS Newholm was a 3399 ton British cargo steamship built in 1899 by Swan Hunter of Newcastle. She was 330 ft long and 48 ft wide and had a 293 hp triple expansion engine. The picture on the left is of an almost identical ship built by the same company, Swan Hunter. She is the steamer "Elingamite" which was also built in the late 1800's.

On the 8th September 1917, SS Newholm was on her way from Bilbao in Spain to Middleborough with a cargo of iron ore when she hit a mine laid by the German submarine UC-31 of the I Flotilla.

The ship sank so fast that twenty of her crew did not have time to get off and drowned during the sinking. Nine of her crew including Captain Mangus Smith managed to get to cling to floating wreckage. Two local crabbing boats, one skippered by 13 year old Ella Trout of Hallsands picked up the survivors who were then transferred to naval patrol drifter "Direct Me" and taken to Dartmouth. Ella was seen as the second "Grace Darling" and awarded the OBE in 1918.

UC 31 had laid eight mines in the area the night before planning to sink the shipping around the Dartmouth entrance. She sank 38 ships with a total of 51,017 tons between 2 September 1916 until she surrendered on 26 Nov 1918 .

One of these ships sunk was the Newholm. UC31 was skippered by Kapitänleutnant Kurt Siewert who was honored with the "Royal House Order of Hohenzollern".

The Newholm sits on the seabed on a sloping sand bank (28 to 42m) and is a popular site for scuba divers. The photo to the right, taken by local diver Richard Knight, shows some of her twisted remains.



1) Nordstern 1888



The Nordstern would have looked a bit like the one in the image above built around the same time.

The 421 ton German steamer nordstern of Bremen went ashore during a storm near Start Point on 13th January 1888. Captain B. Buhle and his crew of 12 were carrying a cargo of wine from Malaga en route to the Netherlands.

She was built by Möller & Holberg, Stettin in 1882, She was part of the Neptun Line / Dampfschiffahrts Gesellschaft Neptun (1873-1974 Bremen)

Formed by Johann Hermann Niemann and others in 1873 the Dampfschiffahrts Gesellschaft Neptun started operations with six ships from Bremen to Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the German Baltic ports. In 1875 a service from Bremen to Rotterdam and Amsterdam was started and in 1877 a Bremen Hamburg service was begun, the company expanded rapidly and new liner services were opened to the Mediterranean, Spain and Portugal.

Crew used two of their own lifeboats and rowed to Salcolme where they were met by lifeboat lesty at the entrance. The refused to board the lifeboat but eventually accepted a crew member of the lifeboat to transfer to their boats and act as pilots. All the crew got ashore.

A tap and porthole was recovered from the wreck by divers. Her boiler lays in 8 m of water off Peartree point.

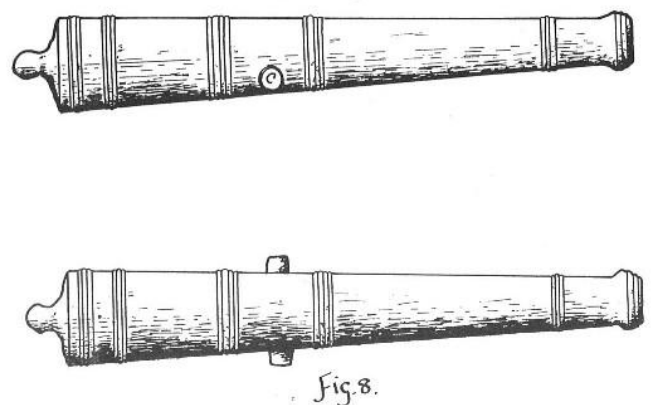
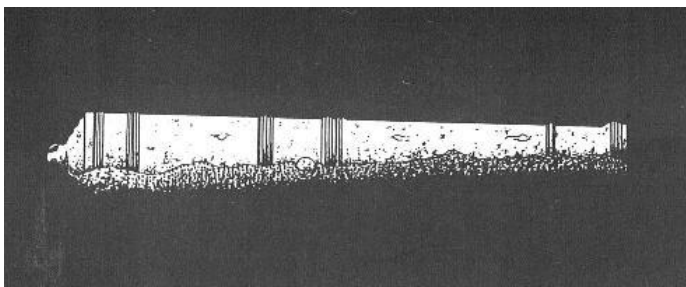
m) HMS Crown Prize



HMS Crown Prize was a 223 ton 6th rate frigate won from the French in 1691. She was built of wood and carried a crew of twenty two and an armament of 26 cannon. The image above is of a similar French frigate of the time.

On 9th February 1692 she was lost on her way to the river Dart in Devon. Twenty one men and Captain William Tichborn were all lost when the ship eventually was driven ashore. It is believed she hit the mewstone and drifted south. We have found and researched the cannon on both sides of the entrance to the Dart but neither match the dates around the sinking. Four cannon have been recovered off beesands and one, belonging to Terry Scott, was on display in the “Cellars”. These may well be from the Crown prize as one had the broad arrow navy mark. The following are sketches by Stephen George of the recovered cannon.

One of her cannon lay off the Mewstone an others lay near the Skerries bank.



n) De Boot



Built at Rotterdam and in service for the VOC from 1733 till 1738 she was a 650 tons full rigged sailing ship.

De Boot hit Prawle Point on her 2nd homebound voyage in the English Channel between Goudstaart and Dartmouth on November 8th 1733 under the command of Capt. Jacob Van Duinen



Today her remains are scattered in gullies, only shards remain of her cargo of porcelain, and there is one cannon. More modern wrecks such as the Demetrios have also scattered there remains over the wrecksite.

A box of diamonds that was lost in the wreck has never been found.

16. Other ships known to have wrecked in the area.

o) Betsey Anne

p) Maria 1892

q) Ida 1930

r) Bona 1907

s) Louise Yvonne 1935

t) Hepe P 1979

u) Marie Teresa 1872

v) Spanish Galleon 1700

w) Reformation 1883

x) Lizzie Ellen 1891



17. Artefacts located

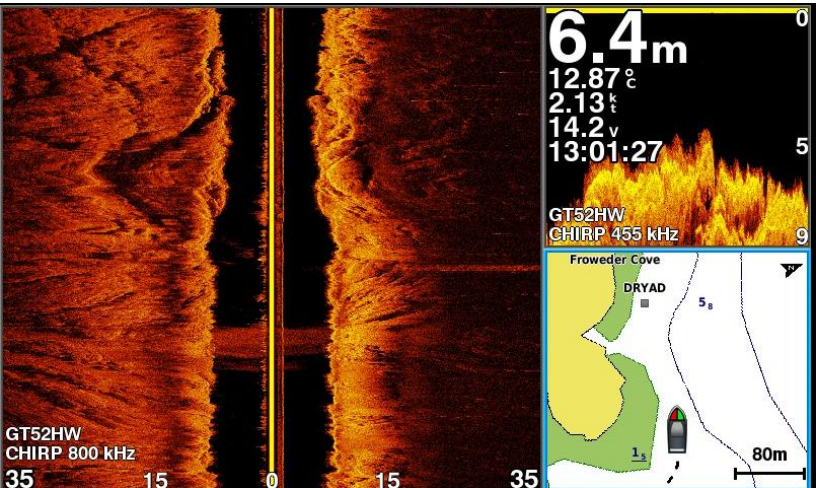
No artefacts were recovered during this project. All the artefacts shown were previously recovered..

18. Pictures of the team at work



19. Other project images

Sidescan (unknown wreck Start Point), Prawle Point, Equipment , Start Lighthouse, Typical drone image, diver & drone photography record Prawle



Metric / Imperial
Settings

OverviewDetailsNotificationsLarge MapPhotos

GENERAL

POWER

SENSORS

CONTROLS

WIND

The following map shows the locations where videos and/or photos were taken.
The triangle indicates the direction:

MapSatellite

Google

Imagery ©2016 DigitalGlobe, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky | Terms of Use | Report a map error

	Flight time	Altitude	Home Distance	Gimbal Pitch	Heading	Type
A	00m 42s	11.8 ft	0 ft	0°	94°	Video
B	02m 27s	24.6 ft	281 ft	90° down	92°	Photo



Start Point & Images from the air



20. Research

50265

OFFICIAL LOG BOOK. No. 5.

FOR
EITHER FOREIGN-GOING OR HOME TRADE SHIP.

Name of Ship	Official Number	Port of Registry	Registered Tonnage	Name of Master	No. of his Certificate (if any)
Ypsalme	50265	Liverpool	734	John Thomas	8092

Date of Commencement of the Voyage 8th December 1887

Nature of the Voyage or Employment Foreign & China

Delivered to the Shipping Master of the Port of Liverpool the 27 day of Oct 18 88

Signed [Signature] Shipping Master

NOTE.—The above Entries are to be filled up by the Master, and the Log Book is to be delivered to the Shipping Master within forty-eight hours after the Ship's arrival, or upon the discharge of the Crew, whichever first happens, in the case of a "Foreign-going Ship," and within twenty-one days after the 30th of June and the 31st of December respectively in every year in the case of a "Home Trade Ship."—See 255.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
1867.

During the course of this project we researched the following books and archives.

Plymouth Records Office
Exeter Records Office
Records office Paris State Papers
Records Office Kew

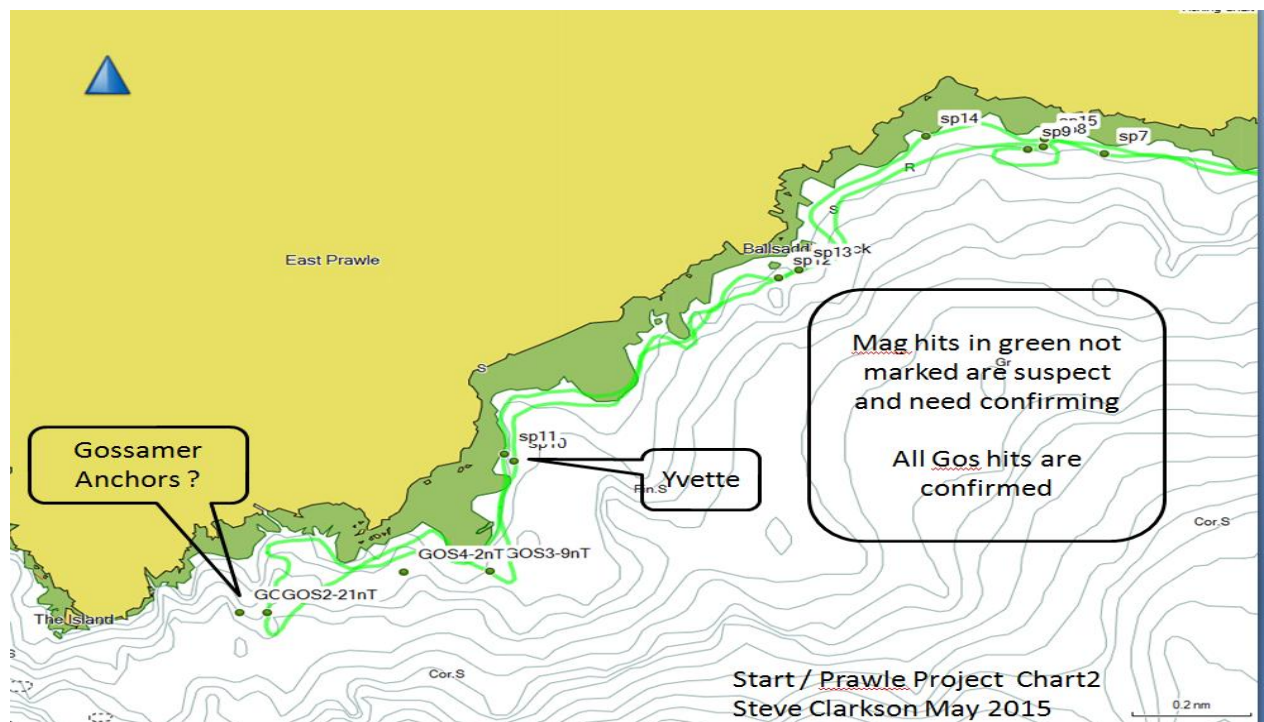
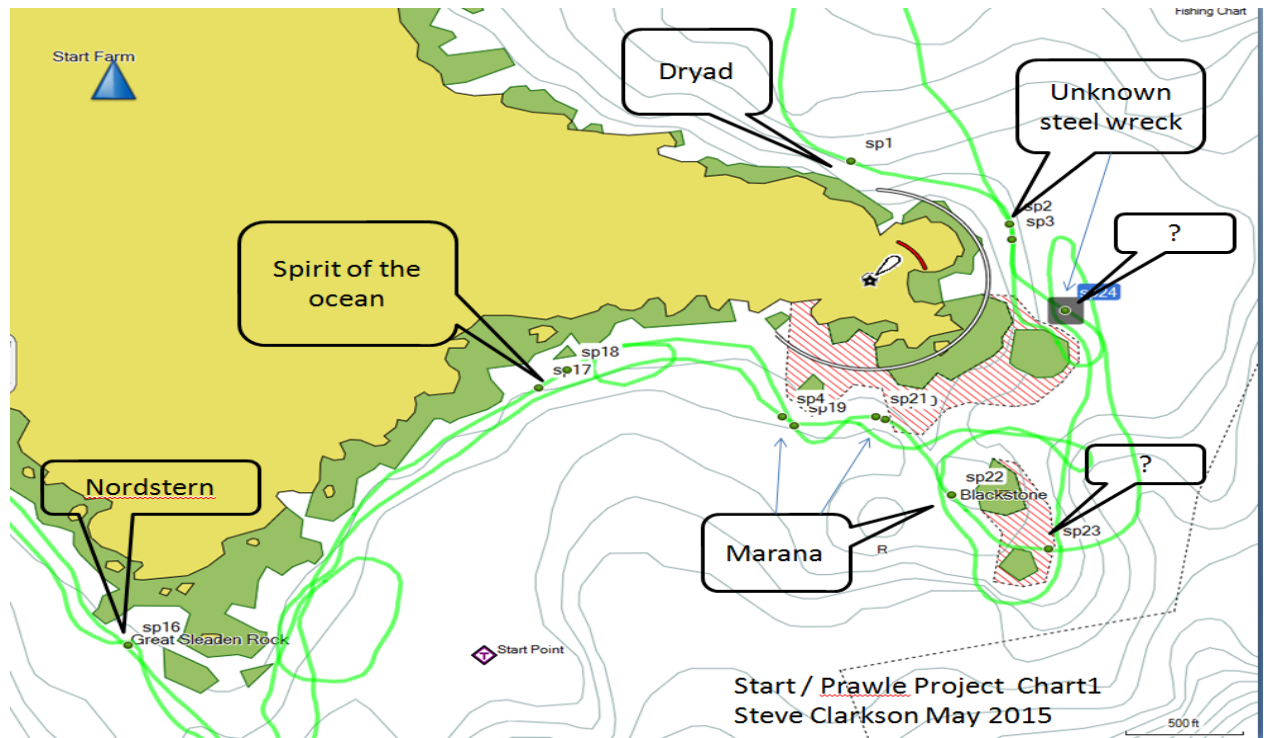
Shipwrecks of the South Hams Kendal McDonald
The Life & Death of the Liverpool "Barque Dryad" Henry Alexander
Shipwrecks on the South Devon Coast Richard Larn
Kingsbridge Gazette
Shipwreck Index Richard Larn
Prawle History Society documents
Salcome Museum
The Tea Clippers McGregor
Port Adelaide Museum
Maritime History Archive Memorial University Newfoundland
South West Maritime Archaeological Group
The reverend Pamela Kemp Chivestone Church East Prawle
Stephen George local diver/historian

21. Magnetic surveys

The magnetometers used were:

Aquascan AX2000, Aquascan AX 100 & Planet Electronics MX 500

The chart below shows the magnetometers hits in GREEN dots.



22. On site activities

Date	Activity
10 April 2015	Magnetometer survey Prawle Point
15 April 2015	Magnetometer survey Langstone Point
25 May 2015	Magnetometer survey Lanacombe bay
7 June 2015	Diving "Newholm"
27 June 2015	Magnetometer survey to find "Reliance"
3 May 2015	Beach / rock metal detecting Prawle
4 July 2015	Magnetometer survey Start Point
23 July 2015	Diving "Gossamer"
22 Aug 2015	Magnetometer survey inshore Start Bay
9 Sept 2015	Diving Start Marana / Spirit of the Ocean
11 Oct 2015	Magnetometer survey Lanacombe bay
31 Oct 2015	Magnetometer survey Elender cove
22 March 2016	Camera Survey Start using drone
14 April 2016	Camera survey Prawle using Drone
11 May 2016	Visit Start Point Lighthouse
12 May 2016	Marine Archaeology Training (Kingswear/Dart)
28 May 2016	Sidescan surveys Start Point
29 May 2016	Coming beach near Gossamer & Yvette wrecksites
2 June 2016	Visit Prawle Coastwatch

23. Conclusions

The area from the shore to the 10m line between Prawle Point and Start Point was successfully surveyed, Researched and documented. The probable position of the last resting place of the ships was established and in some cases the wreck positions were identified with a specific ship due the artifacts found. It was found to be a very difficult area to work in due to strong tides and prevailing wind from the South West making diving inshore very difficult with few days available. There are many shipwrecks that have been salvaged and towed away in the area, particularly off Prawle Point so little evidence is left behind. There are still many small magnetic targets we have not investigated and the survey area needs to be extended to the 20m contour line as many ships sunk in the area have not been found.

24. Financial Report

The project spend was roughly in line with the planned cost. A detailed spreadsheet and receipts are available if required.

Some members of the team provided all their own personal boats .

Hire Equipment	Magnetometer/metal detector hire	430
Equipment bought	Rope, buoys, slates, tapes & weights batteries etc	320
Air		120
Boat fuel /fees	Fuel for club & private boats & harbour fees	880
Boat Hire		650
Hire of Drone equipment and skills		900
Research	Trips to Kew/Exeter/Plymouth	170
	Total spend	3470
	Jubilee Trust Funding	1900

25. Possible future projects on the site

This report documents some of the shipwrecks from Start to Prawle Point but there are some that we know wrecked in the area but have never been found. The next stage will be to investigate some of the magnetic anomalies that have not been dived and also do more magnetometer work in Lanacome bay and to the 20m line.