



SS HJØRDIS “The Forgotten Ship”



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FOREWORD



The wreck of the iron steamship *SS Hjordis* (English equivalent pronunciation “Yurdis”) has lain off Blakeney Point since she was wrecked and went aground in February 1916.

Almost a “ghost ship”, little was known locally about the *Hjordis* or of the circumstances which caused her to go aground so close to the shoreline. It was surmised that she might have been the victim of a wartime attack.

As the sand moved in, the wreck became almost completely covered.

Between 2015 and 2016, the channel moved half a mile to the east and the flow of water over the wreck scoured her out.

Exposed by the tides and shifting sands, large sections of the vessel’s hull and deck were uncovered and became clearly visible just below the waterline.



SS Hjordis - 2016

It was particularly poignant that in 2016, one hundred years after the *Hjordis* went down, the ship showed herself once again and, as a result, there was a revival of interest in her.



My original research in 2016 marked the one hundredth anniversary of the disaster.

It presented the history of the ship, her construction, history of ownership, her voyages and the sequence of events which caused her to run aground. It described the attempts that were made to save the vessel and her crew members, outlined how widely the disaster was reported, and speculated on whether the considerable loss of life could have been averted.

This updated report includes new information which adds to our knowledge of the *Hjordis* and the men who crewed her, not least the man who, against all odds, was the sole survivor.

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SS HJØRDIS - THE SHIP

THE NAME

The *SS Hjørdis* - the name is of Ancient Scandinavian/Icelandic origin and means "sword goddess" - began her life as *SS Strassburg*, before her name was changed to *SS Gimle* and later to *SS Hjørdis*.



SS Gimle (TBG142189603) - DnV, Lloyds, Starke - Steinar Norheim

SPECIFICATIONS

The *SS Strassburg* was an iron-hulled, screw-driven cargo ship, built in March 1873 by the German shipbuilder Actien-Gesellschaft (A.G.) Hansa, Rostock, Germany at the Hansa-Werfte für eiserne Schiffe und Maschinenbau-Anstalt (shipyards for iron ships and mechanical engineering). Actien-Gesellschaft (A.G.) is a corporation limited by share ownership and which may be traded on a stock market.

It was in Rostock that the first propeller-driven steamers in Germany were constructed and the *Strassburg* was one such; she was built at yards owned by Albrecht Tischbein, the forerunner of iron shipbuilding in Germany, founder of one of the first German iron shipbuilding yards, and builder of the first iron screw-driven sea steamer in Germany.

The ship was built for the shipping company Freihandel (William Minlos), Lübeck, Germany and information from The Corporation of Trinity House in 1995 suggests that "she was ice-strengthened for the Baltic winter trade".

The *Strassburg* had a collar hide/fire tube boiler built by A.G. Lübecker Maschinenbau, with a single 2-cylinder compound engine (A.G. Hansa), size NHK 60 IHK 198, with a power of 60 nhp (nominal horse power), 198 ihp (indicated horse power). Ship lists show that in 1873 this engine was typical for a vessel the size of the *Hjørdis*.

A screw steamer, the *Strassburg* was a hybrid of sail - a three masted schooner - and steam, but there appear to be no references to her actually using sails. Reports show that when her engine broke down in 1909, she had to be towed into port and there is no suggestion that she was using sails on her final voyage.

Records in the Shipping Museum in Rostock show the *Strassburg*, listed under (another) ship - hence the ditto marks - also called *Strassburg*, which was built at Greenock on the Clyde.

Nr. & Signal.	Namen von Schiff, Schiffer, Rheder und Heimathsort.	Flagge. Takelung.	Tonnengehalt. Pferdekraft. Anker u. Ketten.	Bau-Jahr — Ort — Meister. Baumaterialien, Verholzung, Beschlag, Reparaturen.	Länge. Breite. Tiefe.	Tiefgang beladen. Form. Anzahl d. Decks.	Fahrten. Naut. Instrum.
	Strassburg. Heimbruch, O. Nordd. Lloyd, Bremen.	D. h	3025 2230	72. Greenock, Caird & Co. —; 10E; Cem. (2 Cyl. 46" & 72" - 48" ..)	351,3 39,4	20 4 (SpD.)	N.-Amer.
	— Nachtwey, J. Dampf.-Ges. > Freihandel, Lübeck.	D. h	445 342	73. Rostock, „Hansa“. —; 3E; Cem.; h.v.o.r. (n.B.n.Cem.)	161,6 23,4	12 1	Osts.
		3m.Sch.	60	3.79.	11,5		

The entry reads:

Names of the ship, the skipper/captain and the owners. Port to which the ship belongs/is registered:

Strassburg - J. Nachtwey - Dampf-Ges (Dampf Gesellschaft, meaning steamship factory) - Freihandel - Lübeck

Flag - Germany

Rigging - 

Tonnage, Power of machine, Anchor and chains

445 - 342 - 60

Build year - Place - Maker - Construction materials


1873 - Rostock Hansa

Length - Width - Depth

161.6 - 23.4 - 11.5

The owner is shown as being the steamship factory and is, therefore, assumed to be the first record, before the ship was sold to her first owner.

A second record in Rostock Shipping Museum gives more detail.

N° & Signal.	Noms du navire, du capitaine et des armateurs. Port, auquel le navire appartient.	Classe à dater du... Port & date de la dernière visite.	Navi-gation & Desti-nation.	Pavillon. Grée-ment et espèce.	Tonnage. Puissance d. mach. Ancres et chaînes.	Année et port de construction, Constructeur. Matériel de construction, chevillage, doublage, réparations etc. Détails de la machine etc.
282. PBGS	Strassburg. 89. Hintz, J. H. C. 89. Act.-Ges. »Freihandel« (Wm. Minlos), Lübeck.	80 ^A 8.88.sp.V.II. Lübeck. 12. 89.	Osts.	D.  3m. Sch.	445 342 200	73. Rostock, Act.-Ges. „Hansa“. ; 4E; W3; Cem.; r(aB.nCem.)79; r(rD.rCem.)85 rTs.87; 0.8.88; by.0.rCem.11.89. (2 Cyl. 20" & 33"-25"; 67 Ø.) nMasch.71; MC.8.88; n(r)Masch 11.89.

Names of the ship, the captain and the owners. Port to which the ship belongs/is registered:

Strassburg - J. H. C. Hintz - A. G. Freihandel (Wm. Minlos) - Lübeck

Class - dated from ... Port and date of the last visit

80 - Lübeck - 12.89 (December 1889)

Navigation and Destination

Osts

Flag. Rigging and Type

Germany -  - 3m. Sch.

Tonnage, Power of machine, Anchor and chains

445 - 342 - 200

Year and port (harbour) where constructed - Builder - Construction material, tacking, dubbing, repairs etc.

1873 - Rostock - A. G. Hansa - etc

Details of the *Strassburg's* specification differ. The Rostock Shipping Museum records show her dimensions as: 161'6" long x 23' 4" wide x 11' 5" deep.

A separate catalogue - in the German Shipping Archive - of the ships built at the Rostock shipyards formerly owned by Albrecht Tischbein gives the *Strassburg's* dimensions as 49.25 m. long x 7.12 m. wide x 3.82 m. deep, equivalent to 161' 6" x 23'4" x 12'6" respectively, and includes the detail 210 PSi.

Norwegian sources give her dimensions as 61.0 m. long x 9.1 m. wide x 3.7. m deep, equivalent to 200' 2" x 29' 10" x 12' 2" respectively. These figures tally with a survey made in 1921 and with a 1960 wreck survey held by the Blakeney Harbour Association which both reported the ship to be 200 ft. long x 30 ft. wide.

There is also a small difference between the Rostock Museum record of gross registered tonnage which shows 445 (a figure for the total amount of space - 44,500 cu. ft. - available within the ship) and the Norwegian source which gives 431 (43,100 cu. ft.).

The catalogue of ships built also shows her gross registered tonnage as 445 (44,500 cu. ft.) but gives her net registered tonnage as 342 (34,200 cu. ft. actually available for cargo).

The same catalogue shows the *Strassburg* as being built in 1872, rather than 1873; the difference may lie in 1872 being the year the ship was laid down and 1873 being the year she was commissioned. The earlier date may have significance; it seems that *Strassburg* was being built or was built just as Germany was moving from the imperial to the metric system of measurement.

Like Britain and the United States of America in the 1860s, German states were making moves towards adopting the metric system and - in 1868 - they passed legislation which meant that, on the unification of these states to form Germany, use of the metric system was to be compulsory. This happened with effect from 1st January 1872.

A further complication in determining the size of the ship is that, before the introduction of the metric system in Germany, almost every town had its own definitions of the units, with many variations between towns and states.

In addition, some obsolete German units have names similar to units that were traditionally used in other countries, such as imperial units in use in the United Kingdom. An example for Rostock shows a Fuß (Foot) as equivalent to the local measurement of $\frac{1}{2}$ Elle, $\frac{1}{16}$ Ruthe, for which the metric/imperial equivalent was 286 mm (11 in).

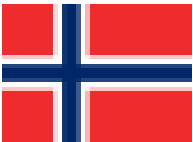
HISTORY AND OWNERSHIP



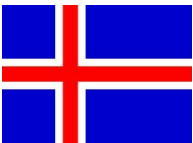
The ship was built as *SS Strassburg* in 1873 by A.G. Hansa, Rostock, Germany for the shipping company A.G. Freihandel (William Minlos), Lübeck, Germany.

A short time after she was built, the *Strassburg* suffered damage, as reported in the 'Morning Post' and other newspapers of Tuesday 6th October 1874: "The following notices of shipping casualties have been received this day by telegraph".

"The Albanian (steamer), bound from Cronstadt for Hull, has put back to repair damage caused by collision with the Strassburg (German steamer, from Lubeck to Cronstadt). Both vessels were badly damaged, but do not make any water.

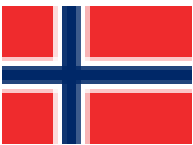


Twenty-three years after she was built, the *Strassburg* was sold in 1896 to the shipping company Alf Monsen of Tønsberg, Moss, Norway, and renamed *SS Gimle*.



As *Gimle*, the ship was sold again in 1898 to J. Bull, of Isafjord, Iceland and transferred to Brødrene Bull (Bull Brothers), Isafjord, Iceland in 1903. In 1904 and still in the Bull Brothers' ownership, her registered port was changed to Hesteyri, Iceland.

The ship was then sold to five successive Norwegian shipping companies.



On 14th January 1906, the *Strassburg* was sold to O.A.A. Hirsch, of Moss (a coastal town in Østfold county, Norway) and renamed *Hjørdis*.

The *Hjørdis* suffered further damage on Saturday 8th June 1907 when she was involved in a collision with the Hull trawler *Doris*, which caused both ships to be detained in port at Stornoway. The two ships were apparently each carrying cargoes of herrings and were bound for the same destination, St Petersburg.

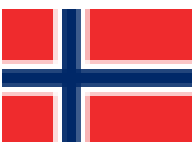
**A HULL TRAWLER'S COLLISION.
NORWEGIAN SINKS.**
A telegram from Lloyd's agent at Stornoway states that on Saturday the Hull trawler *Doris* ran into the Norwegian steamer *Hjørdis*. The Norwegian steamer was cut to the water's edge on the port side of the stern. The *Doris*, which is owned by Armitage's Steam Trawling Co., Ltd., Hull, had a full cargo of herrings for St. Petersburg, and will be detained.

COLLISION AT STORNOWAY.
Lloyd's Stornoway correspondent telegraphed on Saturday:—The trawler *Doris*, of Hull, ran into the Norwegian steamer *Hjørdis*, lying at pier, to-day, cutting her to water's edge port side stern. *Hjørdis* has full cargo of herrings for St Petersburg. Will be detained.

The Scotsman - Monday 10th June 1907

The Hull Daily Mail - Monday 10th June 1907

Although the headline stated that the *Hjørdis* had sunk, the report suggests that her hull was cut open above and down as far as the waterline; this would mean that, provided the cut was above the waterline, she would actually have remained afloat.



On 6th April 1909, the *Hjørdis* was transferred to D/S A/S *Hjørdis* (O. A. Hirsch) of Moss, Norway.

Two years after the *Hjørdis's* collision in 1907, the ship experienced another incident. "The Aberdeen Daily Journal" of 17th July 1909 reported: "The steamer *Hjørdis*, from Wick, has been delayed through a breakdown in her engine ..."



Four days later, the same newspaper reported: "The s.s. *Hjørdis*, which sailed from Wick on the 6th inst., had a breakdown in her machinery, and had to be towed into Christiansund. The damage, however, is not serious, and, from the latest advices to hand, she is expected to resume her voyage tomorrow."

The Hjørdis was sold on 2nd April 1912 to Jacob Ringen, of Haugesund, Norway; ownership was transferred on 9th May 1912 and, on 30th June 1915, the registration was transferred to Bergen, Norway.

Further changes of ownership occurred in quick succession during 1915, when the *Hjørdis* was sold firstly to D/S Dysart (Frimann & Pedersen) of Bergen, Norway on 2nd September and, just over a month later, on 5th October, to Oscar Langerud, of Drammen, Norway.

She was sold to her last owner, D/S *A/S Nordnæs* (Johan Rudolf Trøye) of Bergen, Norway on 2nd December 1915. The ship was reported to have been renamed *Nordnæs* but this was apparently not done before she was lost in February the following year.

TRADE ROUTES

Shipping reports in newspapers of the early 1900s - from 1907 to 1915 - reflect the journeys the *Hjordis* was making - plying, in particular, between ports on the North-East coast of Britain, Scandinavia and Russia with cargoes of coal, herring and salt.

Detailed timeline entries which appear at the back of this paper (page 27 onwards) are drawn from newspaper archives, which may not be comprehensive; there are apparent gaps in the sequential arrival and sailing dates. Details about the ship's cargo are not always stated.

In summary, the *Hjordis's* sailings were:

1907	To and from Aberdeen, Lerwick, Peterhead, Runcorn, Shetland, Stettin and Wick with cargoes of cured herrings, fishery stock and salt
1908	To and from Aberdeen, Frederikshold, Lerwick, Libau, Methil, Peterhead, Stettin and Wick with cured herrings and pulp
1909	To and from Aberdeen, Libau, Manchester, Shetland, Stettin and Wick with cured herrings
1910	To and from Boroughstounness, Esbjerg, Grimsby, Hartlepool, Hudiksvall, Lerwick, Libau, Methil, Peterhead and Wick with battens, bunkers and cured herrings
1911	To and from Arbroath, Berwick, Buckie, Kristiansund, Dresden, Frederickstad, Grimsby, Härnösand, Königsberg, Lerwick, Liverpool, Lower Baltic, Macduff, Shoreham, Stettin, Sunderland and Swansea with coal, cured herrings and potatoes
1912	To and from Blyth, Grangemouth, Middlesbrough, Stromsey and Wick with iron
1913	To and from Berwick, Burntisland, Danzig, Dysart, Fraserburgh, Haugesund, Hviding, Inverness, Peterhead, St Peterersburg, Stavanger, Sunderland, Svendsbo, Wemyss and Wick with cured herrings and coal
1914	To and from Bergen, Blyth, Burntisland, Dysart, Haugesund, Stavanger, Tyne and Wemyss with coal
1915	To and from Kristiansund, Gothenberg, Hull and Middlesbrough

Denmark	Hviding
Germany	Dresden - Königsberg
Norway	Bergen - Kristiansund - Frederikshold - Fredrickstad - Haugessund Stavanger - Svendsbo
Poland	Stettin
Russia	Libau - St Petersburg
Sweden	Gothenberg - Härnösand - Hudiksvall - Lund (Malmö)

THE LAST VOYAGE

PRELUDE TO THE DISASTER - STORMS AND GALES

The "Los Angeles Herald" of Thursday 17th February 1916 gave an account of violent weather conditions which beset Britain the previous day and the extensive damage to property and the loss of life as a result.

14 PERISH, MILLIONS LOST IN WINDSTORM

Hurricane Sweeps British Isles and Leaves Death in Path

By International News Service

LONDON, Feb. 17.—Damage totalling millions of dollars as a result of yesterday's windstorm was shown today in reports from all parts of the British Isles and from Holland.

Ten fishing smacks, with crews numbering eighty men, are missing. Fourteen persons are known to be dead.

Warships were forced by the gale to run into harbors.

The coast, though unprotected by the patrols, was safe from attack, the high waves obviating any assault from Leaward. Many mines were broken from the mooring, some being cast up on the shore.

A snowstorm raged in Scotland, while in Wales the Midland roads were flooded to a depth of five feet.

Ten persons were drowned when a lifeboat from the Norwegian steamer *Hjordis*, which had gone on the beach near Norfolk, was swamped.

Three were drowned when the smack *Narcissus* went aground at Portcawl.

At Llanelly a woman crossing a bridge was swept into the sea by the wind and drowned.

Los Angeles Herald

The "Diss Express and Norfolk and Suffolk Journal" of Friday 18th February gave a local report of a violent gale, a hurricane and snow across Norfolk and Suffolk and described the damage which was caused by the extreme weather conditions and the ensuing floods.

"During the gale on Wednesday the S.S. *Hjordis* from Hull to Calais with coal, was wrecked off Blakeney, and ten of the crew were drowned. Only one man was saved."

It was on the day of the "windstorm" that the *Hjordis* was lost, succumbing - as the newspaper reported - to the gale, as did a Lowestoft trawler, the *Narcissus*, which also went aground and sank on the same day.

"Ten persons were drowned when a lifeboat from the Norwegian steamer *Hjordis*, which had gone on the beach near Norfolk, was swamped."

WEATHER VARIATIONS.

A violent gale at Diss on Monday was succeeded by a heavy snow storm early on Tuesday morning, the ground being covered to a depth of from 3 in. to 4 in. Under the direction of Mr. A. Cooper (Surveyor) the snow ploughs were promptly got to work, the paths cleared for pedestrians and the roads for vehicular traffic. A rapid thaw set in during the day, followed by incessant rain in the evening, and on Wednesday morning all the snow had practically disappeared. The wind blew with hurricane force throughout Wednesday, tiles and slates were dislodged from buildings and a number of trees were blown down. Two roads were blocked at Roydon, one near the Green leading to Fersfield by an elm tree which fell across the highway, and another tree fell across the lane near the Post Office. Men were quickly set to work to remove the obstructions.

The Norwich express narrowly escaped disaster on Monday afternoon. When nearing Ely a big two-armed signal post was blown down by the hurricane and fell across the line. The train was then travelling at over forty miles an hour, and, although the driver noticed the obstruction in time to check the engine, it was beyond human power to prevent a collision. The front wheels of the engine were derailed, and ploughed up the permanent way for some considerable distance, but the tender kept the lines, and the passengers, including a number of soldiers, were unaware of what had happened until the train came to a standstill. A breakdown gang was summoned, and traffic was only slightly delayed, the single line being worked while the damage was made good. The wind at the time resembled a tornado. Tiles were lifted off the roofs in the vicinity of the Station and windows were smashed.

At Ipswich two big trees in Portman Road were blown across the tram lines, preventing cars getting in and out of the tramway station, and causing dislocation of the service. Several chimney stacks in various parts of the town were brought down. In Alexandra Road and Christchurch Park a number of trees were uprooted. In various parts of the town the roads were scattered with fallen slates and tiles, and in the Bramford Road a chimney stack was brought down. In Lacey Street the chimney-stack was brought down upon the roof of one of the houses causing considerable damage. Between Sproughton and Needham Market many acres of land were under water, and in some places the railway seemed to be running through an inland sea. At Needham Market the Coddenham Road was quite impassable to foot passengers, the water under the railway bridge being up to a horse's knees. In the Stow district the river rose about five feet during the night, almost heading the Pickeral Bridge. There are hundreds of acres of low-lying land under water in the district, and a considerable number of slates and tiles were blown off houses.

During the gale on Wednesday the S.S. *Hjordis* from Hull to Calais with coal, was wrecked off Blakeney, and ten of the crew were drowned. Only one man was saved.

**The Diss Express and Norfolk and Suffolk Journal
18th February 1916**

The "Los Angeles Herald" reported that "warships were forced by the gale to run into harbours" and mines were broken from their moorings, some being cast up on the shore.

SHIPWRECKS.

The gales have caused numerous casualties at sea. On the Norfolk coast a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney Harbour bar. The crew of 11, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized, and all the occupants but one were drowned.

The Glasgow steamer Wilston (1682 tons register) has been sunk, and seven members of the crew, including the captain and the first mate, were drowned.

The steamer Telgestea has been sunk off the East Coast. The master, pilot, and crew of 25 have been landed.

Other newspaper and weather reports described how gale force winds, storms and snow had battered large parts of Britain from 14th to 17th February and caused "numerous casualties at sea".

"On the Norfolk coast a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney Harbour bar. The crew of 11, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized, and all the occupants but one were drowned."

The *Hjørdis* was apparently one of four vessels to be sunk during the gales and one of two to go down off the East coast.

Dumfries and Galloway Standard

THE LAST JOURNEY

The *Hjørdis* set off on what was to be her last journey in the early morning of Wednesday 16th February 1916. Amid strong, gale force winds and very rough weather, she left the Alexandra Dock in Hull at 7.30 a.m., bound for Calais. Carrying 459 tons of coal, she was fairly fully laden, the amount of her cargo requiring between 19,300 and 21,800 cubic feet of her cargo space.

A Captain Jensen was her skipper for the voyage; his crew of ten men was made up of nine Norwegians and one Dane, some of whose names are known. Of the Norwegians, Thor Halmersen/Halnessen was the Chief Mate, Peter Hammer the second engineer, Eugen Andersen an ordinary seaman, and (forename not known) Nelsen/Nilsen the steward. Ralf Petersen, from Denmark, was the boatswain.

Referred to in several shipping reports as "the large steamer *Hjørdis*", the ship must have had very competent skippers to survive forty-three years of battling the North Sea but - in the extreme weather conditions and with other ships forced to run into harbour, missing or gone aground - it is surprising, perhaps, that the *Hjørdis* left port that morning, but she probably did so with the obligation of fulfilling her charter.

The *Hjørdis* passed the Wash and prepared to round the Norfolk coast into the North Sea; although she was sailing during wartime when movements might have been restricted, a direct route would have taken her north of Sheringham to arrive off Cromer, and from there, following the coast, to Great Yarmouth and then south to Calais.

Captain Jensen's route for the *Hjørdis* suggests that he planned to hug the shore, coming in to the lee of the land to take advantage of the shelter which the North Norfolk coast can offer from south-westerly gales. The weather conditions might have been expected to hinder the ship's progress but - based on the 75 nautical mile distance between Hull and Blakeney and the twelve hours it took her to reach the North Norfolk coast - *Hjørdis* was apparently travelling at close to her normal cruising speed of 6 knots. However, the very rough weather and loss of visibility must have seriously impeded the Captain's knowledge of the ship's location.

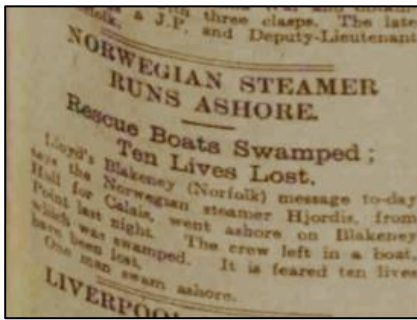
Approximately twelve hours after her departure from Hull, shortly after seven o'clock in the evening that day, the *Hjørdis* - fatefully - reached Blakeney. She went aground in a strong gale at the west end of Blakeney Bar and was wrecked, with the loss of ten lives.

Only one crew member survived. Ralf Petersen described: "we struck and ... the skipper ... gave the order to put her about and we struck again. He called out "Hard a port" and we struck once more and stuck. The skipper cried out "God help me" and the chief mate came up from below and said "She is taking water, get the boats out".

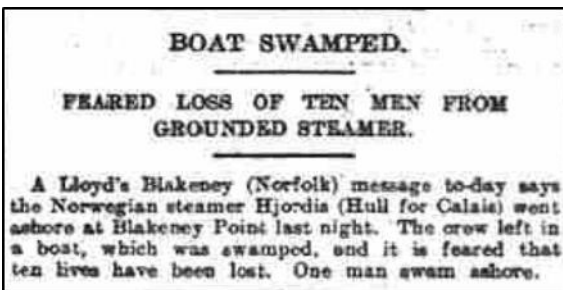
Strongly built, ice-strengthened, and a very seaworthy vessel, the *Hjørdis* was sail and engine driven. The reports of her going aground do not indicate whether she was under sail but, had she been, the sails were possibly blown out in the storm and/or her engine was too small to keep her offshore. Powered by a small horsepower engine of average performance and, with a heavy cargo, the aged iron steamer would have had little chance of survival in such severe weather conditions.

NEWS OF THE DISASTER

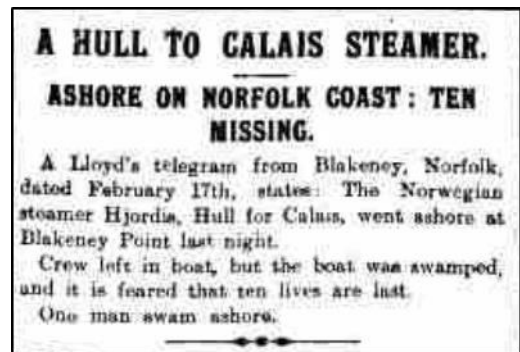
Early, brief reports of the *Hjordis* appeared in regional newspapers in the days following the ship going ashore. The extent of the loss of lives was feared but not confirmed.



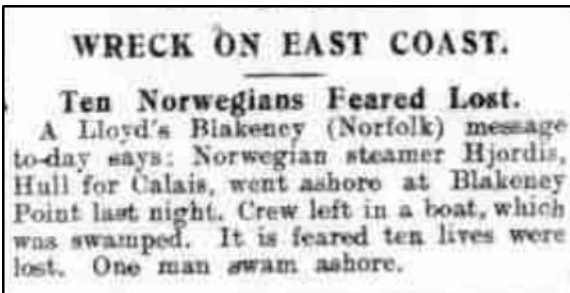
The Dundee Evening Telegraph



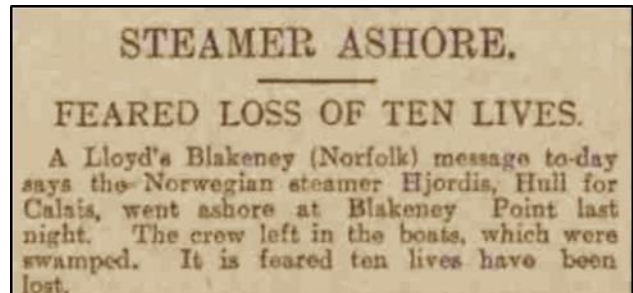
Birmingham Daily Mail



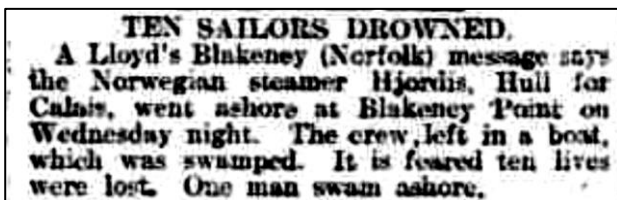
The Hull Daily Mail



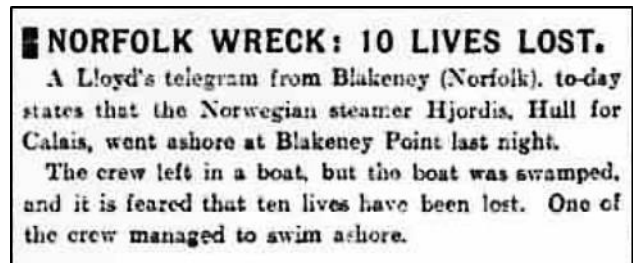
The Portsmouth Evening News



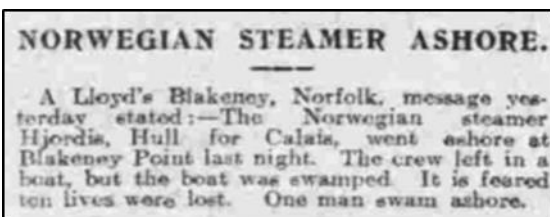
The Lancashire Evening Post



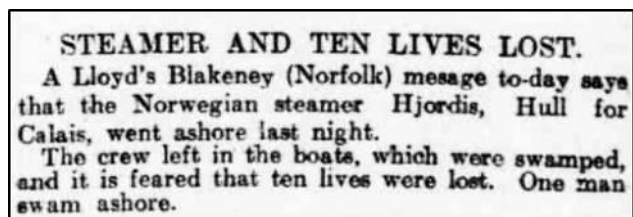
Gloucestershire Echo



The Yorkshire Evening Post



The Aberdeen Daily Journal



The Nottingham Evening Post

SHIPWRECK

Only one of the eleven-man crew survived the wreck of the *Hjørdis*. Although the Captain and crew managed to launch and take to a lifeboat, it was swamped within minutes by a large wave.



Ralf Petersen witnessed the loss of his fellow sailors. Thrashed by a wild sea and probably overcome by the cold, ten men were drowned either in the lifeboat or when they took to the water in an attempt to swim ashore.

Petersen had the presence of mind to take off his boots and most of his clothes and began to strike for the shore. Against immeasurable odds, he reached the beach and struggled along it for nearly two miles before reaching the Blakeney Watch House and safety.

Ralf Petersen's own account of his courageous attempts to save his fellow crew members and of his own survival was reported in the "Eastern Daily Press" of 18th February, two days after the disaster.

Questioned at the inquest held three days later, Ralf Petersen was able to give more information about how the *Hjørdis* had gone aground. A big gale and heavy sea had already smashed one of their boats (presumably lifeboats); they had found better water in the lee of the land but then, at about 7.10 p.m., they struck the ground.

"All hands came on deck, and we dropped the lifeboat out on the lee side of the ship. All got in her except the skipper, another man and myself. The skipper was so fat and had so many clothes on that we had to lift him over the side into the lifeboat.

We had only got clear from the ship for a minute or two when a big sea struck us and then another. We were practically full of water and it was only our watertight compartments that kept us afloat. We could see there was practically no chance of life if we stopped in her and most of us jumped out and started swimming. We did not know where to strike for but suddenly the moon came out and I could see all the beach. I looked round and saw seven or eight heads in the water and three of my mates still in the lifeboat and I cried out "Come this way". Then I started swimming again and when I looked round a second time the heads in the water had gone. But the lifeboat with the three men in her was still there and I swam back to it and got into it.

The lifeboat was not being carried nearer the shore but further out to sea and I said to my mates, "Boys, it's no use stopping here. Let's swim for it". But one was nearly dead and the other two half-dead. I said good-bye to them, took off my boots and most of my clothing and dived in again. I swam and swam, and then struck the beach and though my hands and fingers seemed closed up I grabbed at the shingle. But I knew it was death to stop there, I should only have drowned so I struggled on. I thought I was on an island and after going to the west I turned to the east and suddenly saw in the distance a house. I was dragging along for half a mile I suppose, but I got there and pushed open the door and found it was the watch house. I could not speak but men were there and I was saved."

Petersen was quoted as saying that Captain Jensen "... was on the bridge crying like a baby" and that it was the Chief Mate not the Captain who had given the order to launch the (life)boat.

A further, similar report of Petersen's account appeared in "The Straits Times" (Singapore) of 30th March 1916.

DESPERATE FIGHT FOR LIFE.

Story of Sole Survivor of Crew Of Steamship.

Ralf Petersen, the sole survivor of the crew of eleven hands of the Norwegian steamship Hjordis, wrecked on February 18 off Blakeney, on the Norfolk coast, said that when the vessel struck her position was not known, and the captain ordered them to take to the lifeboat, which was launched from the lee-side. "We had only got clear for a minute or two when a big sea swamped us," he said. "We could see there was no chance if we stopped in the boat, and most of us jumped out and started swimming. We did not know where to strike for, but suddenly the moon came out, and I could see the beach. I looked round and saw seven or eight heads in the water and three of my mates still in the boat. I shouted, 'Come this way!' and continued swimming.

"When I looked round again the heads in the water had disappeared, but the lifeboat was there with three men in her, and I swam back and got in. I found the lifeboat being carried away from the shore, so I said: 'Let's swim for it, boys.' One was nearly dead and the others half dead. I said: 'Good bye,' took off my boots and most of my clothes and dived in. I swam on till I struck the beach, and though my hands and fingers were closed up grabbed at the shingle. I knew it was death to stop there, as I should have only been carried out to sea and drowned so I struggled on, and thought I was on an island till after going east I turned west and suddenly saw a house. I dragged along for half a mile, and when I pushed open the door found it was a watchhouse. I could not speak, but men were there, and I was saved."

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"When I looked round again the heads in the water had disappeared, but the lifeboat was there with three men in her, and I swam back and got in. I found the lifeboat being carried away from the shore, so I said: 'Let's swim for it, boys'. One was nearly dead, and the others half-dead. I said: 'Good bye', took off my boots and most of my clothes and dived in. I swam on till I struck the beach, and though my hands and fingers were closed up grabbed at the shingle. I knew it was death to stop there, as I should have only been carried off to sea and drowned so I struggled on, and thought I was on an island till after going east I turned west and suddenly saw a house. I dragged along for half a mile, and when I pushed open the door found it was a watchhouse. I could not speak, but men were there, and I was saved."

At the Watch House, Petersen was wrapped in blankets and spent his first night there in front of a big fire. As newspapers had already reported, he had made a full recovery by the day after the disaster.

Mr Ernest Alfred Strangroom, a 45-year-old Auctioneer and Draper of Cley, acting on behalf of the Shipwrecked Fishermen and Mariners' Royal Benevolent Society, had arranged for Petersen to have new clothing and to be taken to the "King's Head" public house in Cley High Street, where he was looked after by Frederick William Baines, the 40-year-old Licensed Victualler, and visited by many of the local people.



The "King's Head" was the place to which bodies of those lost at sea were traditionally taken to be coffined.

BLAKENEY WATCH HOUSE

The Watch House was built in 1835, probably in association with the coastguard cottages at Morston, and, as its name suggests, it was used by the coastguards in bad weather, when a detachment would be sent to watch for ships in distress.

There is a story to the effect that, for the first eleven years of its life, the Watch House was used by the Preventive men (forerunners to Customs and Excise) to try and hamper the activities of smugglers. This, apparently, was unsuccessful as, contrary to its purpose, those employed were local men, smugglers themselves, and the building served as a convenient storehouse for contraband.



The Watch House

In the roof on the seaward side of the Watch House is a room with a bay window which is accessed from below by a small vertical iron ladder. From the window, there is a clear view out to sea and along the beach in both directions.

On the south side of the Watch House there was a large flagpole on which the watchmen used to raise different flags as a warning of a boat or ship in trouble or as a request for a boat or provisions.

Directly south of the Watch House in Blakeney village is a cottage on top of Green Hill - the last cottage in the row - which has an outside door on the first floor, between the bedroom windows. It appears incongruous today but, at the time, there was a platform with rails protruding from this doorway on which a trolley with the lifeboat maroon could be wheeled out.

If a vessel was seen to be in distress, a warning signal flag was hoisted from the Watch House. When this signal was spotted, a rescue procedure was set in motion.

The Blakeney watchman would wheel out from the cottage the trolley which held the rocket launching equipment and a rocket would then be launched to summon the Blakeney lifeboat men to embark on a rescue.



Blakeney Point - Old Lifeboat Station

The crew would assemble and row small boats out to the lifeboat station on Blakeney Point. From there, they had to manhandle the lifeboat across the beach to the water and launch it.

The Watch House was also used on occasions as shelter for shipwrecked sailors or fishermen until they could be brought to more permanent safety and this is consistent with Ralf Petersen's account.

RESCUE ATTEMPTS

Newspaper reports of Friday 18th February, two days after the *Hjørdis* went aground, described not only the effort that was made to save her and her crew but also reflected the gale force weather conditions on that night.

TEN DROWNED.

STEAMER'S BOAT CAPSIZES IN TERRIBLE SEA.

A shipping disaster, involving considerable loss of life, occurred on the north Norfolk coast during the gale on Wednesday, shortly before eight o'clock in the evening, a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney harbour bar.

The rocket brigade of Cley was assembled in haste and turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was necessarily slow. In the meantime the crew of eleven, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized in a fearful sea, and all but one of the occupants were drowned.

The sole survivor managed to swim ashore, and was picked up in an exhausted condition. By this morning he had apparently made a good recovery. The Blakeney fishermen were out with their salvage boat, but nothing could be done in the terrible conditions then prevailing.

Two bodies, one believed to be that of the master, have been recovered. The lost vessel, which remains a hopeless wreck at the spot where she struck, left Hull on Wednesday morning.

The Birmingham Daily Gazette

SHIPWRECKED CREW TAKE TO BOAT,

WHICH IS CAPSIZED IN A FEARFUL SEA,

AND ONLY ONE MAN MANAGES TO SWIM ASHORE.

A shipping disaster involving considerable loss of life occurred on the North Norfolk coast during the gale of Wednesday.

Shortly before eight o'clock in the evening a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney Harbour bar.

The rocket brigade of Cley was assembled in haste, and turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was slow necessarily. In the meantime the crew of eleven, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized in a fearful sea, and all but one of the occupants were drowned.

The sole survivor managed to swim ashore, and was picked up in an exhausted condition. By yesterday morning he had apparently made a good recovery. The Blakeney fishermen were out with their salvage boat, but nothing could be done in the terrible conditions then prevailing. Two bodies, one believed to be that of the master, have been recovered.

The lost vessel, which remains a hopeless wreck at the spot where she struck, left Hull on Wednesday morning.

The Dundee Courier

The reports indicate that the gale took hold quickly and dramatically and that the crew of the *Hjørdis* either had little or no time to send distress signals or had decided to try to save themselves, getting clear of the ship before she broke up. As a result, and although the lights of the *Hjørdis* had been seen at various points along the coast, "her perilous position was not realised". Ralf Petersen's account suggests that the Captain was overwhelmed by events and that it was Thor Halmersen/Halnessen, the Chief Mate, who took control.

NORWEGIAN STEAMER WRECKED.

10 OF CREW DROWNED.

A SHIPPING disaster, involving considerable loss of life, occurred on North Norfolk coast during the gale of Wednesday. Shortly before eight o'clock in the evening a Norwegian steamer, laden with coal, went ashore at the east point of Blakeney harbour bar. The rocket brigade of Cley was assembled in haste and turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was necessarily slow. In the meantime the crew of eleven, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized in a fearful sea, and all but one of the occupants were drowned. The sole survivor swam ashore.

The Scotsman

Newspaper reports gave no information as to how emergency assistance was summoned nor the sequence of events which caused it to be instigated.

Men in the Watch House may have seen the *Hjørdis* from the upstairs "look-out" room or it may not have been until Ralf Petersen reached the Watch House - apparently by following the telegraph poles positioned along the beach - that the men there raised the alarm.

The reports described that the Cley Rocket Brigade was hastily assembled and hurried to the beach with five horses.

Under the supervision of Henry N. Parker, a 58-year-old Journeyman Butcher from Cley, the rocket apparatus was carried on a cart lent by John Everett of Hall Farm.

Battling against the gale, the Brigade's progress along the shingle was slow but they managed to travel along the beach to within 300 yards or so of the *Hjordis*. There was no response to signals sent up and the Brigade set to return home.

TEN LIVES LOST.

MEN DROWNED IN SIGHT OF ROCKET BRIGADE.

A shipping disaster involving considerable loss of life occurred on the North Norfolk coast during the gale of Wednesday. Shortly before eight o'clock in the evening a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney harbour bar. The rocket brigade of Cley turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was necessarily slow. The crew of eleven, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized in the fearful sea and all but one of the occupants were drowned. The sole survivor managed to swim ashore, and was picked up in an exhausted condition.

The vessel, which remains a hopeless wreck at the spot where she struck, left Hull on Wednesday morning.

The Western Morning News

THE SEVERE GALE.

Wreck on the Norfolk Coast.

TEN LIVES LOST

A shipping disaster involving considerable loss of life occurred on the North Norfolk coast during the gale of Wednesday. Shortly before eight o'clock in the evening a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney harbour bar. The rocket brigade of Cley was assembled in haste and turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was necessarily slow.

In the meantime the crew of eleven, seeing that rescue from shore was hopeless, took to their boat. This was capsized in the fearful sea, and all but one of the occupants were drowned. The sole survivor managed to swim ashore and was picked up in an exhausted condition. By yesterday morning he had apparently made a good recovery.

The Blakeney fishermen were out with their salvage boat, but nothing could be done in the terrible conditions then prevailing. Two bodies, one believed to be that of the master, have been recovered. The lost vessel, which remains a hopeless wreck at the spot where she struck, left Hull on Wednesday morning.

A Lloyd's telegram adds that the wrecked steamer was the *Hjordis*, bound from Hull to Calais, and that ten lives were lost.

The Belfast News-Letter

It was known fairly soon after the *Hjordis* went aground that one man had managed to swim ashore and, although exhausted, had made "a good recovery" by the following morning.

It would seem that, in the interval between the ship grounding and the Rocket Brigade being summoned, the crew of the stricken *Hjordis* - seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless or would be slow to execute - took to their own lifeboat. They were probably clear of the ship for a short time before a huge wave overtook them; some tried to swim to shore, others remained in the lifeboat.

While the Rocket Brigade was returning from the beach, at about 11.30 p.m., a body was found approximately 150 yards east of the Watch House by Corporal Bertie Hale, of the 67th Provisional Battalion.

An hour later, a second body was found about 2½ miles east of the wreck by James White, a Naval pensioner of Church Loke, Cley.

Both bodies were recovered from the water and taken by the Rocket Brigade cart to Cley. They were examined the following morning by a Police Constable Hewett (possibly, given that it was wartime, William Hewett, a 56-year-old Police pensioner from Norwich), who had them removed to Blakeney. Two more bodies were discovered soon afterwards at Salthouse.

Within a few days of the *Hjordis* being wrecked, the scale of the disaster quickly became clear.

A Lloyd's telegram from Wells, Norfolk, says: Norwegian steamer *Hjordis*, previously reported ashore at Blakeney, has parted amidships and sunk in sand 12ft. Three bodies have been recovered.

Manchester Evening News – 18th February

NORWEGIAN STEAMER SUNK.
WELLS, NORFOLK, February 18.
Norwegian steamer *Hjordis*, previously reported ashore Blakeney, has parted amidships, and sunk in sand twelve feet. Three bodies recovered.—Lloyd's.

The Scotsman – 19th February

A Lloyd's telegram from Wells, Norfolk, states that the Norwegian steamer *Hjordis*, previously reported ashore at Blakeney, has parted amidships and sunk in sand 12 feet. Three bodies have been recovered.

Liverpool Daily Post – 19th February

“The Banbury Advertiser” of 24th February carried a similar report but added, “The vessel is a wreck”.

Newspaper reports of *Hjordis*'s grounding made no mention of a lifeboat being launched from the shore but Mrs Susie Long, writing to the “Eastern Daily Press” two days after the *Hjordis* was wrecked, stated that a boat did go out to offer assistance.

THE BLAKENEY WRECK.
To the Editor.
Sir—In your report in the “Eastern Daily Press” I see no mention is made of the lifeboat crew of this parish, who went out at 8 p.m. and arrived home at 4 a.m. in the old lifeboat “Hettie,” belonging to Mr. Holliday. They went up to the steamer, where all the lights were still burning both inside and out, and could and would have saved all the crew if they had not previously left. The steamer is ashore on East Point. I may say the men went on their own initiative, having had no orders. I think it only fair to mention this.—Yours faithfully,
SUSIE L. LONG
(Wife of Chas. H. Long, bowman of lifeboat, and daughter-in-law of Coxswain Geo. Long).
White Horse Hotel, Blakeney.
February 18.

THE BLAKENEY WRECK
To the Editor
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SUSIE L LONG
(Wife of Chas. H. Long, bowman of lifeboat, and daughter-in-law of Coxswain Geo. Long).
White Horse Hotel, Blakeney,
February 18”

Of the names in her letter, Mrs Long's husband, Charles Long, and her father-in-law, George Long, were both crew members of the RNLI Blakeney lifeboat *Caroline*. The “Mr Holliday” referred to was Richard Holliday, a 50 year old Fisherman of High Street, Blakeney, who was also a crew member of the *Caroline*.

In a subsequent letter dated 25th February, this time to the “The Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette”, Mrs Long corrected her earlier one, saying that the steamer actually came ashore on the West Point.

At the time, the *Caroline* had a crew of (mainly) fishermen who were too old to take an active part in the war; of eighteen crew members, the majority were over the age of fifty. Plaques in Blakeney Church commemorate the Blakeney lifeboats and their rescues to 1924 but none refer to either the *Hettie* or the *Caroline* going to the aid of the *Hjordis*.

It is not known how the fishermen of the *Hettie* were alerted to the disaster off the Blakeney coast, perhaps by communication from the Watch House or from the Rocket Brigade. It is also for speculation why the “old lifeboat”, rather than the RNLI lifeboat *Caroline*, went out to the *Hjordis* but the *Caroline* was probably in the Lifeboat House and would have taken longer to launch.

One aged ship trying to save another, the *Hettie* was built in 1873 - the same year as *Hjordis* - and was in use until 1891, hence Mrs Long's reference to "the old lifeboat".

Mrs Long's letter showed that the crew were - on their own initiative and with no orders to do so - on their way to the *Hjordis* within an hour of the ship grounding, going out from Blakeney at 8.00 p.m. and returning at 4.00 a.m. the following day. Reaching the steamer, they found all the lights still burning but the crew had left the ship.

Her account is consistent with a report in "The Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough", "The Blakeney fishermen were out with their salvage boat, but nothing could be done in the terrible conditions then prevailing".

WRECK ON NORFOLK COAST.

NORWEGIANS' TRAGIC FATE IN A FEARFUL SEA.

A shipping disaster involving considerable loss of life occurred on the North Norfolk Coast during the gale of Wednesday. Shortly before eight o'clock in the evening a Norwegian steamer laden with coal went ashore at the east point of Blakeney Harbour Bar.

A rocket brigade assembled in haste and turned out with five horses, but their progress along the shingle in the teeth of the gale was necessarily slow. In the meantime, the crew of 11, seeing that rescue from the shore was hopeless, took to their boat, which, however, was capsized in a fearful sea, and all but one of the occupants were drowned.

The sole survivor managed to swim ashore, and was picked up in an exhausted condition. By yesterday morning he had apparently made a good recovery.

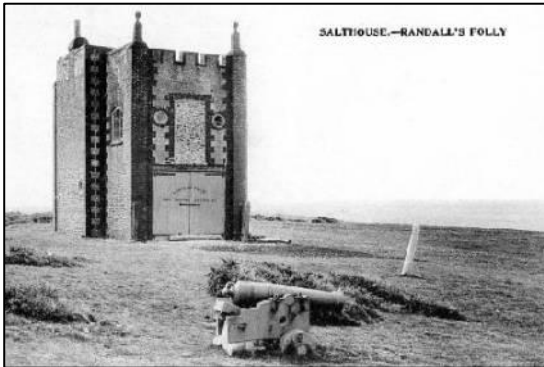
The Blakeney fishermen were out with their salvage boat, but nothing could be done in the terrible conditions then prevailing.

Two bodies have been recovered. One is believed to be that of the master. The lost vessel, which remains a hopeless wreck at the spot where she struck, left Hull on Wednesday morning.

The Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough

CLEY ROCKET BRIGADE

The Volunteer Rocket Brigade originated in the early 19th Century when Captain George Manby (1765-1854) of Gorleston, an Artilleryman and the Barrack Master at Yarmouth, invented and pioneered his mortar and rocket-firing rope line apparatus, a device to winch to safety sailors who were marooned on ships close to shore; he also invented the first rocket for these Brigades. The Rocket Brigades were formed by the Coastguard, under the Board of Trade, and each station had an officer of the Coastguard in charge.



Randall's Folly

On the Blakeney, Cley and Salthouse stretch of the North Norfolk coast, the Rocket Brigade's apparatus was stored in the so-called "folly", a house built by a Cley man, Onesiphorous Randall, who made his fortune in speculative building construction in London.

Nicknamed 'Randall's Folly', the building stood on land known as the Great Eye (now almost lost in the shingle bank), adjoining Salthouse beach.

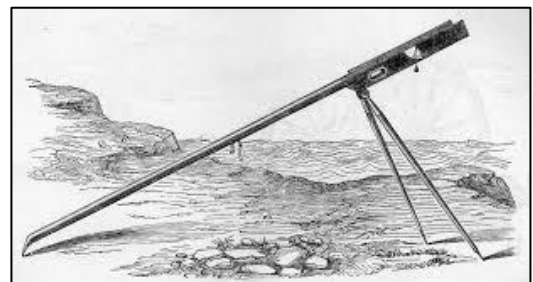
The building was sold - after Randall's death - to the Board of Trade in 1867 and became a coastguard station where the rocket life-saving equipment was stored, hence it acquiring the alternative name of the "Rocket House".

Randall enjoyed sailing and his intention was that his Salthouse property would be a place for visits to his home county and also that it would serve as a refuge for shipwrecked mariners; it seems apposite, therefore, that the building was later used by the Rocket Brigade to store apparatus which could save sailors' lives.

When a ship was wrecked close to shore and conditions were too difficult or impractical to effect a lifeboat rescue, Brigades would be alerted to the need for their presence by a signal maroon, a type of rocket that makes a loud bang and bright flash. The rocket apparatus would be pushed, dragged or towed on a small wagon to the most appropriate point on the coast.

The tripod would be placed firmly on the sand or ground and a rocket (placed on top) would be aimed, allowing for factors such as wind and distance.

A line would then be attached to the rocket, and any "flaking" pins in the rope storage box removed, to allow a free run for the rocket-pulled line. The fuse would be lit and the rocket was fired over the ship and secured. Several attempts were often required, especially in poor conditions.



Once the rocket's rope line had fired over the deck of a stricken vessel, the ship's crew would haul in a heavier, thicker hawser with a block, which would be fastened to the mast. A line would then go back and around to a secured point on the shoreline, allowing a breeches-buoy rescue apparatus to be set up.

The "breeches buoy" - a device originating from an ordinary lifebelt with a pair of large canvas breeches attached - would be hauled out to the boat and crew members could then sit in this sling and be hauled back to shore and safety.

If the stranded vessel was too far from shore for the mortar or rockets, the "Rocket" men would be rowed by boat nearer to the vessel.

Often, the crew of a stricken vessel would be too exhausted to attach hawsers or sort blocks, so a member of the shore rescue party would be hauled out to assist them. Using another ingenious device, which resembled a pair of remotely-activated cutting shears, the hawser could be cut close to the mast of the evacuated ship, and the main portion pulled back to shore, leaving only a small piece of hawser and one block onboard.

The innovative men of the Rocket Brigades made one further, final invention. To aid them in working at night, they would use a "wreck-light", being a vertical column of small box tins filled with inflammable material and tied together. On lighting the bottom tin, it would burn away brightly, finally igniting the one above, with the old tin dropping to the ground, leaving a continuous and bright light to work by.

Many Rocket Brigades - which were not part of the RNLI but worked under their direction to save distressed ships - continued to operate until the late 1980s.

THE LOST CREW - INQUEST AND BURIALS

Of the ten men who drowned, the bodies of only four crew members were recovered. The bodies of the remaining six sailors were probably never found and were lost to the sea.

During the First World War, the Guildhall in the High Street, Blakeney served as a temporary mortuary for shipwrecked sailors and this is probably where the bodies of the four drowned men were taken and where the sole survivor, Ralf Petersen, identified them.

An Inquest into the deaths of the sailors was held on the Saturday following the disaster, on 19th February, at the "Ship Inn" in the High Street, Blakeney. It was conducted by the Coroner of East Dereham, Mr Walter May Barton, a 69-year-old Solicitor of the Guildhall, St. Withaburga's Lane, East Dereham.

Ralf Petersen, the only survivor, gave evidence. A Dane who lived in Norway, he gave his age as 25, although the "Eastern Daily Press" reported that "he looked twice this but is framed like a giant".



The Ship Inn, Blakeney

The "Thetford & Watton Times" of 26th February reported:

WRECK ON BLAKENEY EAST POINT

SOLE SURVIVOR'S STORY

"Mr. W. M. Barton held an Inquiry at the Ship Hotel, Blakeney, on Saturday, on two bodies washed ashore after the wreck of the Norwegian steamer Hjordis on Blakeney East Point on the preceding Wednesday night.

Ralf Petersen, boatswain on the Hjordis, and the sole survivor of the crew of eleven, said the Hjordis belonged to Bergen and left the Alexandra Dock at Hull on Wednesday morning, bound for Calais. When off the Norfolk coast on the evening of that day a big gale was blowing, and there was a heavy sea, so the captain gave orders for the ship to come in lee of the land. They did so, and got into better water, and keeping on their journey, south-east, they struck the ground about 7.10 p.m., knocking a hole in the bottom. When she first struck the captain said, "Hard a starboard", to get her into deep water. The order was obeyed, but she struck twice more, and then she struck so hard that the compass fell off the wheel. The chief mate came up from below and said, "The only thing to do is to get the lifeboat out before it is smashed." But the captain did not give the order as he was on the bridge crying like a little boy. They got the lifeboat out, and all got into her, but as soon as they had got clear of the bow of the steamer the sea half filled the boat. Then another went right over her, almost filling her, and most of them were washed into the sea.

"Witness started swimming, and when he caught sight of the land he turned his head, and seeing seven or eight heads in the water, he cried out, "Come on, swim to the land.' He did not get an answer from them, and they must have been drowned. The Hjordis was a very seaworthy vessel, well found in every way. He identified the bodies washed up at Blakeney as Thor Halnessen, aged 34, chief mate, and Eugen Andersen, aged 20, ordinary seaman. Witness had also seen two bodies that came ashore at Salthouse; they were Peter Hammer, second engineer, and Nilsen, the steward.

Evidence was given of the finding of the bodies and the jury returned a verdict of "Death by drowning through misadventure at sea" and on their behalf the Rev. Gordon Rowe* expressed great regret at the sad occurrence, and deep sympathy with the bereaved parents. The affair, he said, was "all the more deplorable in that if the men had kept on their ship for an hour or so after she struck all their lives might have been saved."

* the Rector of Blakeney and Glandford

“The Yarmouth Independent” - also of 26th February - gave a similar report on the Inquest but included Ralf Petersen’s response to the Inquest’s Foreman, that “They only came closer to land in order to get shelter from the wind, and they had no intention of putting in to harbour. They knew where they were when they were passing the mouth of the Wash”.

THE BLAKENEY DISASTER.

SOLE SURVIVOR'S STORY.

The Norwegian steamer Hjordis was totally wrecked at Blakeney during the great gale on Wednesday in last week, and ten men were drowned. At the inquest, Ralf Petersen, boatswain on the steamer and the sole survivor of the crew of eleven, said the Hjordis belonged to Bergen and left the Alexandra Dock at Hull on Wednesday, the 12th inst., bound for Calais. When off the Norfolk coast on the evening of that day a big gale was blowing, and there was a heavy sea, so the captain gave orders for the ship to come in lee of the land. They did so, and got into better water, but keeping on their journey, south-east, they struck the ground about 7.10 p.m., knocking a hole in the ship. When she first struck the captain said, “Hard a starboard,” to get her into deep water. This order was obeyed, but she struck twice more, and then she struck so hard that the compass fell off the wheel. The chief mate came up from below and said, “The only thing to do is to get the lifeboat out before it is smashed,” but the captain did not give the order as he was on the bridge crying like a little boy. They got the lifeboat out, and all got into her, but as soon as they had got clear of the bow of the steamer the sea half filled the boat. Then another went right over her, almost filling her, and most of them were washed into the sea. Witness started swimming, and when he caught sight of the land he turned his head, and seeing seven or eight heads in the water, he cried out, “Come on, swim to the land.” He did not get an answer from them, and all must have been drowned. The Hjordis was a very good seaworthy vessel, well found in every way. He identified the bodies washed up at Blakeney as Thor Halnessen, aged 34, chief mate, and Eugenien Andersen, aged 20, ordinary seaman. He had also seen the two bodies that came ashore at Salt house; they were Peter Hammer, second engineer, and Nilsen, the steward.

In reply to the Foreman, witness said they only came closer to land in order to get shelter from the wind, and they had no intention of putting into harbour. They knew where they were when they were passing the mouth of the Wash.

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The Yarmouth Independent - 26th February 1916

The Inquest verdict was “Death by drowning through misadventure at sea”. The Coroner signed certificates for the burial of the two men found at Salthouse, who had been identified as Peter Hammer and (unknown forename) Nelsen/Nilsen.

The Civil Registration Death Index for the March Quarter 1916 records the four named sailors’ deaths.

Eugenien Andersen	Born c1896	Age 20	Death registered in Walsingham District
Thor Halmersen	Born c1882	Age 34	Death registered in Walsingham District
Peter Hammer	Born c1876	Age 40	Death registered in Erpingham District
(Name) Nelsen	Born c1896	Age 20	Death registered in Erpingham District

At the time of the *Hjørdis* disaster, legislation - in the form of the Burial of Drowned Persons Act 1808 (also known as Grylls' Act) and the subsequent Burial of Drowned Persons Act 1886 – ensured that the bodies of those lost at sea were decently, appropriately buried.

The 1808 Act provided for “suitable interment in Churchyards or Parochial Burying Grounds in England for such dead Human Bodies as may be cast on Shore from the Sea, in cases of Wreck or otherwise”. It required that unclaimed bodies of dead persons washed ashore from the sea should be removed by the churchwardens and overseers of the parish and decently interred in unconsecrated ground.

This act was amended by the Burial of Drowned Persons Act 1886 to extend its applicability to bodies found in, or cast on shore from, all tidal or navigable waters.

Historically, fishing and merchant seafaring were the most dangerous of all professions and each year many fishermen, mariners and ships' passengers lost their lives at sea. Prior to the 1808 legislation, it was customary to unceremoniously bury drowned seamen, without shroud or coffin, and in unconsecrated ground. Uncertainty about the religious faith of those washed ashore, the considerable financial burden which burials placed on the parishes, and the pragmatic local response to these losses, resulted in the widespread practice of shoreline burials in all coastal communities.

The Blakeney Parish Registers record that Eugenien Andersen and Thor Halmersen/Halnessen, whose bodies were recovered by the Rocket Brigade, were buried on 21st February.

The Parish Registers for Salthouse for 1916 record that Peter Hammer and (name) Nelsen/Nilsen, whose bodies were “found on the beach at Salthouse”, were buried in Salthouse churchyard, also on 21st February.

It is likely that the men were all buried simply, with a minimum of ceremony - in probably the equivalent of a “pauper's funeral” - in a grave marked, if at all, with just a wooden cross.

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BURIALS in the Parish of *Salthouse*
in the County of *Northampton* in the Year 1916

Name.	Abode.	When Buried.	Age.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
<i>Ernest Peter Myles</i> No. 521	<i>Salthouse</i>	<i>January 5th 1916</i>	<i>53 years</i>	<i>Cer. typical under Act 1886</i> <i>Harold Myles</i>
<i>Peter Hammer</i> No. 522	<i>Body found on the beach at Salthouse</i>	<i>February 21st 1916</i>	<i>about 40 years</i>	<i>J. R. Borden</i> <i>Rector</i>
<i>_____ Nelsen</i> No. 523	<i>Body found on the beach at Salthouse</i>	<i>February 21st 1916</i>	<i>about 20 years</i>	<i>J. R. Borden</i> <i>Rector</i>

Salthouse Parish – Register of Burials

THE CAUSE OF THE DISASTER?

With only the one first-hand, contemporary account of what befell the *Hjørdis*, there is conjecture and a number of possible interpretations about what caused her to go aground.

The *Hjørdis* was sold three times during 1915; her last (Norwegian) owner acquired her on 2nd December, just over two months before she was wrecked. With a change in ownership came, perhaps, a new Captain and crew possibly less experienced and/or less familiar with the ship than their more longstanding predecessors. In weather conditions which had forced other ships to remain in or to put into harbour, did Captain Jensen - so early in his engagement - wish to impress his new employer by setting out from Hull in order to fulfil his charter?

Other ships had been sunk during this gale, therefore the disaster could have been caused by weather conditions alone. However, bearing in mind that - in his accounts of the disaster - Ralf Petersen made no mention of any panic or efforts to prevent the ship floundering on a lee shore, it seems most likely that a navigational error was to blame.



It is understandable that Captain Jensen would have intended to steer his ship close to the shore between The Wash and Cromer in order to benefit from a far less severe swell in the lee of the coast during a severe south-westerly gale, which all reports indicated was blowing at the time. His plan was seemingly to arrive off Cromer.

In the accounts he gave of events, Ralf Petersen stated that the *Hjørdis's* position was not known when she went aground and, on leaving the ship, the crew did not know which direction to strike for. This would appear to confirm that a navigational error was to blame.

The two - East and West - towers of Blakeney Church were used to guide ships into the navigable channel between the inlet's sandbanks, the light on the top of the East tower serving as a leading light to guide vessels into the harbour (the "leading light" practice later achieved by using pairs of lighthouses at different levels). When viewed from the sea, in daylight and in darkness, Blakeney Church is the only prominent point on a barren stretch of coastline and a visual aid for mariners to easily identify their position for many miles.

If the *Hjørdis* was closer to the shore than Jensen thought, it is possible that he mistook the light on the smaller, East tower of Blakeney Church for the Cromer lighthouse, further along the coast. This would explain why the *Hjørdis* was so close inshore; the water is very deep close in to Cromer, but not close in at Blakeney.

Petersen described the *Hjørdis* bumping over a sand bank, then having a few moments to alter course and attempt to get seaward in deeper water, before she struck the last time. The press reports referred to "the tide carrying her in ... she struck the west side of the bar and came over it".

These press reports are a little misleading. High water that day was at approximately 5.00 p.m. so, at the time of the grounding, the tide would have been flowing from west to east along the coast and flowing out of Blakeney Harbour. It is more likely, therefore, that the *Hjørdis* struck one of the many sand bars in that area and then bounced over the first bar into deeper water, pushed on by the east setting tide. This would have made it more difficult for Captain Jensen to alter course to save the situation before the *Hjørdis* grounded on the next sand bar.

There is an anomaly in Ralf Petersen's account of the Captain having given the order, "Hard a starboard" to get the ship into deep water, for this would have put the ship further on to the shore. This might be either a reporting error by the newspaper - for the assumed order would be "Hard a port" - or an indication of the Captain's confusion or panic in the unfolding disaster.

Petersen's account of the lifeboat being carried out to sea after the crew abandoned the *Hjørdis* does further support the fact that the wind direction was south-west and not west-north-west as local newspapers had reported.

The greater likelihood - of the *Hjørdis* grounding as the result of navigational error - is borne out by the lifeboat being carried out to sea. This too would further support the fact that the gale was south-westerly, rather than west-north-westerly.

A DIFFERENT OUTCOME?

Mrs Susie Long's letter to the "Eastern Daily Press" suggested that the crew of the old lifeboat *Hettie* "could and would have saved all the crew" of the *Hjordis*.

When the ship struck, the tide was ebbing; therefore, could the crew have remained on the ship and awaited rescue, or simply waded ashore at low tide?

Ralf Petersen's accounts conveyed the desperate situation which the crew encountered, where events were happening quickly, in uncertain circumstances: one of their lifeboats had been smashed before she grounded; there was no time to send up flares; the ship was taking in water; the crew did not know where they were; the skipper had lost control; and the ship was showing signs of breaking up.

With the benefit of hindsight and with clearer heads at the time, there is little doubt that if the crew had remained on the *Hjordis*, they would probably have survived - either by being rescued by the *Hettie* or by remaining on the *Hjordis* until low tide.

This retrospective assessment of the events which befell the *Hjordis* and her crew is, sadly, consistent with one of the contemporary accounts.

The "Thetford & Watton Times" of 26th February - in its account of the Inquest - reported that the Foreman of the Jury had alluded to the possibility of a different outcome ... "The affair was all the more deplorable in that if the men had kept on their ship for an hour or so after she struck all their lives might have been saved."

THE SOLE SURVIVOR?

At the Inquest into the loss of the *Hjordis* and ten members of her crew, Ralf Petersen, the only survivor, gave evidence. Newspapers reported that Petersen was a Dane who lived in Norway; he gave his age as 25, suggesting a birthyear of c1891.

The surname Petersen is very commonly found in records of Scandinavian sailors and in crew lists but one record - from the Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital Admissions and Discharges 1826-1930 - is consistent with what is known about Ralf Petersen's birthyear and birthplace.

Two Danish sailors from the same ship - the *SS William Thomas Malling* - were admitted to the Seamen's Hospital in Greenwich on 4th February 1920. The *Thomas Malling* was a Danish (1034 GRT, 194 NHK, 1005 IHK triple expansion) two-masted steamship, built in 1913 as a cargo carrier for Det Danske Kulkompagnit (The Danish Coal Company) and was registered in Copenhagen.

No.	Date of Entry	NAME	Quality	Age	Creed	Where BORN	Place of Birth	Place of Birth	Port of Registration	Insurance Society	CHARGE OR DISEASE	Nature	Date of Discharge	How disposed of	No. of Days in Hospital
513		Cornelius C.	Seaman	36	Dan.	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark	Copenhagen	Det. Danske Kulkompagni	Pneumonia	Pneumonia	Feb. 20	Cured	16
514		Peterson R.	Seaman	29	Dan.	Denmark	Denmark	Denmark	Copenhagen	Det. Danske Kulkompagni	Pneumonia and cardiac failure	Pneumonia and cardiac failure	Feb. 6	Died	-

The entries show:

Date of Entry	4th February 1920	4th February 1920
Name	C. Cornelius	R. Peterson
Quality	Seaman	Seaman
Age	36	29
Creed	Dan.	Dan.
Birthplace	Denmark	Denmark
Ship	SS Thomas Malling	SS Thomas Malling
Port of Registration	Copenhagen	Copenhagen
Owners or Employers	Det Danske Kulkompagni	Det Danske Kulkompagni
Nature of Complaint	Pneumonia	Pneumonia and cardiac failure
Date of Discharge	20th February 1920	6th February 1920
How disposed of	Cured	Died
No of Days in Hospital	16	-

It seems a strong possibility that the man who had courageously tried to save his crew members and who survived the wreck of the *Hjørdis* on 14th February 1916 succumbed to pneumonia and cardiac failure just over four years to the day later.

The survivor Ralf Petersen had, although exhausted, “made a good recovery” after the shipwreck. The “Eastern Daily Press” reported, about the Inquest, that he looked twice his age (twenty-five years) but was “framed like a giant”. Petersen must have been a fit man to have survived the shipwreck of the *Hjørdis* but had his years at sea taken their toll on his appearance, if not perhaps his later health?

If the Danish sailor who died at the Dreadnought Seamen’s Hospital was indeed the same Ralf Petersen, sole survivor of the *Hjørdis* wreck, could his exposure to and immersion in the cold waters of the North Sea off Blakeney four years earlier have been a factor in his final, fatal illnesses?

SS HJØRDIS NOW



The wreck of the *Hjørdis* has lain off Blakeney Point since she went aground.

Sunk in twelve feet of sand, with more local sand moving in subsequently, the wreck became all but completely covered.

A survey dated September 1960 (source unknown but held by the Blakeney Harbour Association) gives the following information about the wreck:

“Iron Norse steamship 200 ft long 30 ft beam lying in a deep pool on dry bank heading 20 deg true with a list to port and one mast standing at the fore end.

The hull, which is broken in two amidship, is about 9ft out of water at LWST. The boiler and engines are showing, also a cat davit is standing near the stern.

Wreck extends approximately 40 ft North West and 130 ft South East of pole carrying a light erected on wreck position 525902N 005825E (Trinity Superintendent Great Yarmouth 13.11.58).”

The position of the wreck was checked again by Trinity House on 2nd October 1969, when the *Hjørdis*'s position was “found to lie 259 degrees 1.75 cables from position 525902N 005825E in position 525858N 005812E”.



In October 1993, The Corporation of Trinity House - in whose possession the *Hjørdis* then was - carried out a survey of the former steamer which showed the wreck to be lying in a NNW/SSE direction in depths of between 2.0 to 2.5 metres at low water springs.



Two years later, in 1995, Trinity House invited tenders for the complete removal of the wreck which then lay sunk off Blakeney Point, some 10 miles west of Cromer, at Latitude 52° 58'.97 North – Longitude 00°58'.20 East.

Trinity House described the vessel as “a 100 ton iron steamer” and recorded that “The vessel has since partially dispersed and the remaining wreckage is currently approximately 20 metres long and 5 metres wide”.

A further observation made by Trinity House in correspondence of 1995 - referring to a suspicion that *Hjørdis* had been ice-strengthened for the Baltic winter trade - suggested that this “would account for the fact that her low section has lasted so long”. The reference to her “Baltic winter trade” is consistent with records of her trade routes.



In August 1995, a proposal was submitted to Trinity House by a local company, offering three options to remove the wreck between the “fair weather months” April to October 1996.

- to completely remove the wreck and dispose of ashore as scrap material
- to remove the wreck but to sink in deep water
- to cut the wreck level with the sea bed, repeating as and when more of the wreck might be uncovered by the moving sand banks and - associated with this - to maintain a beacon placed over the wreck.



In the event, the *Hjørdis* was not removed and the wreck has remained off Blakeney, always marked with a buoy.

The buoy was continually being destroyed by the strong tides and was removed; the wreck is now marked with a Trinity House beacon.

Aerial photographs commissioned by the Harbour Association in 2016 show that much of the ship’s structure still remained.

The Blakeney Harbour mouth regularly changes position. Currents push it towards the east, producing a lengthening peninsula of sand between the entrance channel and the sea. Tidal currents then break through towards the west and the eastern mouth fills up again.

In recent years, the harbour entrance channel has been moving towards the east, bringing it nearer to the wreck. In April 2016, this movement reached the wreck, scouring through it, so that *Hjørdis* was lying in the middle of the channel at the entrance to the harbour; by December the same year, the channel was moving east of the wreck and beginning to bury *Hjørdis* in the sand once again.

The movements in the sand peninsula and the changing position of the harbour mouth determine whether *Hjørdis* is either almost completely covered by sand and lost to view or is a still visible reminder of the lost ship jutting from the sea.

SS HJØRDIS – TRADE ROUTES

1907

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Saturday 18 May Peterhead Sentinel	PETERHEAD May 11 - Hjordis, Hirsch, Runoon, salt	PETERHEAD May 15 - Hjordis, Hirsch, Lerwick, stock
Monday 27 May Aberdeen Journal Dundee Courier	ABERDEEN May 26 – Hjordis, Shetland, light (wind-bound)	
Wednesday 29 May The Scotsman		ABERDEEN May 27 – Hjordis s., for Peterhead, light (w.b.)
Saturday 1 June Peterhead Sentinel	PETERHEAD May 28 - Hjordis, Hirsch, Aberdeen, light	PETERHEAD On Wednesday the steamer Hjordis sailed for Lerwick with a cargo of 3891 barrels of fishery stock.
Saturday 1 June Aberdeen Journal	PETERHEAD May 28 - Hjordis, Hirsch, Aberdeen, light	PETERHEAD May 29 – Hjordis, Hirsch, Lerwick, stock
Monday 3 June Aberdeen Journal		PETERHEAD On Wednesday the steamer Hjordis sailed for Lerwick with a cargo of 3891 barrels of fishery stock.
Tuesday 13 August The Scotsman	LIBAU August 9 – Arrived - Hjordis s., from Wick	
Saturday 19 October Aberdeen Daily Journal		PETERHEAD October 12, Hjordis, Hirsch, Stettin, herrings
Saturday 19 October Peterhead Sentinel		PETERHEAD During the week the following steamers cleared from the port with cargoes of cured herrings: Hjordis, 2058 barrels ...
Wednesday 23 October Aberdeen Journal	William Reid's "Foreign Herring Market" report, dated Stettin, 19th October says: During the week we received from the East Coast of Scotland and England by the steamers (list follows which includes Hjordis) ... 17,076 barrels herrings."	

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Monday 1 June Aberdeen Journal	ABERDEEN May 29 – Hjordis, Lund, Lerwick, light	
Tuesday 2 June Dundee Courier		ABERDEEN May 31 – Hjordis (s), Lerwick, stock
Monday 6 July The Scotsman	LIBAU June 29 - Hjordis, s., from Lerwick	
Monday 13 July Aberdeen Journal Dundee Courier		HERRING FISHING WICK Saturday - The steamers Iris and China are loading for Libau and the Hjordis for Stettin (cured herrings)
Thursday 23 July The Scotsman	STETTIN July 19 – Hjordis, s., from Wick	
Saturday 19 September The Scotsman	METHIL September 18 – Hjordis s 226, Nispet, from Frederikshold, pulp	
Thursday 24 September Dundee Courier		METHIL September 23 – Hjordis (s), Nispet, Wick, light
Friday 25 September The Scotsman	WICK Thursday - ... the Hjordis has just arrived for the purpose of loading. Stocks of cured herrings on hand are now getting well reduced, and in the course of a short-time should be well shipped off."	

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Thursday 20 May Manchester Courier	EASTERN LOCKS, WEDNESDAY Manchester Ship Canal Hjordis, 226 - light For Weston Point (Agents), Dublin	
Monday 7 June The Scotsman		STORNOWAY "The steamer Hjordis sailed on Monday for St Petersburg with 2670 barrels" (of herrings)."
Thursday 24 June The Scotsman		BUENOS AYRES June 20 – Hjordis for Channel
Saturday 17 July Aberdeen Journal		ABERDEEN "The steamer Hjordis, from Wick, has been delayed through a breakdown in her engine, and no direct cargo is at hand at the time of writing."
Wednesday 21 July Aberdeen Journal		"The s.s. Hjordis, which sailed from Wick on the 6th inst., had a breakdown in her machinery, and had to be towed into Kristiansund. The damage, however, is not serious, and, from the latest advices to hand, she is expected to resume her voyage tomorrow."
Thursday 12 August Aberdeen Journal		WICK Wednesday - ... the steamers Hjordis and Ahus have sailed for Stettin and Libau.
Wednesday 20 October The Scotsman		BERGEN October 13 – Hjordis, s., for Shetland

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Saturday 16 April Yorkshire Post	GRIMSBY April 14 – Hjordis ss, 226, light, Esbjerg	
Saturday 26 May Sunderland Daily Echo		THE TYNE Yesterday - Hjordis s, Peterhead
Thursday 16 June The Scotsman	BO'NESS June 15 – Hjordis, s226, from Libau, battens	
Friday 24 June The Scotsman		BO'NESS June 23 – Hjordis, s 226, Damnas for Hartlepool, bunkers
Thursday 21 July The Scotsman		
Thursday 28 July The Scotsman		ARBROATH July 27 - Hjordis s., Douglas, for Methil, light
Monday 8 August Aberdeen Journal		FRASERBURGH The following is a list of the week's shipments ... s.s. Hjordis for Libau 1517 barrels
Saturday 27 August The Scotsman		BO'NESS August 26 – Hjordis s., 226, Damnes, for Wick, bunkers
Thursday 1 September The Scotsman		WICK The steamers ... have arrived to load cured herrings, while the Louga and Hjordis have sailed.
Friday 23 September The Scotsman		HUDIKSVALL September 15 – Hjordis, s., for Lerwick

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Saturday 25 February The Scotsman	DRESDEN February 24 – Hjordis	
Wednesday 17 May Manchester Courier	LIVERPOOL Hjordis from Frederikstadt	
Monday 7 August	KRISTIANSUND July 31 – Hjordis s, from Peterhead	
Monday 28 August Sunderland Daily Echo	THE TYNE Saturday – Hjordis s, Shoreham	
Thursday 31 August Sunderland Daily Echo	MACDUFF Wednesday - The large steamer Hjordis of Moss, loaded part of a cargo of cured herrings for the Lower Baltic, and sailed during the afternoon.	
Friday 1 September The Berwick Advertiser		NORTH SUNDERLAND On Monday the steamer Hjordis sailed for Stettin, via Macduff, with cured herrings.
Monday 4 September Aberdeen Journal		MACDUFF – Saturday On Wednesday, ... the large steamer Hjordis, of Moss, left with 1300 barrels from Messrs W. and C.I. West for the Lower Baltic.
Friday 8 September The Scotsman	STETTIN September 5, Hjordis, s., from Macduff	
Wednesday 20 September The Scotsman		HERNOSAND September 15 – Hjordis, s. for Lerwick
Wednesday 4 October The Scotsman		BERWICK October 3 – Hjordis, s., 226, Alson, for Konigsberg, via Grimsby, herrings
Friday 6 October The Berwick Advertiser		October 3 – Hjordis, ss 226 tons, Olsen, Konigsberg, via, Grimsby, herrings
Monday 4 December Sunderland Daily Echo		SUNDERLAND CUSTOM HOUSE - COASTERS CLEARED Yesterday – Hjordis, 226, for Buckie, 440 tons coals, T. Rose THE WEAR - SAILED Yesterday – Hjordis s, Buckie
Monday 11 December Dundee Courier Sunderland Daily Echo	ARBROATH Dec 10 - Hjordis (s), Buckie, light	
Wednesday 13 December The Scotsman		ARBROATH Dec 12 – Hjordis, s., Damnes, for Swansea, potatoes.

1912

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Friday 12 January The Scotsman	GRANGEMOUTH January 11 - Hjordis, s, 226, Olsen, from Middlesborough, iron	
Saturday 13 January Dundee Courier	MONTROSE Jan 12 – Hjordis (s), Grangemouth, light	
Monday 13 May Sunderland Daily Echo	SEAHAM Yesterday – Hjordis s, Stromsey	
Tuesday 14 May Sunderland Daily Echo		Yesterday - Hjrdis s, Wick
Friday 5 July The Scotsman	COPENHAGEN June 30 – Hjordis s, from Wick	
Friday 2 August Yorkshire Post		GRIMSBY July 31 - Hjordis s, light, Blyth

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Saturday 25 January The Scotsman		DYSART January 23 - Hjordis s, 226, Svendsbo, from Dysart for Stavanger, coal
Tuesday 11 February The Scotsman	DYSART AND WEMYSS February 9 – Hjordis s., Svendsbo from Stavanger, at Dysart, light	
Thursday 13 February The Scotsman		DYSART AND WEMYSS February 11 – Hjordis, s., 226, Svendsbo for Haugesund, from Dysart, coal
Tuesday 25 March The Scotsman	DYSART AND WEMYSS March 23 – Hjordis, s., 226, Hviding, from London, at Dysart, light	
Thursday 27 March The Scotsman		DYSART AND WEMYSS March 25 – Hjordis, s., 226, Hviding, for Haugesund from Dysart, coal
Thursday 29 May Sunderland Daily Echo		SUNDERLAND CUSTOM HOUSE COASTERS CLEARED Hjordis s, 226, for Inverness, 400 tons coals, T.Rose
Friday 30 May Sunderland Daily Echo		THE WEAR Today – Hjordis s, Inverness
Friday 6 June The Scotsman	BURNTISLAND June 4 - Hjordis s, 226, Hviding, from Inverness, light	
Saturday 7 June The Scotsman		BURNTISLAND June 6 – Hjordis, s., 226, Hviding, for Wick, coal
Friday 13 June Dundee Courier	BURNTISLAND June 11 - Hjordis (s), Wick, light	
Saturday 14 June The Scotsman		BURNTISLAND June 13 – Hjordis, s.,
Tuesday 5 August Aberdeen Journal		FRASERBURGH August 2 – Hjordis, s.s., Hiording, St Petersburg, herrings
Monday 11 August Aberdeen Journal		FRASERBURGH - Saturday Half a dozen cargoes of cured herrings have been shipped from Fraserburgh to continental ports during the week ... (list includes) s.s. Hjordis for St Petersburg, 1377 barrels
Tuesday 16 September Aberdeen Journal	FOREIGN HERRING TRADE “Mr W. Reid, of Stettin, states that during last week he received from the east coast of Scotland by the direct steamers Suldal, Prima, Mineral, Hanchem and Hjordis, and the Leith liners Toledo and Staff, 24,095 barrels of herrings ... “	
Tuesday 16 September The Scotsman	STETTIN September 11 – Hjordis, s., from Berwick	
Saturday 11 October The Scotsman	DANZIG October 7 – Hjordis, s., from Peterhead	

1914

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Friday 20 February The Scotsman	STAVANGER Feb 13 – Hjordis, s.s., from Dysart	
Wednesday 29 April The Scotsman		DYSART AND WEMYSS April 28 – Hjordis, s.s., 226, Larsen, from Dysart for Stavanger, coal
Wednesday 6 May The Scotsman	STAVANGER April 30 – Hjordis, s., from Dysart	
Friday 12 June The Scotsman		HAGUESUND June 8 - Hjordis, for Lerwcik
Wednesday 14 October Newcastle Journal	BLYTH October 11 - Hjordis s., Haugesund	
Wednesday 16 December Newcastle Journal Sunderland Daily Echo	THE TYNE December 15 – Hjordis s, Haugesund (Dunston) Dunston is the dock	
Wednesday 23 December Newcastle Journal		THE TYNE December 22 - Hjordis s, Bergen

1915

NEWSPAPER DATE AND SOURCE	ARRIVED	SAILED
Wednesday 24 March Sunderland Daily Echo		FLAMBOROUGH HEAD PASSINGS By Lloyd's telegrams yesterday – Steamers passed North: Hjordis (Norwegian)
Wednesday 21 April Sunderland Daily Echo		FLAMBOROUGH HEAD PASSINGS By Lloyd's telegrams yesterday – Hjordis (Norwegian)
Tuesday 25 May Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough	MIDDLESBROUGH May 25 – Hjordis – Sogler, Kristiansund	
Saturday 16 October Liverpool Daily Echo	HULL October 15 – Hjordis, Gothenburg	

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REFERENCES

- British Newspaper Archive (The British Library Board)
- CLIP - Crew List Index Project
- Websites: Wrecksite.eu
- Genealogical records – Ancestry, Family Search, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints