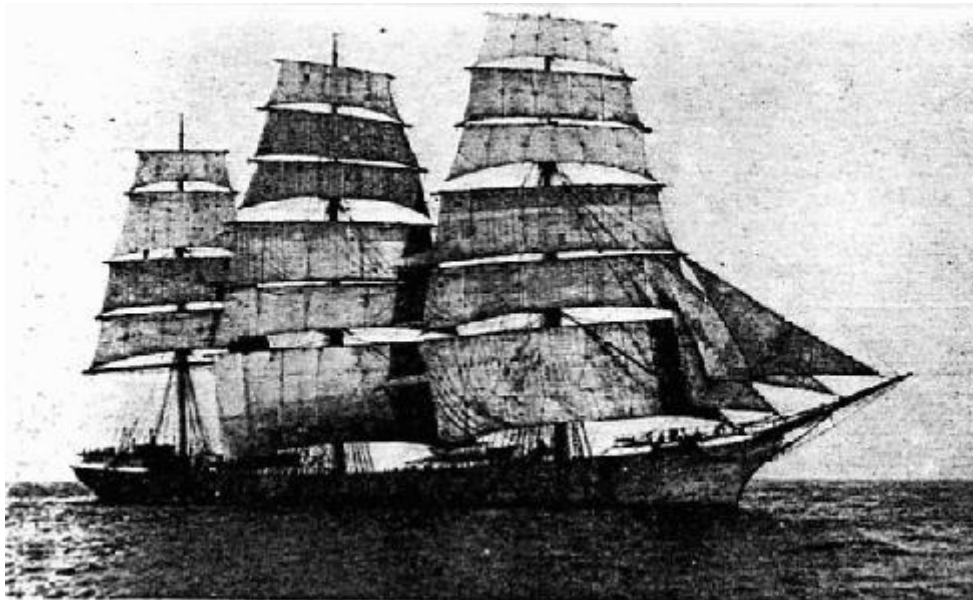


The History

of the

Walkure



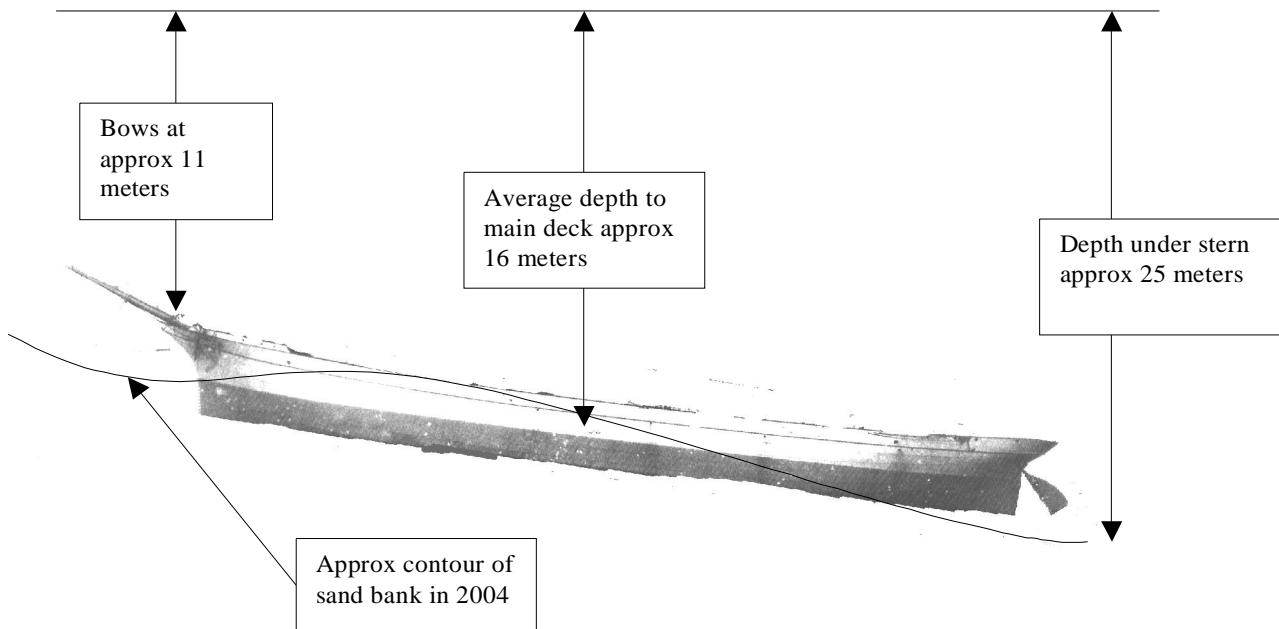
Sister ship – the 'Monkbarns' under sail

Introduction

This article is a collection of research data collected by members of Cambridge City BSAC and friends of members involved with the project. The project is part of the Nautical Archaeology Society, (NAS), 'Adopt a wreck' scheme.

The Walkure, wrecked on the Haisborough sand bank in December, 1911 is still in remarkable condition and is well worth surveying for this project. She is still fairly intact and now supported by the sandbank. The sand waves move around the wreck making each dive different. Parts of the wreck are covered and revealed as the sands move.

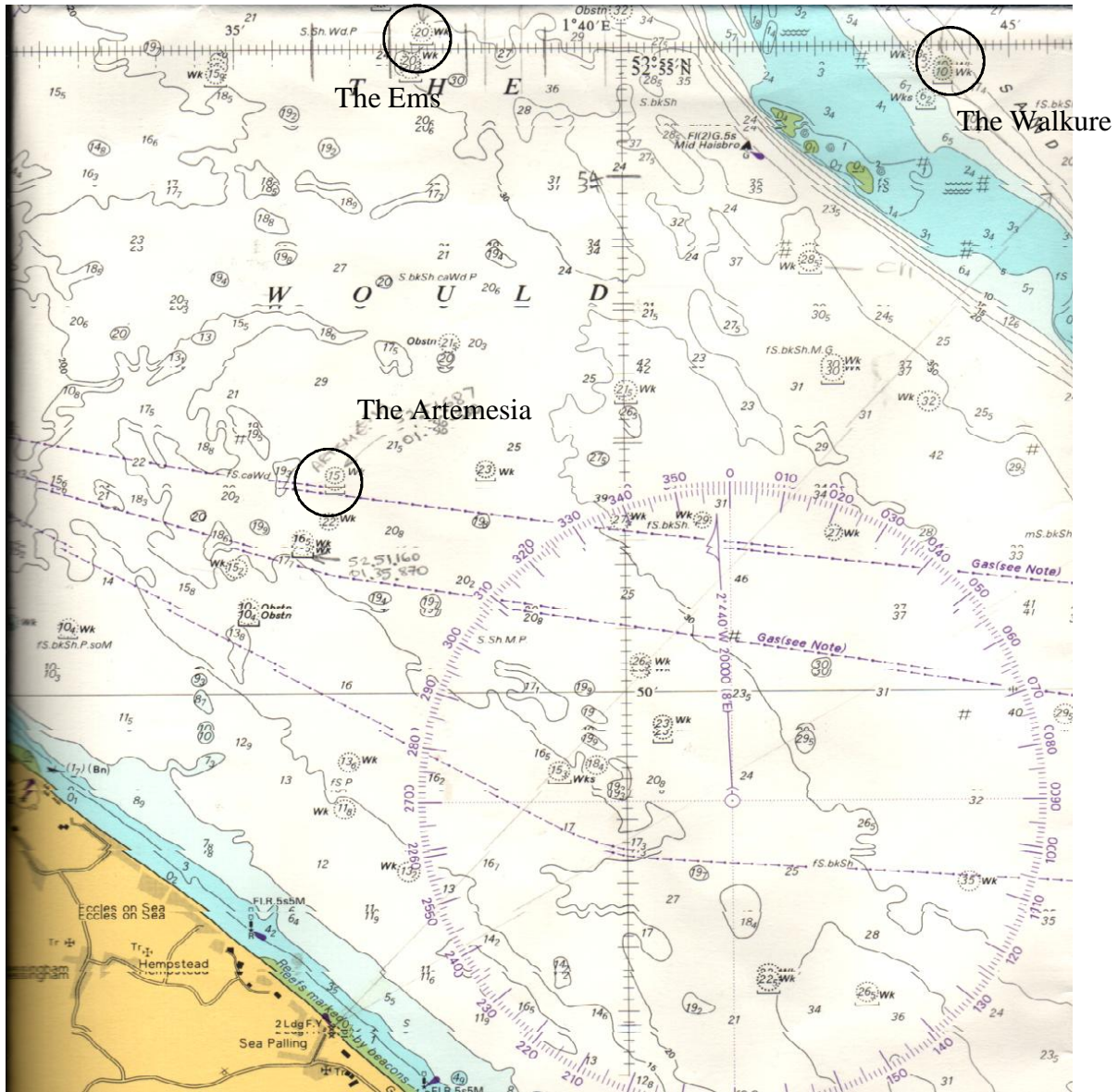
She was launched as the 'Conway' in 1896, changing owners 3 times in all. Her last owners, a German shipping company, renamed her the 'Walkure', pronounced val-ker-e, in 1905. She was wrecked in December, 1911, while on a voyage from Hamburg to Santos in Brazil. She carried a general cargo including motor cars which had a total value at the time of £40,000, a large amount for the time.



This view is from the port side, the starboard side was fairly clear in 2004 but the sand wave moves. In 2003, this covered the bows up to the entire bowsprit. The rudder is still attached by its top mounting. Masts and debris are on the seabed on the starboard side.

Location

The Walkure is on the seaward side of the Haisborough sand bank in the position shown. Well known local wrecks, the Ems and the Artemesia are also shown



Tractor launching is available at Sea Palling. The service is run by Beach Rock Leisure.

Extracts from Lloyd's gazette, Dec 1911 : Walkure's last voyage

Thurs 30th November, 1911

Sailed from Hamburg bound for Santos, Brazil.

Published Tues 5th Dec 1911

Walkure – Felixtowe, Dec 5th 7.15 am. - HMS 'Skipjack' went to assist German barque 'Walkure' ashore on Haisborough sands. Grounded on edge of sand & hauled off, no damage done.

Published Wed 6th Dec, 1911

Great Yarmouth Dec 5th 2.41pm – Just returned from barque 'Walkure' ashore Haisborough sands. Six tugs pulling last high water. Vessel still hard & fast. Jettisoning cargo. Southerly gale blowing. If weather moderates, possibly floating at next high tide.

Published Thursday 7th Dec, 1911

The efforts of six tugs to save the German 4 masted barque 'Walkure' on Haisborough sands were abandoned yesterday after 2 days continuous work owing to her mainmast having forced a hole through her bottom. She has a valuable cargo, some of which tugs & boatmen are now endeavouring to save. Lifeboats standing by to take off crew.

Published Friday 8th Dec, 1911

Great Yarmouth Dec 7th 12.30pm

'Walkure' becoming a total wreck after unsuccessful attempts to salve vessel, small portion of cargo brought ashore. Crew landed this morning, upon arrival Yarmouth found 2 men missing, presume left on board. Lifeboat sent to rescue.

Bizarre coincidence Steam ship with the same name .. *Valpariso Dec 11, 7.40pm* – Walkure(s) reports having bunkers on fire. The fire has been extinguished. We understand about 70 tons totally lost, expenses already incurred amount to £120. Damage insignificant.

Obviously a bad week for ships called 'Walkure' !

Conclusions from reports:

Walkure probably hit Haisborough sands in the dark on the night of Monday 4th December, Tuesday 5th. The report from HMS 'Skipjack' was sent by radio. Became total loss on Wed 6th Dec when her mast punched a hole through the hull.

Time line of ownership

Built

1896 Launched as the 'Conway'. Built by A. McMillan & Sons, Dumbarton. Yard No 344. 1907 gross tonnage.

Year	Ship name	Owner
1896 - 1900	Conway	R.N. Smith, Liverpool
1900 – 1901	Conway	J. Joyce, Liverpool
1905 – 1911	Walkure	H. Folsch & Co., Hamburg

Owners

R.N. Smith,

John Joyce & Co, May Buildings, 51, N. John St, Liverpool

H. Folsch & Co, Rathausmarkt 8, Hamburg, Germany

Press cuttings with
stories about the
wreck and
details of auctioning
the cargo and stores

Eastern Daily press, 7th December, 1911.

THE STRANDED BARQUE

TOTAL WRECK ON HAISBORO'

ANIMATED SCENES IN YARMOUTH HARBOUR.

Yesterday all hopes of salving the German barque Walkure, which struck on Haisboro' Sands, were abandoned, owing to the fact that her mainmast had forced a hole through her bottom. Yesterday afternoon she had about four feet water in her hold, and arrangements were made for tugs and boatmen to salve as much as possible of her cargo. She had left Hamburg only a few days when she struck owing to thick weather, and was on a voyage to Santos in Brazil, with a general cargo.

Lloyd's report as to this vessel states :- The ship Walkure went ashore off Haisboro' Sands on Monday, but she refloated with assistance. Unfortunately however, the vessel is again stranded on the Haisboro', and in view of the bad weather prevailing, her position is regarded as serious, 25 guineas percent being paid to reinsure her on the market. The cargo is being jettisoned as rapidly as possible, and six tugs are in attendance. The Walkure is of 1917 tons gross register, and was outward bound from Hamburg for Santos, Brazil. She has valuable general cargo.

A couple of tugs, the Yare and United Service, arrived last night at the South Quay, their decks filled with stuff salvaged from the Walkure, comprising ropes, wire hawsers, ships stores, canned goods, and variety of articles. It was reported that the barque is gradually settling down in the sands. There were no fewer than nine tugs fast to the Walkure yesterday morning, London tugs having arrived to add their efforts to those of the local boats. The ill success of their attempts falls hardly on the tugs, which get nothing for their services, as these were rendered of no cure no pay terms. Fortunately the weather continues fine, and it may be possible to salve a good deal more from the ill-fated ship. The goods landed were taken charge of by the Custom House officers and warehoused. Among the miscellaneous articles already brought in are sewing machines and spices, but it is impossible to tell the contents of many of the cases until they are opened. All the boxes were perfectly dry, and there were also sacks filled with peas or beans that were probably part of the vessel's provisions. Some of the boxes were labelled Sao Paulo via Santos, with their contents described in German, and some cases are covered in rush matting. The scene on the Quay as packages were brought ashore was quite reminiscent of the old days when the profession of the "wreckers" was one of the profitable occupations followed around our coast. Boatmen are stripping the barque, and the cases put into the lifeboats and ferried to their tugs.

The Louisa Heartwell lifeboat returned to Cromer about 7.30 last evening after 53 hours absence from her station. It was a beautiful moonlight night and as the boat came in, she was an object of great interest to spectators ashore.

Yarmouth Mercury, 9th December 1911

GERMAN BARQUE ON HAISBORO'**A TOTAL WRECK**

About 5 o'clock on Sunday the German barque Walkure, of 1917 tons gross register, outward bound from Hamburg to Santos, Brazil, with a valuable general cargo, struck the dreaded Haisboro' sand, between here and Cromer, and has since become a total wreck. All hope of salving her was abandoned on Wednesday night, when the crew were taken off the then waterlogged vessel by the Gorlestone volunteer lifeboat Elizabeth Simpson, transferred to the tug King Edward VII., and brought to the Yarmouth sailors' home, where Mr and Mrs. Bracey provided a change of dry clothes and a warm meal for the exhausted mariners. The crew numbered 24 all told, and on arrival at the Home consternation was caused because the steward and cook were missing. Capt. Parron and his mate immediately went back on the tug to search for them, and during the day a message was received that the two men had been taken off by the tug Champion. The crew were glad to find that their personal belongings had been saved. From what could be gathered they appear to have had a rough time. Information of the disaster was received from a gunboat engaged on fishery protection duty, and the first tug to arrive on the scene on Monday was the Roman of Hull. (Others soon appeared from Yarmouth and London, and endeavoured to tow the vessel off during Monday and Tuesday, eight tugs in all being made fast to the barque, viz, five from Yarmouth, two from London, and one from Hull. In addition lifeboats from Cromer, Palling, Winterton and Gorlestone put out. The weather was very bad, and the hands were engaged at the pumps continuously, having no sleep from Monday to Wednesday when the weather worsened, and there was 8ft. of water in the hold. It was then they were obliged to abandon her.

Quay labourers were taken out on Tuesday to assist in jettisoning the cargo, a considerable quantity of which was salvaged, throwing a good deal of work onto the coastguard and customs authorities. On Thursday two drifters came in with their holds full of items of cargo saved from the stranded ship, the articles comprising bicycles (which had floated in their wooden cases) sewing machines, cinnamon, mineral medicinal waters, &c., There were also three motor cars on board and pianos. Some of the tugs also brought in a lot of cargo and stores, the lifeboats having ferried the goods from the stranded vessel to the tugs. The goods landed were warehoused by the Customs officers.

Yarmouth Independent, 9th December 1911

**GERMAN SHIP WRECKED ON
HAISBORO' SAND.**-----
VALUABLE CARGO LOST.-----
CREW AT YARMOUTH.

The fine German barque Walkure, a vessel of over 1,000 tons has been wrecked on the dreaded Haisboro' Sands, which she struck during foggy weather on Sunday. She was bound from Hamburg, for Santos (Brazil), with a general cargo, valued, it is stated, at something like £40,000, most of which it is feared, is absolutely lost. No fewer than nine Yarmouth, London and Hull tugs, and Palling and Cromer boatmen endeavoured to salve the ship, but their efforts were unavailing, tow ropes parting time after time. On Tuesday there seemed a chance of getting the Walkure out of her perilous position, as she was moved, but the wind and sea got up, ropes broke and further progress was impossible. On Wednesday work for the salvage of the ship was abandoned; but a considerable quantity goods in immense cases were got on board the tugs and landed at Yarmouth, under the superintendence of Mr. M. Butcher, German vice-consul.

Twenty-two of the crew of the barque came to Yarmouth on Thursday and were received at the Sailors' Home, it transpired that the steward and cook were missing. As it was supposed they had been left on board the barque, the captain and another officer returned to ascertain their fate. They were found and rescued from the wreck.

Notice of the auction of cargo and stores

Eastern Daily press, 13th December, 1911

Sales by W M. Gambling.
TO SHIP CHANDLERS, WHOLESALE GROCERS,
AND STORE KEEPERS.
SHORT NOTICE OF SALE.
(Ex Barque "Walkure", wrecked on Haisboro.)
CORN HALL, GREAT YARMOUTH.

Wm GAMBLING is instructed by LLoyd's Agent at Great Yarmouth to sell by Auction, at the above, where the goods have been removed for the convenience of Sale, on FRIDAY NEXT, 15th DECEMBER, 1911, the salvaged
CARGO AND STORES,
280 doz Cups and Saucers, 60 doz Creolina Disinfectant, 15,600 sheets glass paper, 8 doz, 2 and 4 tier Mess Tins, 480 lbs Margarine, 2 ½ tons WHOLE PEPPER, 1 ½ ton Cinnamon Bark,
108 NEW SEWING MACHINES,
2 drums Zinc and Tallow, 600 lbs. Red Lead, 19 cwt. Paint in 25lb. tins, 4 ½ cwt Composition, 1266 yards Hayward & Son's Coker Canvas and Tarpaulin, 1 cwt. Spun Yarn, 1 ton 14 cwt. Manilla Rope (1in to 4in), 7 ½ cwt . Hemp Rope, and Coil of Wire Hawser, &c.

Sale to commence at 11 o'clock.
On view Thursday, 14th December, 1911, from 10 till 4.
Catalogues may be obtained of the Auctioneer, Regent Street, Great Yarmouth.

Notice of the auction of cargo and stores

Yarmouth Independent 30th December 1911

THE WRECK OF THE WALKURE .

SALVED GOODS SOLD AT THE CORN HALL

Considerable interest was taken in the sale, conducted a few days ago in the Corn Hall, by Mr Wm Gambling, of the salved cargo and stores from German Barque Walkure, wrecked on Haisboro' sands while on a voyage to Santos, Brazil. There were close on 400 lots, and the hall was filled with bargain prospectors. The variety and number of the lots gave the building the appearance of a huge store. The auctioneer wasted no words in his preface, and got to work at once, conducting the sale with such celerity that in sixty minutes he had disposed of 178 lots, which is probably a record at Yarmouth. The first 28 lots consisted of fancy china cups and saucers, which were offered 10 dozen at a time, this quantity making from 10s. to 8s. Next came 6 gross of glass chimneys of narrow diameter, for circular flame reading lamps, which fetched 10s. per 288. Small tins of corned beef sold at 8s. for 10, and tins of boiled mutton at 6s. 6d. per dozen. A large box of dried salt cod, probably about 28lbs in weight, was secured for 13s., and the auctioneer said the buyer at all events need not go without his Christmas dinner. Next a large quantity of creolina, a disinfectant, was put up, made by an English firm. There were over 300 quart bottles, which were offered a dozen bottles at a time, nearly all of which fetched 3s. per lot. The auctioneer said it was the finest possible stable purifier, and then smaller sized bottles were put up, six dozen at a time, which fetched 3s. 6d. first the price rising as the sales proceeded to 3s. 9d. and then 4s., even so a low price for 72 bottles of strong disinfectant. Lots of 3 doz tins, each holding about a quart of the same stuff, sold at 7s., 8s., and 9s. 6d., the price rising as the supply ran short.

Then came spices. Bags of whole peppers, each containing 20 st. , were offered two at a time, and there were evidently some buyers from a distance after these. The first lot sold at 46s. for forty stones, and the price gradually ascended for the succeeding lots till 80s. was obtained for the last. Some 10 st. bags realised 36s. to 38s. each, and the lowest pepper price was 30s. for a bag of 8 ½ stones. Several 26 lb. Tins of dried potatoes then came before the buyers. The first box made 6s., but then the bids dropped to 4s. 6d., and two tins that contained 38 lbs. Made only 2s. 6d. Five hundred pounds of margarine made in Germany were offered in lots of 3 tins containing sixty pounds, which fetched from 22s. to 24s.

Yarmouth Independent 30th December 1911 contd.

A couple of dozen hand sewing machines without covers then tempted some of the ladies present to invest, and sold readily enough at 10s. to 11s. each. After these came twenty five with covers, which made an unvarying 20s. each, lots of five for trade buyers fetching £4 15s. to £5. Several still more handsome machines, with bent covers and well finished, made from £2 4s. to £2 8s. each, a number of fishermen buying them as Christmas presents for their wives. None of these sewing machines had sustained sea damage.

After a quantity of enamelled ware mess tins had been disposed of a quantity of glass paper sold at from 11s. to 16s. per 800 sheets. Next came a score of lots of bales of cassia which much resembles cinnamon. It was of this season's pack from Canton, Two bales, each containing 80lbs. Were offered at a time, and the first couple went for 37s., but the succeeding lots all made 40s. or 41s. for two cases. Three broken bales, containing 16 stones made 24s. Drums of tallow weighing 9st. gross sold at 18s. to 20s., and 100lb. Drums of red lead 22s. to 25s. each. A 26lb. Tin of siccatif of which no one appeared to know anything, went as a blind bargain at 4s. Two tins containing 24lbs. Of frying fat sold for 8s. The rest of the lots had little attraction for the ordinary public, consisting of tiefschwarz (black paint), biefweis (white lead paint), eisen mennle, (red oxide), ochre, amber, anti-fouling composition, steel wire hawser, tarpaulin canvas, spun yarn, whip twine, log lines, Manilla rope, hemp rope, &c. All through there was smart competition, and the sale, which was by instruction from Lloyd's agent at Yarmouth, resulted most satisfactorily.

Extract from the 'Life-Boat' magazine mentioning the Walkure

THE LIFE-BOAT, 1st May, 1912

PALLING and CROMER, NORFOLK-

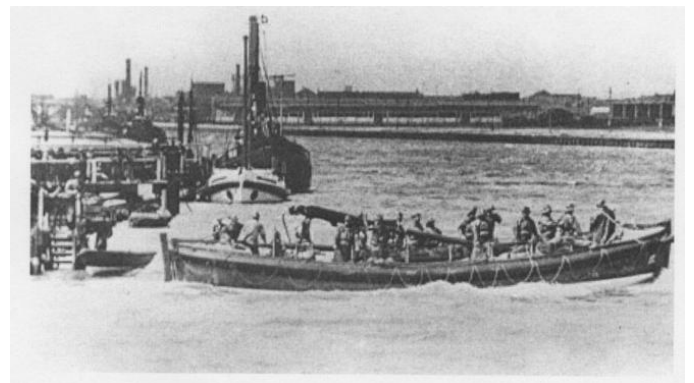
The No. 2 Life-boat at Palling, Hearts of Oak, and the Louisa Heartwell, from Cromer, were launched to the assistance of the ship Walkure, of Hamburg, which stranded on the Haisboro Sands on the 4th December. The vessel was a large one of 1,900 tons, and bound from Hamburg to Santos with a general cargo, had a crew of twenty-four hands. A short time previous to the arrival of the Life-boats tugs reached the vessel, and for two days, whenever the tide was suitable, every effort was made to get the vessel clear of the treacherous sands. On the morning of the 6th December no less than nine tugs were doing what they could to extricate the vessel, but their efforts failed, and eventually the attempt to save her had to be given up. The captain stated that he did not require the Life-boats to take the crew ashore, as the tugs would do all that was necessary, and as long as the weather remained fine the men would continue to salve what they could of the cargo. The Life-boats therefore returned to their stations, and eventually the men on board the ship were taken off and landed by the tugs.

Extract from the 'Life-Boat' magazine mentioning the Walkure



The steam gunboat HMS Skipjack was on fisheries protection patrol in December 1911, the crew pictured above in 1914 at the outbreak of WW1. She was first to assist and did pull the Walkure off the sandbank. Unfortunately the combination of strengthening wind and tidal current pushed her back on.

Some contemporary pictures of the Gorleston volunteer lifeboat 'Elizabeth Simpson' which finally took the crew off and transferred them to the tug 'King Edward VII'.



14th February 1912, tugs pulling the 'Adriatico' off the Haisboro' bank



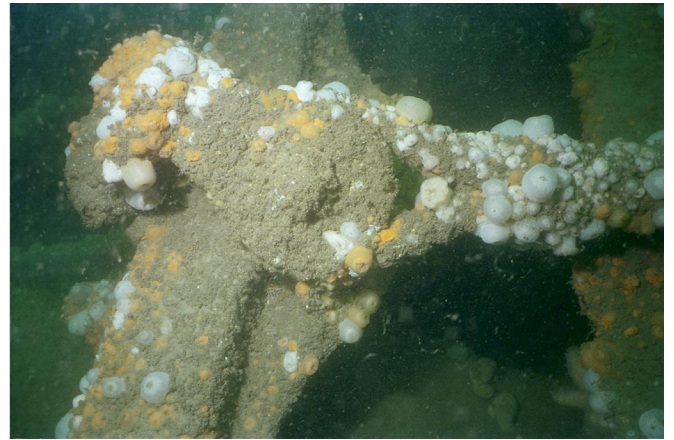
This illustration, a painting and not a photograph, depicts the Adriatico being pulled from Haisburgh Sands with the masts of the Walkure in the background.

The masts & rigging of the 'Walkure' can be seen in the background.

The Walkure today, 2005



Winch close to bows.



Rigging and block still in place.



Bowsprit vanishes into the distance.



Lower section of main mast still upright.



Enamelled cookware in hold.



One of the many bath tubs on the wreck.

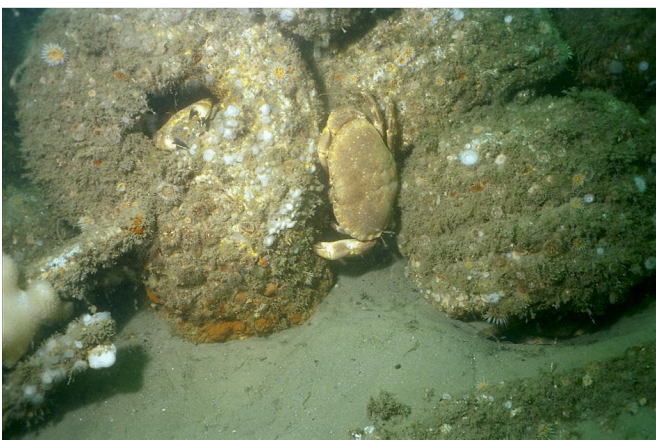
The Walkure today, 2005 contd



The wreckage is now home to vast colonies of anemones and dead mans fingers



The solidified contents of many barrels now litter the stern section of the wreck..



Plenty of hiding places for crabs & lobsters.



Some superstructure still stands near stern.