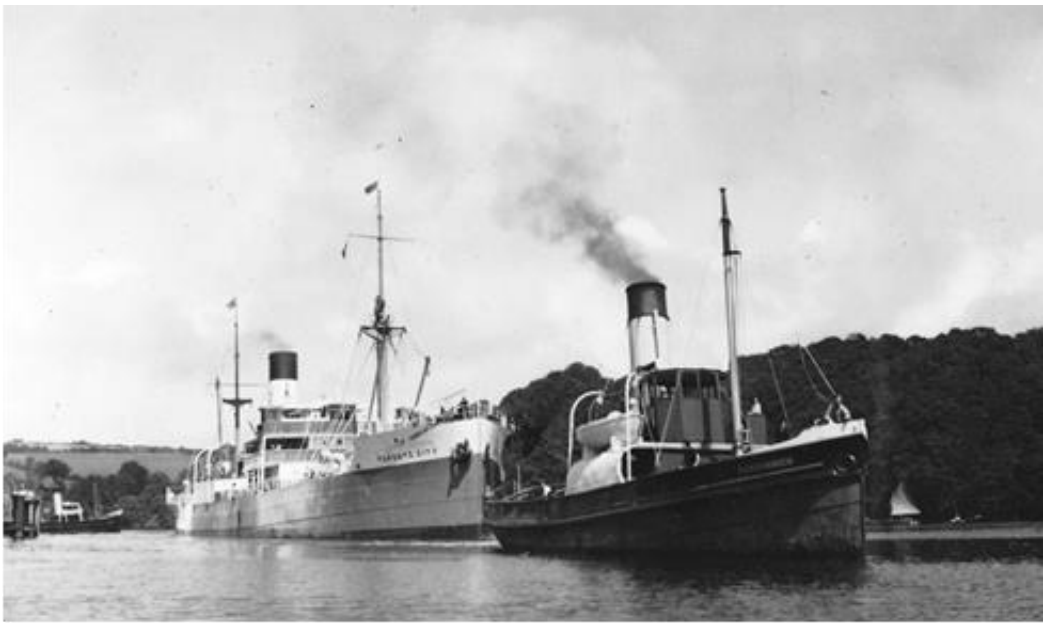
The History of the tug Pendennick



Previous names:- Gamecock

Built:- 1883 Forest and Co, Millwall

Scrapped:- 1947 Plymouth

Period in Fowey:- 1930 – 1946

(This is the first tug with the name Pendennick)

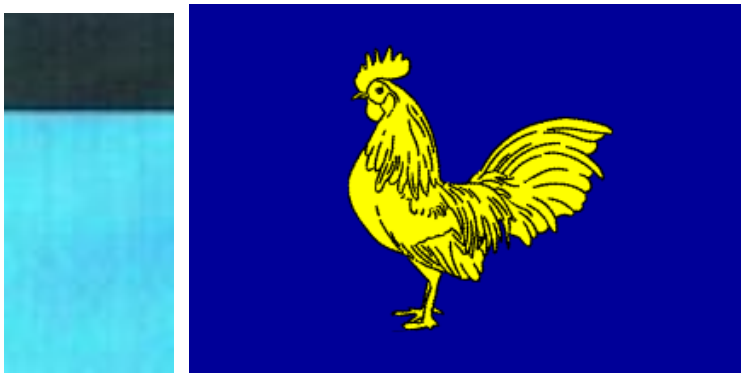
Pendennick is the original name for Bodinnick

Name of Vessel in Fowey	**Pendennick**
Previous Names	**Game Cock**

The Gamecock was built in 1883 in Millwall by Forrestt and Son of the Norway Yard, Limehouse and Britannia Yard, Millwall (1888) of Wyvenhoe, Essex and the Norway Yard, Limehouse (1889) 1788 Established. Millwall was in those days an active an important shipbuilding site and had iron and steel work.

Gamecock was well built and one of the fastest tug on the Thames at the time. Her LOA was 85'and she had a beam of 19'and a draft of 9'6" she was powered by a 2 cylinder 350 H.P. compound steam engine supplied by the builder.(the article below relates) The company was originally founded in 1880, by a consortium of around twelve London River Pilots. Vessels were registered to groups of individuals including Henry Rae, Richard Holland, George Doust, George J. Spicer, Daniel Barker, William Giles, and Arthur J. Couves, although all traded under the banner of the Gamecock Steam Towing Company. (A. J. Couves, manager)

In 1928, The Ocean Towage & Salvage Company Ltd., a company with Turkish roots, acquired the Gamecock Steam Towing Company business. The new owners incorporated a new limited liability concern to take the business forward. At this time vessels were sold by their previous groups of registered owners to the new organisation.



She was registered in the ownership of G. F. Payne and 12 other pilots. It was a common practice in that time for ships pilots to have interests in towage and other activities on the river

Iron screw tug, 88 tons gross, built at Millwall in 1865 for the Gamecock Company, Mr. George F. Payne, the river pilot, for the Nippon Yusen Kaisha etc., being registered owner. She replaced the famous first "Game Cock" and was just as noteworthy a little ship. She was small, but had a beautiful hull, subsequently awarded a prize for its lines, but in addition was magnificently built so that she could stand a lot of knocking about. Running free she was one of the fastest tugs on the Thames and for that reason was always chartered by the Committee for barge and yacht races in the lower river.

Like several other tugs which had a great reputation, the "Game Cock" had a remarkable series of masters. Captain Edward Martin from the first "Game Cock" was succeeded by his old mate Captain Robert Andrews and it was in her that the latter started his extraordinary run of salvage luck. In those days he was the most dashing of the younger tug skippers, as ready to tackle any towing job or salvage as he was to indulge in any high-spirited prank or joke when there was no job of work on hand. His friends nicknamed him "Robert the Devil" or "Peppermint Bob," but full of spirits and fun as he was he never let it interfere with his work, as his record in the "Game Cock" and other ships clearly showed.

On one occasion he saved two ships' companies in one month and on another, putting back to Deal quite by chance in order to land a seasick passenger, he was a witness of the collision between the "Loch Fergus" and the "Idle Wild," picking up the wife and baby of the latter's captain and two seamen. She then pulled off the salvage of the "Loch Fergus" and almost immediately afterwards saved the crew of a schooner wrecked on the Goodwins.

Captain Wal Brownfield was another well known master and yet another, and perhaps the one most intimately connected with her, was Captain W. Mastin, who died quite recently after having been landlord of the Crown Inn at Shorne for some time. He was a great character, always singing "Sweet Belle Mahone" to himself and needless to say getting chaffed over it. But he was a match for any chaff and an inveterate practical joker. His son Captain Alec Mastin also commanded her at a later date, and Captain Arthur Couves.

One could always hear the "Game Cock" approaching on the darkest night by a very curious squeak in her engines, and when she was later fitted with steam steering gear that also made an extraordinary noise. It did not, however, affect her efficiency.

In the earliest days of the war she was taken up for the examination service in the Lower Hope and when relieved from that job was particularly lucky with a number of salvage jobs in the Thames Estuary and neighbouring waters, mostly of ships damaged by mine or torpedo. She then returned to the ordinary river work and in May 1926 was laid up in the West India Dock although she soon found a purchaser and before the end of the year was transferred to Captain Masters, Harbour Master at Poole and an old pleasure-steamer man who had been mate of the "Plymouth Belle" under W. A. Mason, who paid £800 for her and is still finding excellent use for her services.

From John Mason from 1933 newspaper cutting

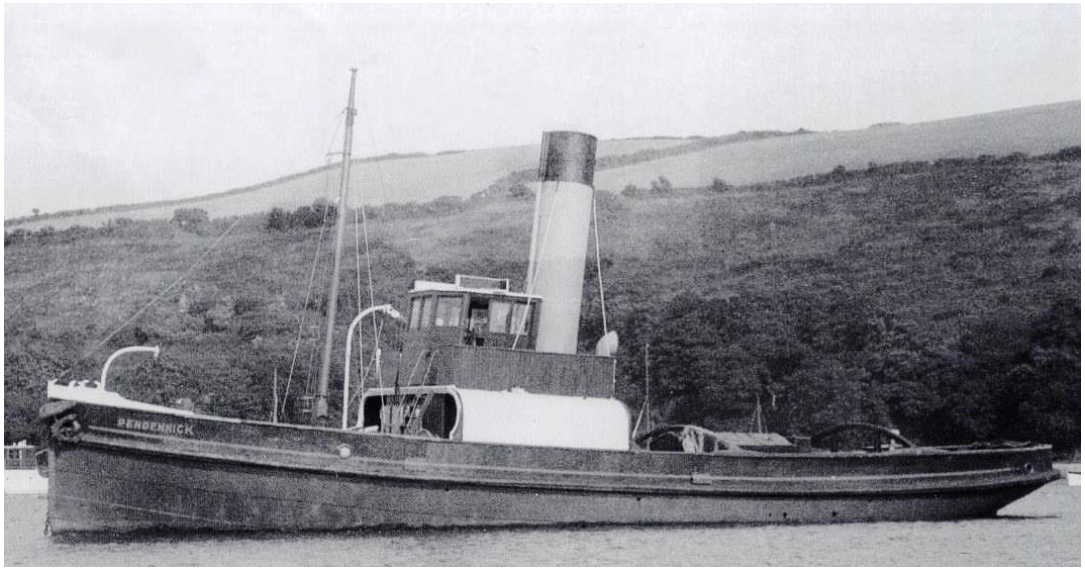
In 1914 with the out break of the first world war she was requisitioned along with many other tugs and coastal craft by the Royal Navy for examination service, based in Lower Hope. Presumably at the end of hostilities she was returned to owners and continued working until May 1926 when she was laid up in West India Dock. Later in 1926 she was sold to W.S.Masters of Poole for £800.It is thought there were plans to run passengers with her but this did not work out and in 1930 she was sold to Fowey Tug & Salvage Company Ltd., Fowey [H. Paul, Fowey].

She was renamed Pendennick.(the original name for Bodinnick) and worked in the port until 30th September 1946 On 19th August 1930 she transferred to the Fowey Tug co, Toyne and Carter and worked through the war in the port.

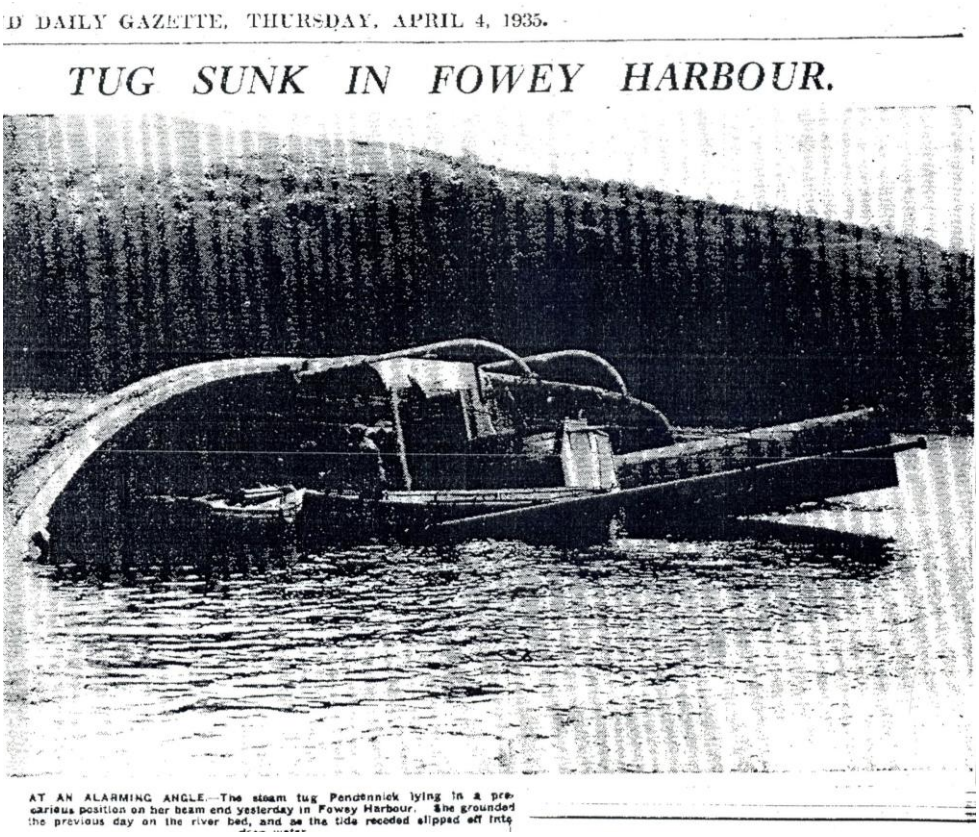
She was sold to breakers in Plymouth being scrapped in Stonehouse, Plymouth and her register closed on 3rd October 1947

Towing the Toronto City to sea through Lew Roads

Pendennick towing a vessel



Pendennick with modified wheelhouse and davits

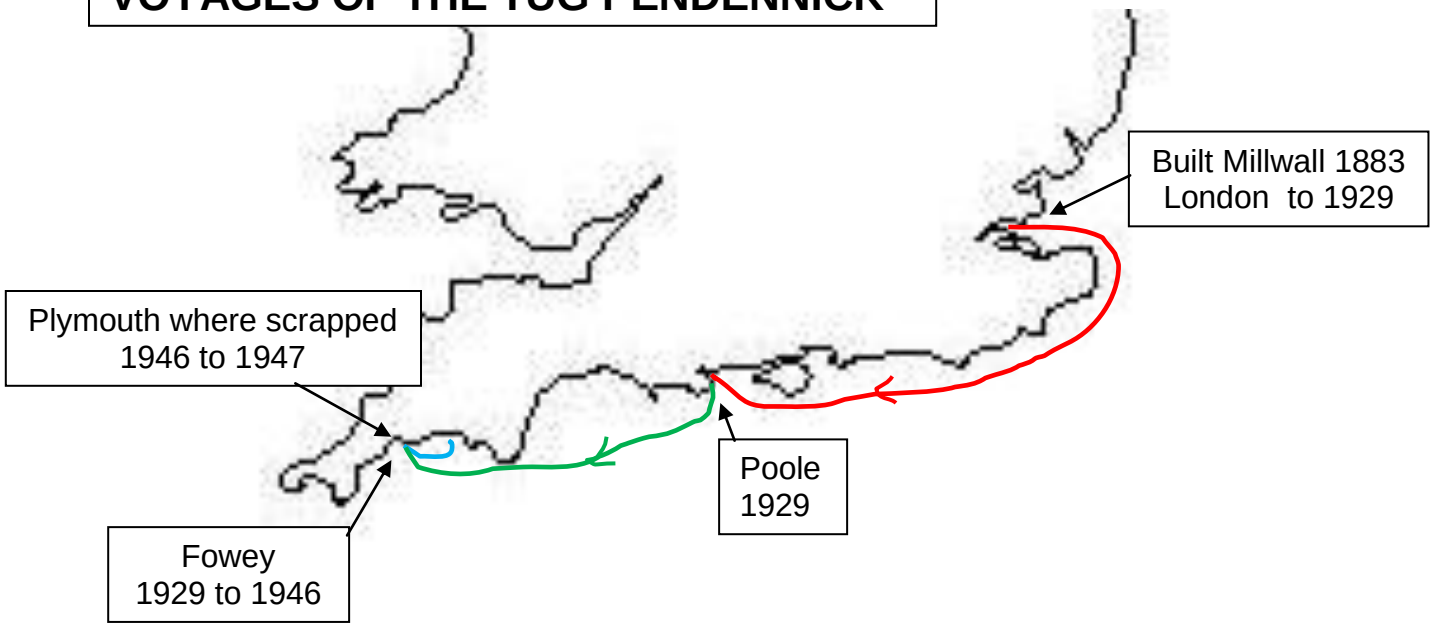


D DAILY GAZETTE, THURSDAY, APRIL 4, 1935.

TUG SUNK IN FOWEY HARBOUR.

AT AN ALARMING ANGLE.—The steam tug Pendennick lying in a precarious position on her beam end yesterday in Fowey Harbour. She grounded the previous day on the river bed, and as the tide receded slipped off into

On 1st April 1935 whilst careening the vessel in Pont Pill to clean the bottom, Pendennick rolled over heeling down the beach. As a result she did not refloat on the rising tide. She was refloated two days later

Name of Vessel in Fowey			**Pendennick**		
Previous Names			**Game Cock**		
Year Built	**1883**	**Official Number**	**87063**	**G.R.T.**	**88**
Builders		**Forrest and Co, Millwall**			
Dimensions			**Length**	**Beam**	**Draft**
			85’	**19’**	**9’6”**
Engines	**C 2 cylinder 350 H.P. compound steam engine by builder**			**Bollard pull**	
Owners Built for		**G.F. Payne, Rochester Gamecock towing**			
History Before Coming to Fowey			**Year 1929**	**W.S. Masters, Poole**	
Owners in Fowey			**1930 19-08-30 30-09-46**	**Henry Paul Toyne and Carter Fowey Tug Co.**	
History on Leaving Fowey			**3-10-47**	**To Plymouth for scrapping at Stonehouse**	

VOYAGES OF THE TUG PENDENNICK