

**CEMENT BARGE**  
(Associated with the stranding of the Greek freighter *Tanais*)

**Wreck Inspection Report**

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**Wreck Inspection Report**  
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## Background

**Site Name:** Cement Barge  
(associated with the stranding of the Greek freighter, *Tanais*).

**File No: MA 103.91**                      **File Name: North Metropolitan Wrecks**  
**File No: MA 207.80**                      **File Name: Moore River Wrecks**

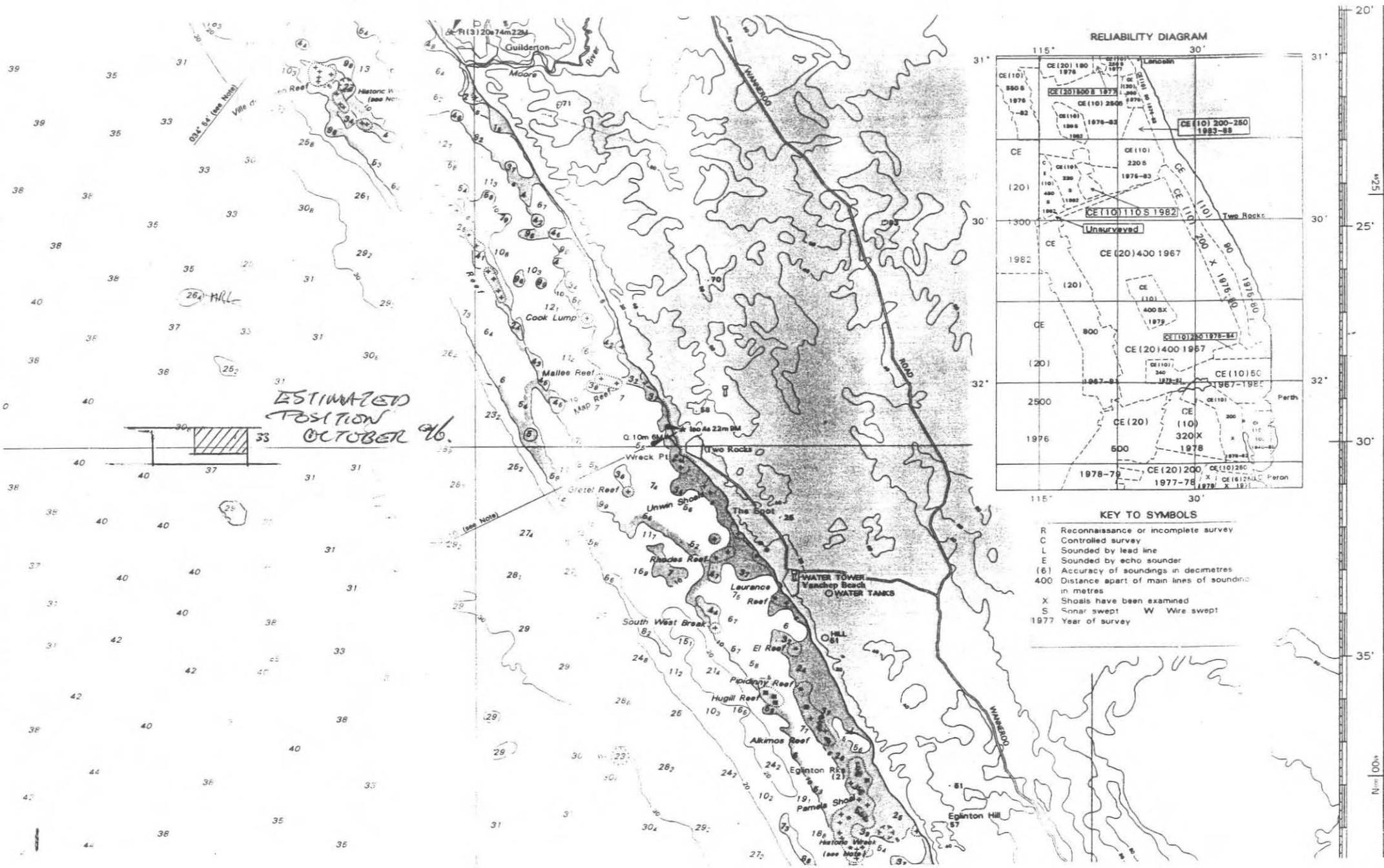
**Resume:** The wreck was found in early June 1985 by John Clarke, skipper of the charter vessel *Tako*. The wreck was detected by echo sounder and showed as a lump with fish over it. (See Appendix 1, *Wanneroo Times*, June 11 1985. "Diver discovers sunken barge.")

First divers on the wreck: Bret (Barney) Carter and Nick Gales. Dive 2: John Clarke and Brian Richie. The site was reported to the WA Maritime Museum but the site was not identified for some years.

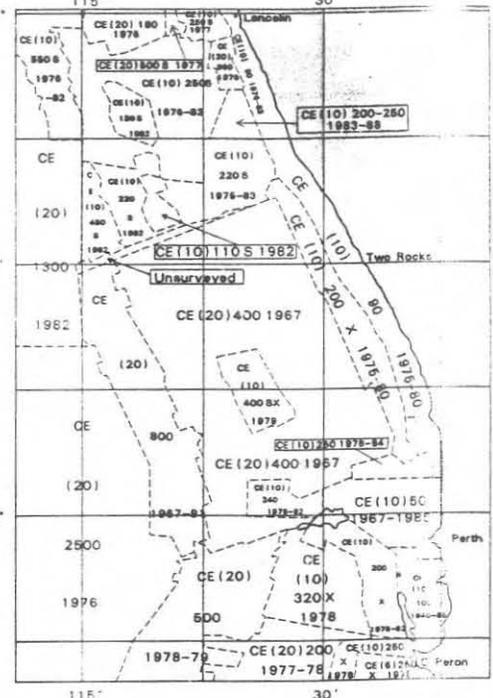
Mr Frank Douglas, an ex-crayfisherman from Seabird and more recently an amateur fisherman working out of Mindarie Keys, remembers the loss of a barge in the area. It had loaded cement from the stranded freighter *Tanais*. The barge was under tow at the time and he thought that it was operated by a North Fremantle firm.

In 1995 a crayfisherman whom I had asked to look out for the barge, pulled up a piece of corroded steel on a crayfish pot. He took me to "his site" to confirm the identification of the wreck. After diving on the site I have confirmed that it is the cement barge. (See photographs No. 1 & 2.)

Figure 1. Chart Excerpt: AUS 754 Lancelin to Cape Peron



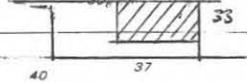
RELIABILITY DIAGRAM



KEY TO SYMBOLS

- R Reconnaissance or incomplete survey
- C Controlled survey
- L Sounded by lead line
- E Sounded by echo sounder
- (6) Accuracy of soundings in decimetres
- 400 Distance apart of main lines of sounding in metres
- X Shoals have been examined
- S Sonar swept
- W Wire swept
- 1977 Year of survey

ESTIMATED POSITION OCTOBER 96.



## Technical Data

**Date of Inspection:** 27 October 1996

**Personnel:** John Clarke

**Approximate Location:** About 9 NM west of Two Rocks Marina.

**Charts:** AUS 754

**Latitude:** 31° 30' S      **Longitude:** 115° 25' E (Approximate)

**Sailing Directions:** From Two Rocks boat ramp, head out 9 NM west.

**Depth:** 36 m

**Height above seabed:** 1—2 metres.

### Site Photographs:

B/W: U/W

Colour: 13 photos (Taken without flash.  $\frac{1}{30}$  and  $\frac{1}{60}$  sec. 100 ASA).

Video: (Video flooded)

Historic: No

### Site Conditions on Inspection:

Swell: 0.5—1.0 metres

Visibility: 15—20 metres

Current: 0.5 kts towards the north

Sea-bed coverage: limestone with sand patches - some sponges, truncates etc.

### Chemical Measurements:

Temperature: No measurements were deemed necessary in this instance.

Salinity: Ditto

pH: Ditto

Dissolved O<sub>2</sub>: Ditto

Corrosion Potentials: Ditto

### Biological Data:

Colonising fauna: An abundance of benthic fish species and Western Rock lobster.  
(See photos Nos. 3 - 6)

### Site Condition and Integrity:

Cement bags - consolidated to a solid mass (See photo Nos. 1 & 2)

Steel plates - deck plating is almost completely corroded.  
                  heaver plating is still visible. (See photo No. 7)

Steel frames - still appear to be sound

Towing bits - still appear sound (See photos 12 & 13).

## Management Considerations

(i) Natural forces: Swell and current would do little further damage to the wreck at this depth.

(ii) Present and future human forces: The site has incurred some damage from crayfishing pots and will continue to do so during the annual crayfishing season, which extends from 15 Nov to 30 June.

## Description of Site

The wreck lies on an orientation of E - W to S E - N W.

The site looks somewhat like a classic ballast pile. Cement bags would have filled the hold. The sides of the hull have collapsed outward so that the deck beams are now vertical. (See photo Nos.8 & 9). The fore and aft decks have collapsed.

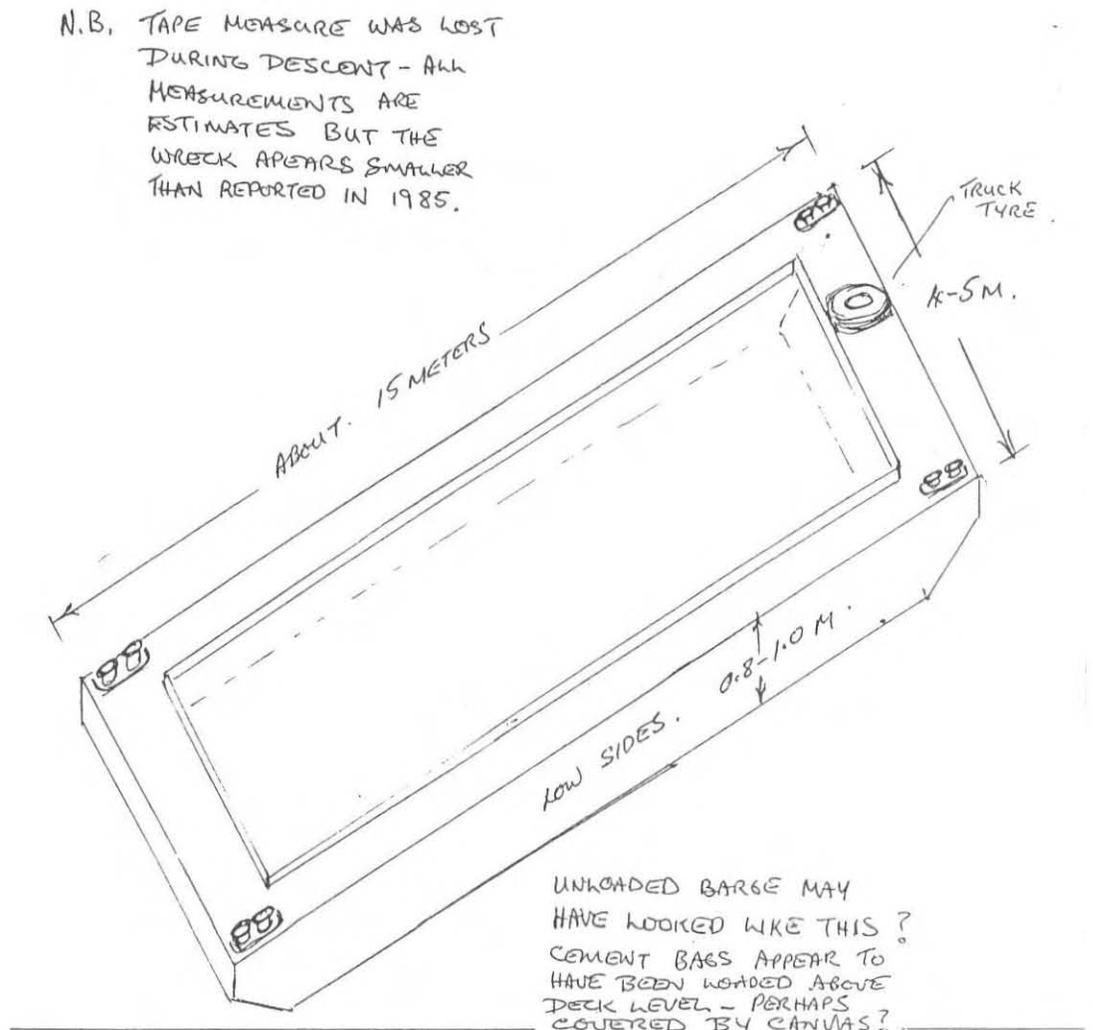
A wire hawser (tow rope) lies in the vicinity of the towing bit at the east end of the site. (See photo No. 10).

Cray pots have been dragged across the site. A vertical ladder seen in 1985 is now missing.

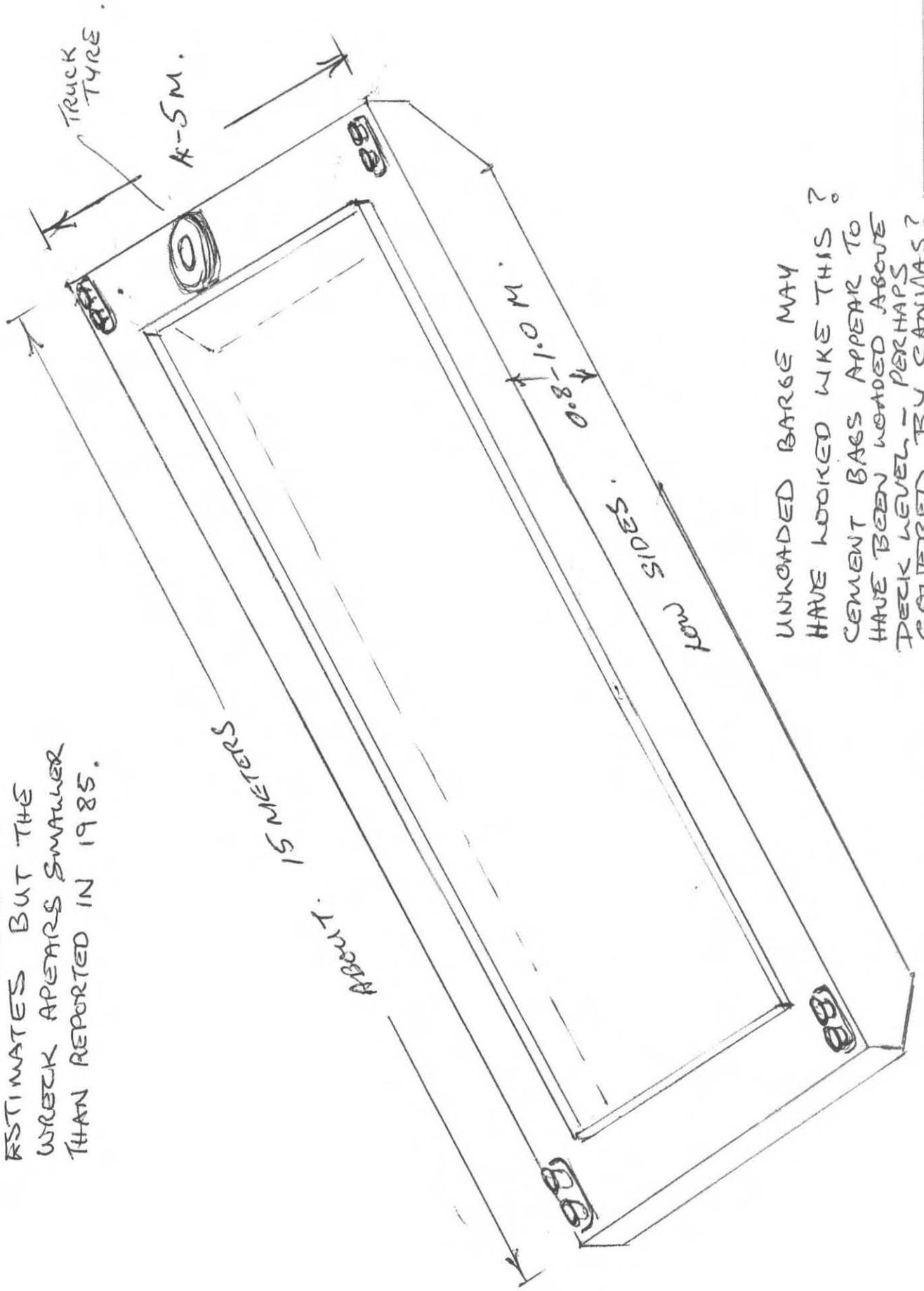
On the east (or SE) end of the wreck, there is a truck tyre (See photo No.11 ) and a temporary navigation light with a white twin flex attached.

## Site Identification Comments

Figure 2. This barge looks more like a harbour or river lighter than an ocean-going barge.



N.B. TAPE MEASURE WAS LOST  
 DURING DESCENT - ALL  
 MEASUREMENTS ARE  
 ESTIMATES BUT THE  
 WRECK APPEARS SMALLER  
 THAN REPORTED IN 1985.



UNLOADED BARGE MAY  
 HAVE LOOKED LIKE THIS?  
 CEMENT BAGS APPEAR TO  
 HAVE BEEN LOADED ABOVE  
 DECK LEVEL - PERHAPS  
 COVERED BY CANVAS?

Figure 2.

## Assessment of Site Significance

(i) Historical:

(ii) Technological:

(iii) Scientific: The site could be included in a comparative study of iron/steel wrecks, and in particular with the Gemini barge as both wrecks lie in similar environments and depths.

(iv) Educational:

(v) Recreational:

(vi) Cultural:

## Recommendations

**The options are:**

(i) Conduct a more detailed wreck inspection incorporating a video and baseline chemical measurements to determine the state of corrosion of the hull structure.

(ii) Include the site in a corrosion study of iron/steel wrecks.

(iii) Leave as is.

Regardless of the outcome of the above, it is recommended that local residents should be encouraged to document and present the history of the wreck.

### Further Comments

Fish and crayfish are plentiful around the wreck and quite naturally, the fisherman who works this area regularly is reluctant to disclose the exact location of the site, as he does not want the position to become common knowledge.



CEMENT BAGS  
STACKED  
CENTRE SITE 1.



STACKED  
CEMENT BAGS  
2.





BLUEYES  
ON WRECK 3.



CRAYFISH -  
UNDER  
WRECK. 4.

BANDIED SWEEP  
KING WRASSE  
5.



KINGWRASSE  
AND  
CRAYFISH - 6.



TUNICATES  
ON SIDE OF  
BARGE . 7.



BARGE SIDE  
FALLEN  
OUTWARD . 8.



SIDE OF BARGE  
FALLEN OUTWARDS  
FROM STACK - 9.



TOWING BITS  
EAST CORNER 10.



TRUCK TYRE  
SE END OF  
WRECK. II.



TOWING BITS  
CLEAR OF  
CEMENT STACK.



PIECE OF PROFILE



13.

TOWING BITTS  
CLEAR OF WRECK  
TO SOUTH WEST.