

# Viking Wirral and the Draken Harald Fairhair Viking Longship Project

Liverpool Victoria Rowing Club, January 2012

*Stephen Harding*

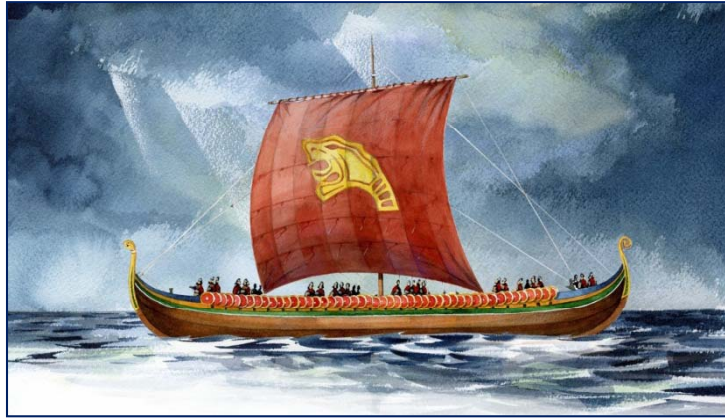


The University of  
Nottingham



***The Draken Harald Fairhair Project 2009 -***

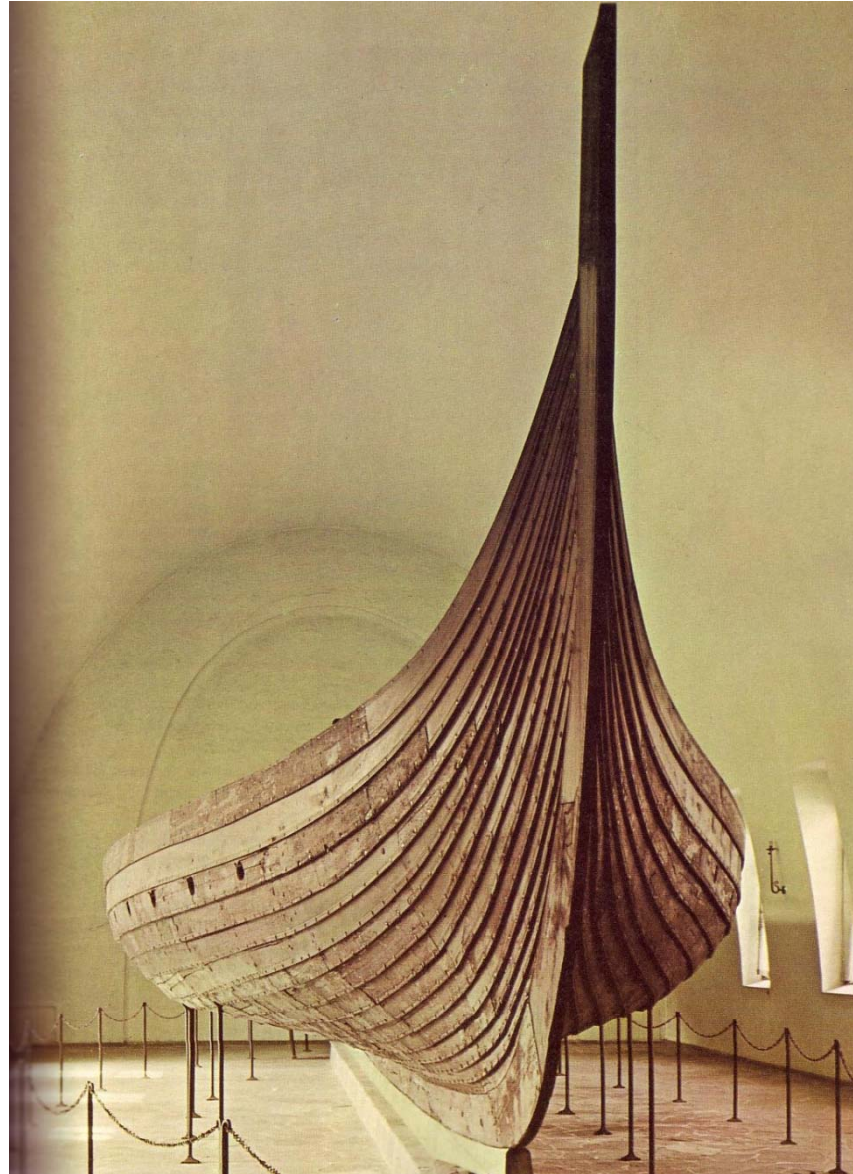




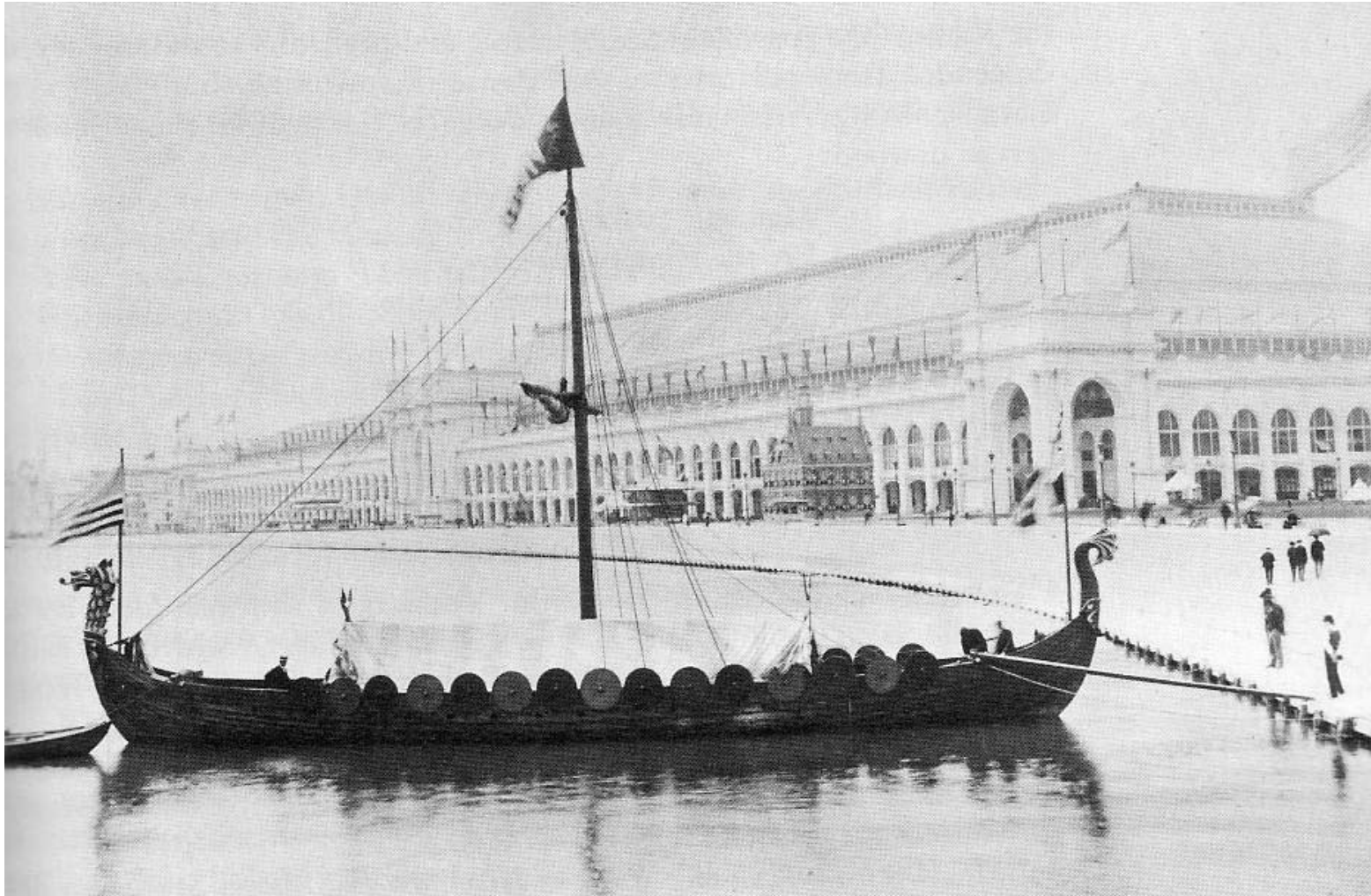
**The *Draken Harald Fairhair* : aim to recreate a ship – the largest ever reconstruction with the superb seaworthiness that characterized the Viking age**

- **Excellent sailing characteristics of ocean going ships**
- **Warships usage of oars**
- **“25 sesse” – 25 pairs of oars, 2 men to an oar**
- **35 metres long – half a football pitch – 8 metres wide**

***Many reconstructed vessels have been based on the Gokstad (~AD850) at the Oslo Skiphuset***







***The Viking*, Chicago, 1893 – 2/3 replica crossed the Atlantic**



***Odin's Raven* - Manx Millenium, 1979**



**Magnus Magnusson**  
**1929-2007**

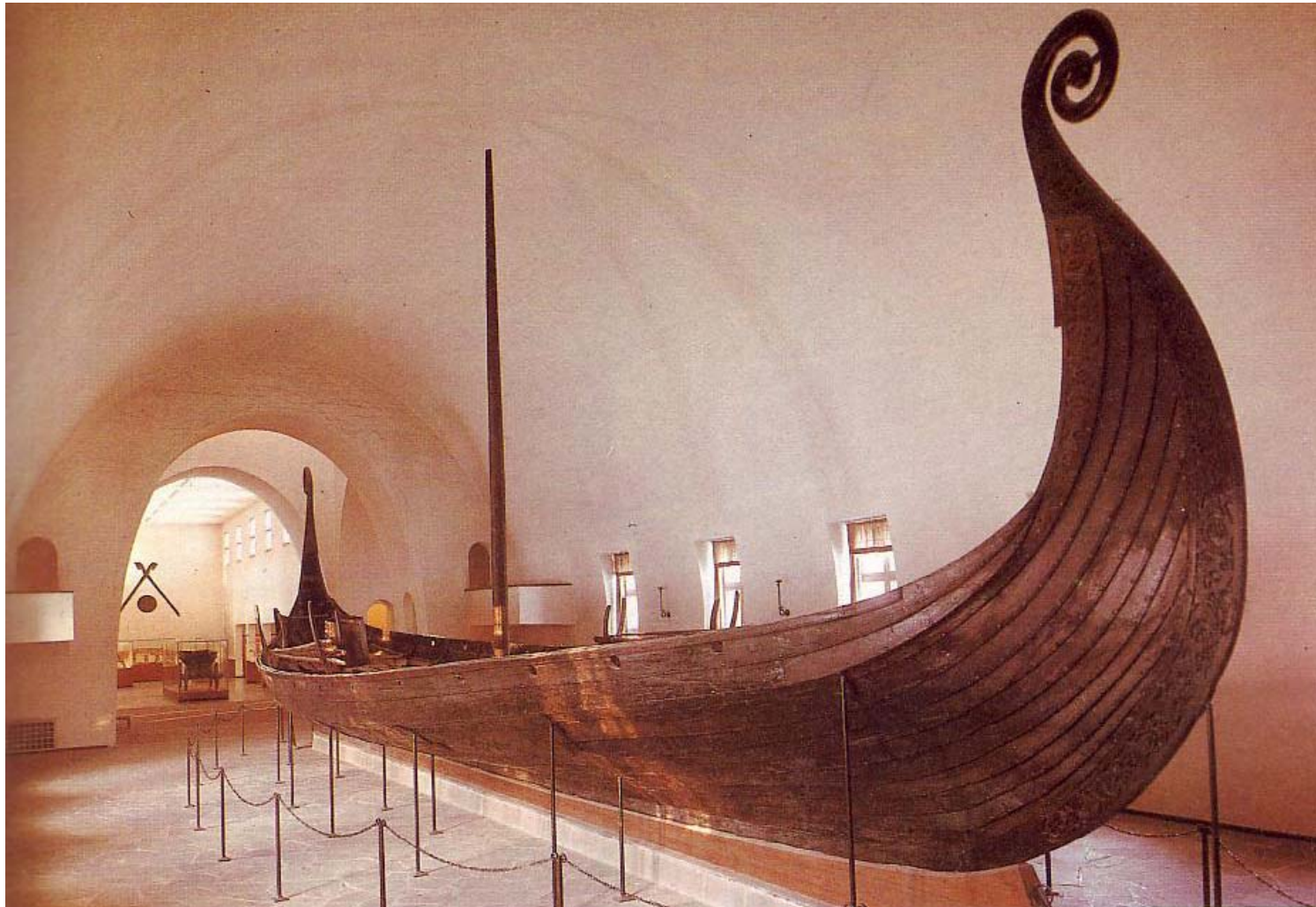




***The Gaia*, late 1980's – also crossed the Atlantic**



**A recent project has also focused on a replica of the Oseberg ship (~AD800), also at the *Skiphuset*...**



***..Oseberg replica (2009)***

***..built by Per Bjørkum  
who wanted to show  
that the Oseberg ship  
was seaworthy!***





***..another was based on Skuldelev 2, a warship at Roskilde (dated to ~1050 and built in Dublin)***

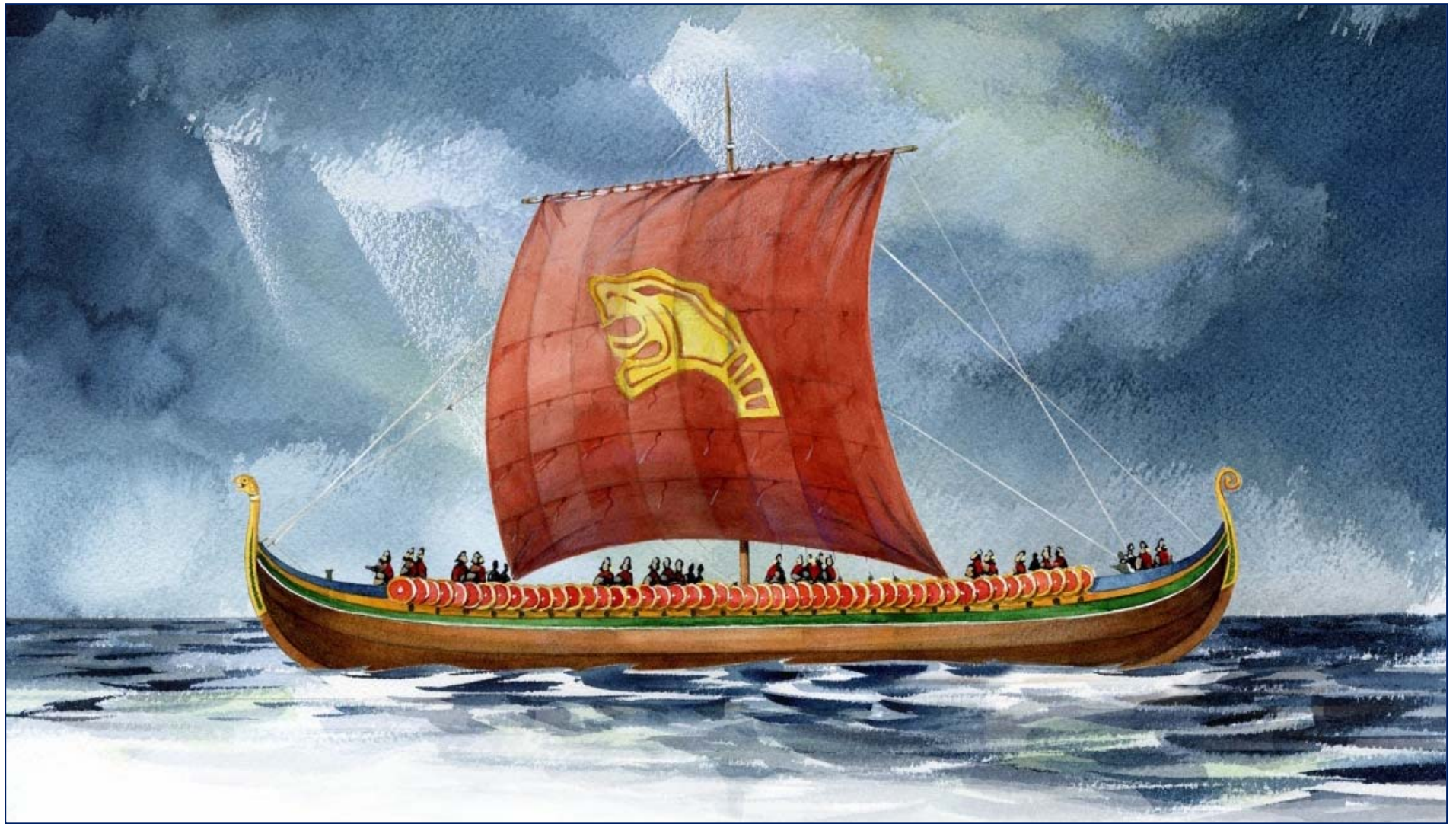


***..reconstructed in 2004 as the “Sea Stallion”***



*Photo Michael Borgen*





***The Draken Harald Fairhair – largest ever reconstruction***



# Thingwall – *Pingvollr*



[http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve/BBCRadio4\\_20May08.mp3](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/-sczsteve/BBCRadio4_20May08.mp3)

# Tranmere - *Tranmæl*







WIRRAL NEWS GROUP, Wednesday, November 30, 2005

# Stone 'most vital' find in 20 years

## Professor gives talk on Bidston discovery

By LOUISE POWNEY

A PACKED room at Wirral Museum this week heard how Bidston has yielded probably the most important archaeological find from the Viking period for 20 years.

Professor Richard Bailey, Emeritus Professor of Anglo-Saxon Civilisation at the University of Newcastle, gave a ringing endorsement of the 10th century Viking Hagluck which was discovered in a Bidston garden in 2004 and called the area a "crucial site".

And now campaigners for the preservation of the area hope the find will provide leverage for their campaign for a complete archaeological assessment of the area and the securing of the former observatory building as a museum.

The stone, which was placed on public display for the first time during Wednesday night's lecture, would have been used as a grave marker and is thought to have been created by local masons from locally quarried stone.

Although it is well known that Viking invaders came to Wirral from Norway, via Ireland, from 800 until 1014, it is believed the man who was buried beneath the Bidston stone arrived on the peninsula from a different direction.

Said Professor Bailey: "The last time I was as excited by a find was 20 years ago. My jaw has never dropped so far when the stone was first shown to me.

"It appears from the stone's decoration that this man was part of an Hiberno-Norse trading group from Yorkshire where there are comparable carvings.

"From this we can tell that he never forgot he was a Yorkshireman, and in death he kept that identification and was evidently an important man.

"Someone in Yorkshire would have known most trade coming in from the Irish Sea and would have sent someone in to try to control it."

● Peter Crawford and Jenny Whalley with the Viking stone

Code: PIC081105G

Carvings of the Viking period took representations beyond the domestic world and often featured martial images or hunting references.

The Bidston stone shows two fanged beasts, assumed to be bears which are often found in Scandinavian artwork, whose tongues are interlaced in an elaborate design with a three-fold knot between their paws.

Peter Crawford, chairman of the Bidston Preservation trust, in whose garden the stone was found, has been keeping the stone at home but is in no doubt where he would like to see the unique treasure end up.

He said: "I want it to take pride of place in the observatory when it has been turned into a living museum.

"The observatory is a crucially important maritime building and the stone indicates the area has a far earlier maritime past."



2706



2894



130

# Viking genes in Northern England project

- ◆ **Part 1 - Wirral and West Lancashire (2002-2007)**
- ◆ **Part 2 - North Lancashire, Cumbria and N. Yorkshire (2008-2012)**





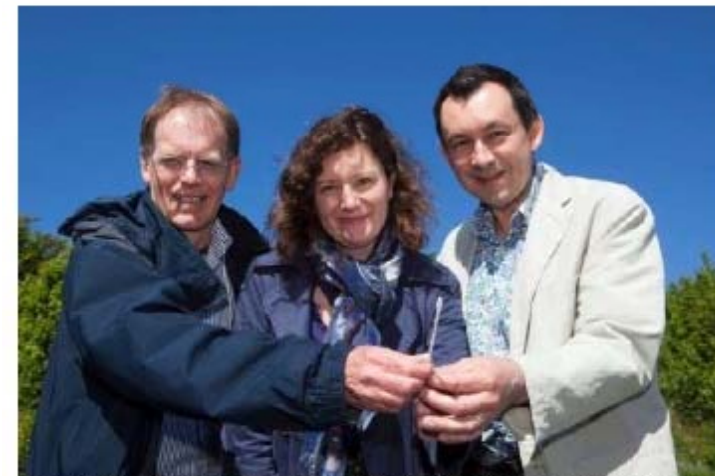
We have also been testing in Scandinavia



Karmøy Lokal

Avaldsnes

## Jakter på viking-gen



Forskertrioen Stephen Harding (t.v.), Turi King og Mark Jobling trenger hjelp av norske menn til DNA-undersøkelsen. Den kan fint gjen nomføres hjemme. En prøve av munnepiteceller fra innsiden av kinnet med denne pinnen er det som skal til. (Foto: Terje Størksen)





***Sigurd Aase, Haugesund***



09/06/2010 07:37







***... also Patron of the Draken project!***



***Sigurd – and Marit Synnøve Vea: Project Leader***



***Terje Andreassen: another Project Leader***







09/06/2010 12:39









***Turi, Mark, Marit, and Harald Løvvik***



## *Heading off to Karmøy Viking Village*



09/06/2010 09:35





09/06/2010 10:37





09/06/2010 11:08





09/06/2010 11:09









09/06/2010 08:08



**NORDVEGEN  
HISTORIESENTER**

09/06/2010 09:37



***Harald Hårfagre –  
and Gyda***





***Hafrsfjorden – site of the famous victory by Harald  
Hårfagre***

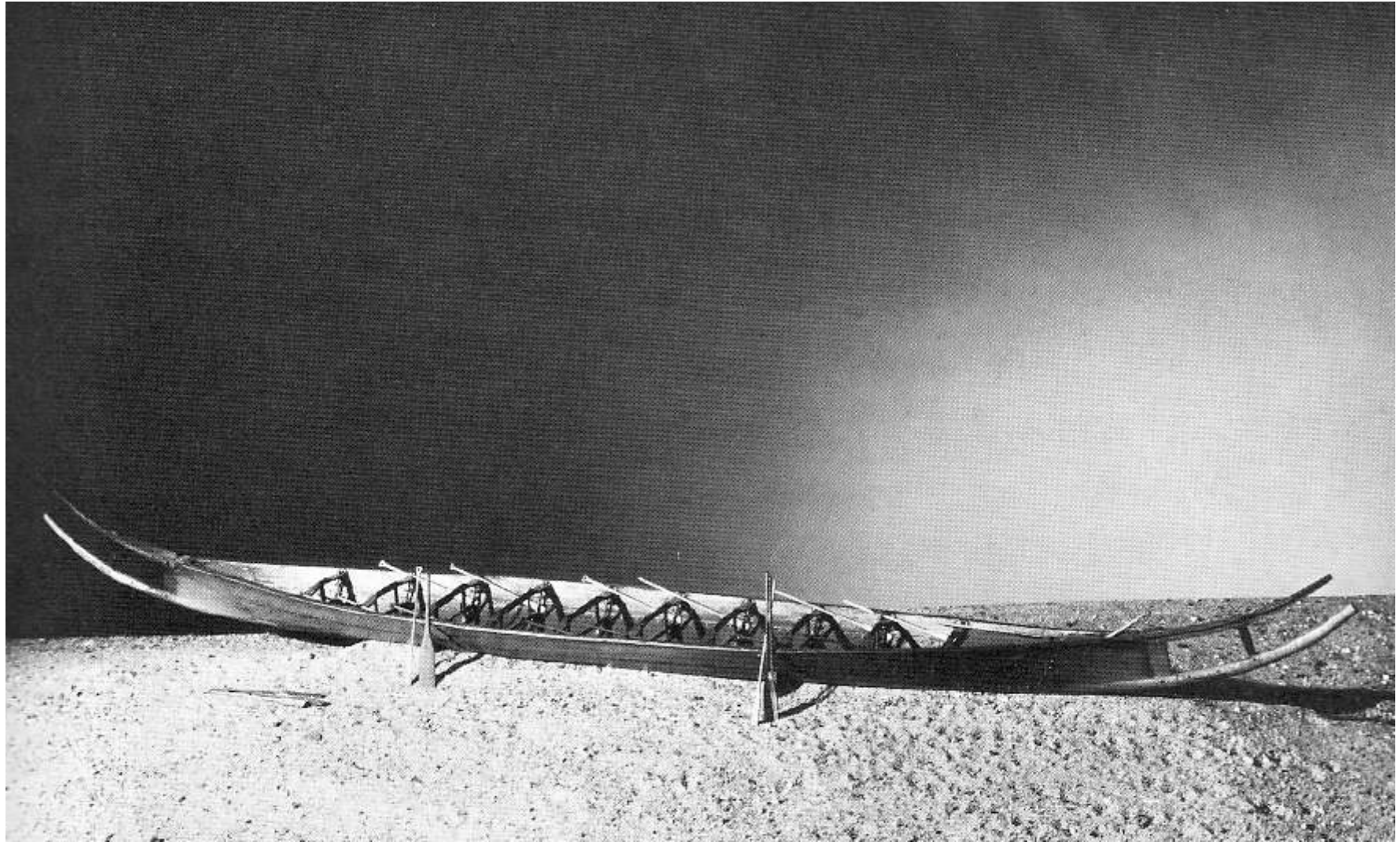






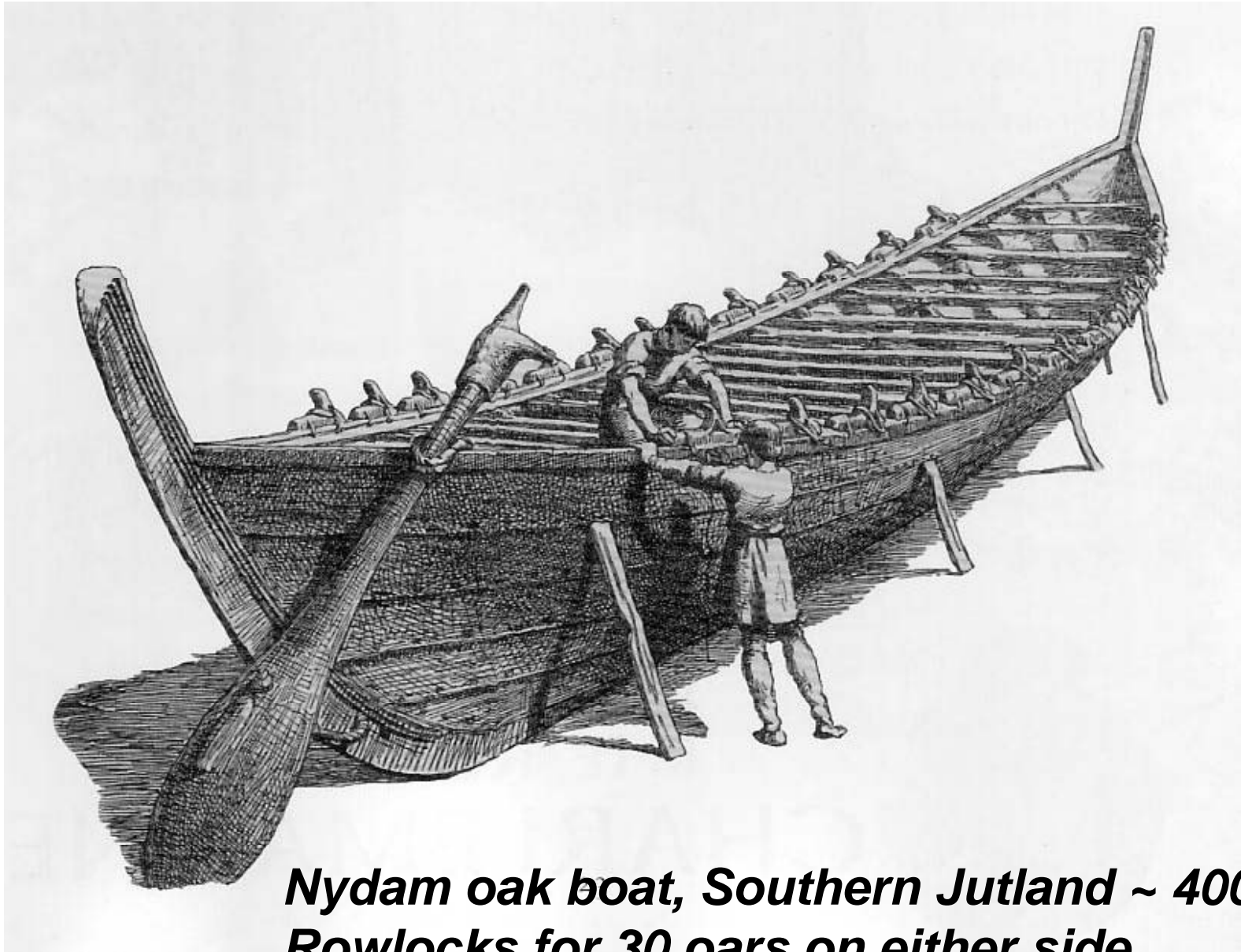


***June 2010: Sigurd agrees to the Draken coming to Wirral on its maiden voyage, 2013!***

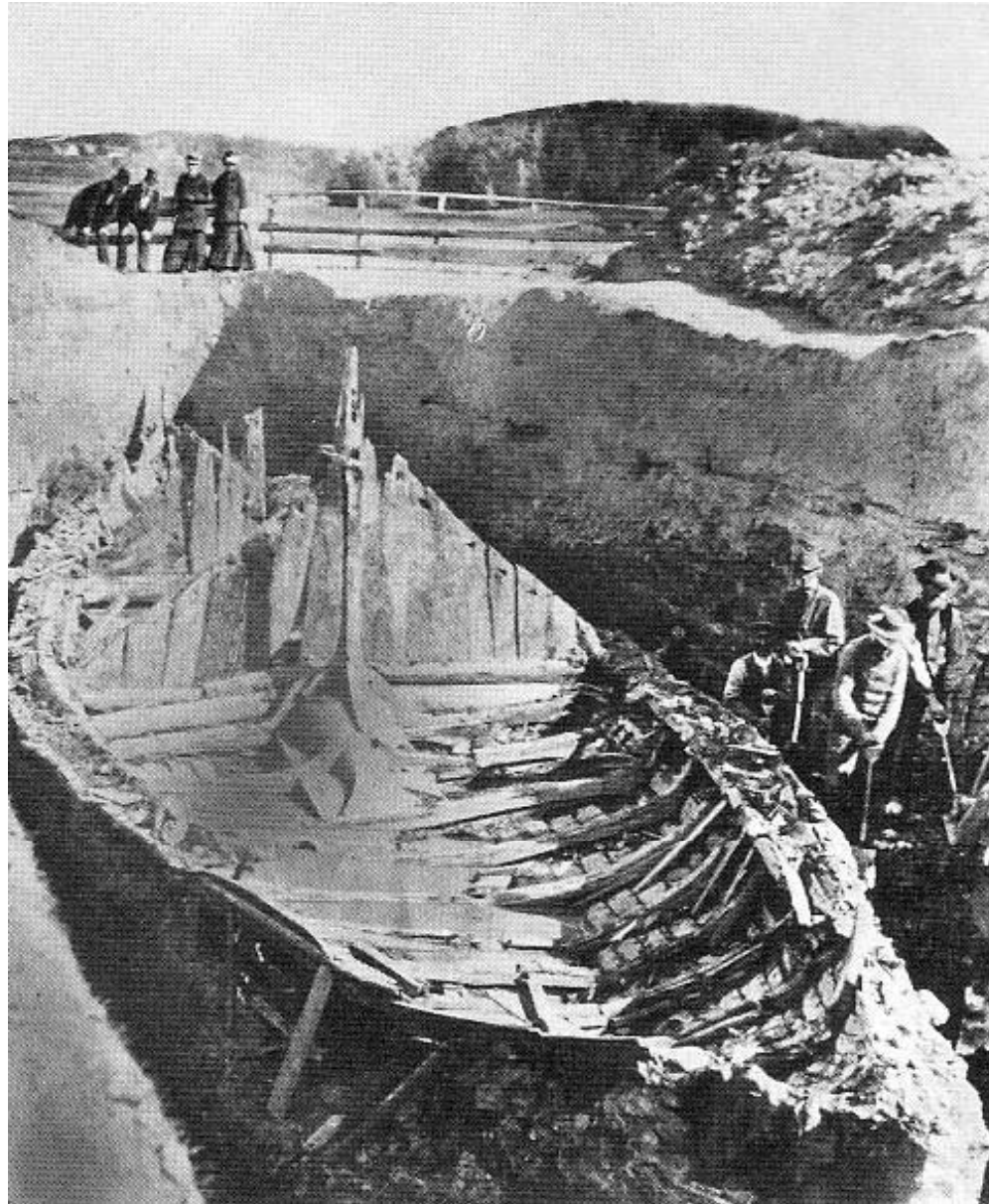


***Hjortspring Boat ~ 300BC - suggested reconstruction***



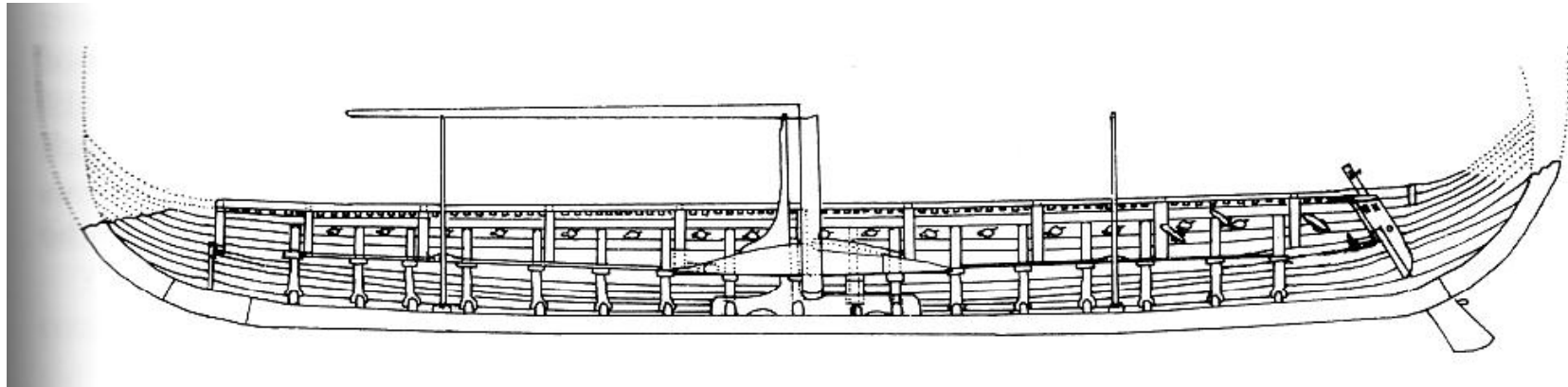


***Nydam oak boat, Southern Jutland ~ 400 AD.  
Rowlocks for 30 oars on either side  
(Schleswig-Holstein museum)***



***Gokstad ~ 850AD (Sandefjord)***



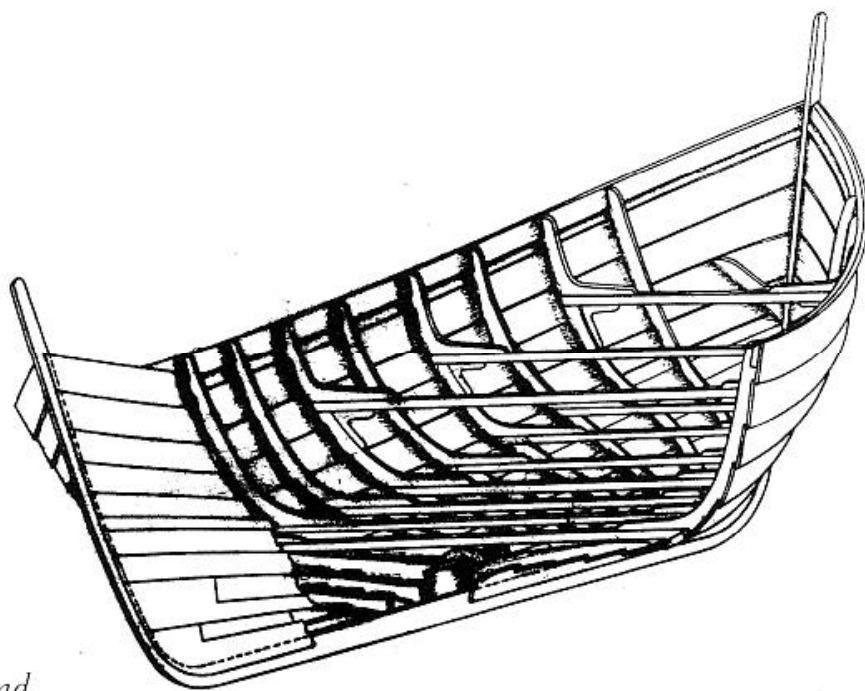


***Drawing of the Gokstad ship, bow to the left –  
Steering paddle at the stern on the starbord  
(styrbord) side***

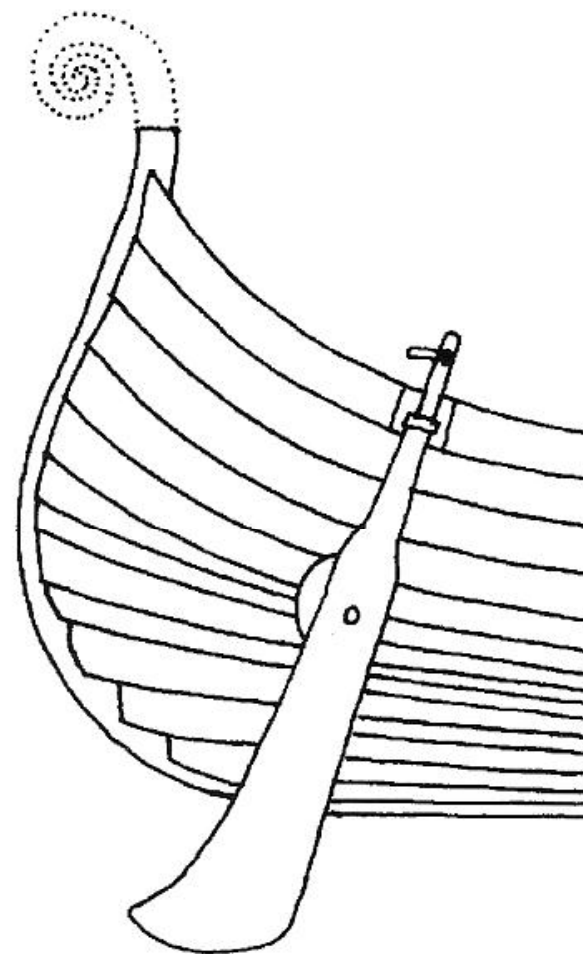


***Askekärr boat ~ 1000AD (Gothenburg)***





*Magnussons and  
Åkerlunds reconstruction  
proposals.*



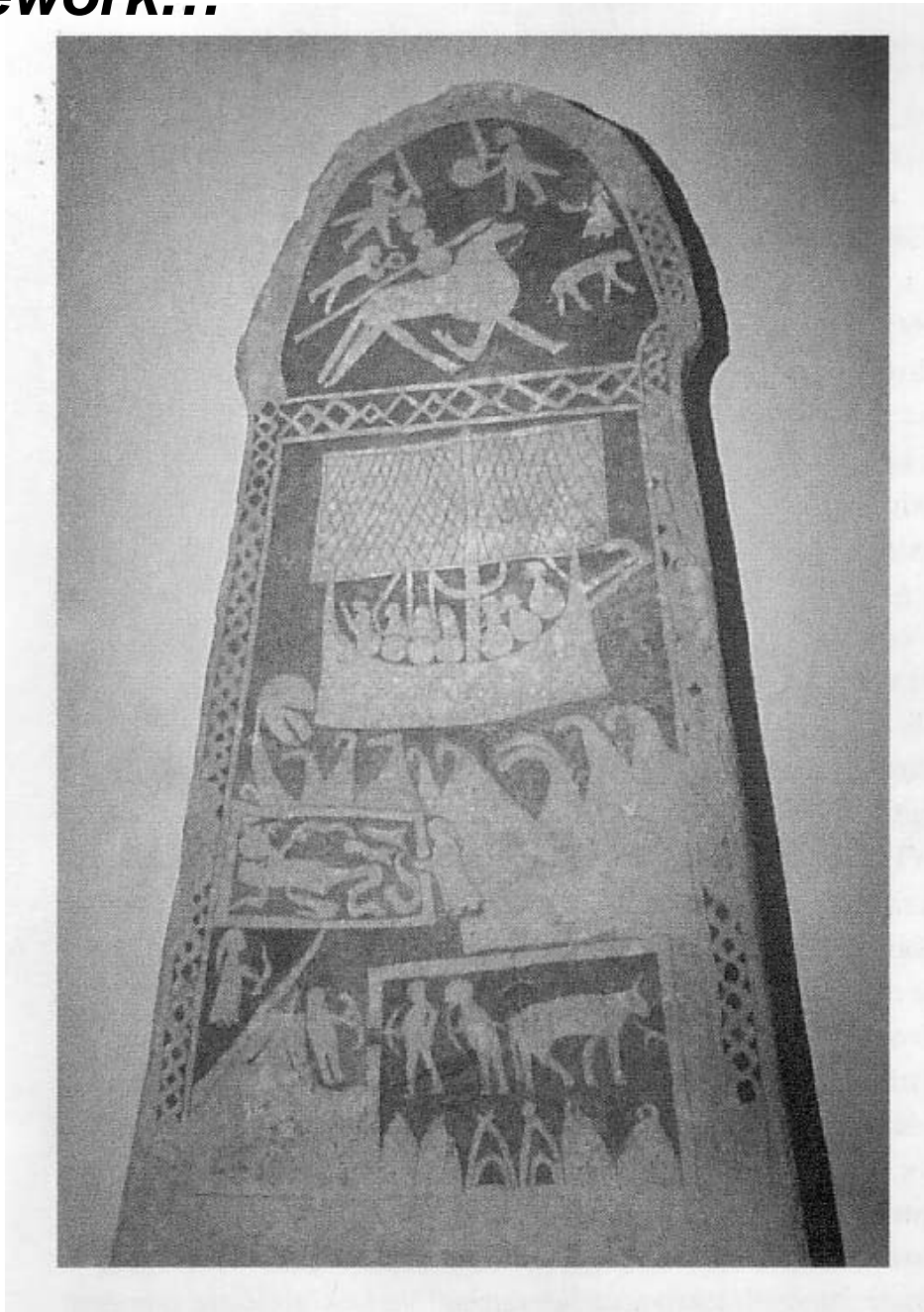
## ***Skuldelev 2 (~1055)***





*From drawings on stonework...*

**Hunninge Klinte  
stone, Gotland**



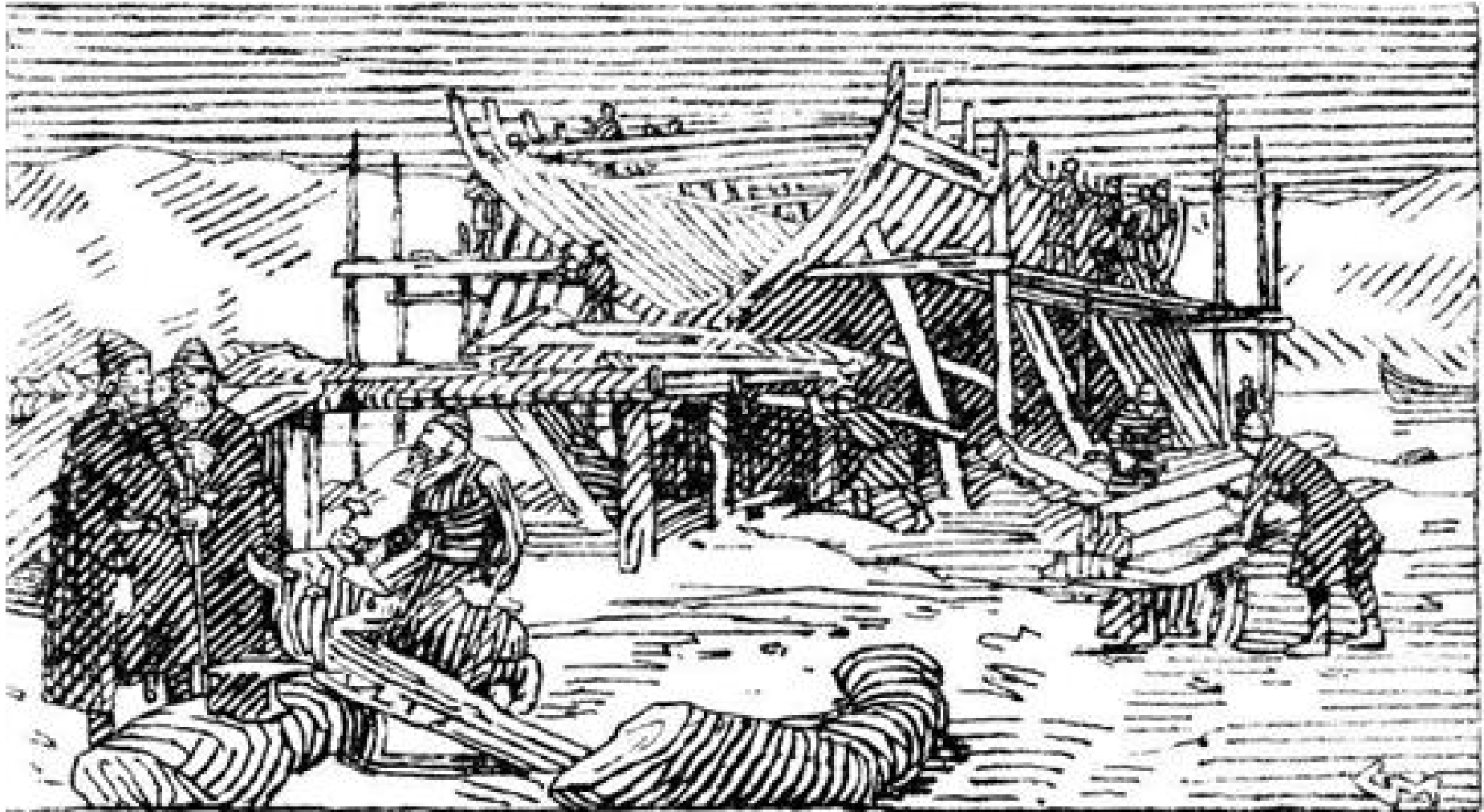
*From drawings on stonework...*



**Tjängvide stone,  
Gotland**



*From other old drawings...*



## ***From the sagas...***

*Men will quake with terror  
Ere the seventy sea-oars  
Gain their well-earned respite  
From the labours of the ocean.  
Norwegian arms are driving  
This iron-studded dragon  
Down the storm-tossed river  
Like an eagle with wings beating*

Snorri Sturluson: King Harald's Saga



***Egil Skallagrimsson...***  
***-Icelander who fought at Brunanburh***

*My mother once told me  
She'd buy me a longship,  
A handsome-oared vessel  
To go sailing with Vikings:  
To stand at the stern-post  
And steer a fine warship,  
Then head back for the harbour  
And hew down some foemen.*

Snorri Sturluson: Egil's Saga



***To a Viking, his ship was ...***

*“an oar steed”*

*“horse of the breakers”*

*“surf dragon”*

*“fjord elk”*

*... and much more*



## *Measuring up!*



***Terje finds the oak of his dreams...***









***Spring 2010 ...***









***Arne-Terje Saether – constructing the ribs of the boat***



*July 2011...*











© Arne-Teue Sæther



***September 2011...***



***One or two missing pieces...***





***Boni Wiik – designer of the Draken head***

***Inspecting the finest silk for the 300m<sup>2</sup> sail***





## **What happens now?**

- ***March/April: Terje visits Wirral – site for mooring chosen***
- ***Spring 2012: Training for oars-people steps up!***
- ***June 2012 – May 2013: experiment with rigging, sailing, rowing***
- ***The maiden overseas voyage 2013***
- ***Prepare for the arrival in Wirral***

## PLAN, VOYAGE 2013

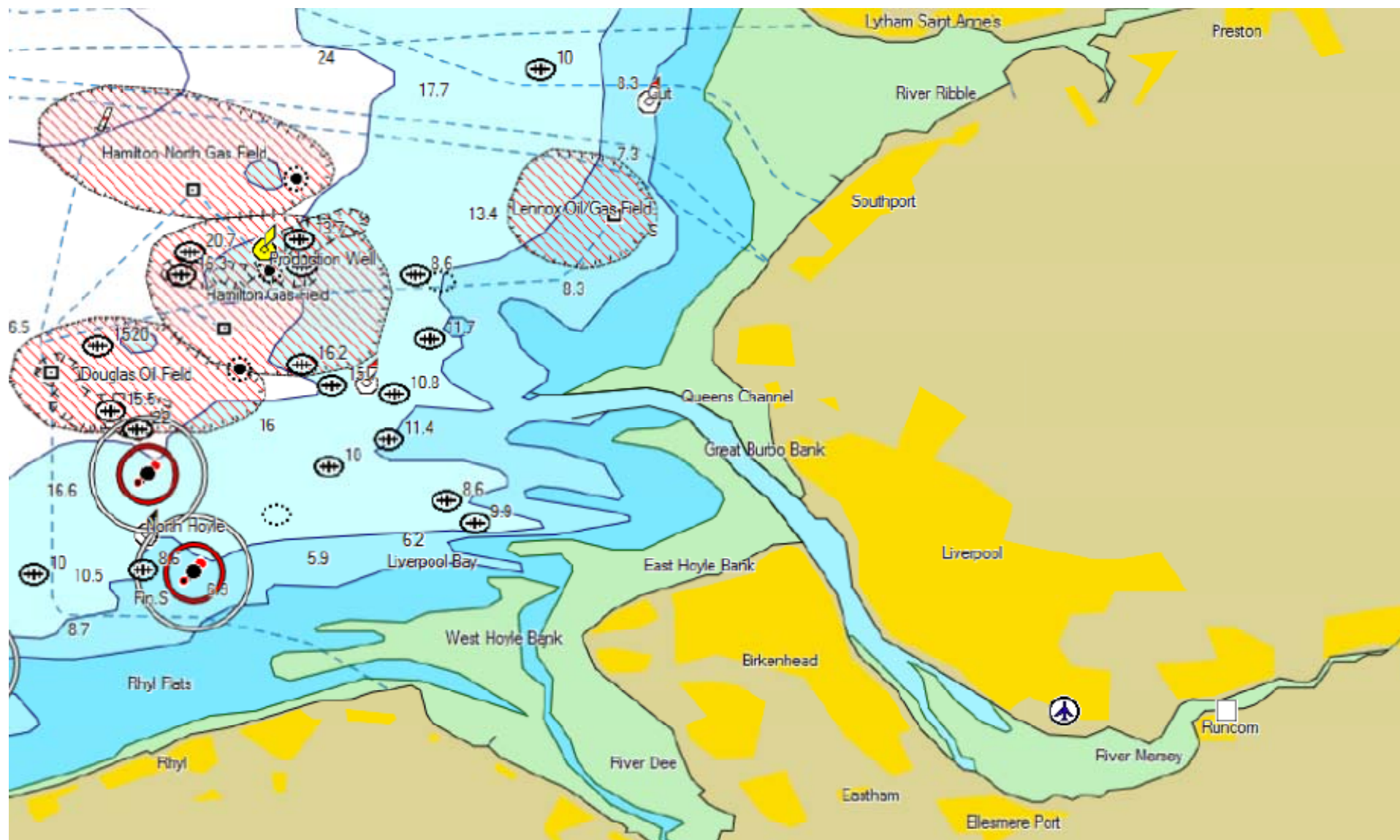
Estimated average speed: 5 knots

Location	Sailing (days)	Length of stay (days)	Estimated distance (nautical mil)
Avaldsnes	1	1	
London	7	4	650
Largs	6	4	680
Isle of Man	1	3	110
Wirral/Liverpool	0.5	3	68
Dublin	1	3	120
Brest	2	4	300
Lisbon	7.5	4	900
Sevilla	2	4	210
Marbella	1.5	4	150
Barcelona	3.5	4	380
Nice	2.5	4	270
Rome	2.5	4	250
Athens	5.5	4	650
Istanbul	2.5	4	310
Total	46	54	5048

**Cruise Length**      100 days







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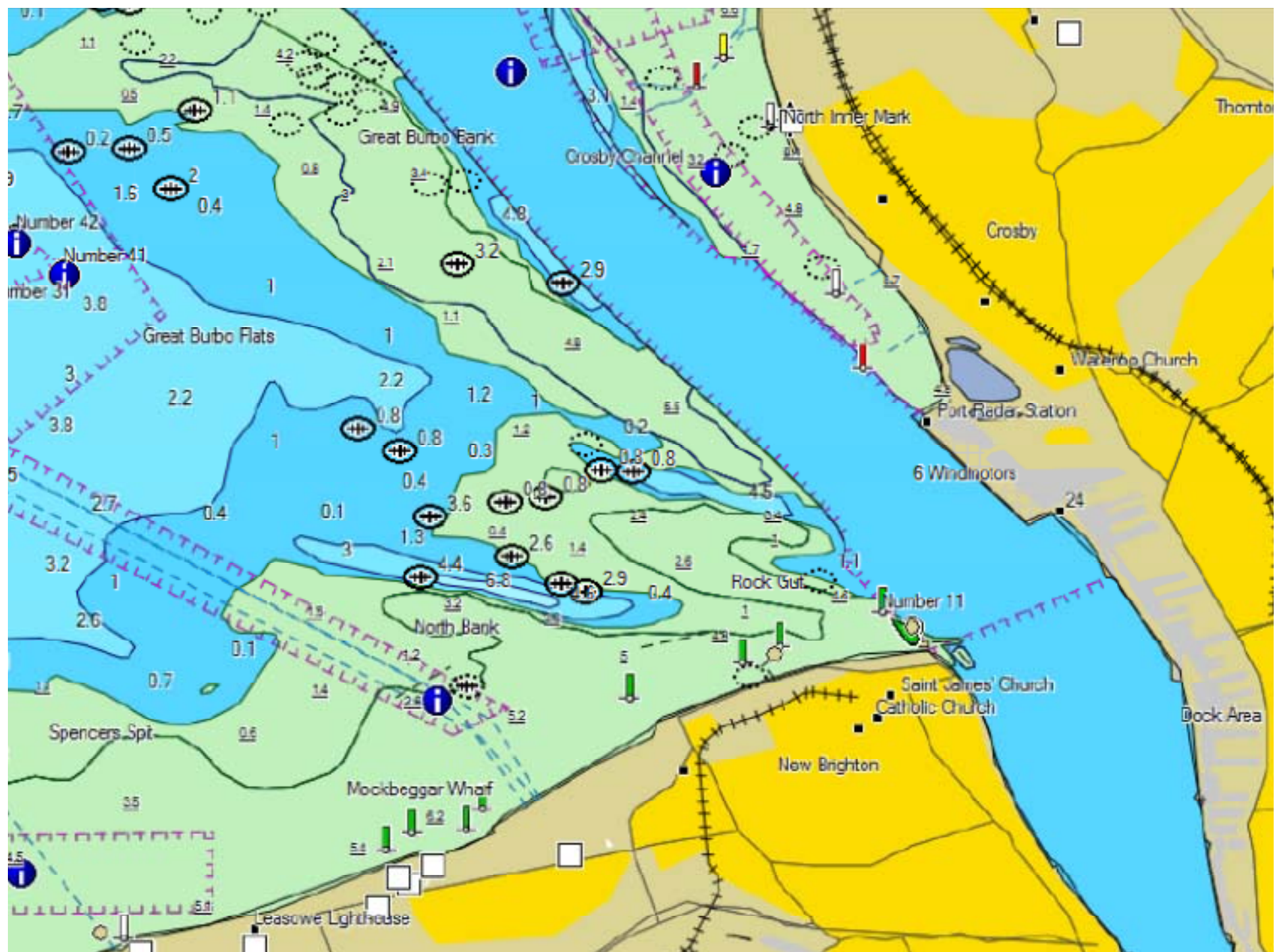
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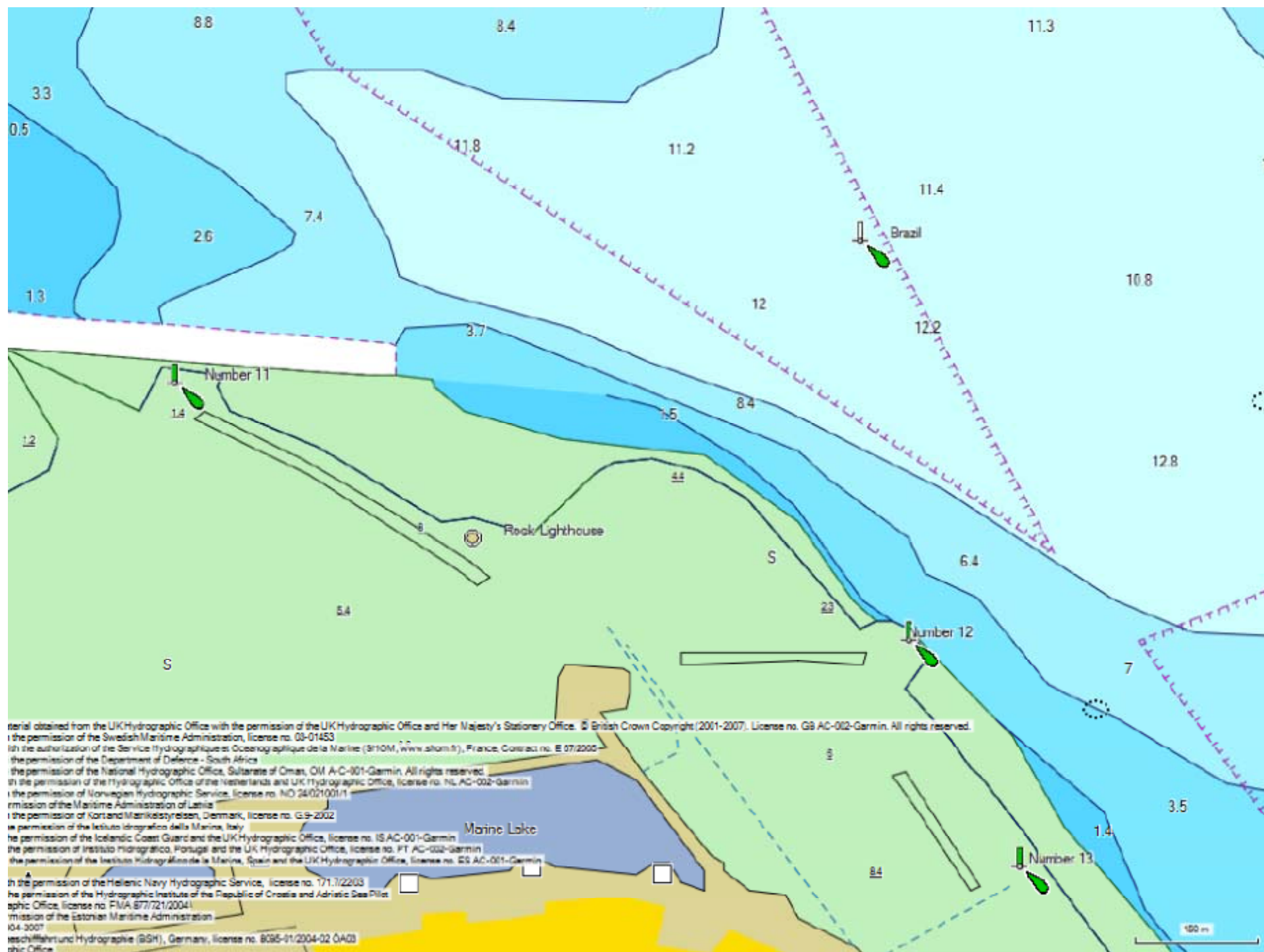
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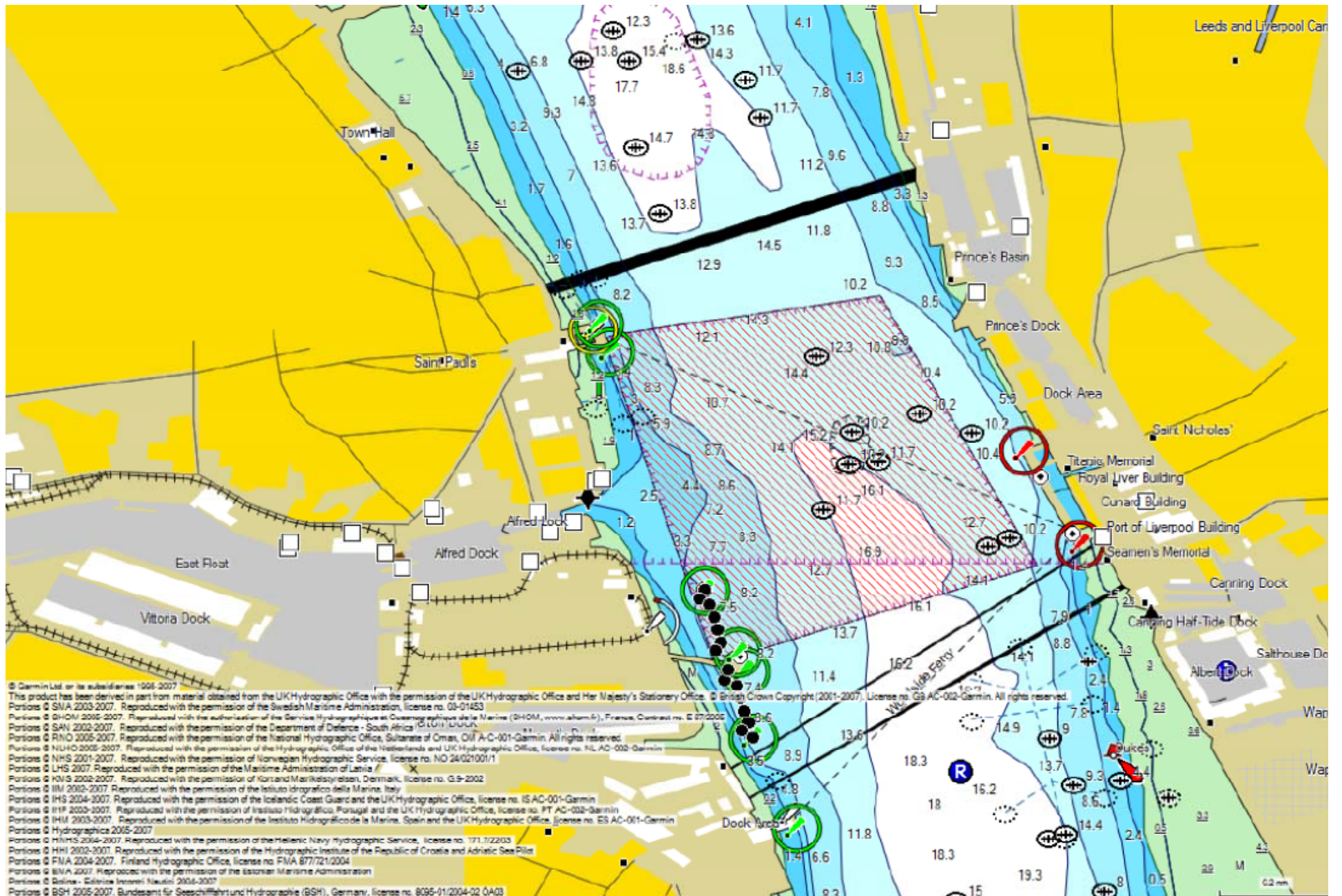
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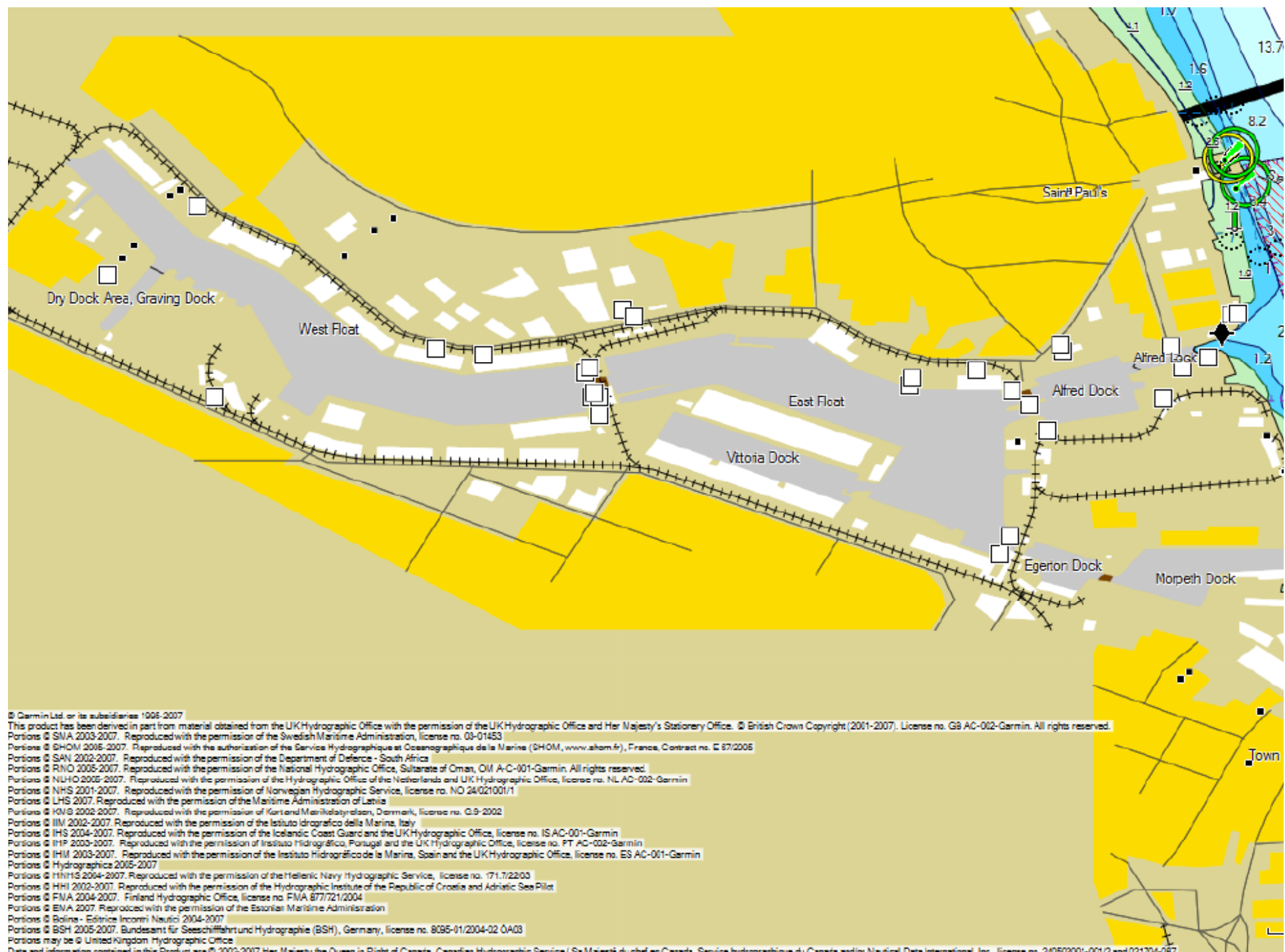












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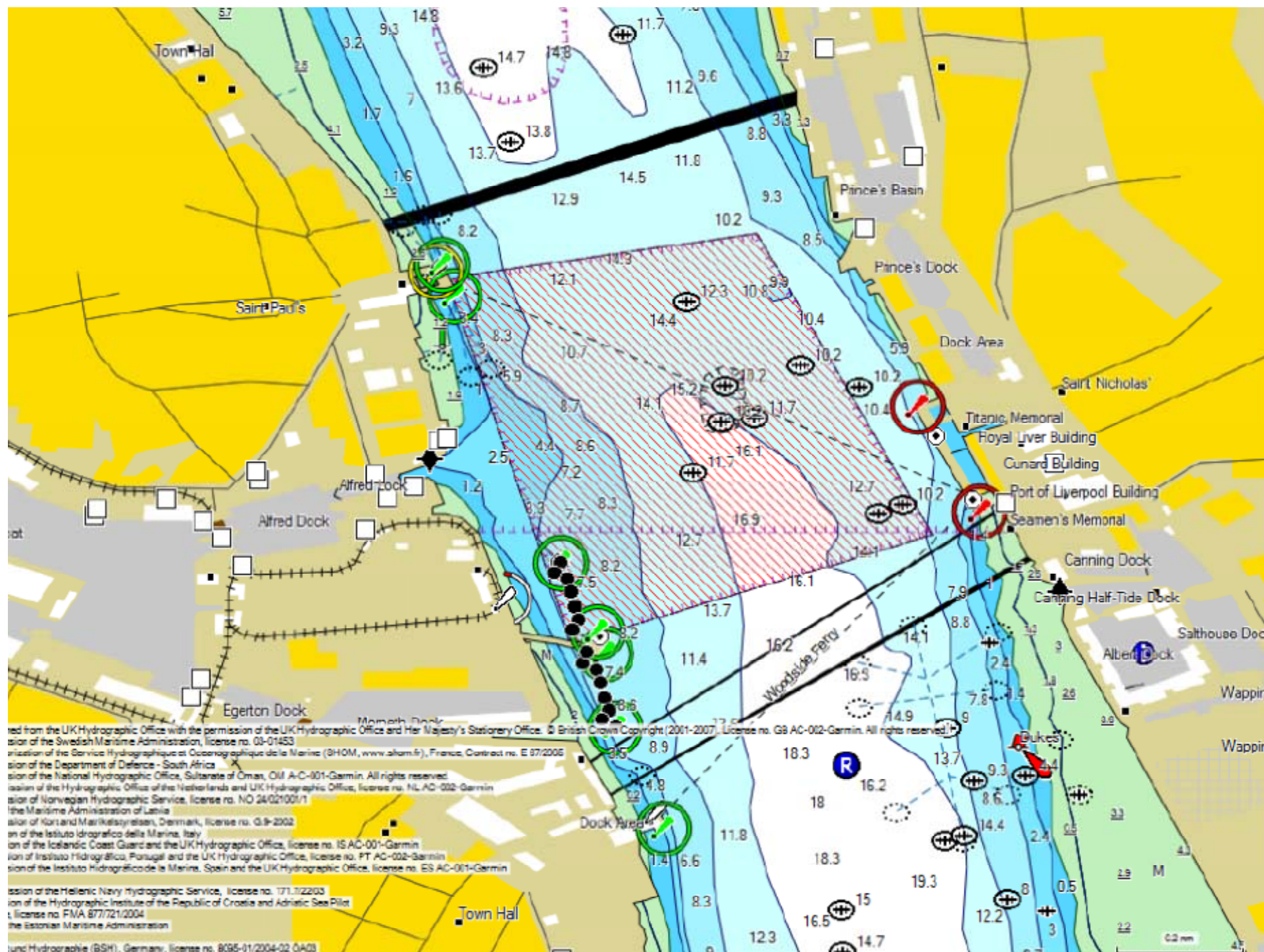
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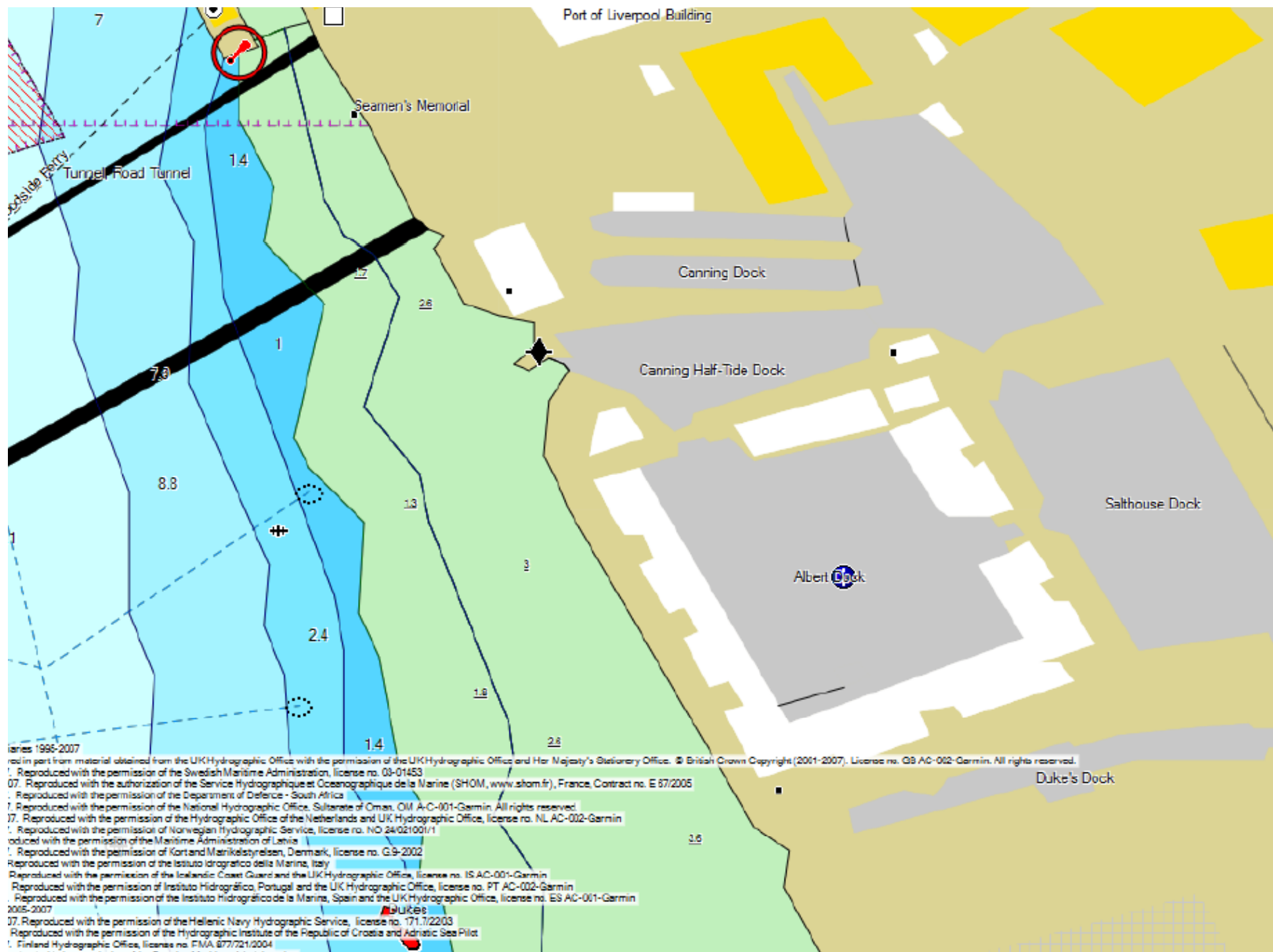
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## **Special thanks to!**

- ***Jim Bibby and colleagues at Liverpool Victoria***
- ***Andy Bonner at Granada & Lorna Hughes, NEWS***
- ***Nick Jedynakiewicz at Royal Mersey Yacht Club***
- ***Susan Hanley-Place and Geoff Hanley of the ZEBU***
- ***Steve Gallimore at Peel Holdings***
- ***Wirhalh Skip Felag & Friends of Meols Park***
- ***All volunteer oarspeople!***





*Thanks to Andy Bonner & colleagues at Granada*

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