

From Cargo-Carrying Sailing Vessel to Research Ship

The term "Nordic yacht" is by no means an indication that the GRÖNLAND has anything to do with the sailing sport. On the contrary, the ship is an example of the smaller-scale cargo-carrying sailing vessel type built in Norway until around 1900 for sealing and other purposes.

In 1868, on behalf of the Bremen Committee for German Arctic Research, Captain Koldewey purchased the ship from the Norwegian master ship-builder Tollef Tollefsen for 3,750 thalers. In order to make it sufficiently safe for the planned research expedition to the North Pole, he had the mast reinforced and the hull fortified with numerous iron plates. After all, the bow would have to withstand the great pressure of the ice floes. He moreover had additional stiffeners installed in the interior.

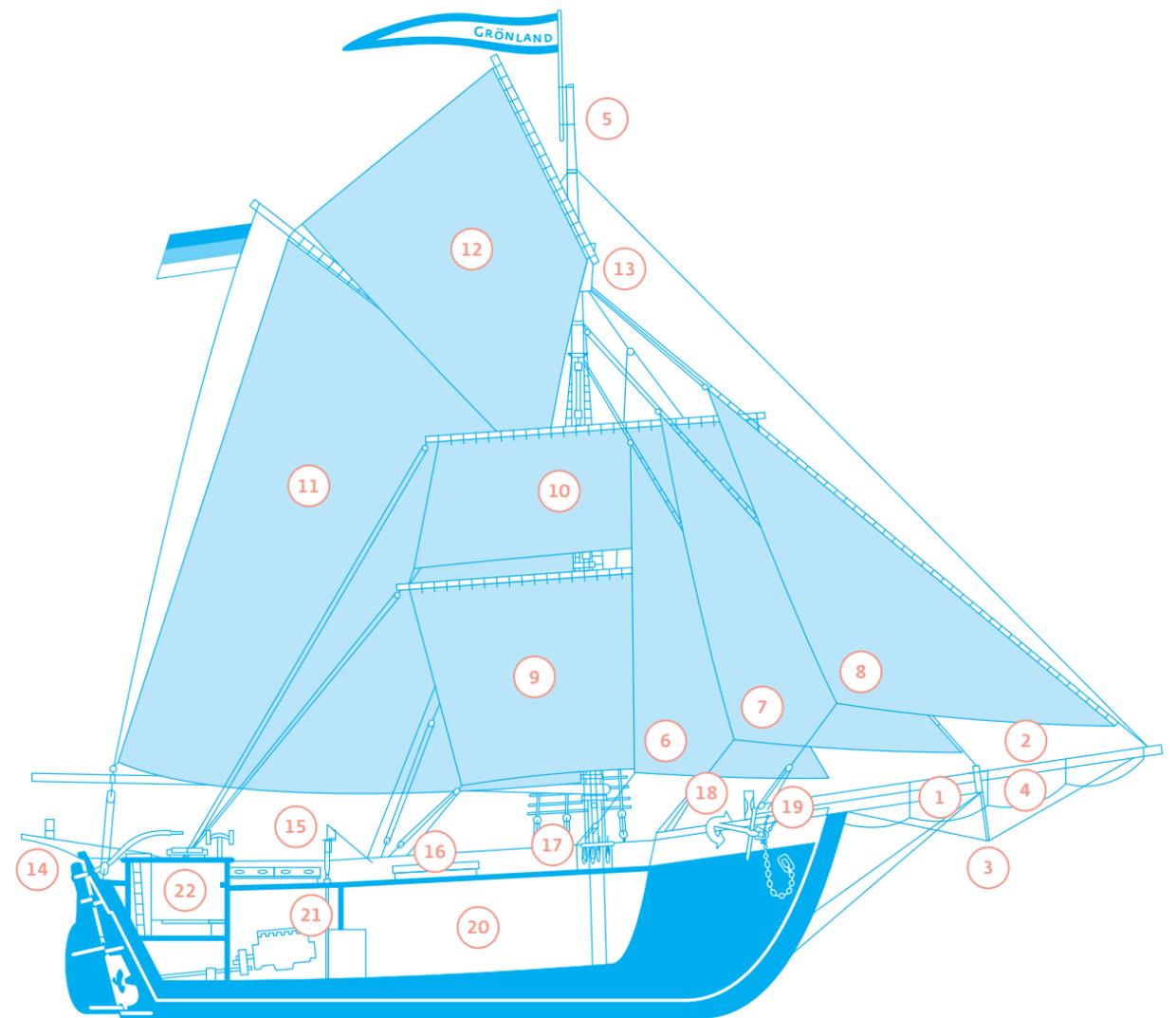
In the Service of Science

It was the geographer Dr. August Petermann of Gotha who had initiated the expedition of the first German polar vessel. He toured for months, giving lectures and collecting donations to finance the acquisition of the ship and its equipment.

Under the leadership of Captain Carl Koldewey, on 15 September 1868, at a point off the coast of Greenland northwest of Spitsbergen, the GRÖNLAND reached the northernmost latitude (81° 45' N) ever verified for a sailing ship. The pack ice belt was so dense that it was impossible to advance any further towards the North Pole.

Many of the practical experiences and scientific results gathered on this First German Arctic Expedition were not only helpful for the subsequent exploration voyages – for example the Second German Polar Expedition in 1869 – but have retained their validity to this day.

- 1 Bowsprit
- 2 Jib boom
- 3 Martingale boom
- 4 Horses
- 5 Mast
- 6 Forestay sail
- 7 Jib
- 8 Outer jib
- 9 Square foresail
- 10 Upper square sail
- 11 Gaff sail or main sail
- 12 Gaff topsail
- 13 Crow's nest (lookout barrel)
- 14 Davit for ship's boat
- 15 Bilge pump
- 16 Hatchway
- 17 Fife rail
- 18 Stock anchor
- 19 Cat-head
- 20 Hold, bunks for 9 crew members at fore
- 21 Engine room with fuel oil tank, installed in the 1920s
- 22 Cabin for captain and 2 mates



A Living Monument

Owing to the fact that the GRÖNLAND was not large enough to serve on the Second German Polar Expedition, it was sold to a Norwegian buyer in 1871. In Norway it served as a coastal freighter for about a hundred years and was motorized as a fishing vessel before passing back into German ownership in 1973 and coming to the German Maritime Museum harbour

in Bremerhaven to operate as an active old-timer vessel. Here it was refurbished in keeping with the "Barcelona Charter" – the European Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Traditional Ships in Operation. Since that time, it has been kept in service by a volunteer crew as a floating ambassador for the museum and the city of Bremerhaven. The GRÖNLAND was comprehensively restored in 2004/05. Today it is the second oldest seagoing vessel still in operation under the German flag.

The National Maritime Museum of Germany
Institute of the Leibniz Association

Nordic Yacht GRÖNLAND

EN

Technical Information

Construction yard Tollef Tollefsen, Matre in Skanevik, Norway

Year of construction 1867

Length x Breadth 25,80 m x 6,00 m

Draught 3,00 m

Sail area approx. 300 m²

Engine Deutz BTM-1013, 200 PS (2,000 per year)

Tonnage 49.90 GRT

Ship's company 12

Passengers max. of 30

Contact Deutsches Schifffahrtsmuseum Hans-Scharoun-Platz 1 27568 Bremerhaven
Tel. +49 (0)471 - 48 207 0 Email info@dsm.museum www.dsm.museum