

Maritime Scientists Help Locate Minesweeper in Irish Sea



Scientists at Bangor University (Wales) have helped to identify a shipwreck in the middle of the southern Irish Sea, previously thought to be that of a submarine, which has now been identified as the minesweeper HMS *Mercury*.

The discovery has been made as part of a joint project between maritime archaeologists at Bournemouth University and scientists at Bangor University's

School of Ocean Sciences, who have been combining marine archives with high-resolution multibeam sonar data to try and identify many of the unknown wreck sites located off the coast of the British Isles.

Originally built as a Clyde-based ferry, HMS *Mercury* was requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1939 to serve as minesweeper. It sank in 1940 after being damaged by a mine that it was attempting to clear and was reported lost off southern Ireland.

As part of the ongoing research programme, Dr Innes McCartney of Bournemouth University has been compiling detailed lists of all ships lost in the Irish Sea: "The wreck site was assumed to be the final resting place of a submarine. Once the sonar data had been processed, the wreck resembled a paddle-wheeled vessel with its paddles boxed into the vessel's superstructure, rather than the characteristic tube-like profile associated with submarine wrecks. Within our database of shipping losses, there was only one possible candidate which featured boxed-in paddle wheels; the minesweeper HMS *Mercury*".

[Read the full story here.](#)



The HMS "Mercury" minesweeper wreck was located in the southern Irish Sea. (Image courtesy: Bournemouth University and Bangor University)