

ROSALIE MOLLER

ICONIC RED SEA SHIPWRECK

An in depth guide

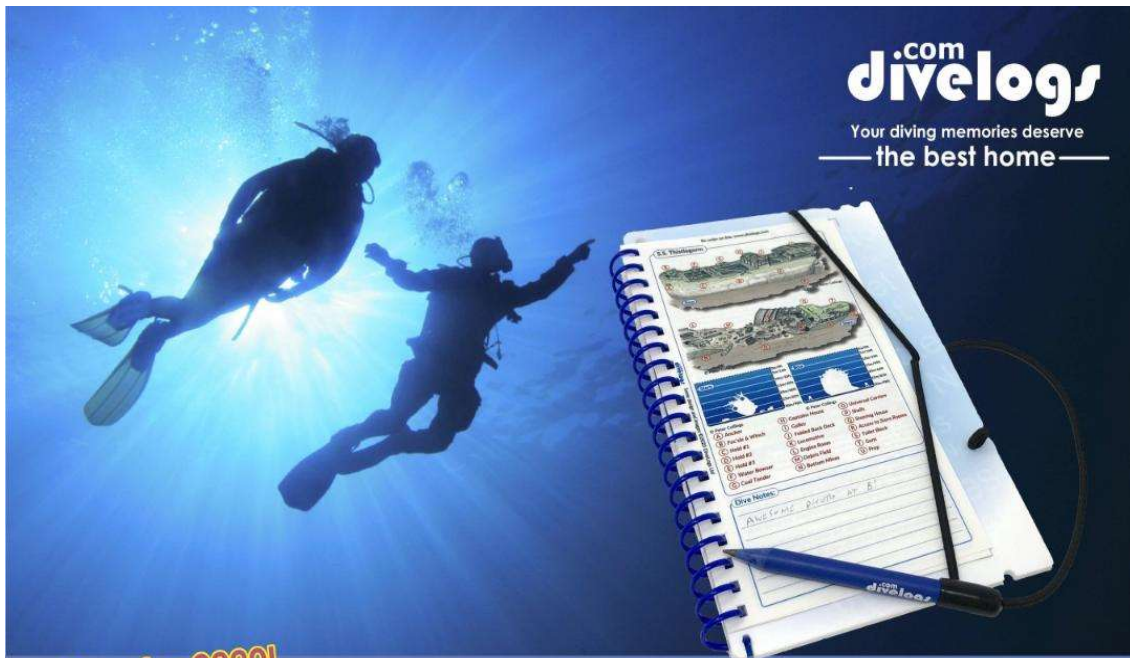
PETER COLLINGS

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THE ROSALIE MOLLER,

an in depth guide

PETER COLLINGS
SSI PRO5000

RSWA 25TH ANIVERSARY
EDITION

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FORWARD by JOHN WOMACK

I am John Womack Snr, BSAC First Class Diver, Advanced Instructor & owner of Otter Drysuits in Yorkshire, having dived the Britannic, Prince of Wales, Repulse and the Victoria plus many more over the last 40 years I would not go anywhere in the Red Sea without one of Peter's guide books. I have been on numerous successful trips of Peter's including wreck searching in Truk Lagoon.

Peter's new book is awesome, there are so many wrecks and to give detailed descriptions of all the wrecks themselves is great, it makes you feel like you have dived them already. I remember doing a night dive on the Thistlegorm which was just fantastic it was pitch black with pin points of light from fellow divers lights. In the south, Peter, Tom and myself went looking for the wreck of the Maidan on Rocky Island, we followed the debris trail down to 65mtrs and there before us was the huge shadow of the wreck hanging over the abyss starting at 80 mtrs. We could only look down in wonder, but we had found what we were looking for after 10 years.

Peter's trips are a must and very much like his trips his books are a must read, Peter is a walking encyclopaedia on all things diving and ship wrecks. A lot of great ships were made in the North East and it comes as no surprise to me that this is where Peter came from too, we have been friends/fellow wreck divers a lot of years and hope to be sharing experiences and books for many more years to come.



John Womack

MD Otter Watersports

Yorkshire.March 2018

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This series of guides is respectfully dedicated to this great man. I am proud to have called him friend and shared his last dive. JOHN MICHAEL WOMACK 23 MARCH 1943- 30TH NOV.2018

INTRODUCTION

During 1993/94 we began to stumble across or find by accident more and more wrecks. Chris Scott realised their potential before I did and he put together the first ever Red Sea wreck safari. Then a certain journalist betrayed a trust and gave the position of the S.S. Thistlegorm away. Suddenly we were running wreck safaris and the photography courses took a back seat. Guests kept coming back for more and we went further and further afield, right down to the border with Sudan, and then much later, right up the Gulf of Suez. By 2010 the Red Sea Wreck Academy boasted a wealth of talent in its membership and had been responsible for locating and identifying some thirty wrecks.

Arguably the most significant of those discoveries was the Rosalie Moller. (The S.S. Turkia still remains relatively undived to this day). I have included an account of that discovery, although there are “others” who claim to have found her (4 years after the event), as three editors can testify! If we weren’t the first, and it’s hard for any of us to believe otherwise, then those who were there before left her untouched. With so much attention focused on the S.S. Thistlegorm our discovery went unnoticed, her location shared only with trusted colleagues and for 6 years she remained pristine and showed little signs of diver damage.

She probably was dived at the end of WW2. The missing fluke of her prop, cut off and not bent, would suggest that, and lends to a theory linking the missing fluke with the “official” report that she was raised and salvaged. Did the salvors simply produce a fluke from each wreck they were supposed to salvage? The theory fits if they were paid per wreck rather than per ton! Whatever the answer the fact remains that this “salvaged” wreck is very real.

Until recently she was intact, apart from the bomb damage. However after the opening of local dive centres close by at El Guna, she has greatly deteriorated. A repeat of the S.S. Thistlegorm saga. Within six months visiting day boats were responsible for the rapid deterioration of the wreck. The masts once 3 metres wide with luxuriant growths, were stripped bare, both masts, funnel, navigation bridge and aft gantry all ripped off, pulled over or destroyed!

Rumours abounded, fired by those who had experienced the wreck without proper planning as dangerous, swept by strong currents and in poor visibility. For those who took the time to dive her properly she is undoubtedly a decompression dive, not a difficult dive, it’s a different story. Although she has a cargo of little interest, she is a fine example of a pre WW1 steamship. Let the rumours persist.

Despite this damage ,the wreck provides a thrilling series of dives and for the well trained, and she will continue to give up her secrets.

Research.

As with the other 24 titles in this series of guide books, all of the facts and documentation has been originally sourced (and verified)by myself and members of the RSWA .We have not relied on previously copied text from other writers.

BARCLAY & CURLE



The company was founded by Robert Barclay in 1818 at Whiteinch, Glasgow, Scotland. In 1862 the company expanded and built new works at Stobcross with a floor area of 19,000 square feet. During the 1870s The Stobcross yard built 22 sailing ships. In addition, the new Clydeholm yard delivered its first steamer and so began a fruitful period of steamer building. Within 10 years the yard was producing iron hulled vessels, and later steel hulled ships.

In 1884 the yards were incorporated as the limited company **Barclay, Curle and Company**. In 1888 they produced their first triple expansion engine. By 1900s the newer yard expanded into building larger liners and cargo liners. Such was the quality of build, the market developed world wide.

In 1912 they expanded into repair work by acquired the Elderslie yard and graving dock from John Shearer and Sons. In the same year Swan, Hunter and Wigham Richardson took over Barclay, Curle and Co Ltd which became a subsidiary, including the Clydeholm and Elderslie shipyards and dry docks, and the dry docks in Govan. British India Line became the main customers and ordered 17 ships before the outbreak of World War I.

During WWI the Clydeholm and West Scotstoun yards produced 57 ships. In addition thirty convoy escort sloops, five "P" class submarine hunters, four river gunboats and six oil tankers. Over 1000 ships were repaired at the yards too. During the First World War the Barclay Curle yard built several Insect class gunboats for the Royal Navy.

The Insect class gunboats (or large China gunboats) were a class of small, but well-armed Royal Navy ships designed for use in shallow rivers or inshore. They were intended for use on the Danube (the name was to disguise their function. The first four ships; Gnat, Mantis, Moth and Tarantula were actually first employed during the World War I Mesopotamian Campaign on the Euphrates and Tigris rivers.

The ships were designed to operate in shallow fast-flowing rivers, with a shallow draught and a good turn of speed to counter river flow. They were fitted with two reciprocating (VTE) engines operating two propeller shafts to offer some redundancy. The propellers were housed in tunnels to minimise the operating draught.

By the 1920s the yards built eight war replacement "G" class meat carriers. British India then returned as the yard's main customer, and the first of many cargo liners were built for many

different companies. In 1922 the company bought up the Jordanvale yard. This yard was then modernised and went on to produce tramps and coasters.

During the 1930s the yards built tankers, and in 1932, they were rationalised. The West Scotstoun and Govan yards now only undertook repair work, with shipbuilding concentrated at the Clydeholm and Jordanvale yards. The yards managed to keep going during the Depression and they made small motor passenger/cargo liners, tankers and then riveted tramps, cargo liners and troopships.

1940s. the yards concentrated on building luxury passenger and cargo liners, along with general cargo ships. Four ships they built became blockade runners during the American Civil War, *Druid*, *Britannia*, *Emma*, and *Minnie*.

Yard list (Steam Ships)

467	1907 April 29	<i>Corsican</i>	11419...	steam	ship
...	1910	<i>Francis</i>	3963	2457 steam	ship
...	1912	<i>City of Dunkirk</i>	5861	3759 steam	ship
...	1918	<i>City of Baroda</i>	7129	4500 steam	ship
...	1920	<i>Melford Hall</i>	5669	3583 steam turbine	ship
...	1920 Feb	<i>Clan Robertson</i>	7951	4954 steam	ship
...	1925 Jan	<i>Rydal Hall</i>	5574	3537 steam	ship
...	1925 Nov	<i>City of Wellington</i>	5733	3642 steam	ship
...	1927	<i>City of Hereford</i>	5101	3215 steam	ship
...	1930 May	<i>City of Barcelona</i>	5787	3524 steam	ship
...	1936 Oct	<i>City of Benares</i>	11081	6720 Steam turbine	ship



THE BOOTH LINE

The Company was originally founded in 1866 as Alfred Booth & Co to operate services to Northern Brazil and the Amazon. Two brothers, Alfred and Charles Booth were involved in the company. Charles is better known for his early work on social investigation in London and his completion of one of the first surveys of poverty in London Boroughs. He played a major role in running the company.

Like many shipping businesses of this period there are a number of companies involved in its history. The Booth Steamship Co. was formed in 1881 and in 1901 it merged with Booth and Singlehurst's Red Cross Line to form Booth Steamship Co. (1901) Ltd. Another company called Booth & Co was set up to run tug and barge operations on the River Amazon. Booth Steamship Company took over Iquitos Steamship Company in 1911.

In 1946 the Booth Line was sold to the Vestey Group, and in 1975 the Booth Line ships came under Blue Star Ship Management Ltd. and Booth Line ceased to exist as a separate entity.

All of Booth Line ships appear to have been named after saints. (hence Francis)



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THE MOLLER LINE

Founded in 1882 in Shanghai by Nils Moller, a Swedish captain. Since Swedish nationals living overseas were not allowed to fly the Swedish flag, he registered his ships under the British flag.

In 1903 the company was divided between Nils Moller who carried on the commission business and his sons, Eric and his brother who carried on the shipping side which was reorganised as Moller Bros. and operated sailing ships. In 1907 Mollers sold their last sailing ship and purchased their first steamer. In 1910 the brothers' partnership was dissolved and the firm taken over by Eric Moller as sole proprietor under the name Moller & Co. Heavy losses were sustained in WWII with 12 ships lost to enemy action, 2 seized by Japan and lost under the Japanese flag and one wrecked.

In 1946 Moller took over the management of Alpha South African SS Co. and their fleet and the Lancashire Shipping Co. The company transferred its operations from Shanghai to Hong Kong in 1953 and abandoned the China coast trade. Several subsidiary companies were set up - Grosvenor Shipping Co., London, Red Anchor Line, Hong Kong and Redfern Shipping Co., Bermuda. The group withdrew from shipping in 1981.



THE HISTORY

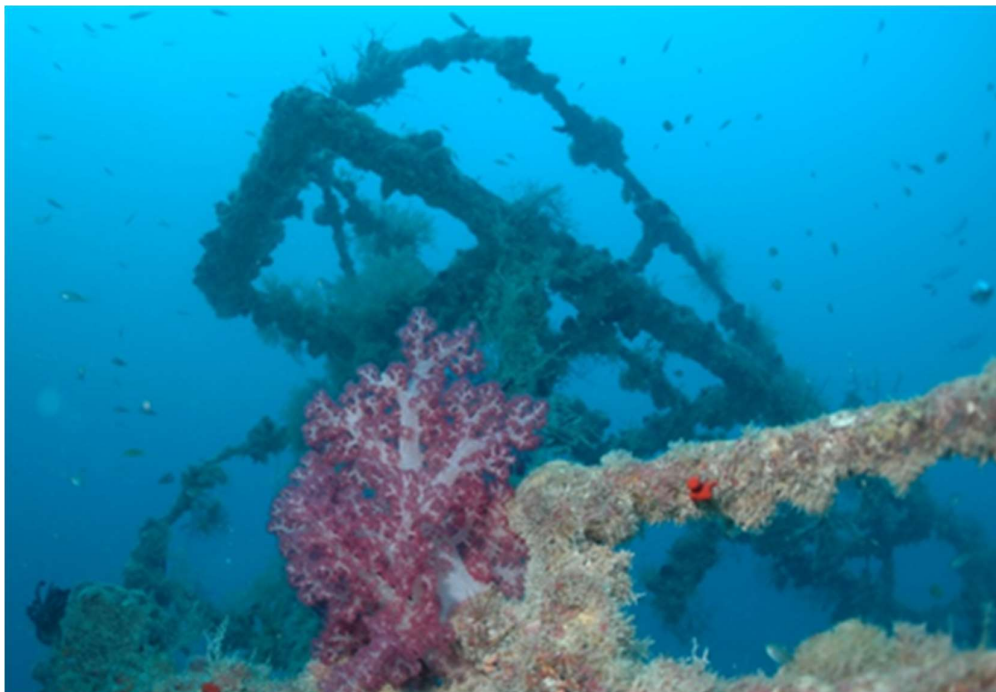
The 3963 ton, 315ft. long ship began life in the ship yards of Barclay and Curle, at Glasgow as the Francis in 1910. In 1931 she was sold to the Reederei Moller Line of Scandinavia and reregistered in Shanghai under the British flag. She was a typical 4 hold

“tramp” steamer, and as her plans show she had capacity to carry eight passengers in four state rooms, situated below the ward room. They flanked her saloon. The officers’ quarters were situated port and starboard of the engine room, and access to these quarters was by an inboard companionway. Her cruiser stern held more store rooms on her ‘tween deck and these are labelled Post room, Potato room and stores on her plans. This space was gained by her steering quadrant being on deck. She has no poop deck or raised fo’c’sle.

For the next few years she operated along the east coast of China between Shanghai and Tsingtao, until in 1938 with war on the horizon she was recalled to Liverpool and under the new command of Captain James Balsom she undertook collier duties, delivering 4500 ton of coal to Royal Navy bases.

MODIFICATIONS

During her refit an aft deck house was added, this doubled as an additional lifeboat deck and contained a second galley and extra stores. This meant that she now had 6 lifeboat stations situated flanking her bridge atop the engine room and atop the aft deck house. On the original plans the area was for sheep pens! In addition a raised track system was fitted from the aft house to her stern. There has been much deliberation as to its function. One suggestion was that it was a launch ramp for a sacrificial Hawker Hurricane. Indeed this would make the Rosalie Moller a CAM –Catapult armed Merchantman However, our research team have failed to come up with any evidence to support this. Indeed this concept seems to be very well documented, and only 9 launches were executed before small aircraft carriers took over air support duties, (see appendix 1) we may never know its true purpose, perhaps as first suggested it was merely a structure supporting a foul weather canopy and small rail track for loading purposes to the aft section. It has now been ripped off the wreck and lies on the seabed some way off the stern.





A diver swims through the aft deckhouse structure, on the portside. The door way, picture left) is the entrance to the aft galley. The serving hatch is located on the starboard side. This shot is taken facing aft. Note the huge shoal of fish parting as the diver passes through.



Two interior shots of the galley at around 32 metres. Picture left is from the doorway, with divers peering in through the serving hatch. Picture right shows the pots and pans still on the range!



Another view of the stern, pre damage showing the gantry above her steering quadrant, running forward to the aft lifeboat deck house.

BELOW; A recent image showing the stern without the gantry. The emergency helm now stands exposed





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FINAL VOYAGE

When war broke out she made several successful trips running the gauntlet to Gibraltar with much needed supplies of coal, Welsh best, which gave the best heat return per ton.

She was now under the command of an Australian captain James Byrne She was part of Convoy BN 8 (28 ships), October 1940, Bombay to Suez, then in Convoy BS10 (27 Ships), December 1940, BN 14 (38 ships) to Suez, February 1941 to Aden then BS21 (28 vessels) for Suez, before returning to Great Britain for a much needed overhaul.

She left Britain bound for Alexandria, via the Cape of Good Hope with yet another cargo of coal. With the Gibraltar straits closed due to the Axis forces there was no access via the Mediterranean so the longer route via the cape had to be undertaken. Stopping at Durban and Aiden on route, she finally entered the Straits of Gobul, in the Egyptian Red Sea, and ordered to anchorage H to await further instructions.

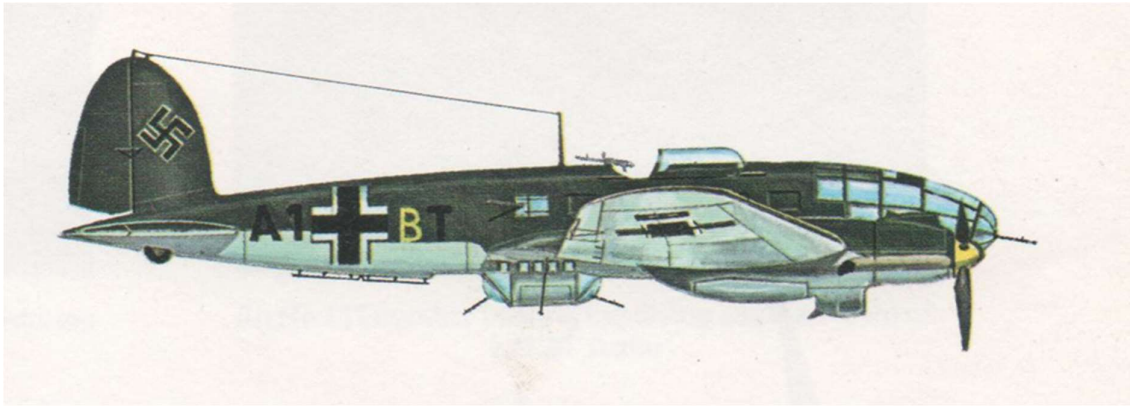
She is not listed in any convoy records at this time (and they are very comprehensive, well documented), which would suggest that she was sailing alone. Perhaps she burned the smoke free Welsh best found in her holds to this day, and sailed un-detected. The Rosalie Moller was unarmed.

Theories that she was a CAM, catapult armed merchantman are discussed later in the Appendix. Her journey north was delayed for the same reasons as the Thistlegorm. The Suez Canal was blocked, so she lay-to awaiting orders.

THE SINKING

It is generally accepted that her location was highlighted by the explosion from the Thistlegorm, and at least some of the aircraft involved in the "Grey Lady" Mission returned to sink the Rosalie Moller. In the early hours of Oct 8 1941, two days after the sinking of the Thistlegorm, while at anchor in the area between Gobul and Quisum Islands, designated anchorage H, having literally followed in the wake of the Thistlegorm, she was attacked by a staffel of HEINKEL HE 111 bombers. Two bombs exploded in number 3 hold causing heavy damage in the starboard quarter.

"Bombs released, striking Number 3 hold at 00.45 hrs, Vessel sank 01.40hrs. 2 crew missing." Captain's war diary.



She rapidly filled with water and began to settle. The weight of her cargo plus the water kept her in a level attitude. She sank quickly, stern first with the loss of two Indian crew men *Basa Main* a Seacunny and *Ghafur*, the ships butler, the survivors taking to the lifeboats.

WAR DIARY;OCT10 1941

“FOLLWING SHIPS NOW LYING SUNK IN STRAITS OF JUBAL;THISTLEGORM (4890 TONS) BOMBED, ROSALIE MOLLER 3963 TONS, BOMBED

SEARCH AND DISCOVERY

In the early part of 1995 as the Thistlegorm began to dawn on the diving world, Captain Hassan was insistent about a “sister ship”, which had also been sunk around the time of the Thistlegorm. Even back then we had access to a huge amount of data (not internet based), and quickly eliminated all the Albyn Line vessels from this connection. Captain Hassan was unflinching and I later understood what he had meant by a “sister ship”. He came up with a name ST FRANCIS and this too proved a nonstarter. Again he went on at great length about an old steamship “behind Gobul”.

During weeks of research we came across an entry from the HMSO publication of British Vessels lost at sea 1939-45. This research was to give us clues about the Turbo, Cape Clear, Turkia and Scalaria, none of which sank in the area. Page 27 had 3 consecutive entries;

5 th Oct	TYNEFIELD,	MINED	Suez Canal
6 th Oct.	THISTLEGORM	BOMBED	Anchorage F Straits of Jubal,Suez
8 th Oct.	ROSALIE MOLLER	BOMBED	Anchorage H Suez

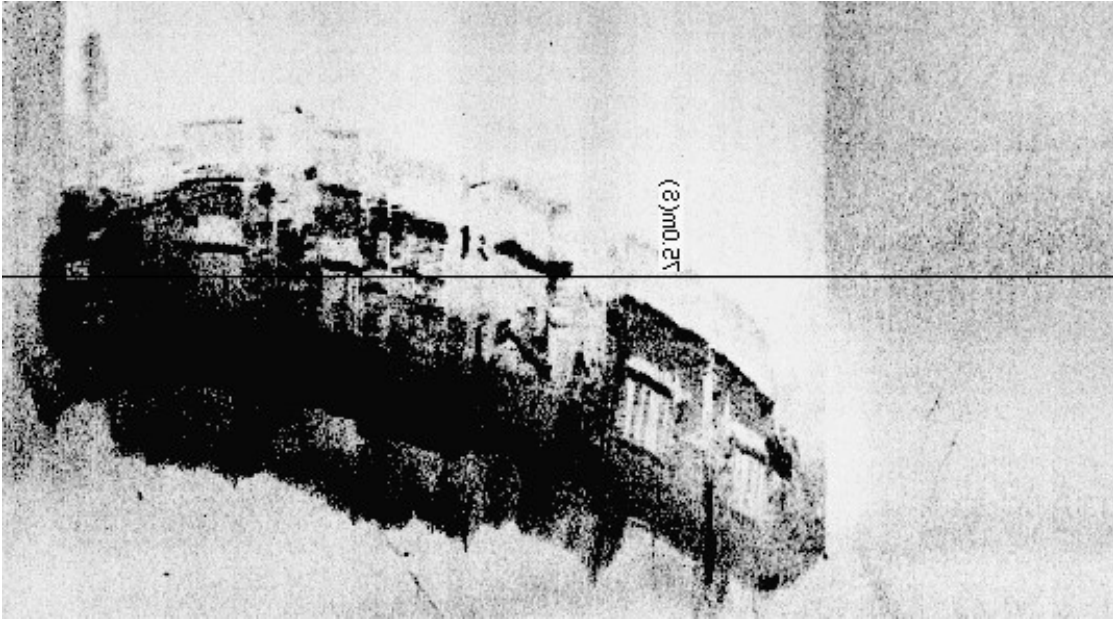
Further research, and three different reliable sources indicated that the Rosalie Moller had been salvaged. One archive came up with an old Admiralty chart and there marked on it was a wreck between Gobul, Tawilla and Quisum -desidnated anchorage H.

Without any contenders, and only Captain Hassan's instincts, a team of regular diving colleagues was assembled, including the late Alan Monk (they were later to become founders of the Red Sea Wreck Academy), our objective to locate this mystery wreck. Armed with only fish finder bottom profiling equipment we set about surveying the area marked on the chart and bounced on dozens of coral heads for almost three days. We were running out of time and enthusiasm, then I spotted seagulls feeding on a shoal of fish over to the west. The fish weren't migrating, I'd seen this spectacle over the Thistlegorm in the late afternoon as the Jacks come to hunt and push the smaller fish towards the surface, right into the beaks of the waiting gulls.



JACK ATTACK. A daily occurrence, jacks maraud the clouds of fish forcing them away from the shelter of the wreck towards the surface where they can be picked off with ease from above and below.

We hastily kitted up, jumped in the zodiac and plunged down through the clouds of fish right on to the foremast of an unknown steamship. Captain Hassan was indeed right. I should never have doubted him! Over the next two days we dived and surveyed the wreck, accumulating clues to her identity. She appeared undived, no mooring lines and all her treasures were in place, as we were slowly to find out. The first clue was the letter M on her upright funnel, the engine maker's plate, with Barclay and Curle, yard number and date would give us conclusive evidence but not until we returned back to the UK. However we did have a name to get us started S.S. Francis, Glasgow. We had found it would seem a ship which to all intent and purpose had been salvaged.

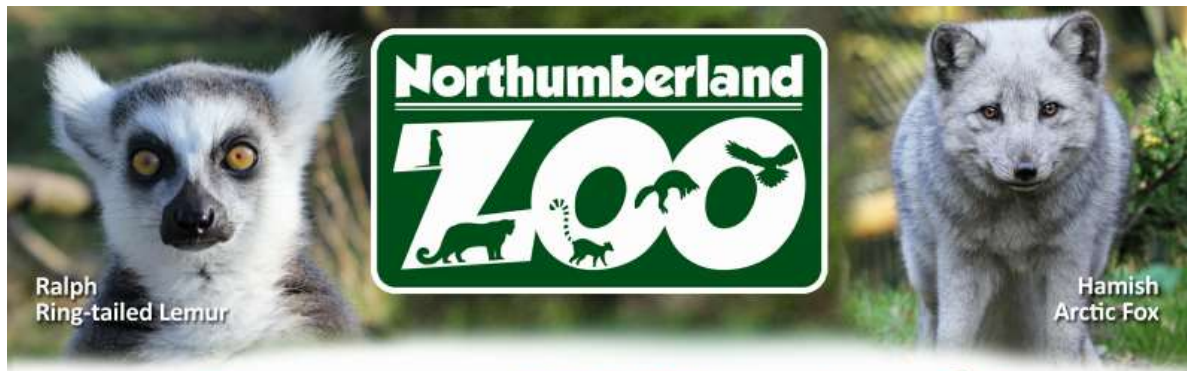


Side scan of the Rosalie Moller, produced by Fiona Stewart our oceanographer, taken during practise runs, preparing for a wreck hunting expedition, years after we had located the wreck. Had we had this technology back then we would have found the wreck much sooner!

THISTLEGORMS “SISTER SHIP” - THE RUMOUR DEBUNKED

As the knowledge of the existence of the Rosalie Moller grew so did the rumours and myths. She was dubbed the Thistlegorm’s “sister ship” but the only connections were coincidental. The Moller was built in Glasgow; Thistlegorm had departed Glasgow on the start of that final journey. Indeed both vessels final route was very similar. Both are 4 hold cargo steamships of similar dimensions, both have their port anchor stowed and have concrete slabs surrounding the bridge area, but that was true of all merchants ships at that time.. They were both bombed within days of each other. They are *similar*. Perhaps that’s what Captain Hassan meant. There is no doubt that his insistence contributed greatly to her discovery.

Several years ago I was commissioned to write an article on this very subject. During editing by the magazine staff, the section explaining the facts was deleted turning the whole thing on its head, feeding fuel to the rumour.



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THE WRECK TODAY

She now lies on a sandy, muddy bottom with her Titanic like bow facing north. The area is sheltered from the prevailing north winds by the islands of Gobul, Tawlla and Qusuim. Contrary to rumour we have never experienced strong currents over the wreck. Divers who have reported current have no doubt had to swim along the side of one or more 30 metre plus safari boat, on the surface and experienced waves generated along the side of the hull. With more and more boats visiting the wreck, daisy chains become inevitable. It's a long swim from three boats back to our mooring line!

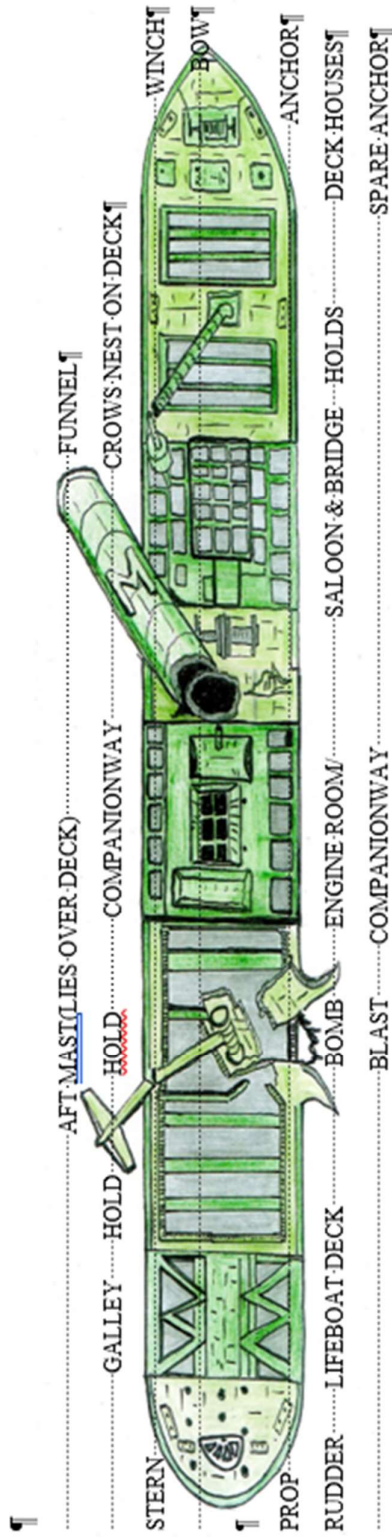
Testament to the lack of current is the layer of silt which covers the wreck and indeed is building up in the interior areas especially the engine room. Careless finning can reduce the visibility quickly and dramatically, however if timed correctly the visibility can be quite staggering, although it is generally 15 metres at best.

It's 46 metres to the seabed, with the top arch of her rudderpost at 40metres. General deck level is at 32metres so by hovering at 30 metres it is possible to have a great "Arial" view of the wreck, an over view, and this allows, with Nitrox Eanx 32, a tour along her full length. (See TOURS below)..

Her superstructure stands a couple of metres above her deck at 26/28 metres. **Up until recently, her masts both offered perfect "deep stops" UNTIL THEY WERE PULLED OVE BY INDISCRIMINATE MOORING..! Both now lie collapsed on the deck.**

Fortunately the wreck does not suffer from the mast overcrowding of the Thistlegorm, but the soft seabed means that mooring is very limited and safari boats are often seen daisey chained off her stern mooring, and this has no doubt contributed to her damage.

S.S. ROSALIE-MOLLER.



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CORRECT @1/11/19

BOW & FO'C'LE



Her straight raked bow sits upright rising up from the gloom to a depth of 32 metres and is usually shrouded with fish, a swim 5 metres out gives a magnificent view. Her port anchor is stowed and her starboard anchor chain runs out. The flagstaff and forward deck crane are still in place. Handrails are relatively intact.



Her windlass, her main anchor winch system can be found positioned centrally on the foredeck in front of the deck houses.



There is no raised fo’c’sle, her foredeck being a single level. and access to the crew’s quarters is via a covered-in stairwell which is flanked by her lamp room (starboard) and rope locker (port) (centre of picture). Either side of this structure are port and starboard deck houses (firemen’s showers), a spare anchor stands upright on the aft bulkhead of the starboard . Note the intact handrails. Depth here is around 33 metres.





The bow is a sight to savour and photograph, with or without a diver for perspective, and it captures the classic lines of this pre WW1 steamship. Note the intact forward loading crane.

A quick inspection around the hull reveals rows of portholes. These are the firemens' quarters, accessed from a covered in stairwell flanked by the storerooms. The bulkhead door is sealed and the stairwell itself is crushed. Portholes on top of the deck house allow a peak inside. Visibility usually allows sight of her foremast from here and it is possible to slowly ascent over the foredeck, first and second coal holds aft towards the highest point of the which is now the bridge.

An advertisement for industrial fittings and valves. The top section shows five different types of fittings: two elbow fittings, a tee fitting, a cross fitting, and a plug. Below these is a large, detailed image of a valve assembly with a handwheel and two ports. The text "Don't take the 'little' things in life for granted.. ..one day your life may depend on them!" is prominently displayed. At the bottom, there are logos for MAX, MIFLEX, BEST DIVERS, ARCHIT, and Swagelok, along with contact information for Miflex shops.

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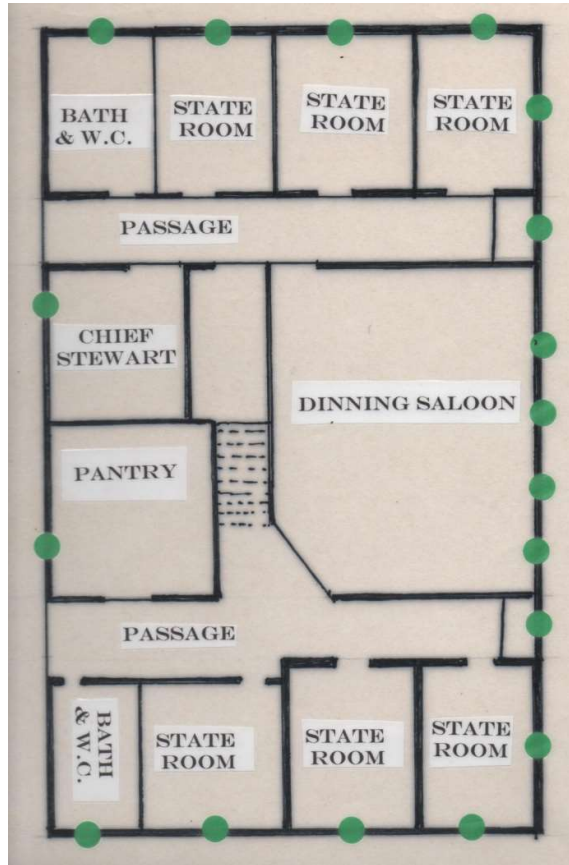
FORE MAST & CROWS NEST



Located between holds number 1 & 2 and flanked by deck winches, the foremast once stood proud some 10 metres above the deck, IT HAS NOW BEEN TORN DOWN BY MORONIC DIVE MASTERS TIEING INTO THE WEAK STRUCTURE , and lies snapped with the crows nest now on the deck. Who trains these idiots???????????

SALOON, BRIDGE & ACCOMODATION

With all the wooden floors and panels long gone, the iron framework allows for easy exploration of this section of the superstructure. Like the dividing walls, the wheelhouse was made of wood and has long since gone. Her telegraph base stands where the wheelhouse once was. There are two deck levels above deck and the entire area is usually full of glass fish, never the less such everyday items such as radiators, bed frames and porthole (green dots!) can still be seen.



Plan view of the state rooms and saloon. These are at deck level. Another floor; the ward room and the navigation bridges, have been removed for clarity.

BOW

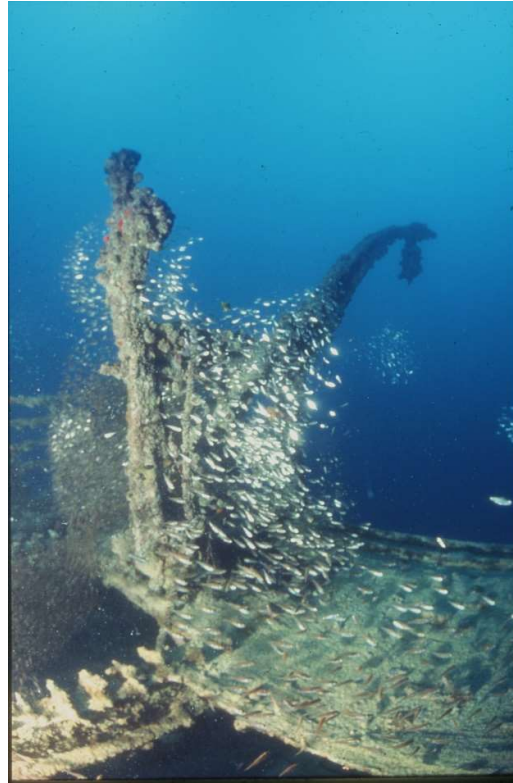
Above the ward room the wheelhouse was located, but this was a wooden structure and has long since been dissolved by the torido marine worms.

The skeletal remains afford easy swim throughs, although the area is usually full of fish.

Although the lack of room dividers permits easy swim throughs, it is essential to maintain good buoyancy and stability, and be aware of draping cables from above. It is possible to ascend up “one floor” from the deck level



The layout of the saloon and state rooms can be seen by hovering above the superstructure. Looking down from this vantage point bed frames, baths, toilets, and wash hand basins can be seen. Above the saloon, her wing (navigation) bridge is located, and just behind are the lifeboat davits.





The saloon area, directly below the bridge is home to thousands of glassy sweepers, flanked by portholes, and with the floor above missing, natural light streams in. Headroom is very low, and piled up on the starboard side are many of the concrete slabs which have fallen through from above. A clue to her wartime role, these were used as crude protection from aircraft strafing. (as with the Thistlegorm)

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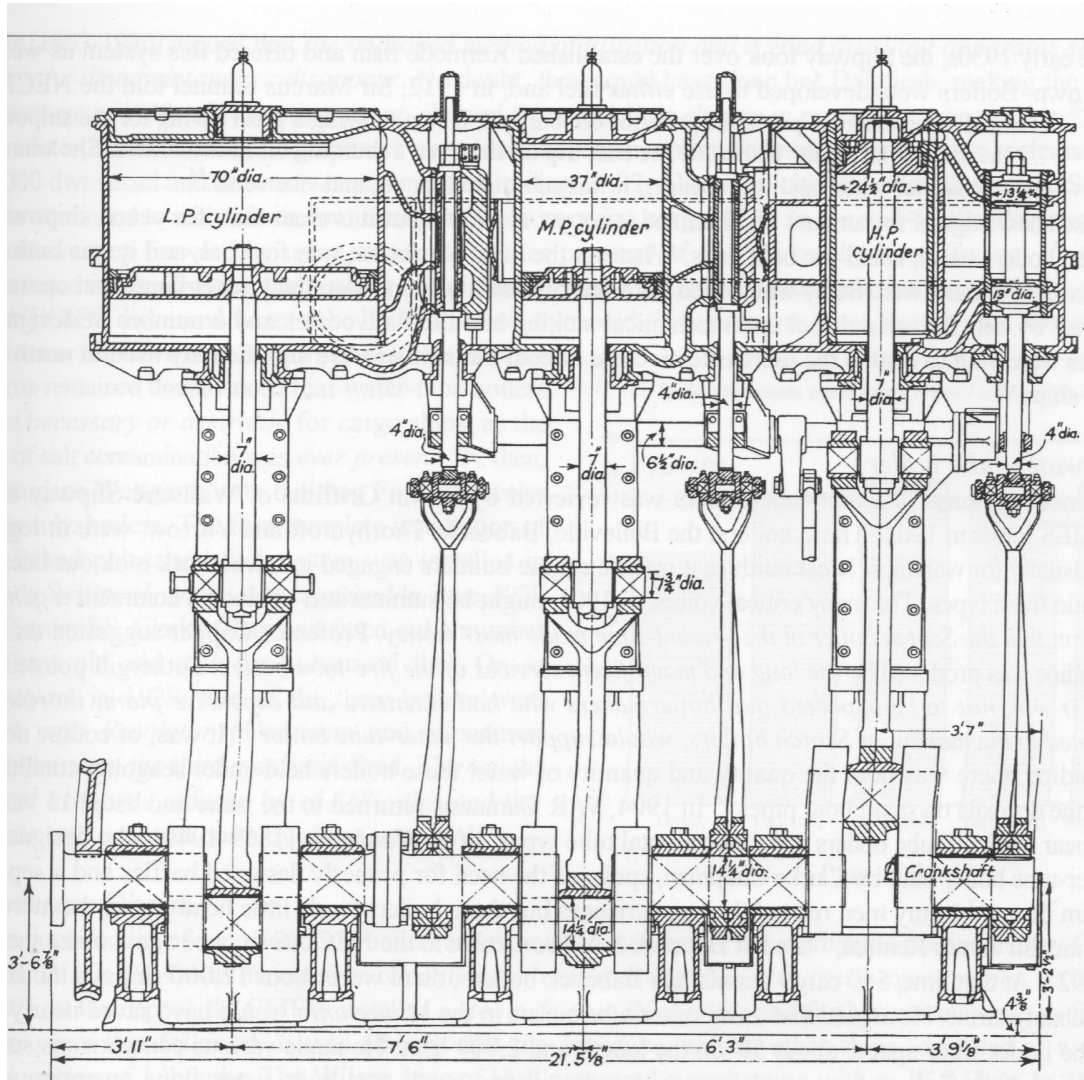
ENGINE ROOM



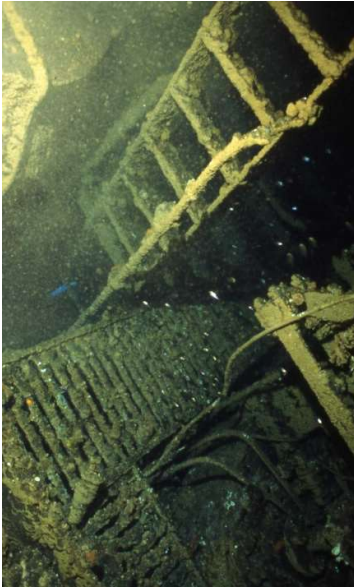
Author's warning: several years ago I received a phone call from a very distressed diver. He asked me if I could tell him where his buddy was. He had lost him in the engine room of the Rosalie Moller, 5 days earlier! As he retold his story, it was evident that neither were properly equipped or trained to penetrate 3 floors down, into what is a very confined, silty and claustrophobic area of the wreck. Led by an equally ill equipped dive guide (single 12l), three went in, two came out. The coroner's verdict was "death by miss-adventure". I have a very different, professional view! I once upset a client by refusing to take his 14 year old daughter into the same area.....she is still alive today.....

There is only one way to dive this lower section of the engine room safely; with the right equipment, training, knowledge and prior to anyone else getting in there! For those with the correct skill sets, this is one of the most evocative sights in the Red Sea. A Hamlet Cigar moment.....a journey into the past, into the very heart of the ship...46 metres down....but only if you come back to brag about it!

Even without a venture into the deeper section of the engine room, the tops of the pressure chambers, high, medium and low, can be viewed by the experienced diver with basic wreck diving skills. This too is a sight to behold. Access is from the coal hold aft or the skylights above. On the portside, forward is a short set of steps up to a doorway and into the boiler room .Off to the starboard side is a store area full of spare engine parts. Light shines down through the engine house roof ventilators. One porthole has fallen out and is now concreted into the aft pressure chamber.



The triple expansion engine stands 3 floors tall. The big ends connecting to the propeller shaft by means of a thrust box lie in the lower floor. Con rods run up to the pressure chambers and the reversing wheel. A repeater telegraph is found on the second catwalk around the bottom of the chambers. A small bridge way sits over the prop shaft, and a workbench sits silent in a corner. A small set of ladders reach up to the electricians store which once housed schematics, lamps and replacement bulbs, oil cans, drip trays, gauges and valves all add to the living museum. Priceless.



catwalk level 2



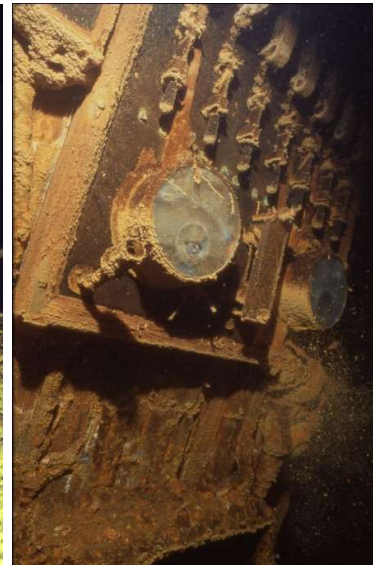
repeater telegraph



reversing wheel



vice, lower level



ammeter and knife switches



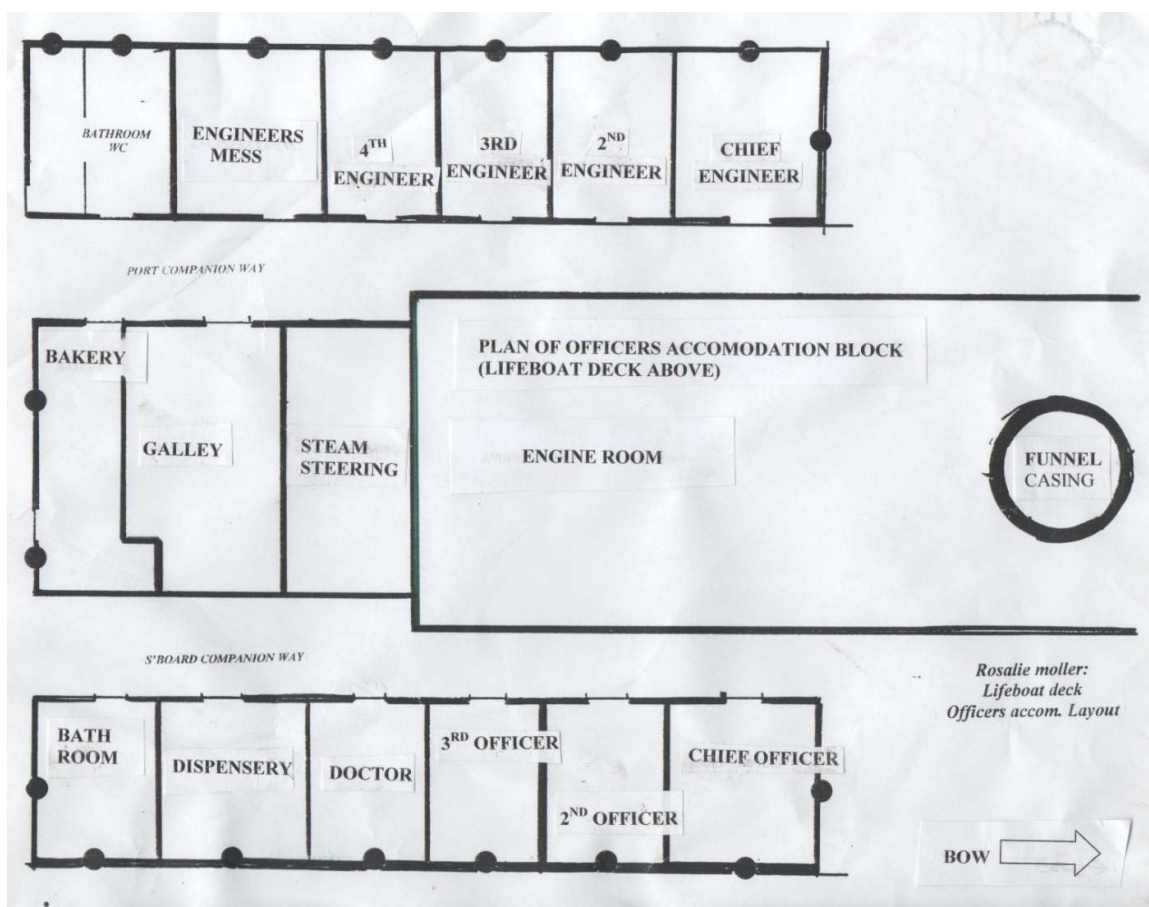
pressure vessel & gauge.



A diver hovers over the pressure chambers ready to descend into the depths of the engine room. Above light filters through from the ventilator roof and behind the hole in the bulk head which alllows access from the aft holds.

The engine room housing is flanked by two companionways running fore and aft. These allow access into the Officers (starboard side) and engineers quarters (portside), which incude baths, toilets, wash hand basins, bed frames and radiators. Again, due to the lack of wooden roofs, they can be viewed from above. The funnel has been pulled over and lies at an angle off to port, two huge letter M's can be found. Her brass whistle was removed some years ago. A donkey boiler (auxillary power and heating) is positioned aft of the funnel base infront of the galley skylight.





At the rear of the engine house is the forward galley and additional store rooms and workshops. Note the vices!

LIFEBOAT DECK, AFT GALLEY

Between The 4th coal hold and the steering quadrant is the lifeboat deck, a raised deck house which contains the aft galley and additional store rooms. A raised ventilator roof and several small smoke stacks lie central, while the life boat davits sit in each corner. These are covered in some impressive plumes of soft corals. The wooden deck work has gone leaving the metal frame work. Companionways run through the structure on both the port and starboard side. A spare anchor hangs by the port rail.



The galley sits across the deck with the serving hatch to starboard and the doorway to port. It is complete with cooking pots and utensils, concreted in place. A chimney ascends from the range through the roof.



AFT HOLDS

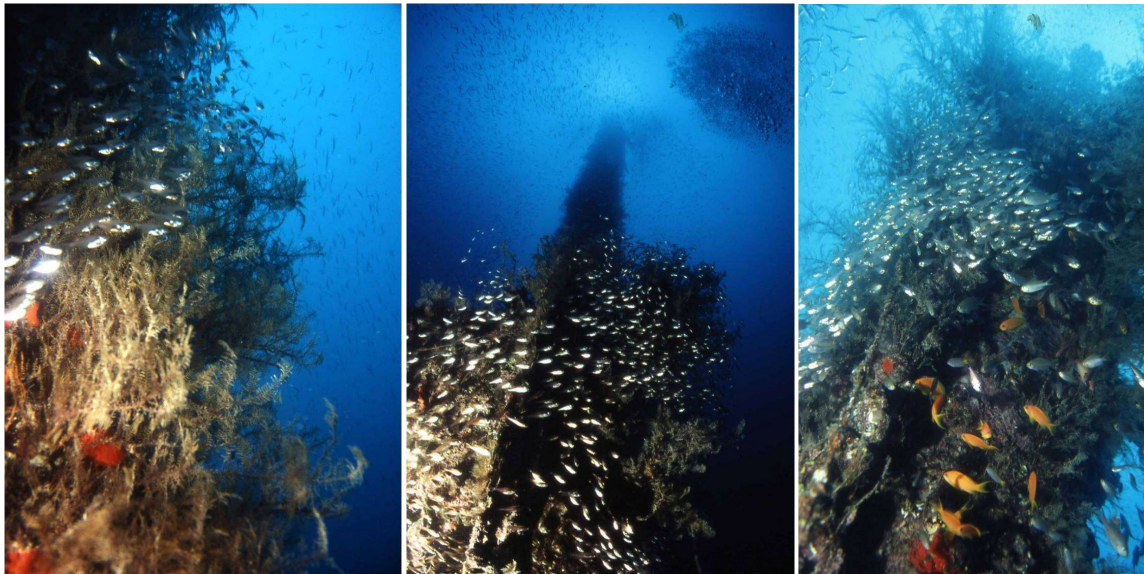
The bomb damage is located on the starboard side, behind the engine room, breaching hold number 4. The rift in the hulls plating has been forced outwards proving the explosion occurred within the hold, punching the metal outwards. It is a tangle of plates and girders.



The lower holds are simply full of coal and several cross bracing girders. They offer little of interest, however the 'tween decks are extremely atmospheric, even a simple ladder or wheel barrow makes a poignant image. In the curved stern section there are several rooms, post room, potato room and in the very stern air scoops and convoy lamps. A thick layer of silt awaits the unwary diver and although shafts of light stream down, visibility can be reduced in seconds.



AFT MAST



The structure of the masts included strong mountings at deck level with the base of the masts ending attached to her keel. The masts were a vertical feast of coral growth, not fans but golden bushes. They sustained a wealth of marine life and made an amazing night dive. With our moorings attached to cleats on the deck the mast withstood many years of visitors, but when the sport diving limit was increased to 40 metres and the day boats arrived, the masts were stripped bare within weeks. The metal skin peeled of layer by layer, boats tied lines to the mast and inevitably the stern mast was pulled over, ripping up its mounting and the surrounding deck.

The tip of the mast now lies off to port, in 32 metres. Hanging out away from the hull The circular base for the wooden extension at the top of the mast is now home to dozens of hinge back shrimp and has taken on a gown of soft corals which hang down in spectacular style. The vast numbers of glass fish have migrated here and antheas have also now invaded giving an additional splash of colour.

The area of deck where the mast enters the hull has now been torn open, resurfurthe damage to the werck.

For the photographer this is a dive in its own right- Due to the lack of diver traffic this has become beautiful spectacle and perhaps the most colourful part of the wreck.





Yet another prominent feature of the stern was the overhead gantry which ran from the deckhouse to the stern rail. It dominated the area and its track has lead to much speculation as to its use. Standing proud of the deck it attracted a huge amount of life, including some very large lionfish.

However, once again the actions of local dive guides have wreaked havoc and the entire structure has been ripped off, and now lies on the seabed some distance from the stern.


It would seem the Rosalie Moller will suffer the same fate as the Thistlegorm at the hands of these morons. Malesh!



STERN, PROP & RUDDER



Like the bow, the stern is a magnificent sight to behold. At 32 metres she still boasts her handrails and her steering quadrant, although there has been an attempt to rip off the steering helm from its worm drive. The steering quadrant sits exposed and the rod and chain system can be traced forward to its motor. There is an access hatch down into the aft store rooms. The beautiful cruiser stern can be admired by swimming a few metres out from the stern. Here her curved rudder comes into view, and her prop, minus one fluke stands motionless. The keel sits over 1 metre into the silt. (the gantry above the quadrant, as reported elsewhere has now disappeared)



S.S. NUMIDIA

Built in Glasgow in 1901, this 6399 ton steam ship ran aground on the northern tip of Big Brother the same year. The wreck is regarded as one of the best in the world, certainly in the Red Sea. Starting at 14 meters and plummeting straight down, almost vertical to 80 meters. Covered in a superb array of marine life but swept by strong currents.

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Peter Collings. Egyptian Red Sea Wreck Stickers

64 stickers of all the well known (and lesser known!) Egyptian wrecks of the Red Sea. Full of detailed drawings and archive photos sourced by well known wreck expert Peter Collings.

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Missing fluke!!!!!!!!!!!!!!The Propeller. As the ship was at anchor there would be no chance of damage to the prop when she sank. The fluke or blade has been cut off prior to her discovery and lends fuel to the speculation over her official status as being salvaged. One fluke on each propeller is usually stamped with a works number.

It has been suggested that this fluke may have been produced as evidence to the contractor (The British Government) of her salvage as the salvors were paid per vessel rather than in tonnage. The shortage of raw materials at the end of WW2 saw an increase in the reclamation of materials from shipwrecks especially pre radiated steel. The dairies of Jim Develyn (Inverlane, Atlas, Oslofjord to name but a few) reflect how much he and other salvors skills were in demand!

DIVING THE WRECK

Due to the attitude of the wreck this is a square profile dive, with the shallowest part of the wreck 30 metres. The wreck is usually buoyed, with a line at the stern and another amidships. However as this keeps breaking it should not be taken for granted. There are certain days when “convoys” arrive and we have witnessed 60 plus divers scrambling up and down the same line, all trying to hold on to that narrow piece of real estate at 6 metres (ever heard of a jon line?...) Needless to say the visibility on the wreck then lives up to its reputation.

Ideally the safari boat should be moored bow and stern to cleats on the deck of the R.M with rope, not steel wire. We always deploy a quick release trapeze and have at least two hang tanks available. This way there is a definitive route to and from the wreck especially if it's a no stop dive. Selections of suggested dives are offered below, for a range of experience. It should be remembered that this is best executed as a decompression dive so training equipment and gas considerations should be included in any dive plan .Plan the dive, dive the plan.





TOUR I Skill level:50 dives. Nitrox+deep +wreck skills

This tour is recommended for those diving the wreck for the very first time, an overview, allowing for the best bottom time without incurring decompression. Safety stops are mandatory, and access to and from the wreck should be via the mooring lines. Torches are essential!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Descending the stern line, the dive commences with an inspection of the stern area, her steering mechanism, complete with helm, deck house, galley and bomb blast area. Look out for very large lionfish and big eyes around the base of the mast. Depth should be around 32/30 metres

It should be noted that there are rooms below decks here- accessed from the aft section of number 4 hold. These are several meters deeper, and are empty except for the very aft section, at the fan tail and these contain spare air scoops, cooking utensils and huge lanterns for convoy duty.



Swimming through these rooms with sunlight coming in through the port holes is quite an experience-but gentle finning is required due to the silt.

Continuing along the starboard side over the bomb blast, the route forward is through a long corridor, rooms to the right are the Doctors room, dispensary, then 4th , 3rd ,2nd and chief officers' quarters. Rooms to the left are access to the engine room and stores above is the galley.

A short swim will now bring the saloon and state rooms into view on the left. It is possible to swim in, explore the area then rise up one level into the ward room, exiting above and out. Maintain this level depth will now be 29/30metres. Swim forward over both cargo holds ,#2 and #3, they only contain coal and have little of interest, to the foremast (note its position) now lying over to post on the deck, again much life shelters here and then on towards the windlass (anchor winch) and finally the bow. Swim out past the bow for a breath taking view.

Return back towards the fore mast, deco time and air will dictate whether to ascend the forward mooring line if present, or return to the stern, this time over the port side of the ship to take in an aerial view of the engineers' quarters. This route will lead back over her funnel, note the letter M and engine house. Slowly ascend back over the aft holds to the stern mooring line (via the aft mast if time / gas allows).

TOUR 2; Skill Level 70 dives + nitrox plus experience with overhead environments +deep +wreck

Again, descend the stern line and locate the bomb damage. Swim into the hold-35/6 metres, and swim forward towards the bulk head. Torch light will reveal a convenient hole in the bulk head. Swim through into the engine room. *Keep to the right, do not swim over the chambers!* Follow the course of the catwalk grating, pausing to take in the view! Turn left at the boiler heads, swim to the port side and locate a small flight of stairs up into the boiler room, now directly in front. Swim anti clockwise around the funnel base, forward and out through a gap in the bulkhead. The funnel lies to the left, hanging over the port side and to the right is a doorway into the saloon and state room area. Explore slowly, note the radiators, bed frames, and wash hand basins. It is possible to rise up through to the floor above and then up through its roof, clear of the superstructure . On occasion this whole area is filled with glass fish.

Again, air/time/deco status will dictate whether to swim forward to the bow or return to explore the stern section before ascending.



A diver exits the boiler room, which itself is fairly intact and offers some alternative exploration. The funnel lies over to right of picture, just out of sight, its base directly above the divers head. His kit consists of a back mounted single 12 ltr and a side mounted 12ltr which can be unclipped for more confined movement through the interior.

TOUR 3 ; Skill level CMAS * or equivalent, deco/ERD skills, redundancy, Advanced wreck**

Recommended with very experienced divers in mind, and assumes the use of 2 x12 litres, and possible accelerated deco/ rebreathers. This is a mind blowing dive but not difficult for those properly trained. The deco stop has often been very rewarding. On one occasion we had a manta ray and then a pod of dolphins.

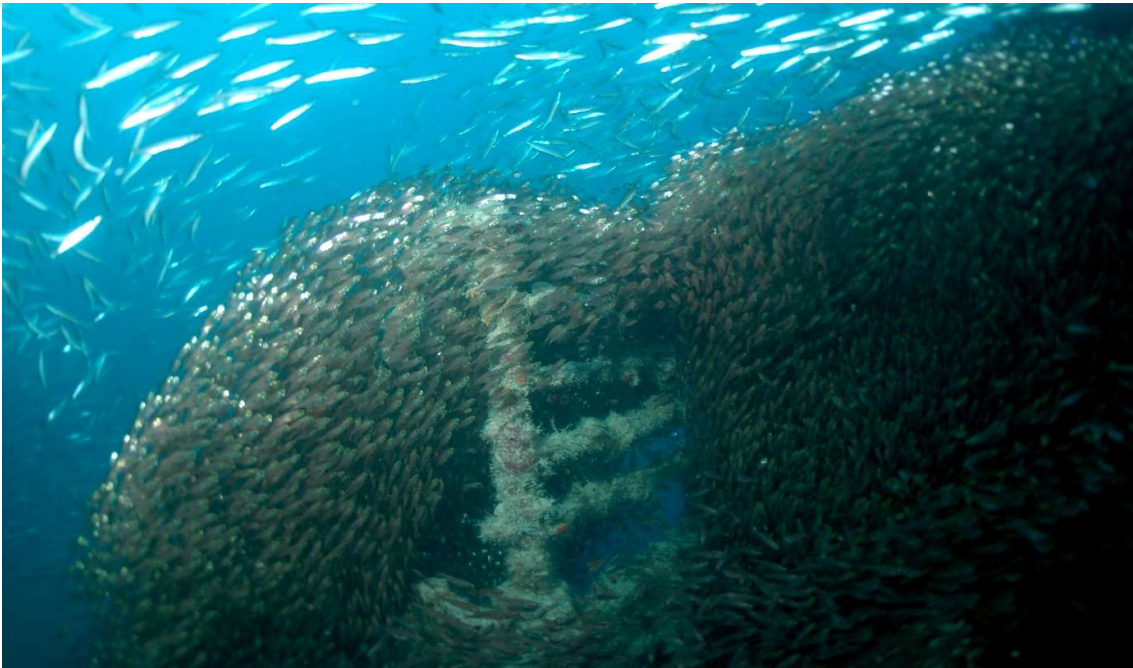
Again, starting at the stern line, swim to the stern rails-swim out and take in the view of the stern, Descend down over her rudder through the flukes 42/4 metres, swim along the starboard side (the hull should be on your left!!!). By swimming away and rising slightly from the hull, the bomb damage becomes evident. The plates forced out and peeled back reflecting the power of the explosion. Swim up and through the damage turning forward (right) across the coal hold in to the 'tween deck and towards the bulk head, into the engine room. Then follow the directions as in tour #2. Alternatively by turning left the store rooms below the stern can be explored

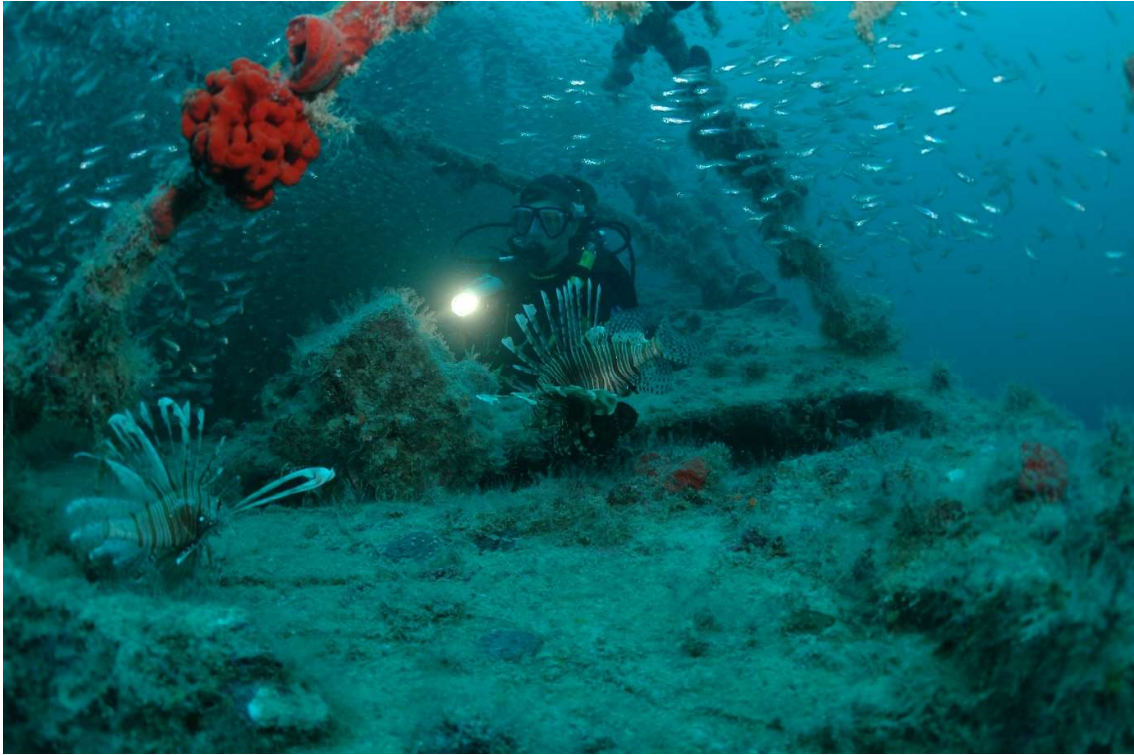


MARINE LIFE



“Couldn’t see the wreck for fish”, a common comment after a dive on the Rosalie Moller. In these two images (above and below) glass fish swarm like bees around the upright structures of the wreck, sometimes so thick they block out the light. A diver can swim into the cloud and be totally engulfed.





Lionfish grow to sizes beyond their specifications, and are found throughout the open areas of the wreck. With no shortage of food they constantly prowling their domain.



As the wreck lies well away from any reef system, on a sandy muddy bottom and little tidal flow, it is not surprising that the species here vary considerably from only a mile away on the other side of Gobul. There is little or no evidence of hard corals but bush corals and soft corals abound. Indeed until recently the masts were a veritable forest. If she were unidentified then we would probably label her the “shrimp” wreck. They seem to be everywhere and in large numbers. Snowflake morays are here in abundance while the giant moray is a rare sight. Sweepers are everywhere, often spilling out of the superstructure and swarming round the base of the masts, absorbing the visiting diver into their midst. There are several species of anemone, some not listed in the text books and several deep water burrowing anemones.

The lionfish are obviously well fed and far outgrow their specifications! Big eyes tend to hang around the base of the masts and several species of grouper are resident, particularly near the bow.

Jacks, trevally and sometimes tuna hunt the sweepers on a regular basis. The sea fans and bryozoans support a good selection of nudibranchs, but I suspect these will be well overlooked. Torpedo rays are often seen lying in the silt



Snowflake or pepperd morays are found throughout the wreck, while their big cousin, the giant moray is less evident.



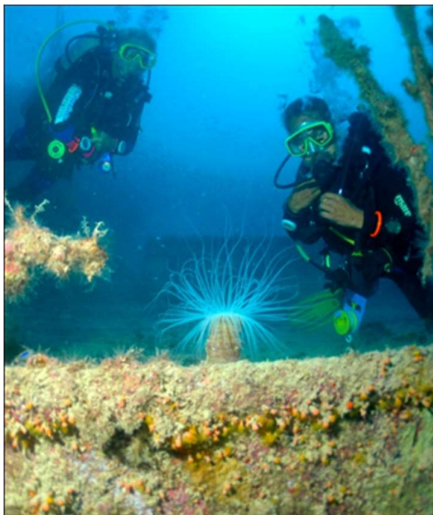
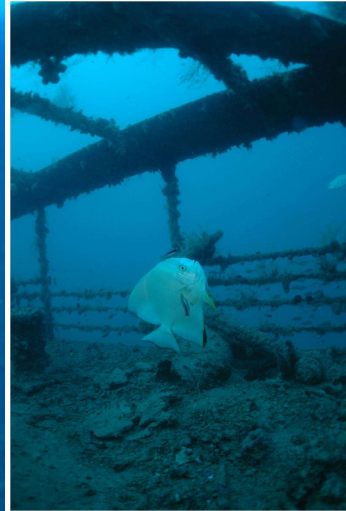
Groupers are present throughout the upper areas of the wreck and some very large specimens have been spotted.



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Jacks sweep in through a shoal of juvenile barracuda picking off sweepers at will.

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APPENDIX 1.CAM SHIPS

CAM ships were World War II-era British merchant ships used in convoys as an emergency stop-gap until sufficient escort carriers became available. CAM ship is an acronym for catapult aircraft merchant ship. A CAM ship was equipped with a rocket-propelled catapult launching a single Hawker Hurricane, dubbed a "Hurricat" or "Catafighter". CAM ships continued to carry their normal cargoes after conversion.

After the Fall of France in June 1940, long range German Focke-Wulf Fw 200 reconnaissance aircraft of I/KG40 shadowed and bombed merchant shipping from the French airfield at Bordeaux-Mérignac. The Admiralty had already experimented with fighter catapult ships - converted freighters, equipped with a single rocket-launched fighter, manned by naval crews. They ordered 50 more rocket-propelled catapults for fitting aboard merchant ships. These were equipped with fifty Hawker Hurricane Mark I aircraft, converted to Sea Hurricane IAs as a temporary measure to provide fighter protection beyond the range of bases on the British Isles. The ship was not fitted for aircraft recovery, so, unless close to land, the pilot would bail out or ditch in the sea at the end of the flight and the plane would be lost.

The RAF formed the Merchant Ship Fighter Unit (MSFU) on 5 May 1941 in RAF Speke by the River Mersey in Liverpool. Wing Commander E.S. Moulton-Barrett commanded the unit providing training for volunteer pilots, Fighter Direction Officers (FDOs) and airmen. After training, MSFU crews were posted to Liverpool, Glasgow or Avonmouth where they assisted in loading their Hurricanes onto the catapults. Each team consisted of one pilot for Atlantic runs (or two pilots for voyages to Russia, Gibraltar or the Mediterranean Sea) with one fitter, one rigger, one radio-telephone operator, one FDO and a seaman torpedo man who worked on the catapult as an electrician.

MSFU crews signed ships articles as civilian crew members under the authority of the civilian ship's master. The ship's chief engineer became responsible for the catapult and the first mate acted as Catapult Duty Officer (CDO) responsible for firing the catapult when directed. The single Hurricane fighter was launched only when enemy aircraft were sighted and agreement was reached via hand and flag signals between the pilot, CDO and ship's master.

The first CAM ship, Michael E, was sponsored by the Royal Navy while the RAF MSFUs were working up. After a trial launch off Belfast, Michael E sailed with convoy OB 327 on 28 May 1941. She was sunk by U-108 on 2 June. The first RAF trial CAM launch was from Empire Rainbow at Greenock on the River Clyde on 31 May 1941, the Hurricane landed at Abbotsinch. Six CAM ships joined convoys in June 1941.[1] When a CAM ship arrived at its destination, the pilot usually launched and landed at a nearby airfield to get in as much flight time as possible before his return trip. Pilots were rotated out of CAM assignments after two round-trip voyages to avoid the deterioration of flying skills from the lack of flying time during the assignment.

CAM sailings were initially limited to North American convoys with aircraft maintenance performed by the Royal Canadian Air Force at Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. CAM ships sailed on Gibraltar and Freetown convoys beginning in September, 1941, after an aircraft maintenance unit was established at the RAF base at North Front, Gibraltar. No CAM aircraft were provided during January and February 1942 after it proved impossible to maintain the catapult-mounted aircraft in flying order during the North Atlantic winter. CAM sailings resumed on 6 March 1942 on North Atlantic convoys and in April on the Arctic Russian convoys with a RAF aircraft maintenance unit in Archangelsk.[2]

Eight CAM ships were requisitioned from private owners, two of which were sunk: Daghestan, Daltonhall, Eastern City, Helencrest, Kafirstan, Michael E (sunk), Novelist, Primrose Hill (sunk).

27 CAM ships were Ministry of War Transport owned Empire ships, ten of which were sunk: Empire Burton (sunk), Empire Clive, Empire Darwin, Empire Day, Empire Dell (sunk), Empire Eve (sunk), Empire Faith, Empire Flame, Empire Foam, Empire Franklin, Empire Gale, Empire Heath, Empire Hudson (sunk), Empire Lawrence (sunk), Empire Moon, Empire Morn, Empire Ocean, Empire Rainbow (sunk), Empire Ray, Empire Rowan (sunk), Empire Shackleton (sunk), Empire Spray, Empire Spring (sunk), Empire Stanley, Empire Sun, Empire Tide, Empire Wave (sunk).

Date	Ship/convoy	Pilot	Outcome
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1 Nov 41	SS Empire Foam	Flying Officer Varley	Focke-Wulf Fw 200 chased off; pilot recovered by HMS Broke.[1][4]
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26 Apr 42	SS Empire Morn / QP 12	FO JB Kendal	Blohm & Voss BV 138 chased off & Junkers Ju 88 shot down; pilot died from injuries received while bailing out.[1][4]
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26 May 42	SS Empire Lawrence / PQ 16	PO Hay	Two Heinkel He 111s shot down; Hurricane shot down, pilot wounded & recovered by HMS Volunteer.[1][4]
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14 Jun 42	SS Empire Moon / HG 84	PO Sanders	Focke-Wulf Fw 200 chased off; pilot recovered by HMS Stork.[1][4]
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18 Sep 42	SS Empire Morn	FO AH Burr	Two Heinkel He 111s destroyed; pilot flew to the Russian Keg Ostrov aerodrome.[1][4]
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1 Nov 42	SS Empire Heath / HG 91	FO Taylor	Focke-Wulf Fw 200 shot down; pilot nearly drowned before recovery.[1][4]
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28 Jul 43	SS Empire Darwin / SL 133	FO JA Stewart	Focke-Wulf Fw 200 destroyed; pilot recovered by HMS Leith.[1][4]
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28 Jul 43	MV Empire Tide / SL 133	FO PJR Flynn	Focke-Wulf Fw200 destroyed; pilot recovered by HMS Enchantress.[1][4]
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In total, there were nine combat launches, eight aircraft and one pilot were lost for eight German aircraft destroyed and one damaged.

APPENDIX 2 LIFE IN THE MERCHANT NAVY, WORLD WAR TWO

SHIP CLASSIFICATION:

UNARMED MERCHANT SHIP. Vessels such as the Rosalie Moller, which had no means of defending itself. Usually afforded the option to abandon ship by U boat captains prior to sinking

DEFENCEVLY ARMED MERCHANT SHIP (DEMS)Cargo ships which were armed in such a way that the arc of fire covered the stern quadrant only; Articles of war demanded that U boat captains, surfaced forward of the defensive arc and offered the crew the opportunity to abandon ship prior to being sunk. This did not apply to vessels protected in convoys.

ARMED MERCHANTSHIP. Vessels armed fore and aft (such as liberty ships), and could be sunk without warning

ARMED MERCHANT CRUISER (AMC'S).Usually converted larger vessels such as liners, which were fitted with larger offensive guns and even torpedo launchers

WARSHIP. Prefixed with HMS , these were vessels specifically designed for offensive operations from Submarines to Battleships, Mine sweepers, depot ships. Armament varied from type to type. .



The British Merchant Navy of World War II, previously known as the "Merchant Service" or "Mercantile Marine" comprised the merchant shipping registered in Great Britain and independently operated by British commercial shipping companies. Those vessels carried cargo to and from the country and those of the

Commonwealth to sustain its war effort. In World War II the title Merchant Navy came into normal usage and with Royal approval, a small silver buttonhole badge was produced for the non-uniformed merchant seamen from January 1940 bearing the letters "MN"

The Ministry of Transport, Was responsible for both shipping and land transport to a single department, and easing problems of co-ordination of transport in wartime. From this point onwards the "MoWT" decided upon the route sailed and the cargo carried by every ship.



From the outbreak of war in September 1939, individual seamen could decide if they wished to sail and risk attack by German forces, or in the face of extremely high losses, if they wished to change their occupation to work ashore or otherwise enlist in the Armed Forces.

Losses of shipping and their crews in 1940 and 1941 were staggering and were nearing a peak, with 779 ships sunk and 16,654 seamen killed or missing (approximately 49 percent of their crews). Fortunately for Great Britain the great majority of seamen continued to take the risk and the nation's war supplies and food continued to arrive.

Until May 1941, merchant seamen sailing aboard British vessels attacked and sunk by enemy action received no pay (wages) from the moment that their ship sank. If the seaman was fortunate to survive the sinking only to spend days or weeks in an open lifeboat hoping for rescue, it was regarded as "non-working time", the seaman was not paid for that time because their employer, the shipping company who had owned the lost vessel, no longer required their services!

In May 1941, "Emergency Work (Merchant Navy) Order, Notice No. M198" was passed by the British Parliament in recognition of the desperate situation facing Great Britain. Under this new order, a Merchant Navy Reserve Pool was established, which was to ensure that available seamen were allocated to ships which needed crew, it *required* seamen to continue to serve for the duration of the war, they were guaranteed a wage for that period including time spent in lifeboats or in captivity and it provided for two days paid leave earned per month served

The British Merchant Navy was the biggest in the world and required more crew than Great Britain had merchant seamen, as a result large numbers of Indian, Chinese and West African seamen were engaged to crew ships which regularly traded from Great Britain to ports in those areas. Additionally, men from Commonwealth countries sailed aboard British ships as did many others from Scandinavia, the Netherlands and most countries of the world, including Germany and Japan.



Many seamen came from British port towns and cities and followed their forebears to sea, often sailing with family members.

It was not unusual for men to have no fixed abode and to live in "Seamen's Hostels" in port for a week or two before their next trip.

In the early war years Britain desperately needed fast convoy escorts and lacked the number of warships to fulfil this role. Several ocean liners were requisitioned by the Royal Navy to act as Armed Merchant Cruisers (AMCs), after having basic armament fitted. As these ships already had experienced crews, the merchant seamen were asked to sign a T.124 agreement to serve alongside the Royal Navy in Naval uniform as members of Naval Auxiliary Personnel subject to Naval discipline. Approaching 10,000 seamen, mostly reluctantly signed for a period of service up to 1 year,

One of the AMCs mainly crewed by large numbers of merchant seamen was HMS Jervis Bay which fought a tragically unequal battle with the *Admiral Scheer* in defence of Convoy HX 84. She was lost but had bought sufficient time for the convoy to escape annihilation.

Traditionally merchant seamen were administered from a Mercantile Marine Office; the local port office of the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen. Such offices existed in major Ports such as Glasgow, Leith, Newcastle/South Shields, London, Southampton, Cardiff and Liverpool. The "MMO" was managed by a Mercantile Superintendent of the Civil Service and his team of clerks and messengers. (Such as Wamnes & Co who managed the Albyn Line)

The crew of a ship varied in direct relation to its size and handling requirements and the role of the vessel. The largest ocean liners (such as the MAURITTANIA, QUEEN MARY



BRITANIC) serving as troopships during World War II could have a crew of up to 700 men and women to cater for the thousands of soldiers being carried aboard. It would also have electricians, an on-board hospital, a laundry, masters-at-arms to maintain order, a barber shop and so on.

(across the globe) and had a crew of 40 to 50. A diesel-engined motor tanker averaged a crew of 44 and a small coastal collier might only have a crew of a dozen. Ship's crews were highly segregated and had little to do with each other and would not normally mix.

They lived in different parts of the ship and ate apart. The only inter-departmental mixing was in the "Saloon" where the master, the mates, the chief engineer and the radio officers would eat and socialize. The engineer officers who numbered three or more ate in their own messroom. The carpenter and boatswain, who held Warrant Officer status, ate separately. The deck crew ate together and the engine-room crew ate by themselves.

The crew of any ship was arranged by a department system. Under the First Mate, the Deck Department handled the ship and its cargo, under the First Engineer; the Engine room Department provided the power and managed the engines and the Chief Steward managed the catering, the provisions and ran the Ship's Cook and his assistants and stewards. In wartime every ocean going ship had a "Radio Officer" and sometimes he had assistants; but in wartime the need to maintain a constant radio watch necessitated three radio officers instead of one. ^[31]

The average age of a seaman aboard a British registered vessel in 1938 was about 36 years and by 1945 it was down to about 32 years old.



During the war, many ships were armed with old artillery pieces (as in the Thistlebroom) and small arms; later, light 20mm cannon. These weapons were variously manned by trained merchant seamen of the crew, or pensioned gunlayers of the Royal Navy or Royal Marines who had signed on as members of the crew and later by members of the Royal Artillery Maritime Regiment.

These vessels were known as DEMS (Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships). Gunners varied in number with the armament and could be as few as one or two or as many as 30 men.

The Master of a ship, locally referred to as the Captain, held a Master Mariners certificate, also known as an Ordinary Certificate in Steam and some even held an Extra Master's certificate which signified additional qualification in navigation.

He was employed by the shipping company who owned the ship and was responsible to the company for every aspect of the ship, the profitable trading of the ship, the cargo, the crew and the success or failure of the voyage. Masters with a proven track record often remained with a company for many years and could expect to become wealthy. As new ships were added to a company's fleet a successful and favoured master could expect it to be assigned as "his". At sea his word was absolute law and would be enforced by the First Mate, Boatswain (Bosun) and Boatswain's Mate.

The First Mate (also called a Chief Officer on ocean liners) had considerable experience at sea, usually held a Master Mariner's certificate and was gaining experience to allow him to seek employment as a master. He was responsible to the master for the cargo, ensuring everything was properly stowed and discharged at the correct port. He supervised the more junior mates in the navigation, handling and running of the ship.

The Second Mate (Second Officer) reporting to the First Mate usually held a First Mate certificate and sometimes also a Master Mariners certificate.

The Third Mate reported to the more senior mates and would usually hold a Second Mate's certificate and be studying for his First Mate's ticket.

Depending upon the size of the vessel it might have a Fourth Mate, Fifth Mate, and so on. The largest ocean liners could have Senior and Junior levels of each rate of Mate as far as 10th Mate.



The Ship's Carpenter and Boatswain (Bosun) were the senior deck ratings and both were typically men of very considerable sea-going experience and personality. The Boatswain's Mate was also an experienced seaman trusted by the Boatswain and Mates to be able to keep the deck crew in hand either by force of personality or by using his fists. Able Seamen were the ship's seamen with sea-going experience, the highest ranking amongst them were the "Quarter Masters" who stood watches on the

bridge to steer the ship. The most junior were "Ordinary Seamen" who as yet lacked experience and the lowest were the "Deck Boys" who were typically fourteen or fifteen year old lads learning to be seamen.

Ships often carried Apprentices who were indentured to the shipping company for a period of four years to learn the trade of seaman with a view to becoming Mates. Unlike Midshipmen in the Royal Navy, the Apprentice worked with the Able Seamen, messing with them and sleeping in the seamen's accommodation. Some ship's carried a Storekeeper who was an experienced older Able Seaman who controlled the issue of the ships stores.

The First Engineer (or Chief Engineer Officer) had to hold a First Class Certificate in Steam and would have had considerable sea-going experience, he was responsible for the main and subsidiary machinery Reporting to him was a Second Engineer who would always hold a First Class Certificate in Steam and would be gaining the experience required to permit him to seek a Chief's post.

There were Third Engineers, Fourth Engineers, and so on, the number of them depending on the size of the vessel. All would usually have completed an apprenticeship ashore in heavy engineering, often in power stations or similar and after going to sea would have gained a Second Class Certificate in Steam.

The senior Engine room ratings were the Donkeyman and the Greaser (Petty Officers), in addition to heading the "Black gang", (engine room ratings), the former was responsible for the ship's auxiliary power and for maintenance of cargo handling derricks, the latter ensured correct lubrication of all necessary parts of the engines and keeping the Firemen and Trimmers in order.



The Black gang, were the men who handled the coal and spent their working lives coated in coal dust as most ships were coal burning steamers.

They were normally divided into two groups, the Firemen and the Trimmers. The firemen were the men who stood watches in the stokehold feeding tons of coal into the furnaces beneath the boilers to keep up a head of steam.

The trimmers were the men who spent their lives in the ship's bunkers (the hold which held the coal) and were responsible for loading barrows of coal with which they ran across planks of wood to the stokehold to maintain the piles of coal beside the men feeding the furnaces. They

had to keep the level of coal within the bunkers trimmed (level) to prevent the ship becoming unstable.

Some ships carried Engine room Storekeepers, experienced older ratings who controlled the issues of stores.

The larger the ship, the larger the catering department. Aboard a general cargo ship all matters of victualling/catering from food, cleaning of officer's cabins and supplies of food and drink were managed by a Chief Steward. He would usually have two or three Assistant Stewards reporting to him. Also reporting to him was a Chief Cook (senior Petty Officer status), with his Assistants and a Galley Boy, one of his assistants was usually a baker. On a long voyage, food became the centre of attention for the crew and a cook unable to produce food which was considered acceptable would very quickly become seriously unpopular

Food were usually coarse and poor as refrigeration was not usually available aboard ship for crew provisions. Any frozen food available was from an ice-box and after the ice melted salt meat from brine tubs and butter from tins provided much of the staple diet. Fresh eggs, fruit and vegetables might or might not be provided on arrival in port dependent on the budget held by the Chief Steward which was spent only with the permission of the Master who was there to ensure the success and profit of each voyage. Seamen lived in dark, confined, damp, poorly ventilated and often rusty dormitory accommodation with wooden board bunks three or more high, without running water and lacking heating.

DONKEYS BREAKFAST

Each man might be provided one or two blankets at best and was expected to bring his own "donkey's breakfast" – a sack cloth bag containing straw which was to serve as a mattress

Based on their own experience, abilities and hard work, any Able Seaman was eligible to progress from the most junior rating to firstly take the examination for a Second Mate certificate, then after sufficient sea-time, a First Mate and finally Master Mariner and it was not unusual for a former Deck Boy to become a master. In order to obtain a Second Mate's



certificate (known as a "ticket"), a seaman would have had to have gained several years sea time experience either as an Apprentice (a Cadet) or as an Able Seaman, no matter what his background or educational qualifications, either route involved living and working with seamen.

There was very little class consciousness at sea, particularly aboard general cargo ("tramp") steamers although the degree of regimentation necessary for maintenance of discipline amongst large crews and the adoption of naval-like uniforms aboard ocean liners did sometimes attract

officers and others who were more comfortable in that environment.

Merchant ships were quickly fitted with defensive armament and their crews trained to use the World War I surplus 12-pounder, Hotchkiss or Lewis machine guns and even .303 Lee Enfield rifles. Gunnery courses were held regularly in the major ports such as Liverpool, Bristol

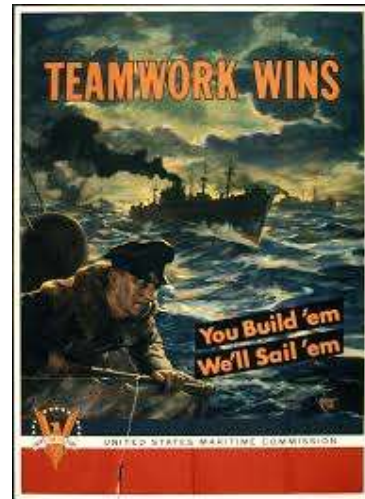
and Newcastle, with Naval and Royal Marine instructors and certificates awarded to those seamen who completed them and so were able to return fire if attacked.



Merchant seamen were dying within nine hours of the outbreak of war on 3 September 1939 when *U-30* torpedoed the passenger carrying ocean liner SS *Athenia* and then surfaced to attack the sinking ship with gunfire, destroying her radio room, she sank with the loss of 118

Once torpedoed, merchant ships behaved very differently, a tanker carrying high octane aviation fuel might explode into flame, spreading a film of burning fuel across the sea all around the ship as it sank, a ship loaded with timber might remain afloat for several days, a ship with a cargo of bulk iron ore would usually sink in less

than 60 seconds as water quickly flooded the cargo holds. Sometimes there might be time to launch the ship's boats, but other times seamen could be struggling to survive in the water trying to hang onto any floating debris. It is difficult to estimate the total number of merchant seamen who lost their lives during World War II because the government of the time did not grant them the automatic right of commemoration by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Unlike the Armed Services in which every wartime death by whatever means was recorded and commemorated, the seamen of the Merchant Navy could only be remembered if their death could be proven to be attributable to enemy action. 36,749 members of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleet are commemorated and could be counted.

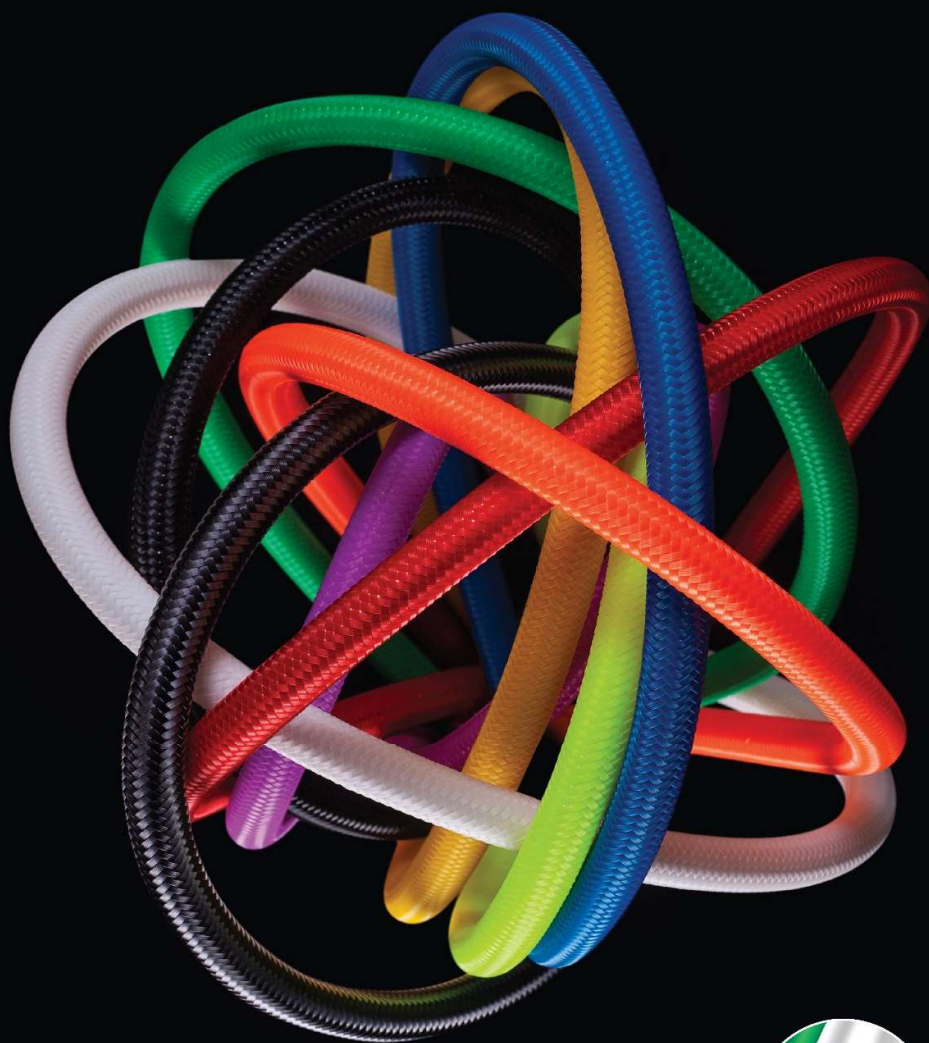


PETER COLLINGS.

Peter began diving in 1970. In 1983 he wrote the first of 12 diving related books and has won several international awards for his publications and underwater photography. His articles and photographs have appeared consistently through the international diving press, including DIVE, DIVER MAGAZINE, SPORT DIVER, SCOTTISH DIVER and H2O.

A BSAC Advanced Instructor, (Red Sea Wreck Academy) SSI PRO 5000 DIVER and TDI Advance Trimix diver, Peter has led over 500 wreck and photo safaris around the world, logging over 6000 dives, and along with his regular team of experts has located and identified many of the shipwrecks in Egyptian waters. To date Peter has written and published 27 diving related guide books.

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The E book concept

The idea of the E BOOK series came about after seeing so many incorrect publications quoting the wrong identity of the Tile Wreck at Abu Nuhas in the Red Sea. Despite a plethora of undeniable facts presented by myself and members of the Red Sea Wreck Academy, self proclaiming experts still, for reasons known only to themselves, continued to quote the MARCUS as the CHRISOULA K. It was archive photographs from Howard Rosenstien and the location of the ships bell, which added weight to Stephan Jablonski's accounts of the sinkings'. This new material gave us enough to produce the first E book in 2008.

Being free from restrictions it soon found its way around the world and was passed on from diver to diver. It had the desired effect-Now more and more reports carry the correct identity.

Its success lead to more titles being produced and published .Initially with an Egyptian theme, the Thistlegorm, Rosalie Moller and the Russian warranted a volume to themselves. Tourist authorities have noticed the importance of their assets. Wrecks are living underwater museums, and commissions have flooded in from Leros, Egypt, Truk, Palau,Sri Lanka Subic Bay, and Busuanga, to name but a few.

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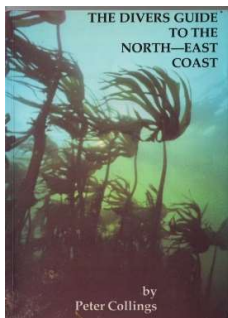
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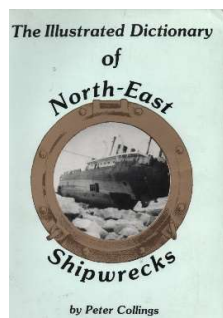


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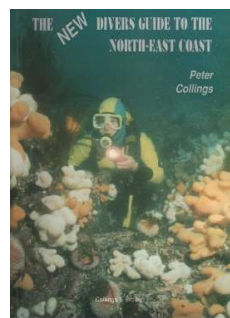
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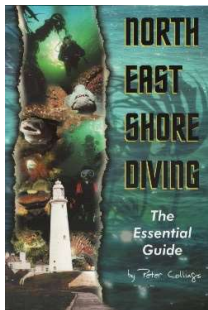
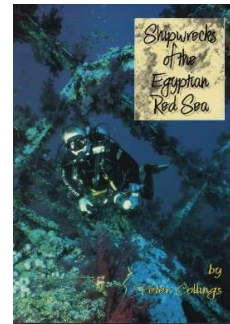
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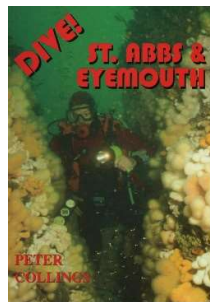
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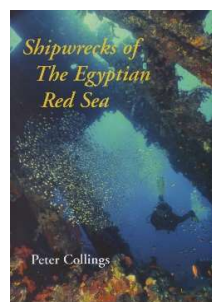
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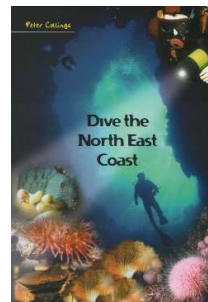
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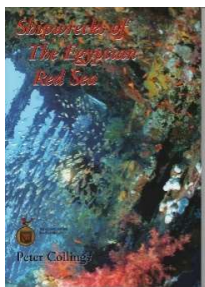
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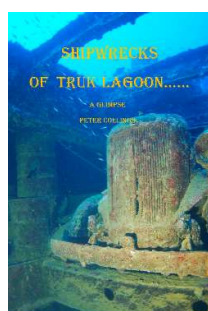
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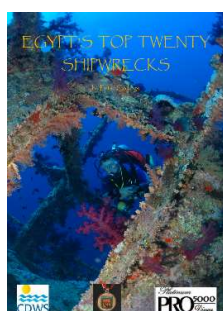
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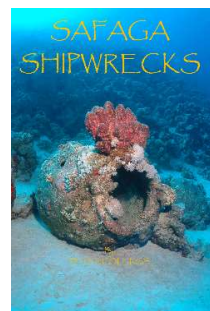
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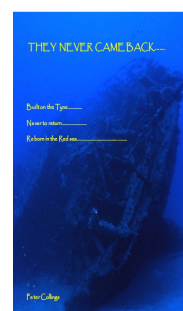
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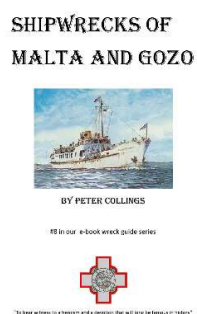
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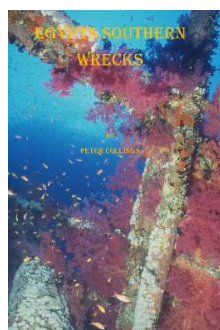
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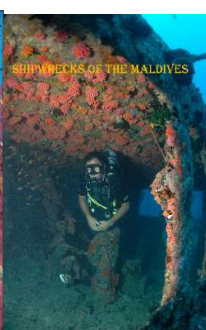
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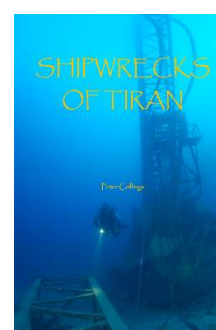
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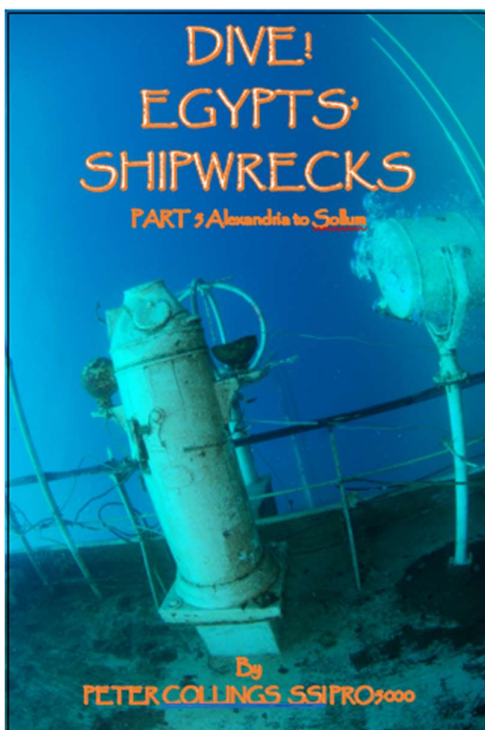
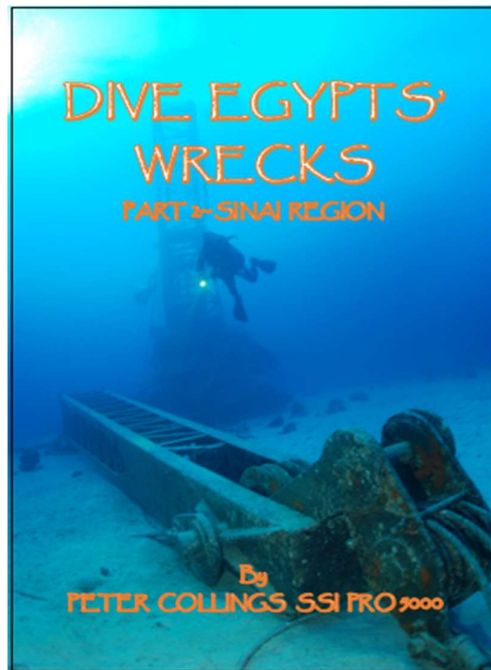
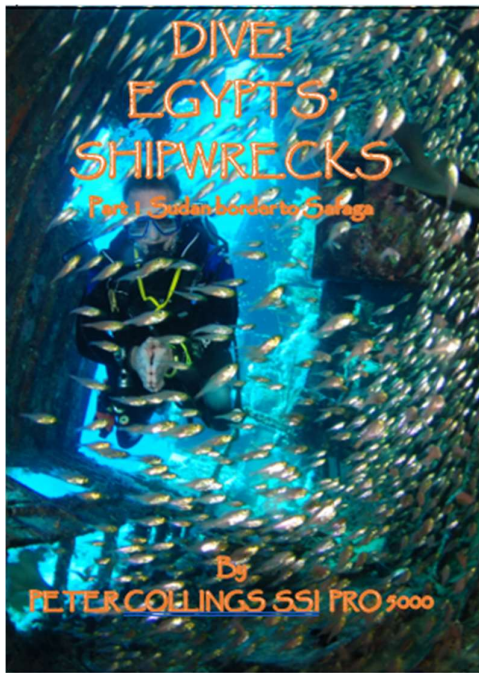


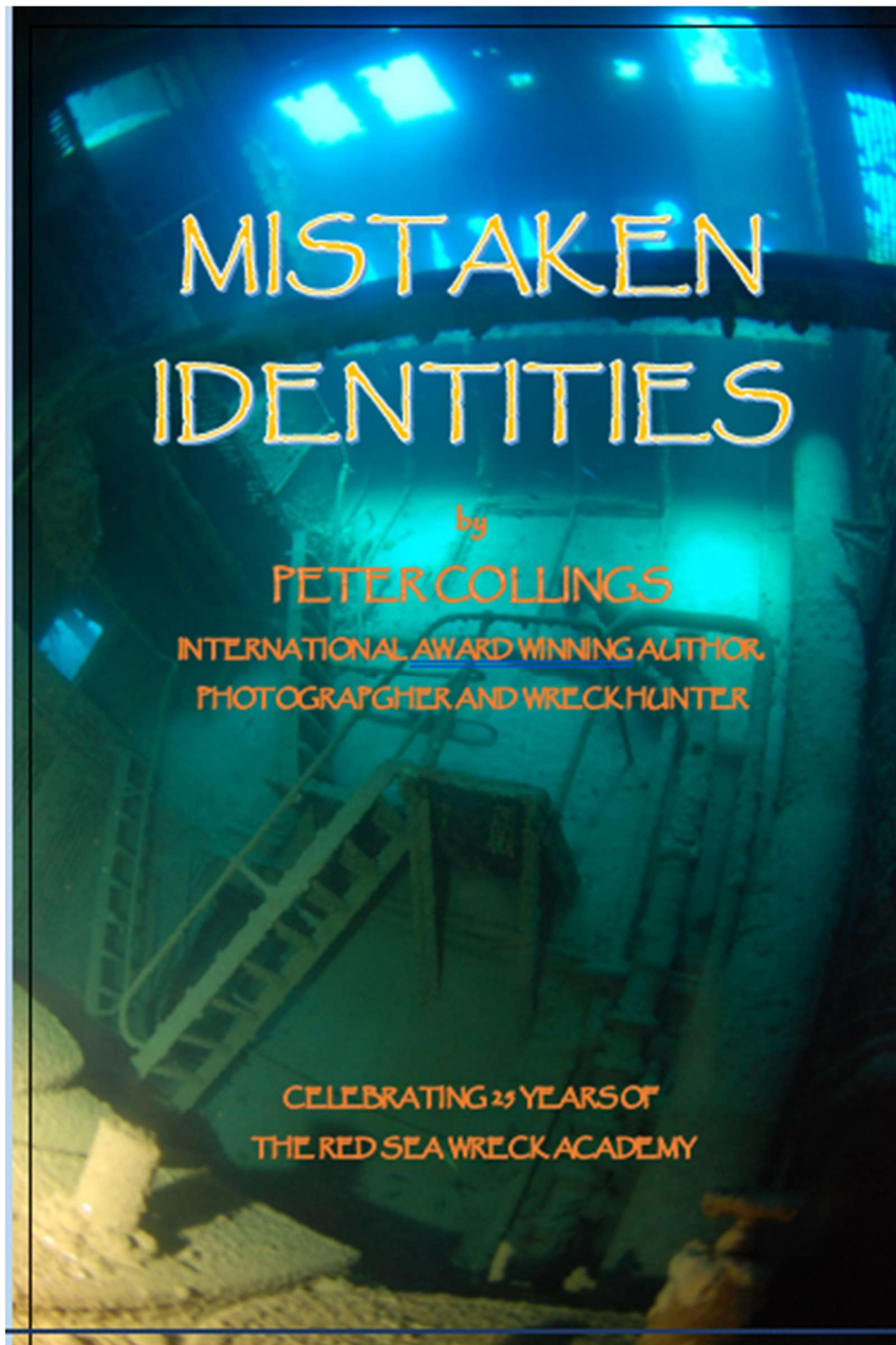
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Being free from restrictions it soon found its way around the world and was passed on from diver to diver. It had the desired effect. Now more and more reports carry the correct identity. Sadly some don't!

It was also an opportunity to give something back to diving. Of course there was also controversy over the identity and purpose of the Russian Wreck at Zabagad, and this lead to the second title. "75 Years Underwater" is THE definitive guide to the worlds most dived wreck. "Suez Wrecks" highlights the achievements of our regular wreck hunting trips up into the Gulf and "dive Egypt's wrecks" in 5 volumes is the most comprehensive guide to these waters .Other area's are also featured ;Subic Bay,Leros Truk Lagoon, Maldives Malta Coron and Palau.

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PETER COLLINGS

Peter began diving in 1970. In 1985 he wrote the first of 35 diving related books, and has won several international awards for his publications and underwater photography. His articles and photographs have appeared consistently throughout the international diving press since 1983,

A BSAC Advanced instructor, (Red Sea Wreck Academy) SSI PRO 5000 DIVER and TDI Advance Trimix diver, Peter has lead over 500 wreck and photo safaris around the world, logging over 7500 dives, and along with his regular team of experts has located and identified many of the shipwrecks in Egyptian waters.

Peter has worked closely with several tourist Authorities such as ESTA, Istria, Chuuk and most recently Leros Active writing and publishing a 25 title series of E-guide books. Several more locations are earmarked in this series of guides which promote tourism through shipwrecks.



