

Where Is H11?

Renowned wreck diver Innes McCartney and his local team of Martin Sinclair and Jim McLeod had doubts about the initial identification of British submarine H11 and decided to find out what the real facts were ...



The wreck detectives - the team that correctly identified the U714 and the H11

THE DISCOVERY of the rare British submarine *H11* off Eyemouth in 2006 caused a stir among divers and historians alike. The wreck reputedly lay in 57 metres of water and was lost on tow to the breakers yard in 1922.

However in the light of discoveries made this year, initial findings have turned out to be a little premature. Local divers raised suspicions as to the true identity of this submarine wreck late in 2006. They had begun to question the type of submarine they were diving because it did not seem to be of the H-Class design.

Consequently a diving team made up of submarine expert Innes McCartney and local divers Martin Sinclair and Jim McLeod visited the site in April 2007. They discovered that the wreck in question was actually *U714* - a WW2 era U-boat destroyed in a depth charge attack in the area in March 1945.

The wreck is actually an important find as it features all of the key features associated with a late-war German submarine. The site is remarkably intact and some interesting items, such as its rare communication gear, snorkel and anti-aircraft armament are all present. In fact key identifying features lie all over the site.

As Innes McCartney recalls:

"When *U714* was sunk, a liferaft was recovered from the sea. Interestingly, the open liferaft canister can be seen on the seabed next to the wreck. The only major area of damage is to the stern area where a crack can be seen where the stern tube joins the pressure hull."

So what of the wreck of the elusive *H11*? Around 7 miles from the wreck of *U714* in 70m lies another submarine wreck. When McCartney, Sinclair and McLeod dived this site, the wreck of *H11* was finally correctly identified. This site had been visited by divers previously but was thought to have been something else. The Hydrographic Office record for this site suggests the divers thought they had possibly found a British A-Class submarine.

The wreck of *H11* is upright and although heavily netted it is in exceptionally good condition. Key identifying features include the bows, unique external torpedo door, folding hydroplanes, hatch configuration and stern.

McCartney states: "The shroud around the conning tower is made of bronze and although probably not fitted when the submarine was built, it seems this was a common modification made by the Royal Navy. There is a major spilt in the top of the pressure hull near the bow, allowing for access into the submarine."

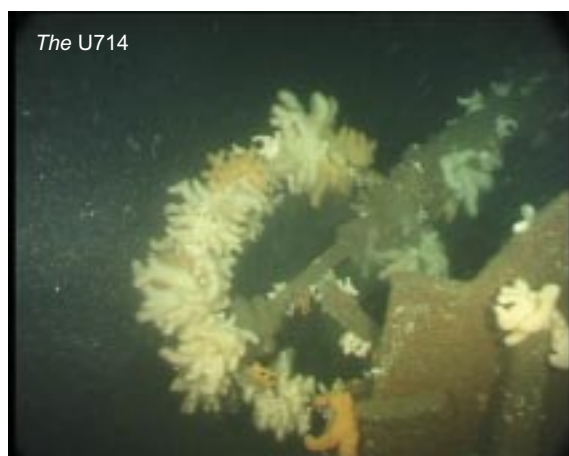
H11 was clandestinely built in the United States during World War I to an American design and is therefore quite a rare wreck.



The H11



The U714



The U714