



Anglo ~ Danish Maritime Archaeological Team

A Non-Profit Educational Organisation, Assisting Students To Participate In Maritime Archaeological Field Work
Protecting the Caribbean's Underwater Cultural Heritage

For Immediate Release PRESS RELEASE

ADMAT Discovers New 1720's French shipwreck next to an uninhabited Caribbean island.



Photo: The ring of anchor 1 on *The Island Wreck* © ADMAT

The Anglo~Danish Maritime Archaeological Team (ADMAT) (non-profit scientific and educational organisation) are pleased to announce that they have located and partly documented a new French shipwreck which probably sunk between 1719-1724 next to a deserted island in Monte Cristi Bay on the north coast of the Dominican Republic. ADMAT is working with Oficina Nacional de Patrimonio Cultural Subacuático (ONPCS) to conduct maritime archaeological surveys of a number of important French historic shipwrecks.

The wreck site nicknamed *The Island Wreck* was partially documented and located last autumn when Dr Simon Spooner led an international team of maritime archaeologists to survey the wreck site.

Dr. Spooner the Principal Investigator of the project stated:

"The protection of underwater cultural heritage is very important. Recently the government of France has signed up to the UNESCO Convention On The Protection Of Underwater Cultural Heritage and ADMAT's work with ONPCS and the French museums is vital for the protection of French historic shipwrecks in the Caribbean. The scientific interpretation of the archaeological clues given on the shipwreck gives important historical information. We have partially documented the wreck and analysed the wrecking taphonomic process which allows us to calculate in detail the final hours of the vessel; as she struggled at night in a tropical storm. We know the ship, which was sailing ten miles off shore under military orders when the waves of the storm smashed the ship onto the outer fringe reef off one of The Severn Brother Islands in Monte Cristi Bay. As the crew jettisoned the cannons, anchors and later the cargo; the ship was pushed towards the beach. The crew fought for their lives amongst high seas in pitch blackness as the ship was taken apart by the pounding waves. A trail of pre cut granite blocks, anchors and cannons was discovered amongst stunning reef and marine life, making this one of the most beautiful wreck sites in the country".

Research undertaken by Dr. François Gendron and Florence Prudhomme from ADMAT-FRANCE (non profit scientific arm of ADMAT) based in the Institut de Paléontologie Humaine at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris, have now found exciting documents which prove that this ship, possibly in addition to *The Tile Wreck* (which also sunk in Monte Cristi and another ADMAT Project) was directed by the French High Command to deliver building materials, pre cut granite blocks and cannons to build the French sea defences of Cape Francis (now Cape Haitian in Haiti). Documents reveal that the French High Command were concerned that the local building stone from the island was insufficient to withstand bombardment and battle from the English fleet, and therefore initiated the order that all merchant ships sailing to the island had to transport pre cut granite building blocks from the granite quarry's of Nantes on the River Loire in France. The dates for the military order for the transportation of granite blocks were from 1719-1724. Florence Prudhomme who directs the French archival research is continuing her search to identify The Island Wreck. Dr. François Gendron and Dr. Simon Spooner have put a paper together on these blocks (from *The Tile Wreck*) and the archival information behind them, stating how and why they were sent, which will be published soon.

Divers, archaeologists and volunteers wanting to join the ADMAT survey team for this summer's archaeological survey should contact Dr. Simon Spooner. LinkedIn members can follow Anglo Danish Maritime Archaeological Team (ADMAT's) work by looking at the ADMAT's LinkedIn company profile and joining the group page. We can also be followed by facebook.

If you would like more information on this story or any other projects ADMAT is undertaking please contact

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ADMAT - FRANCE

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