

EVELINA, HM TRAWLER, EX JOHN HOWARD

Date of loss: 16 December 1939

Wreck: ★ ★ ★

Depth: 79 m

Reference: 55 00'.522 N 001 04'.183 W

Location: 11.46 nm E from Tynemouth pier

The *Evelina* (Official No. 144362) was a steel-hulled 202-ton British steam trawler measuring 35.15 m by length, with a 6.73-m beam and 3.68-m draught. She was built and completed as Yard No. 1330 by Rennie Forrest Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. Ltd. Wivenhoe, completed as a fishing vessel late in 1919; she was delivered to the Royal Navy as the *John Howard* (Adm. No. 4203) on 22 July 1919. The boat was placed on the London register by the Admiralty to await disposal and on 3 February 1920 was registered as L.317. The single steel screw was powered by a 75-hp, three-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used one single-ended boiler working at a pressure of 180 psi. with three furnaces and giving ten knots. The cylinders measured 30.48 cm, 50.8 cm and 86.36 cm with a 58.42-cm stroke (12 in., 20 in. and 34 in. with a 23-in. stroke). A.G. Mumford Ltd. at Colchester manufactured the machinery. She had one steel deck and three bulkheads cemented. Echo sounding device was also fitted.

In 1921 she was sold to Mercantile and on 12 December 1921, Consolidated Steam Fishing and Ice Co. Ltd. Grimsby bought and registered her at Grimsby as GY.1331. In February 1922 she was renamed *Evelina*. In September 1927, she was owned by Consolidated Fisheries Ltd. Grimsby and Sir John Denton Marsden, Baronet was the manager. In 1929 the Grimsby registry closed.

Rutherford Brothers at North Shields was the registered owner from December 1929.

On 17 January 1930 she was registered at North Shields as SN.62.

In 1935, J. Tomlinson and J. Tomlinson Jnr at North Shields acquired her.

In November 1939 the Admiralty requisitioned the boat as an Armed Patrol Vessel (Adm. No. 4203, Port Reg: WWII: SN.4)

Final patrol

On 16 December 1939, HMT *Evelina* (Skipper John William Cowling RNR) was patrolling offshore from the Tyne when she detonated a mine, laid by one of Bronte's Kriegsmarine destroyers: *Z 4* (Richard Beitzen), *Z 8* (Bruno Heinmann), *Z 14* (Friedrich Ihn) and *Z 15* (Erich Steibrick), which had laid mines during the night of 12/13 December 1939, under the cover of *Z 19* (Hermann Künne).

The wreck was never located and is a war grave. The men who died were:

Bailey, Richard, 2nd Engineman, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
 Brunton, Robert, Fireman, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
 Cowling, John, Skipper, RNR
 Curtis, Matthew, 2nd Hand, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
 Pearson, William, 3rd Hand, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
 Reed, George, Deckhand, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
 Robinson, Robert, Cook, Naval Auxiliary Patrol

Sutherland, David, 1st Engineman, Naval Auxiliary Patrol
Tripp, Jack, Deckhand, Naval Auxiliary Patrol

BVLS 1939–45, p. 3 ; SRN Vol. 2, p. 125 ; LCWLR 1939–45, p. 29.

Wrecksite

The wreck, possibly that of HMT *Evelina*, is orientated in an E to W direction. It sits in a slight scour, on a seabed of soft sand and mud in a general depth of 79 m (LAT). The wreck is intact, standing nearly 4 m high and covers an area of 36 m in length by 6 m across. If it is the trawler, the bell will be inscribed: *John Howard 1919*.

H. C. FLOOD

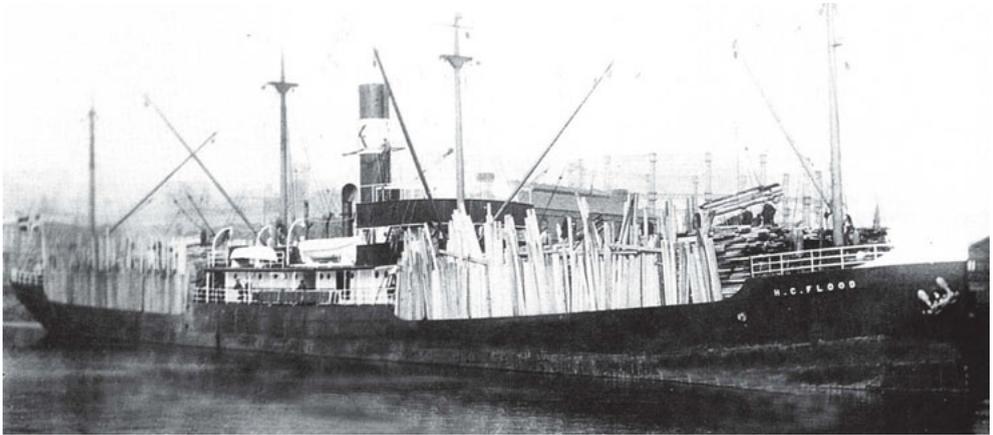
Date of loss: 15 December 1939

Wreck: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Depth: 52 m

Reference: 55 00'.510 N001 13'.412 W

Location: 6.5 miles ESE of Tyne north pier



Norwegian steamer H.C. Flood, circa 1930 (Courtesy: Stein-Erik Dagsland, Heinavegen & Rolf Kristensen, Åsgårdstrand, Norway)

H. C. Flood was a steel-hulled 1902-ton Norwegian steam cargo ship measuring 81.3 m in length, with a 12.82-m beam and 5.48-m draught. Bergens Mekaniske Værksteder, Bergen built and completed it as Yard No. 193 in October 1917 for Dampskipsselskapet Aktieselskapet. H. C. Flood, Haugesund and Knut Knutsen, O.A.S. was the manager. The single screw was powered by a 208-nhp BMV, three-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used two single-ended boilers. The cylinders measured 49.53 cm, 76.2 cm and 132.08 cm with a 91.44-cm stroke (19½ in., 30 in. and 52 in. with a 36-in. stroke). Bergens Mekaniske Værksteder, Bergen manufactured the engine and ancillary machinery. She had one deck, four masts and a 7.9-m poop deck, a 20.4-m bridge deck and 7-m forecastle. Direction Finding Equipment was also fitted. The designated code recognition signal letters were: LCNR.

From January 1936, Dampskipsselskapet Aktieselskapet Falkeid of Haugesund was the registered owner and Th. Nordbø, Jr. of Haugesund was the manager.

Final voyage

On 15 December 1939, the *H. C. Flood*, under Captain Conrad Johan Johannessen, detonated a German-laid mine and the ship foundered 6.75 miles ESE of the River Tyne. She was on passage from Hull for Oslo with a cargo of coke; four of her crew of 21 were killed. The mine had been laid by one of Bronte's Kriegsmarine destroyers: *Z 4* (Richard Beitzen), *Z 8* (Bruno Heinemann), *Z 14* (Friedrich Ihn) and *Z 15* (Erich Steinbrick), which had laid mines in that area during the night of 12/13 December 1939, under the cover of *Z 19* (Hermann Künne). The crewmen that died on *H. C. Flood* were:

Aanesen, Odin Kristian S., Donkeyman
 Johannessen, Conrad Johan, Captain
 Kristensen, Thorleif Martinius, Able Seaman
 Salomonsen, Hans Ole, Ordinary Seaman

Starke Schell Registers; LWL 1939–45, p. 21; Norwegian War Losses 1939–45.

Wrecksite

The wreck, probably that of *H. C. Flood*, lies on a seabed of fine sand and mud in a general depth of 52 m (LAT). It is orientated in a northeast to southwest direction, is very substantial, sitting upright but in two pieces, with the bow section broken off and lying at a slight angle. The stern end is almost completely intact and standing almost 10 m high, with much of the superstructure still in place; it is possible to swim through many of the various openings and a number of portholes are visible. The wreck, which is covered in a profusion of soft corals, is possibly one of the most interesting wrecks off this part of the coast. Masses of fish, including cod, pollack, pout whiting and saithe surround the wreck so it will make an excellent boat-angling venue.

ETHEL TAYLOR, EX CREMLYN, EX JAMES HUNNIFORD

Date of loss: 22 November 1940

Wreck: ★ ★ ★

Depth 18.8 m

Reference: 55 00'.597 N 001 22'.984 W

Location: 0.60 nm E (7.5 cables) of South Shields Lighthouse

The *Ethel Taylor* (Official No. 143786) was a steel-hulled 276-ton British steam trawler measuring 38.22 m in length, with a 7.11-m beam and a 3.86-m draught. Smith's Docks Co. Ltd. South Bank-on-Tees built and completed her as Yard No. 665; she was launched as *James Hunniford* on 24 January 1917 for Clifton Steam Trawlers Ltd. Fleetwood (Fleetwood Port Registration FD.363).

The single screw was powered by an 87-nhp three-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used one single-ended boiler working at a pressure of 180 psi with three plain

furnaces, 4.64sq.m (50sq.ft) of grate surface and 150.13 sq.m (1616 sq.ft) of heating surface. The cylinders measured 31.75 cm, 53.34 cm and 88.9 cm with a 66.04-cm stroke (12½ in., 21 in. and 35 in. with a 26-in. stroke). Smith's Docks Co. Ltd. manufactured the machinery. She had one deck, three bulkheads cemented and a 21.9-m quarterdeck and 6.4-m forecastle; she was also equipped with a wireless direction finder and echo sounding device. She was classed as 100 A1. The designated code recognition signal letters were: GTCJ.

On 16 January 1920, Cygnet Steam Fishing Co. Fleetwood purchased and renamed her *Cremlyn* (FD.363). New Docks Steam Trawling Co. Ltd. Fleetwood purchased and renamed her *Ethel Taylor* in 1934.

On 15 March 1936, *Ethel Taylor* was fishing off the west coast of Scotland when she was in collision with the 331-ton Fleetwood steam trawler *Winooka*, (ex *Searward Ho*), owned by Boston Deep Sea Fishing Co. Ltd. Fleetwood, which resulted in the sinking of the *Winooka*.

In 1939 the registered owner was Clifton Steam Trawlers Ltd. Fleetwood. In 1939 *Ethel Taylor* was requisitioned by the Admiralty and converted to Auxiliary Patrol Vessel no. 3504; she was then armed with a 12-pounder deck gun (5.44-kilo shells).

Final patrol

On 22 November 1940, *Ethel Taylor*, commanded by Skipper Richard Cowling, foundered after detonating a German mine laid off the mouth of the Tyne. The Cullercoats lifeboat *Westmorland* was launched at 1758 hrs and rescued the last man from the sinking trawler; two men were lost, but the survivors were taken off by a Royal Navy drifter and put on shore at the Tyne quay. The crewmen that died were:

Hardman, John A., Stoker 2nd Class RNPS, LT/KX 108570, MPK
Pearson, John W., Engineman, RNPS, LT/KX 124600, MPK

LCWLR 1939–45, p. 158; LR 1940 No. 57465 (E); SRN Vol. 2, p. 124; Toghill (2004), p. 155; Morris (1994).

Wrecksite

The wreck is orientated in a WNW to ESE direction and lies on a dirty hard seabed of sand and stone in a general depth of 18.8 m (LAT). It is upright, quite intact, standing some 3.5 m high and is very impressive; an ideal site for taking underwater photographs. Pout whiting can often be found shoaling over the top of the wreck during the summer months and some large cod have been observed.

ALBIA, EX MONMOUTH

Date of loss: 5 February 1915

Wreck: ★ ★

Depth: 15 m

Reference: 54 00'.452 N 001 23'.050 W

Location: 0.62 nm ESE from South Shields Lighthouse

The *Albia* (Official No. 95770), was a steel-hulled 2506-ton steam cargo ship measuring 91.44 m in length with a 12.03-m beam. Tyne Iron Engineering Shipbuilding Co. Ltd. at

Willington Quay near Wallsend built and completed her as Yard No. 82 in October 1890; she was launched as the schooner-rigged *Monmouth* on 1 September 1890 for Great Western S.S. Co. Ltd. who registered her in Bristol; Mark Whitwill and Son was the manager. The single screw was powered by a 232-hp, three-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used two single-ended boilers. Her cylinders measured 57.15 cm, 92.71 cm and 152.4 cm with a 99.06-cm stroke (22½ in., 36½ in. and 60 in. with a 39-in. stroke). The shipbuilders manufactured the engine and ancillary machinery. She had six bulkheads, web frames and water ballast. The designated code recognition signal letters were: LWJG.

In 1895 she was sold to Ramón de la Sota, renamed *Albia* and registered in Bilbao, with Captain Goicochea as the master. Captain T. De Urrestizal was the master from 1897. Sota y Aznar, Bilbao was the registered owner in 1900. In 1904 the registered owner was Cia Anon del Vapor Albia, Bilbao and Sota y Aznar was the manager. From 1906, she was owned by Cia Nav Sota y Aznar, using the same manager.

Final voyage

On 5 February 1915 the *Albia* stranded on the Whitestones Reef, one mile SE of Roker lighthouse, Sunderland, while on a voyage from Sagunto to Jarrow; she was carrying a crew of 24, eight passengers and a cargo of iron ore. The crew managed to refloat the vessel, which had a badly damaged hull; the master then decided to make full speed for his destination in the Tyne. However, as she reached the mouth of the Tyne, so much water had flooded in that the vessel was in immediate danger of sinking. A skipper of a Tyne pilot cutter, who saw the predicament, rushed to aid the *Albia* and took off 21 people in all. Those remaining must have taken to the boats just minutes before she sank, just outside the river mouth and close to the main shipping lane. All 24 people were rescued.

LCR 1915, p. 8 (g); Starke Schell Registers; Board of Trade Wreck Return 1915, p. 16; American Lloyd's Register of American and Foreign Shipping, 1857–1900.

Wrecksite

The wreck lies in a general depth of 15 m (LAT). It is very substantial with some large box sections, but it is well broken up and covered in many fishing lures and monofilament fishing lines. The boilers are standing upright, along with the engine, and these are surrounded by jumbled mounds of steel debris, masses of broken pipes and broken machinery that are covered in heavy sediment. It has been extensively salvaged over the years but is still worth a visit. Shoals of pout whiting and lots of small saithe, pollack and cod can be seen around the wreck during the summer months.

CRYSTAL

Date of loss: 7 January 1892

Wreck: ★ ★

Depth: 15 m

Reference: 55 00'.742 N 001 23'.728 W

Location: 0.23 nm E of South Shields Lighthouse

The *Crystal* (Official No. 83916) was an iron-hulled 2613-ton British steam cargo ship measuring 100.54 m in length, with a 14.68-m beam. J.L. Thompson and Sons at North Sands Yard, Sunderland built and completed her as Yard No. 167 in 1881; she was launched on 8 September 1881 for J. Dent and Co. of Newcastle, who was the owner at the time of loss; Captain R.A. Darling was the first master. The single iron screw was powered by a 300-hp, two-cylinder compound steam engine that used two boilers. The cylinders measured 101.6 cm and 193.04 cm with a 121.92-cm stroke (40 in. and 76 in. with a 48-in. stroke). Wallsend Slipway Co. Ltd. manufactured the engine and ancillary machinery at Wallsend. She had two decks, an awning deck, seven bulkheads and water ballast.

From 1887, she was registered to Arrow Shipping Co. Ltd. Newcastle upon Tyne, and Dent and Co. was the manager; the master was Captain R. B. Stannard. Code letters: WFLK.

Final voyage

On the night of Thursday, 7 January 1892, the *Crystal*, a well-known vessel that had been employed in the American trade for many years and commanded by Captain R. B. Stannard, was partly loaded and proceeding from the Tyne to Dundee, *en route* for New York, when a collision occurred just off the piers with the steamship *Elder* (1856 – Blaydon and London Steam Shipping Co. Blaydon). The *Elder* was in ballast, on passage from London for the Tyne. The *Crystal* was struck amidships on the starboard side and cut down to the water line. She began to fill up at once and although the crew immediately tried to keep the ship clear enough to enable the master to return the ship to harbour, their most strenuous efforts were futile. The *Crystal* was about to founder and the assistance of a steam tug was engaged, but she sank before she reached the piers. The crew saved themselves by taking to the boats, from which they were taken on board the tug and landed at North Shields. The *Elder* sustained considerable damage to her bows but reached the harbour safely and was taken to Wallsend for repairs.

LCR 1892, p. 6 (d); LR 1890/1 No. 1035 (C); Board of Trade Wreck Return: *Crystal*, 1892; American Lloyd's Register of American and Foreign Shipping, 1857–1900; Starke Schell Registers; *The Times*: Saturday, 9 January 1892, p. 7, Issue 33530.

Wrecksite

The wreck is located about 500 metres seaward and east of the lighthouse at South Shields. It lies on a seabed of dirty sand and stone in a general depth of 15 metres. It is sitting almost in the direct shipping lane for the mouth of the river, so great care should be taken when diving at the wrecksite. Huge ships pass very close by this wreck and the noise created by their enormous engines and screws, is very nerve-racking. There is a substantial amount of the wreck left, but it is totally collapsed and well broken up. Bronze valves and copper pipes still attached to battered machinery can be found, while rusting steel plates, bent framework and girders lie in flattened heaps on top of each other. The ship engine is just a broken heap and there is no sign of the two boilers. The ship was carrying a general cargo, which must have included large stone mill-grinding wheels, because dozens of these lie stacked up in one section of the wreck.

RIO COLORADO, EX SHEILA

Date of loss: 22 March 1917

Wreck: ★ ★

Depth: 15 m

Reference: 55 00'.960 N 001 22'.710 W

Location: 0.82 nm ENE of Tynemouth Lighthouse

The *Rio Colorado* (Official No. 118356) was a steel-hulled 3565-ton British turret-decked steam cargo ship measuring 103.65 m in length, with a 15.29-m beam and a 6.85-m draught.

William Doxford and Sons Ltd. at Sunderland built and completed her as Yard No. 312 in November 1903; she was launched as the *Sheila* on 23 October 1903 for Lion Line, Ltd. London and registered in London; Weddel, Turner and Co. was the manager.

The single screw was powered by a 300-nhp three-cylinder triple expansion engine that used three boilers and gave 9.5 knots. The cylinders measured 66.04 cm, 106.68 cm and 172.72 cm with a 106.68-cm stroke (26 in., 42 in. and 68 in. with a 42-in. stroke). The shipbuilders manufactured the engine and ancillary machinery. She was classed Bureau Veritas (BV).

Turner, Davidson and Co. was the manager in 1911.

In 1913 she was renamed *Rio Colorado* when purchased by European and Brazilian Shipping Co. Ltd. London; Petersen and Co. Ltd. was the manager. From 1915, London-American Maritime Trading Co. Ltd. was the registered owner, with the same manager.

Final voyage

At 0545 hrs on 22 March 1917, the *Rio Colorado*, with Captain Arthur Garbutt Cromach in charge, detonated a mine laid by the KDM submarine SMU *UC 50*, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Rudolf Seuffer, on 18 March 1917. The steamer had just reached the Tyne having made the perilous voyage across the Atlantic, on passage from Montevideo for Newcastle and had been approaching the examination vessel just off the mouth of the Tyne with her valuable and very much-needed cargo of wheat, when she struck the mine amidships, blasting a massive hole in the side of the hull. Sea conditions were extremely rough at the time and she foundered in just 40 minutes. The chief officer, boatswain and two seamen drowned, while three firemen and the second engineer were lost and also presumed drowned. The unfortunate captain drowned while attempting to swim the short distance to the examination vessel, but the remaining 19 crewmen and the pilot were picked up by it and taken to the New Quay at North Shields. Those crewmen who died were:

Aylasen, John, Able Seaman MM
 Bowie, C.M., 46 yrs, Mate MM
 Codde, Joseph, 46 yrs, Fireman MM
 Cromack, Arthur Garbutt, 45 yrs, Master Mariner MM
 Jessop, George, 32 yrs, Second Engineer MM
 Nilsen, Oaubak, 27 yrs, Fireman MM
 Quesada, Jose, 27 yrs, Donkeyman MM
 Svensson, Karl Raganr, 24 yrs, Able Seaman MM

ADM 137/2961; CWGC; BVLS 1914–18, p. 38 ; LCWLR 1914–18, p. 108.

Wrecksite

The wreck is orientated in an E to W direction and lies on a seabed of dirty hard sand and stone in a general depth of 15 m (LAT). Because of the location in relation to the shipping channel, the wreck was dispersed with explosives soon after it sank. Although it is totally collapsed and well flattened, the debris is spread over a wide area, covering 105 m by 50 m, with lots of twisted steel plates, ribs, pipes and framework all jumbled together. The three upright boilers and the battered remains of the steam engine lie in the midst of it all. Shoals of small saithe and large pollack often swarm around the wreck during the summer months

HORTENSE LEA, ex SKJOLD

Date of loss: 21 September 1919

Wreck: ★ ★ ★

Depth: 36 m

Reference: 55 01'.213 N 001 19'.155 W

Location: 2.86 miles ENE of South Shields Lighthouse



Skjold (Courtesy Norwegian Maritime Museum)



The 1,125 ton Norwegian steamer Skjold circa 1910, later to become the Hortense Lea, which foundered off the Tyne in 1919. (Courtesy of Rolf Kristensen and Stein-Erik Dagsland, in Norway)

The *Hortense Lea* was a steel-hulled 1125-ton Norwegian steam cargo ship measuring 69.72 m in length, with a 10.71-m beam and a 4.87-m draught. Laxevaags Maskin and Jernskibsbyg Værksted, Bergen built and completed her as Yard No. 90 in September 1908; she was launched as the *Skjold* on 15 August 1908 for Johs. Sundfør, Haugesund. The single screw was powered by a 101-nhp three-cylinder triple expansion steam engine that used one boiler. The cylinders measured 40.64 cm, 64.77 cm and 109.22 cm with a 76.2-cm stroke (16 in., 25.5 in. and 43 in. with a 30-in. stroke). The shipbuilders manufactured the engine and ancillary machinery. She had one deck, a 64-ton (181.22-cubic.m) housedeck and 31-ton (87.78-cubic.m) forecastle. She was classed NV. Code letters: MFHW.

In 1916, Aktieselskapet Dampskipsselskapet 'Hortense Lea', Bergen purchased and renamed the ship *Hortense Lea*; Erik Grant Lea in Bergen was the manager. From 1917, Bergen Lloyd Aktierederi, Bergen was the registered owner and Bjørnstad and Brækhus was the manager.

Final voyage

At 0500 hrs on 21 September 1919, the *Hortense Lea*, commanded by Captain A. Nielsen, was on passage from Arundel for the Tyne with a cargo of rough wood pulp, when she foundered off the Tyne with the loss of nine lives. She carried a crew of 19 and two passengers. Heavy seas were raging, smashing open the hatches, and she quickly began to sink. Rockets were sent up and the 563-ton Swedish steamer *Wargon* (1919 – Wargöns AB, Wargön) went to her assistance, but the *Hortense Lea* foundered before the steamer could reach her. The *Wargon* rescued fifteen people and took them to Sunderland. Three of them, including one female passenger, died from exposure, the weather being bitterly cold, and six of the crew were lost with the vessel.

LCR 1919, p. 5 (b); LR 1919/20 No. 15936 (H); Starke Schell Registers; *The Times*: Monday, 22 September 1919, p. 12, Issue 42211.

Wrecksite

This wreck is orientated in a NE to SW direction and lies on a seabed of dirty sand, stone and colliery waste in a general depth of 36 m (LAT). It is sitting upright, fairly intact and standing up to 7 m high, but with quite a bit of damage to the bow section at the southwestern end. The highest part is the stern section, where much of the bridge structure is understood still to be in reasonable condition, with a number of portholes visible, all covered in soft corals. The author is not aware of the bell having been recovered, which should be inscribed: *Skjold 1908*, but the wreck has been well visited by local divers. Lots of fish of various species shoal over and around the wreck, especially cod and pout whiting, so it will make an interesting boat-angling venue.