

Crimean ship found off Balaclava

Ukrainian archaeologists say they have identified the remains of HMS Prince, a British naval vessel that sank off Balaclava during the Crimean War.

The sinking, with all 150 men on board, caused outrage not only for the human toll, but because thousands of badly needed winter uniforms were also lost.

The ship had not been found since it sank during a storm in November 1854.

Other underwater expeditions have found parts of the ship, but it is the first positive identification.

According to Sergei Voronov, of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, and the leader of the expedition, explorers discovered a plate fragment from the captain's mess last summer.

After months of meticulous cleaning, the fragment revealed the name of the company which owned the Prince before it was hired by the Royal Navy: the General Screw Steam Shipping Company.

Cold and disease

Now Mr Voronov and his colleagues are hoping to attract international interest to explore another ship which also sank during the Crimean War and is mostly intact.

The Prince was lost during a winter storm near the Crimean port city of Balaclava, during the historic siege of Sevastopol, which was part of the Russian Empire but is now located in Ukraine.

Its sinking unleashed an uproar in Britain, as troops were suffering from the extreme cold and widespread disease.

The Crimean War, which lasted from October 1853 to February 1856, pitted Russia against Britain, France, the Ottoman Empire and the Kingdom of Sardinia.

It was during the Crimean War, at the Battle of Balaclava, that the ill-fated Charge of the Light Brigade took place which led to the deaths of 272 British soldiers.

The Crimean War is sometimes called the first modern war, and was the first to incorporate the tactical use of railways and telegraph, and was captured extensively in photographs.

Story from BBC NEWS:
http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/8571967.stm

Published: 2010/03/17 10:56:42 GMT

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