HOW DID DIVERS FIND A MERCHANT SHIP LOST DURING WORLD WAR TWO?



WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Divers have located the wreck of the SS Cornwallis, a Canadian merchant ship sunk by a German submarine off the coast of Maine in December 1944. Forty-three crew members died when the ship was hit. The Cornwallis was carrying sugar and molasses between the Caribbean and Canada, but it was also fitted with machine guns and carried armed guards because German submarines were attacking ships in the Atlantic. A team began searching for the wreck in 2019. Researchers used wartime records to narrow the search area, then examined more than 50 square miles of seabed with side-scan sonar. When they found a possible wreck, they compared it with the ship's original blueprints. The discovery shows that the war reached much closer to the coast of North America than many people realise. The wreck is now protected in deep federal waters, and the find may give families a clearer place to remember those who died.

WHY IS THIS INTERESTING?

World War Two is often pictured through famous battles in Europe and the Pacific, but it was also fought across the Atlantic. Merchant ships, sailors and coastal communities faced real danger. Finding the Cornwallis helps restore an overlooked part of that story and gives the dead a final resting place.

THINK LIKE A HISTORIAN

"Why were ordinary merchant ships important during World War Two?"

Source: Smithsonian Magazine

https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/a-nazi-submarine-torpedoed-a-merchant-ship-just-off-the-coast-of-maine-in-1944-divers-have-finally-located-the-wrec