

HMS Montagu Battleship wreck given protected status

- 20 September 2019
- **The wreckage of a battleship in the Bristol Channel has been granted protected status by the government.**
- HMS Montagu became grounded near the isle of Lundy in 1906 and had to be salvaged and broken up.
- The protection was granted partly as a result of **archaeological material gathered by wounded veterans, who dived on the wreck last summer.**
- Among the findings were armour plating, gun turrets and shells left behind by the salvage operation.
- The dives were organised by veterans' charity Help for Heroes, Historic England and Wessex Archaeology.
- Dave Handley, from Help for Heroes, described the designation as "amazing news".
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ip covers the wreck making it hard for divers to see
- The new status for the wreck means the area is now considered a nationally important archaeological site.

- A set of steps carved into the granite cliffs as part of the salvage operation was also granted the status.
- Duncan Wilson, chief executive of Historic England, said the "distinctive" steps were "forever linked to the landscape" of the island.
- "Combined, the wreck and the steps provide a rare group of maritime monuments," he added.



- Image copyright Wessex Archaeology tagu was wrecked on the rocks of Lundy island in the Bristol Channel in 1906
- Recreational divers will still be free to explore the ship but the remnants will be closely managed.
- Due to the salvage operation and exposure to the powerful waves around the island, little of the initial wreck is left.
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• **HMS Montagu**

- The battleship was launched in 1901 in response to rapid naval expansion in the build up to World War One.
- On 30 May 1906 it became grounded in thick fog while conducting radio communication trials in secret.
- The ship could not be saved and the remains had to be salvaged where they lay.
- In 1907, as part of the salvaging operation, a series of steps were carved into the rock and a 10-tonne suspension bridge installed to ease access to the wreck.

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- Graham Scott, who helped co-ordinate the volunteers for Wessex Archaeology, described the wreck as a "giant jigsaw of bits, lying roughly in a ship shape".
- One of the key challenges was to "search through the kelp and try in your mind to put the puzzle together", he said.
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Image copyright Wessex Archaeology divers were often accompanied in their research by an inquisitive population of juvenile seals