

# SS Milly

The SS Milly was built in 1904 by William Gray & Co in Hartlepool. Originally she was the SS Ludwig Groedel, changing her name to SS Milly at the outbreak of war as she became operated by Alexander and Mair from Glasgow. She was 325ft long and 47ft beam, and was almost 3,000 grt. Her maximum speed was around 11 knots. When war broke out she was fitted with a rear gun to protect her from submarines. There were 2,899 such Defensively Equipped Merchant Ships by February 1917.

On September 6<sup>th</sup> 1918 while voyaging from Brest to Barry in ballast, the Milly was sailing alone and proceeding on a zigzag course at 10-knots, just 2¼ miles W ¾ S of Tintagel Head, when a torpedo was sighted only 100 yards away. The German submarine UB 87 had never surfaced at any time. The attack took place at 1355hrs and the torpedo struck on the port side level with No.3 hold which sank her in just five minutes. Two boats were launched, but men in the aft part of the ship found themselves in the sea since the stern went down very rapidly. Two men drowned but the survivors of the 33 crew were picked up by the SS Madame Brook 15 minutes later and were landed at Swansea.

The two men who drowned were a deck boy, William Sydney Eaton (17) from Cardiff, and the Mess Steward, Robert Hocking (18) from Plymouth.

Lying in about 46 metres of water, the wreck of the Milly is very popular with divers, and in 1991 the gun that was fitted at the outbreak of war was salvaged to become a memorial to the men who died. It can be seen behind the Golden Lion in Port Isaac.



*The recovered gun from the SS Milly*

## Sources

SS Milly: <http://www.wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?77511> and <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=140167>

Defensively Equipped Merchant Ship: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defensively\\_Equipped\\_Merchant\\_Ships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Defensively_Equipped_Merchant_Ships)