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# SS Sir Francis [+1917]

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## Details

### general

nationality: [british](#)  
purpose: [transport](#)  
type: [cargo](#)  
subtype/class: [collier](#)  
propulsion: [steamer](#)  
date built: [1910](#)  
status: [live](#)

### details

weight (tons): 1991 [grt](#)  
dimensions: 85,34 x 12,34 x 5,64 m  
material: [steel](#)  
engine: [Steam triple expansion](#) by G. Clark Ltd. Sunderland, two single [boilers](#), single screw  
armament: 1 x 3pdr Mk V stern gun  
power: 208  
speed: 9 knots  
yard no.: 254

### about the loss

cause lost: [torpedo](#)  
date lost: [07/06/1917](#) [dd/mm/yyyy]  
casualties: [+ 10 rank 488](#)

### about people

builder: [Austin S. P. & Son Ltd., Sunderland](#)  
engine by: [George Clark Ltd., Sunderland](#)  
owner: [Cory Colliers Ltd. \(Wm. Cory & Son\), London](#)  
captain: Andrew Wanless / R. G. Strickland  
no. of crew: 22

### about the wreck

status: broken in several pieces  
depth: 44 max. / 41 min. (m)  
orientation:  
location on seabed: [proud](#)  
visibility: [average](#)  
current: [normal](#)  
sea bed: [hard ground](#)  
protected: [no](#)  
war grave: [no](#)

### references

reference(s): [Carl Racey, A Century of Steamship Losses](#)

### updates

entered by: [Lettens Jan](#)  
entered: 27/08/2008  
last update: [Racey Carl](#)  
last update: 15/09/2010

### Position

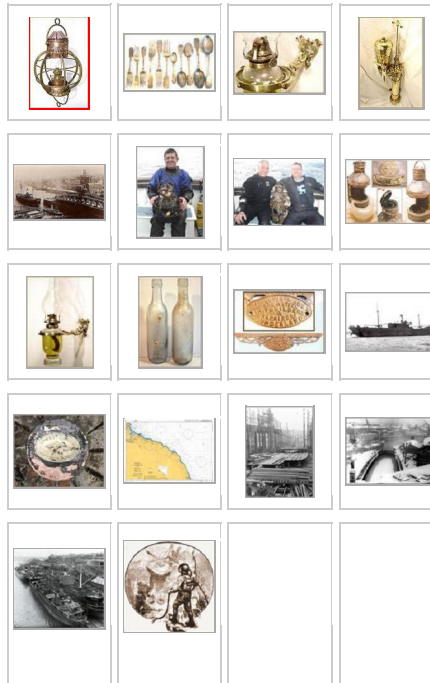
[Lettens Jan](#) 01/10/2009

latitude: [UK\\_hydro\\_member](#)  
longitude: [UK\\_hydro\\_member](#)

## Pictures



FRANCIS (with Cory Name Plate), by Carl Racey and members of Scarborough Sub-Aqua Club in August 2006  
copyrights: [A Century of Steamship Losses, Carl Racey](#)  
ref. used: [A Century of Steamship Losses, Carl Racey](#)



[insert new picture](#)

**Hydrographic Service UK**

WRECK REPORT

HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICE  
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DATABASE

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AIS: [check AIS](#)  
 mark: [add position to my marks](#)  
 dist. homepage: [dist. homepage](#)  
 ref. used: [UK Hydrographic Office](#)

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### The Wreck today

[Lettens Jan](#) 01/10/2009

[UK hydro member](#)

ref. used: [UK Hydrographic Office](#)

[Racey Carl](#) 15/10/2009

This is the wreck of a typical WW1 merchant steam ship. The fairly intact stern section is lying over at 45 degrees on its port side. As you progress forward the ship levels out at amidships and is sitting on her keel. The engine is laid over on its side but the two boilers which are sat forward of the engine are in their correct orientation. There are catwalks and framing around part of the engine.

The bow section is also fairly intact but folded back on its self with the deck at 60 degrees from the seabed. There is a lamp room in the middle of the whale back, close to this is a mast running to the sea bed with a bell bracket which appears to have the bolt still in place! We have not seen any sign of a gun or shell cases, although we have a report from G. Wadworth that there is a gun on the seabed, in the stern area. A part from the ship's steam gear was recovered, and is the same as one from the LADY HELEN (also built by S. P. Austin). An onion type oil lamp was recently recovered bearing a Cory name plate along with shards of crockery having the Cory black flag on. More recently (Aug '06) a stair tread type makers plate was found in the starboard side bow area bearing the ship builders name.

ref. [A Century of Steamship Losses, Carl Racey](#)

[insert wrecksite info](#)

### History

[Racey Carl](#) 01/03/2009

The [SIR FRANCIS](#) was proceeding on a course following the War buoys for the Tyne to collect a cargo of coal and making 10 knots, an explosion occurred under No 3 hold on the starboard side at 4.40 a.m., throwing up the hatches and other wreckage. The vessel began to settle fast by the stern. Before the ship's lifeboats could be lowered a second torpedo stuck under the bridge on the starboard side and she sank about half a minute afterwards. Twelve of the crew were picked up by passing ships s.s. DRYADE and s.s. VERNON, and were later landed at South Shields. The master and the rest of the crew were not found and presumed down.

A report from the master of the DRYADE said that he saw the submarine fairly close which fired the first torpedo which struck the [SIR FRANCIS](#), and the second torpedo, intended for the DRYADE, passed under the stern of his ship and hit the [SIR FRANCIS](#), which sunk in a minute and a half. The ship's confidential papers went down with the vessel. Two crewmen were picked up by the DRYADE and handed them over to the lifeboat of the VERNON. The VERNON we are informed picked up 10, several lives appear to have been lost.

ref. [Carl Racey, A Century of Steamship Losses](#)

[Racey Carl](#) 09/04/2009

Built for W. Cory & Son Ltd, London; Yard No 254; Launch Date 25/05/1910; Fitted with 1 x 3pdr Mk V stern gun; Vessel torpedoed by UB.21 whilst under the command of Franz Walther (later of UB.75); Two explosions, the first abreast of No 3 hatch on the starboard side, the second on the starboard side destroying the bridge and chart room, sank by the stern within half a minute; 22 crew.

10 lives lost including master.

ref. [Carl Racey, A Century of Steamship Losses](#)

[Lettens Jan](#) 03/12/2010

[UK hydro member](#)

ref. used: [UK Hydrographic Office](#)

[Racey Carl](#) 15/10/2009

The [UB-21](#) became the most successful submarine that operated along the Yorkshire coast of England. In February 1917 the [UB-21](#) sank the [LADY ANN](#) off Scarborough. In the following 15 months she was responsible for the [JOHN MILES](#), [BYWELL](#), [VICTORIA](#), [RIKARD NORDRAAK](#), [EDITH CAVELL](#), [SNA II](#), [SIR FRANCIS](#), [TRELYON](#), [GLOW](#), [VANLAND](#), [SPRINGHILL](#), [AMSTELDAM](#), [GEMMA](#), [OCEAN](#), [PATRIA](#), [HERCULES](#) (Whitby), [HERCULES](#) (Filey Bay), [CONSTANTIA](#), [ANBOTO MENDI](#), [GOTHIA](#) (off Hartlepool), [HASLINGDEN](#) (off Seaham), the sailing vessel [MENTOR](#) (off Hartlepool) and finally the [PAUL](#) in Sept 1918.

A total of 23 vessels were sunk by [UB-21](#) off the Yorkshire Coast, and at least another 9 vessels sank or damaged along the east coast of England and 4 vessels taken as a prize of war. Also, under the command of Franz Walther, [UB-21](#) sank the fishing vessel [EXCEL](#) 18/02/1917 and the Swedish steamer [HAROLD](#) on 06/05/1917, both NE of the Tyne

ref. [Carl Racey, A Century of Steamship Losses](#)

[insert new history](#)

**Documents**[insert new document](#)**About Owner(s)**[🇬🇧 Cory Colliers Ltd. \(Wm. Cory & Son\), London](#)

Cory Colliers (William Cory & Son) Ltd. 52 Mark Lane, London. Originally in the coal trade, became tug operators. Later renamed to Cory Towage Ltd.

**About Builder(s)**[🇬🇧 Austin S. P. & Son Ltd., Sunderland](#)

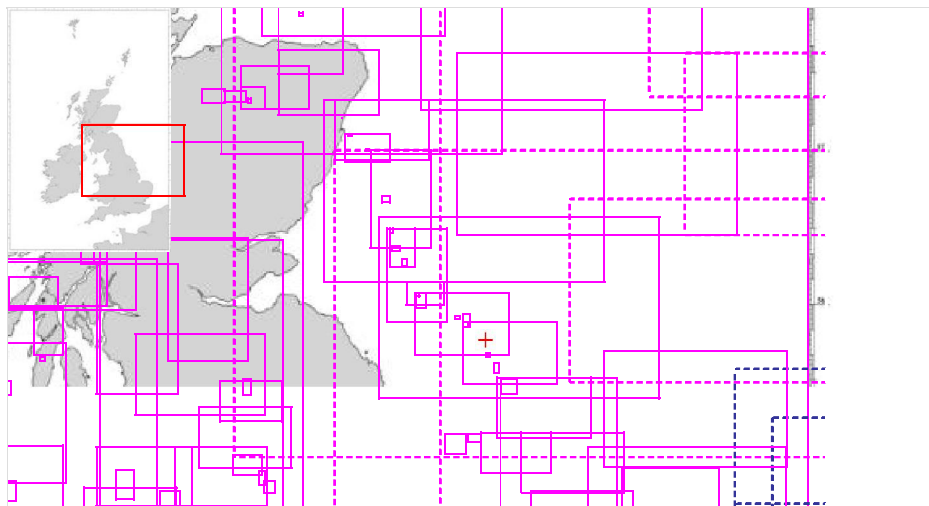
S. P. Austin and Sons began in 1826. Austin's was famous for its pontoon, which opened in 1904. The pontoon was a platform that could be sunk below a ship, then re-floated to raise the ship out of the water. Austin's merged with Pickersgill's in 1954 to become Austin and Pickersgill The yard closed in 1956

[🇬🇧 George Clark Ltd., Sunderland](#)

George Clarke of Southwick Engine Works, Crown Road, Southwick, Sunderland

**Related wreck(s)****related by histories:**

|                                 |           |            |                                      |           |            |
|---------------------------------|-----------|------------|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Amsteldam</a>    | 1233 tons | 18/10/1917 | <a href="#">🇬🇧 Lady Ann</a>          | 1016 tons | 16/02/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇪🇸 Anboto Mendi</a> | 2114 tons | 10/05/1918 | <a href="#">🇬🇧 Ocean</a>             | 1442 tons | 23/11/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Bywell</a>       | 1522 tons | 29/03/1917 | <a href="#">🇷🇺 Patria</a>            | 838 tons  | 29/12/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Constantia</a>   | 772 tons  | 08/05/1918 | <a href="#">🇩🇪 Paul</a>              | 659 tons  | 26/09/1918 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Edith Cavell</a> | 20 tons   | 05/05/1917 | <a href="#">🇳🇴 Rikard Nordraak</a>   | 1123 tons | 02/05/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Gemma</a>        | 1385 tons | 19/10/1917 | <a href="#">🇫🇷 SNA II or S.N.A.2</a> | 2294 tons | 06/06/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Glow</a>         | 1141 tons | 22/07/1917 | <a href="#">🇬🇧 Springhill</a>        | 1507 tons | 24/08/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇸🇪 Gothia</a>       | 1826 tons | 11/05/1918 | <a href="#">🇬🇧 Trelvon</a>           | 3099 tons | 21/07/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇸🇪 Harold</a>       | 1697 tons | 06/05/1917 | <a href="#">🇩🇪 UB-21</a>             | 292 tons  | 01/01/1920 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Haslingden</a>   | 1934 tons | 12/05/1918 | <a href="#">🇸🇪 Vanland</a>           | 1285 tons | 23/07/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Hercules</a>     | 1295 tons | 30/12/1917 | <a href="#">🇬🇧 Victoria</a>          | 1620 tons | 29/04/1917 |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 Hercules</a>     | 1095 tons | 25/03/1918 |                                      |           |            |
| <a href="#">🇬🇧 John Miles</a>   | 687 tons  | 22/02/1917 |                                      |           |            |

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